

FACTS ON EARLY FAIRFIELD DISTRICT RESIDENTS

*from the Low-Country.*

In February 1824, Mr. Edward G. Palmer of St. James Parish Charleston District, having married a daughter of Dr. James Davis of Columbia, who was averse to his daughter's living in so unhealthy a climate, prevailed upon him to remove to Fairfield, and to purchase lands near the present town of Ridgeway, called the Bloomingdale Plantation, on Dutchman's Creek, where he built a very fine house and surroundings, and changed the name to Valentia.

Mr. Palmer was born in 1800, and died in 1867, leaving two sons and one daughter. His grandson, who bears his name, owns Valentia, and lives there.

S. Peyre Thomas was the next. He removed from St. Stephen's Parish in 1827, settled not far from Mr. Palmer's; married Miss Rosborough, and died in 1854, leaving his wife, one daughter and four sons *at Valley House & Magnolia.*

Dr. John P. Thomas removed from St. John's Parish, where he had been practicing physician for several years. In 1836, he also purchased lands in the neighborhood of Ridgeway, where he lived until his death in 1859, aged about 67, leaving a wife, who has since died, and a large family of sons and daughters *at Mt. Hope.*

In May 1834, David Gaillard, Samuel DuBose and Theodore DuBose, all of St. John's Parish, Charleston District, left Pineville, the pleasant summer resort of the planters in that section of the country for twenty miles or upwards around, on a tour of inspection for lands in some more salubrious locality, combining health, with fertility of soil, a very fatal type of fever having prevailed to an alarming extent, for some previous summers in Pineville and the adjacent country. They stopped at Mr. Edward Palmer's, friend and companion of their boyhood, who being well acquainted with the country of Fairfield and its prominent inhabitants, was pleased to accompany them in their search after homes.

Mr. Theodore DuBose purchased from Mr. John Johnson, who was about moving to Alabama, a large tract of land with a well settled and comfortable residence, on the Waterkee Creek, about nine miles above Winnsboro. Mr. Gaillard purchased from Dr. Boyd of Chester, a large and valuable tract of land of about 1200 acres, which was added to from time to time. This place was twelve miles above Winnsboro, intersected by creeks, very fertile and very healthy, but with only a log cabin for a dwelling, compelling him to spend his winters at his home in St. Johns, which he had not yet disposed of. Mr. T. DuBose's place he named Farmington - Mr. Gaillard's was Springvale, from a very fine spring of delightful water in a valley between two hills. Mr. Samuel DuBose, Senior, also purchased a place well settled and salubrious, about two miles from White Oak, where he and his wife and several children spent 6 or 8 summers very pleasantly; but upon the death of his wife and eldest daughter he sold out his place, and afterwards spent his summers and his remaining family, with his oldest son, Theodore DuBose. His son, Samuel, who married Miss Cloud, also purchased a plantation about 8 miles above Winnsboro, which was called Dove Cove, but he did not live many years - left a wife and a son and daughter all living at this time. The summer of 1834 proved to be

more sickly than the previous ones had been, so that Pineville was from that time a desolated village, very few venturing to return there another season. This resulted in large additions to Mt. Zion Academy, then, and for many years after, kept by Mr. Hudson. Pineville had always supported a large and respectable Academy, where the classics and higher branches of education were taught, and our young men were prepared for college.

Several families, principally widows, with their sons, came up to Winnsboro to live in preference to boarding them at the school, for the advantages of health, as well as this most excellent school. Mrs. Isabella Porcher, with four sons and two daughters, rented a house in Winnsboro, and settled herself until her sons had all been prepared for college by Mr. Hudson. Indeed, from 1836, several families came up, some merely for a summer resort, and others for the combined advantage of the school. Mrs. Sarah Couturier, with one daughter, who married Dr. T. T. Robinson and two sons, the sons scholars at Mt. Zion, and the family spending for many years the summers with her daughter and son-in-law, Theodore S. DuBose, and the winters at her home in St. John's.

Mrs. Mary Gaillard, the widow of Dr. Edwin Gaillard, of St. Stephen's Parish, with one son, Edwin, a scholar at Mt. Zion, and four daughters, she also rented a house and settled herself permanently, as she had intended, but after eight years the marriage of one daughter, and her subsequent removal to New York, and the death of another, and her son studying medicine in Charleston, and then practicing in Florida, where he was offered a large and lucrative practice, and where he contracted chills and fever from the effects of which he never altogether recovered, but was forced to remove to a Northern climate; all the circumstances combined induced her to change her plans and to follow her children to New York, where her other daughters married, her son also, all the family having since died there, excepting two daughters, one a widow with one son and one daughter surviving, and the other with two sons and one daughter, Mrs. Martha DuBose, also came with her daughter, Mrs. Mary Gaillard, but lived with her other daughter, Mrs. David Gaillard, until her death in 1848.

Old Mr. and Mrs. Sims Lequeux came up also, in order to be with relatives and friends who had preceded them. They kept house in Winnsboro until their death. Mr. Isaac Dwight, with his wife, and five children, for several years, spent their summers with T. S. DuBose. After the death of his wife, the daughters were placed at school in Charleston, the sons at Mr. Hudson's in Winnsboro.

In May 1840, Mr. Josiah Obear, an Episcopal clergyman, from Vermont, who came south for his health, was sent by our Bishop to this place, at the request of the members of the church settled here, there being a respectable number of church members at that time. Being without a church, services were held in the Court House. The Parish being organized, he was elected Rector, and steps immediately taken to build a church, a lot having been given for that purpose by Mr. Evans. Subscriptions were raised, Samuel DuBose, Theodore DuBose, Edward Palmer and David Gaillard being the principal subscribers, assisted by the inhabitants of the town. Mr. Obear was married in November 1840 in Charleston. In 1841, January, Mrs. Obear an accomplished lady, opened a school for girls, in which Mr. Obear assisted. In 1842, the church, a neat

and convenient building was completed, and in September was consecrated by Bishop Gadsden. Mr. Obear remained here as Rector of this Parish until February 1849, when his health failed, he resigned his charge, and returned to his native State, where he engaged in farming, but being much attached to the South and especially Winnsboro, he returned here in September 1855, when Mrs. Obear reopened her school and, with his assistance, kept it up until in 1880 when he was elected Rector of the Church, not the original church, however, that having been burned in February, 1865, near the close of the War, by Sherman's raiders, who caused so much distress and loss of property by fire and otherwise. Another church having been built immediately, in a more central situation, Mr. Obear continued Rector until his death of Paralysis in 1882.

I omitted to mention, in the proper place, that Mr. Gaillard, for the benefit and convenience of church and school for his large family, moved from his plantation to Winnsboro in January 1844, where he lived several years in a hired house, at the same time cultivating a farm one and half miles from town, and where he built a fine house, which he occupied only four years, when he died March 1855, suddenly at the age of 56 years, leaving a widow and 11 children. The War broke out in 1861. Two of the sons and a dearly loved nephew fell victims, and two others dying of disease have reduced the numbers sadly. The remaining family are scattered, one son farming in Virginia, near Alexandria, one near Rome, Georgia, and one in Sumter County, three daughters and their aged mother in Winnsboro, and one son at the farm, Clifton, the fine house there having been burned several years after the war.

In 1838, our second church was burnt, in one of the greatest conflagrations ever experienced in Winnsboro. In a few days, steps were taken by the Rector, Rev. James Glass and congregation subscribed \$1200.00, and liberal subscriptions were made by many in this community and friends elsewhere. Just one year from the burning of the second church, the third was completed, a very neat brick church, insured this time, but we are again without a Rector and the congregation small, so many of our young people having moved away to get employment elsewhere.

In 1844, Theodore S. DuBose purchased a residence, Roseland, comfortably settled, three miles from Winnsboro, for the advantages of school and church, he also having a large family to educate, and many relations and friends to entertain during the summer months from the low country and Charleston. There they lived until 1862. In the midst of the War, he died of pneumonia with measles, and his wife two months later. There followed a breaking up of the family. The sons in the army, only daughters remained at home, and they removed to Winnsboro. The family are all gone, except two sons at Sewanee, Tenn.

During the War, quite a large number of refugees came up to Winnsboro from Charleston, most of them having relations or friends or acquaintances living here, and with only 2 or 3 exceptions were all members of the Episcopal Church. Most of them returning to their homes at the close of the War, a few having determined to remain and make this their future home, necessity compelling some to do so. In the four years of the War, several died, and with nothing to mark their resting place in the Episcopal Cemetery, will be very soon lost to memory, as well as to sight.

(This manuscript was given to me by my Mother on Sunday, March 17th, 1895. It was prepared for me at my request.) Signed H. A. G. (Henry Augustus Gaillard)

His Mother-Louisa Carolina DuBose (Mrs. David)

1837-1921