

PALMER HISTORY.

The first Palmer we know anything of was Thomas Palmer and it is supposed that he came first to Virginia and later migrated to South Carolina. In the records kept in Charleston, S.C. is an inventory of his estate dated April 17, 1733 and it shows he lived in St James' Parish, Berkeley County.

Thomas Palmer's wife was Sarah Saunders, daughter of Lambert Saunders who died in 1721.

(Copy of the original.* LOCAL ITEMS. Death of Hon. Edward Gendron Palmer.

Fairfield District lost one of her most worthy citizens in the death of Hon. Edward Gendron Palmer. The whole state will sympathize with her in this loss. Colonel Palmer died at his residence near Ridgeway at 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ O'clock A.M., 1867.

Mr. Palmer was born in St. Stephen's Parish, August 1800. He was the son of Thomas Palmer and descended from the Huguenots. At an early age he graduated in the South Carolina College in the class of 1817 and studied law for two years under Colonel Gregg, of Columbia, was admitted to the Bar, but never practiced, as he possessed an ample fortune.

In December, 1822, he married Miss Davis, a daughter of Dr. James Davis, of Columbia. Shortly after his marriage, Colonel Palmer moved to this District, which he in part represented in the Nullification Convention in 1832. This was the beginning of his career in public life. His life since then has been so identified with the interests of his adopted District and his State, that it is unnecessary to go into details of it here. He was the first president of the Charlotte and South Carolina Railroad Company, which position he filled for about nine years with a fidelity and energy much to the success and prosperity of the road. And it was only of his own request that he was relieved from that responsible post.

Having an ample fortune before it was destroyed in the common ruin that befell our District by Sherman's raid, it was in the more private walks of life that the character of Mr. Palmer was developed. He dispensed charity without stint. To him more than any one else, is awarded the chief credit for building up the Episcopal Church in Winnsboro, as well as the one in Ridgeway. (of which he was a member)

His sufferings were not protracted, as he, though complaining for several days, was confined to bed but two days.

To the family of the deceased we know we can safely extend the united sympathies of all our citizens.

" VALENCIA" CARRIES THE TRADITIONS OF THE OLD SOUTH.
(Copy of original)

"
History of the Palmer Family.

"Valencia" carries THE Tradition of The Old South.

Descendants live in house built by Edward Gendrom Palmer
First Low-Country Planter to Cometo Fairfield in 1824. Gay and
Good Times of Long Ago. A Beau Brummel's Parisian Clothes
taken by Yankees- Chirn Breakfast Set and Ball Dress Sur-
vive 100 Years- Ridgeway 107 feet higher than FlagPole of
Central Union Bank Building in Columbia.

By Fitz HughesMcMaster.

"This is to be a story of "Valentia", - not in Spain,
but in Fairfield County, South Carolina, not far from Ri-
dgeway.

It is quite the fashion now to write of the Old South
as the land of Myths, and make-believe and pretense.

Colonel John W. Thomason. Jr., of Texas and Washing-
ton, D.C., in writing "The Old South Myth", says in the dim
future men will whisper "Once down there to the south and
west, there was a fabulous country, where all the men we-
re valiant and all the women lovely, and the people went
singing at their toil. They had stately buildings with tall
white columns, and their ornaments were ivory and gold.
On them the sun shone through the day and the moon was
bright in thenight time and the birds made music".

Colonel Thomason destroys some of the myths, ,shows some
of the realities, and does say, "The pre-war society of the
South was in sober fact the most graceful, the most
cultivated, and the most attractive way of living this
hemisphere has seen."

CAN DREAM ABOUT "VALENCIA".

There is no myth about "Valencia. It was one of the real-
ities of "The Old South."

After hearing about it and seeing it, there comes
to mind a couplet:

"One dearest sight I have not seen--
It almost seems a wrong:
A dream I had when life was new,
Alas our dreams, they come not true;
I thought to see fair Carcassone."

Now I can dream ab out "Valencia" before the war. It was
no myth. It was a reality.

The records of 1800 show that 15 planters in the Southern
States owned 500 slaves or more. Eightt of these lived in
South Carolina. A much greater number owned between 300
and 500, but of these 72 lived in South Carolina and the
next ranking state was Louisiana with 20.

The master of "Valencia" was one of the 72 in South
Carolina, who owned between 300 and 500, and a few miles away
at "Peay's Folly" loved one of the eight in South Caroli-
na who owned over 500.

HISTORY OF THE PALMER FAMILY.

"The scent of roses" is still around "Valencia". The widow of Edward Gendron Palmer, 3d, whose grandfather built "Valencia" in 1834, is the mistress of the mansion, and while numerous family divisions and other causes have greatly reduced the holdings, still some 400 acres and more of the original 6,000 appertain to the ante-Confederate war home, and many of the original furnishings are to be found therein.

AT BLOOMDALE.

Early in 1824, Edward Gendron Palmer, 1st, of St. Stephen's Parish, Santee, Charleston District, having married Caroline, daughter of Dr. James Davis, of Columbia, was induced by his father-in-law to move from the low-country to Fairfield County. His account book, now extant, shows that in that first year he bought several tracts of land aggregating 1,742 acres, at an average price of \$8.77 an acre, near "New Lands" as Ridgeway was then called. His first holdings became known as "Bloomingdale" plantation on Dutchman's Creek. The situation proving unhealthy, one child dying while there, he bought lands nearer what is now Ridgeway, and in 1834, on a high hill built a home there.

James Davis, 2nd, brother of Mrs. Palmer, had just returned from extensive travels in Europe. The view which he saw from his sister's new home reminded him so much of a view he had from his hotel window in Valencia, Spain, that he suggested to his brother-in-law, Edward Gendron Palmer, that he name the home "Valencia", also fitting because it was high and healthful. Its height is not generally appreciated. The United States surveys show that the bench mark at the railroad station in Ridgeway, is 107 feet higher than the top of the flag staff on the Central Union Bank Building the highest material point in Columbia. The government surveys give Columbia an altitude above sealevel of 332, Winnsboro 545, and Ridgeway 626 feet.

The location of "Valencia" is so high, Liberty Hill, Great Falls, and other places 20 miles or more away may be seen. Every time a new street light is erected at Liberty Hill, it is noted at "Valencia".

Another evidence is that the well from which water is now drawn by an electric pump, originally by bucket and chain, is 139 feet deep, and "believe it or not" 124 feet of it is through limestone rock. It took seven years of intermittent blastings with black gunpowder to get through to water. And, strange to relate, the water for many years had strong limestone taste until the earthquake of 1886 when the water became clear with little taste.

The home is not one of the mystical "stately buildings with tall white columns". It is a two-story frame building, with large halls through the center, five rooms on the first floor and four on the second. At least two of the rooms, maybe others, are 22 feet by 22½ feet, with 11 foot ceilings.

The mantels are high, hand-carved wooden ones, and beneath them are deep, wide fireplaces where hickory and oak logs once crackled, and made beds of hot, red coals, doubtless before which a man and maid saw the future of their dream-lives.

Tasselled Cords.

In the drawing-room are yet the red and gold cornices above the windows, from which hung Brussels lace curtains with over-drapes of rich damask, held back by tasselled cords attached to brass rosettes.

On the floors in winter are carpets, with pile so high as to make the tread feel as if double thicknesses of velvet were beneath. In the summer Chinese matting replaced the carpets, and gave a freshness and cool sensation entirely lost to modern floor coverings.

Some of the mahogany furniture of colonial design still remains. One piece is a small table purchased by Col William C. Preston in Washington, which had been a table in Thomas Jefferson's study. On this table rests a bust of Colonel Preston, the workmanship of Powers or a contemporary. Amazing to relate when this bust came back from the North where it had been sent for a minor repair, it was painted black, and so it remains today.

Over a mantel formerly hung the portrait of Mrs. W.C. Preston, the sister of Mrs. Palmer and daughter of Dr. James Davis. On the walls were rare pictures and prints. Of these which remain are profiles of Napoleon I, and of Josephine and of sisters of Napoleon. These were brought from Paris by Edward Gendron Palmer, 2nd, who lived there for several years before the Confederate War, and who was presented at the court of Napoleon III.

In the flower garden, near the mansion, was the library, two large rooms on the first floor, and two bedrooms on the second for overflow company.

To the rear of the dwelling was the kitchen, dairy, smokehouse and servants quarters. At some distance were the "quarters" for the field hands and their families.

DR. James Davis.

It was in the master's room on the first floor that Dr. James Davis, father of Mrs. Palmer, and the first superintendent of what is now the State Hospital in Columbia, died. Dr. James Davis had a summer home on "Quinine Hill", which he named, now the home of James H. Hammond of Columbia.

It was in the library that Dr. John Ramsey Davis Palmer, second son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Gendron Palmer, 1st, loved with his bride, who was the daughter of Congressman *John Addison Woodward, while his father was having built for them their home on "Cedar Tree" plantation, several miles away on the road to Winnsboro.

An incident of the marriage of Edward Gendron Pal —

HISTORY OF THE PALMER FAMILY.

mer and Miss Caroline Davis, in 1822, was that the wedding breakfast a set of china was used which had been brought from China by a sea captain, a friend of Mrs. James Davis the mother of the bride. This set was bequeathed by Mrs. Davis to her namesake, Mrs. Katharine Ross Davis Gailliard, (Widow of Col. D.D. Gailliard) and about 100 years later, in 1924 about, was used at the wedding breakfast of her son, St Pierre DuBose Gailliard, and Miss Monica Blodgett, in Washington, D.C.

Another pleasing reminder of the happy days is found in the fact that the dress worn by Mrs. Palmer when she accompanied her sister, Mrs. Louise Penelope Davis (W.C.) at the opening of the Ponce de Leon Hotel, St. Augustine, Fla., in 1890, and again at the ball given in honor of President and Mrs. Coolidge at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C.

From Edward Gendron Palmer, 1st "Valencia" passed to his oldest son, Edward Gendron Palmer, 2nd, who was an invalid and never married. By some quip of good fortune, before the Confederate War he took his slaves to Florida and there sold them. Securely investing his fortune he went to Paris to live. Upon the breaking out of the war he returned home and was not permitted to pass through the army lines.

GAY Apparel.

He brought back with him from Paris, a full wardrobe of gay apparel, which pleased his fastidious taste, but which were lost to Sherman's soldiers in 1865.

To save his watch his father threw it into a cotton patch and there it remained for a number of years to be turned up one day by a negro plowing. It is now the property of N.W. Palmer.

It may be said if this fastidious Beau Brummel, who once practiced law in Winnsboro and edited the newspaper there for a short time, that when his Parisian wardrobe was appropriated by the Yankees he was not too proud to wear a suit made by his sister, Mrs. (COLL. Henry C. Davis, grandmother of Professor H.V. Davis of the University of South Carolina. She spun the wool and wove the cloth and made the suit.

It would make a newspaper story too long to tell the many interesting details of life at "Valencia" before the Civil War. Enough has been written to show that it was a true type of the best ante-Confederate War life.

And right happy it is that the traditions are maintained as far as they may be in accord with present day life. As stated it is now owned and occupied by the Widow of Edward Gendron Palmer, 3d, who with several of her children maintain the home.

THE HISTORY OF THE PALMER Family.

It is not amiss to mention that somewhat in line of late progress a herd of Devon cattle has been bred here for the last 46 years. From it have been sold breeding animals in every southern state from Virginia to Louisiana. Only recently ten animals were sold to the agriculture department of Florida. Fine horses are still bred and despite untoward agricultural conditions a delightful southern home is still maintained.

Edward Gendron Palmer .4th, lives in his own home not far away and plants his own lands near the lands which his great-grandfather planted 100 years ago.

The Palmer family which recently held a family reunion at Springfield Plantation, near Rutawville, Berkeley County, is of the same stock as the Palmer family of "Valencia," but no immediate connection.

"I have seen fair Carcassone".

--
(From Susie Palmer Ruff.)

I should like to add that the herd of Devon cattle mentioned in the enclosed article, was the first Federal accredited herd of registered Devon cattle in the United States.

The cabinet of trophies and ribbons won in the last three years will attest to the fact that there is still fine horses at Valencia.

There has been no division of the property since the death of Edward H Palmer, III. It belongs to his six children and is managed by his three sons, Edward Gendron Palmer, IV., Lucien Kirk, and Berkeley Marion Palmer. The last two named brothers reside in "Valencia" house.

(The other children are: Mrs. D.W. Ruff- Susie, Mrs. James G. Bradley-Minna. Miss Harriett Palmer.)

(*** This is a mistake. Insert Joseph Addison Woodward (whose father, William Woodward, son of the "Regulator", was Congressman and Christian minister)