



**LONG AGO
AT
LIBERTY HILL
An Historical Sketch**

by
Mary Ellen Cunningham

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By

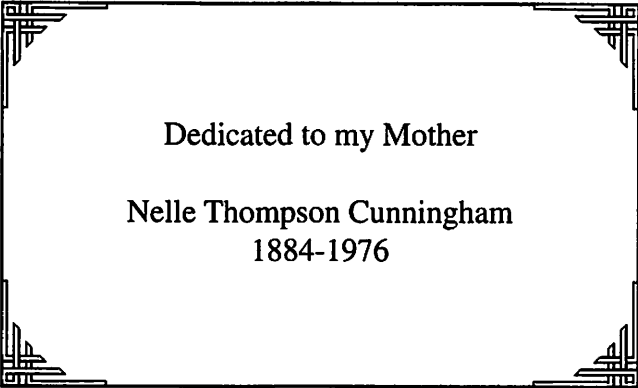
Mary Ellen Cunningham

Liberty Hill, SC

Printed

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Camden, SC



Dedicated to my Mother

Nelle Thompson Cunningham
1884-1976

INTRODUCTION

In books lies the soul of the whole
Past Time: The articulate audible
voice of The Past, when the body
and material substance of it
has altogether vanished like
a dream.

Thomas Carlyle
(1795 - 1881)

There was history to be preserved before it was lost forever. The burning desire to put together the many stories and facts grew stronger so with undaunted courage I venture to write this story of Liberty Hill. I do not claim in any way to be a writer.

This has been a labor of love for those who lived at Liberty Hill long ago, and for their descendants; those living there today, and all newcomers, who have come to live on "The Hill" and on nearby Lake Wateree. I have tried in some small way to preserve some of the history of this unique place known as Liberty Hill.

Situated in the northwest corner of Kershaw County in the foothills of the piedmont, Liberty Hill had its beginning in the early years of the 19th century. The large plantation owners of the surrounding area envisioned the need for a neighborhood with a church and school connections. They divided this section known as Liberty Hill into home tracts, built big houses and moved their families from their plantations. Thus Liberty Hill came into existence as a thriving community.

For over half a century it was a wealthy, prosperous growing community, its hospitality known far and wide. This was not to last, as

the Civil War came with its devastation, loss and drastic change. Liberty Hill recovered slowly, never to regain its wealth, but never to lose its sense of values or integrity. It is a small community with a rich history.

The facts for this book were put together from records preserved by Nelle T. Cunningham, interviews with many people, young and old; letters, documents, pictures gathered from friends and relatives; and from research and the recollection of the writer who lived during some of the years this history was taking place.

This book is dedicated to my mother who left a valuable collection of notes and articles marked "keep this", "save", and "see inside - very important". The book is yours now. I hope it will bring delightful reading to those of you interested in the history of Liberty Hill. May God bless you one and all.

We lived in a world of stars
at night, on our hill top;
About us for miles was
the splendid darkness
and silence.

Mary Ellen Cunningham

1997

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

It is impossible to name all who so willingly contributed information and pictures to make this book possible. I thank you one and all with deep appreciation. To McCleery B. Cunningham, Robert M. Campbell, Jr., Charles A. Robinson III, thank you for the articles. Kershaw County Historical Society for use of material from History and Homes of Liberty Hill, South Carolina by Louise Johnston, and Bell Studios, Lancaster, SC for assistance with pictures. I thank you. To Midland's Printing, Inc., Camden, SC, I give hearty thanks for professional assistance and advice.

Last but not least to my friend Mary Ann Wade, I am indebted beyond measure for the many hours spent preparing this manuscript. Always patient, kind and gentle through all the frustrations we endured together it is with heartfelt gratitude and deep appreciation, I give you thanks.

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MAPS

Liberty Hill 1875-1938

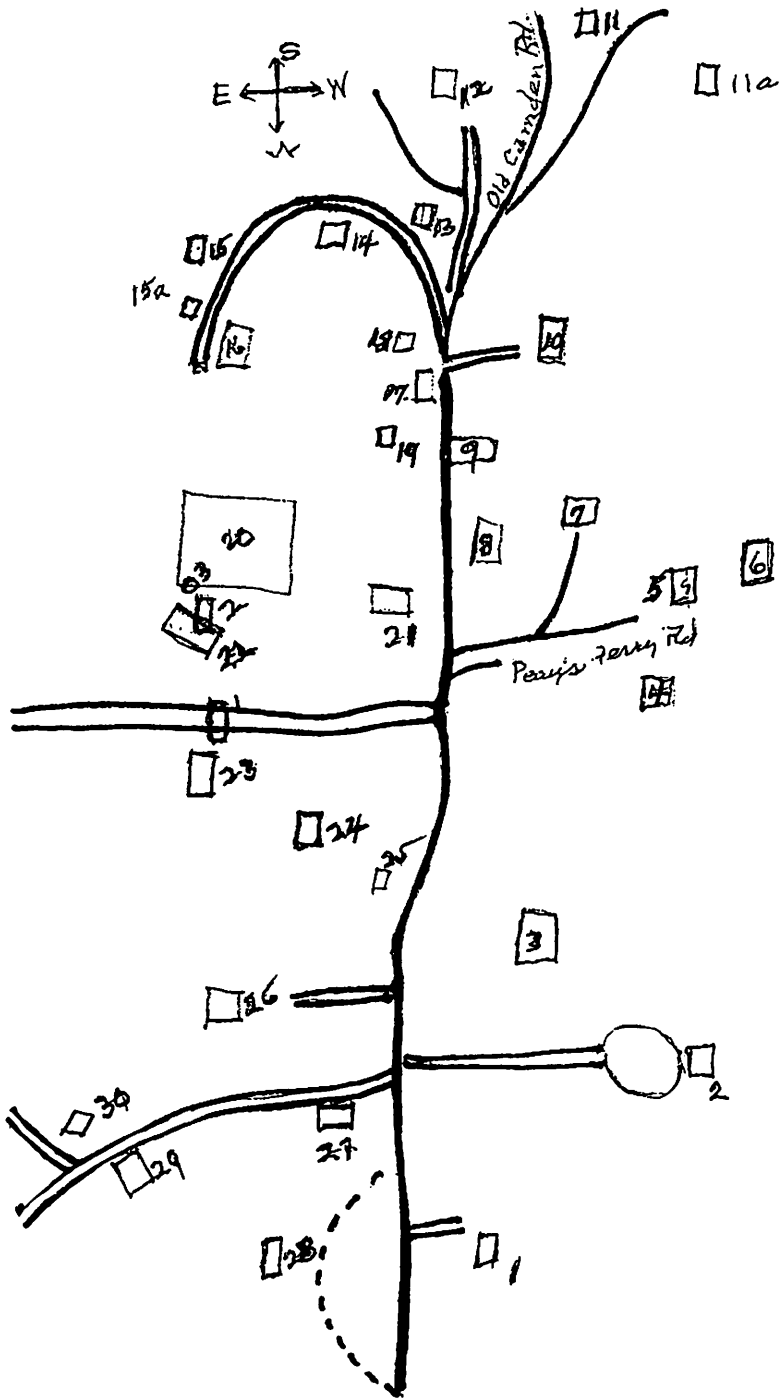
Liberty Hill 1996

Liberty Hill Stores 1813-1938

Liberty Hill 1875-1938

1. J. S. Thompson - now L.P.T
2. R. B. Cunningham - now C.D.C.
3. L. J. Patterson
4. Lewis Thompson - now Richards
5. Ed Jones
6. Parsonage
7. Patterson's Mill
8. W. K. Thompson - now Mackey Jones Co.
9. Mackey-Jones Store original Ned Brace
10. John Brown - now R. C. Jones
11. William Dixon - now Hilton
- 11a. Matheson
12. R. B. Patterson - now J. B. Johnston
13. Store - Richards Brothers
14. N.S. Richards
15. Abe Jones - now McCrae
- 15a. F. J. Hay
16. W. C. Cunningham - now J. G. Richards
17. Perry & Brown Store - now Clements
18. Wm Brown - now John Clements
19. Jordon Lane
20. Cemetery
21. Richards Store
22. New Church
23. New School (1908)
24. Wm. Johnson - now C. D. Cunningham
25. Dr.'s Office - then P.O. now Library
26. Wyatt Patterson - now Wardlow
27. Grange Hall - now Higgins
28. J. W. Floyd
29. J. L. Jones - now Selwyn Cunningham
30. Gilbert House
1. - Position of Old Church
2. - Position of Old Log School House
3. - Position of Little Bell Tower

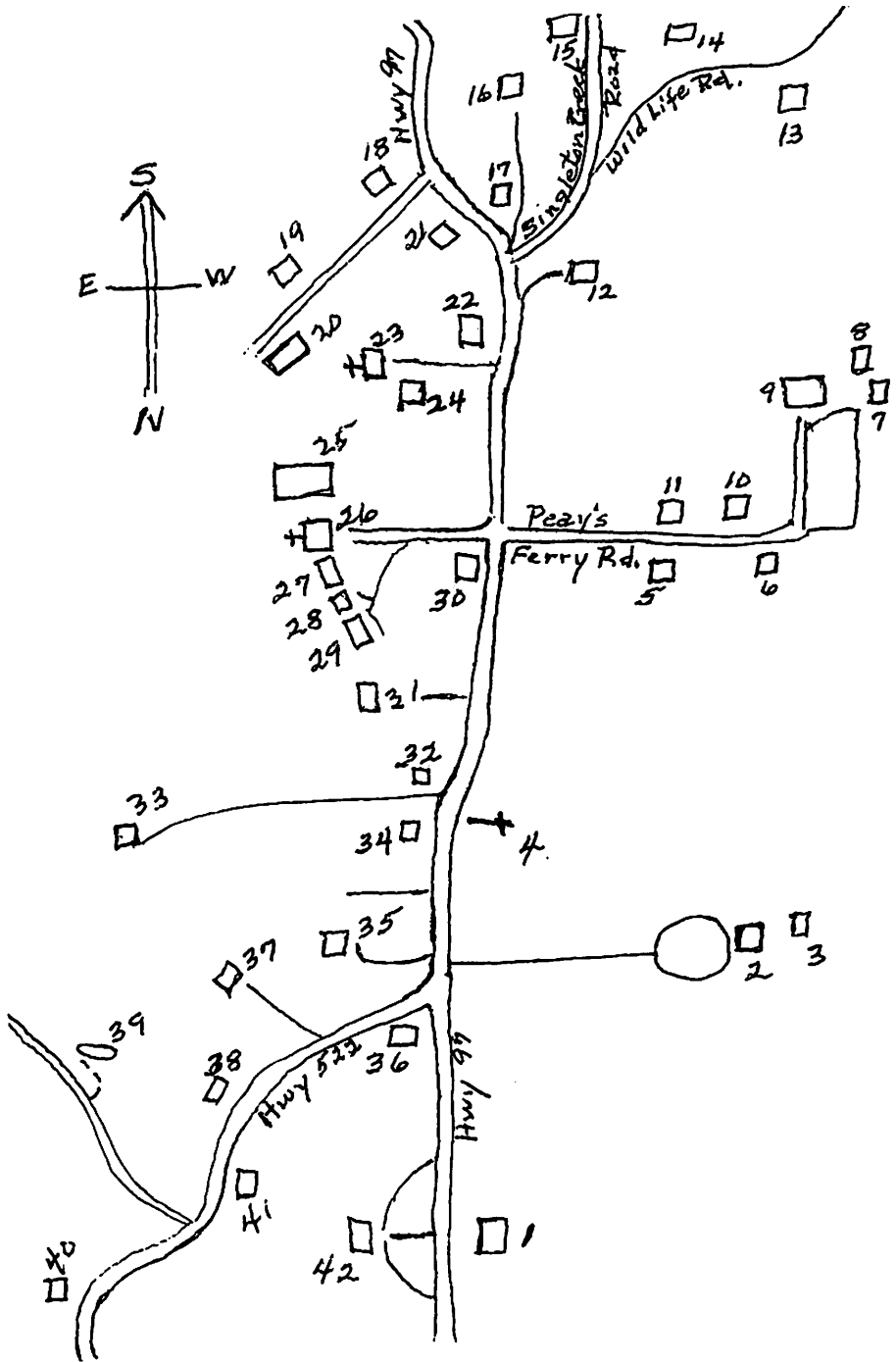
Liberty Hill 1875-1938



Liberty Hill 1996

1. John A. Thompson, Jr.
2. Sarah C. Eskridge
3. Mary E. Cunningham
4. Liberty Hill Fire Tower
5. Ted & Shelma Brunson
6. Mae Canty
7. Polly Doby
8. Richard & Robert Mae Catoe
9. The Community Center
10. Dean Murphy
11. Drennan Jones
12. Dean Murphy
13. Jim & Sylvia Hudson
14. Richard & Doris Van Ooyan
15. Frank K. Babbitt
16. Al & Mary Jane Dingle
17. U S Post Office
18. Rock & Lida Savage
19. Theodore Marion & Catherine
Mitchel DuBose IV
20. Jim & Jill Rose
21. David & Andrea Williams
22. Bill & Pam Corbett
23. Messiah Presbyterian Church
24. Masonic Lodge
25. Liberty Hill Presbyterian
Cemetery
26. Liberty Hill Presbyterian
Church
27. Fellowship Building
28. Pastor's Office
29. Manse
30. Old Store & Post Office
31. Robert C. Richards, Jr.
32. The Little Office
33. Jerry & Linda Cauthen
34. Patricia Taylor
35. Shirley Williams
36. Mr. & Mrs. James McDonald
37. R. D. & Frances Williams
38. Jack Jones
39. Indian Mortar Rock
40. Robert Lee & Doris Thompson
41. Donna K. Smith & Don Kidd
42. Bob & Pati Deaton

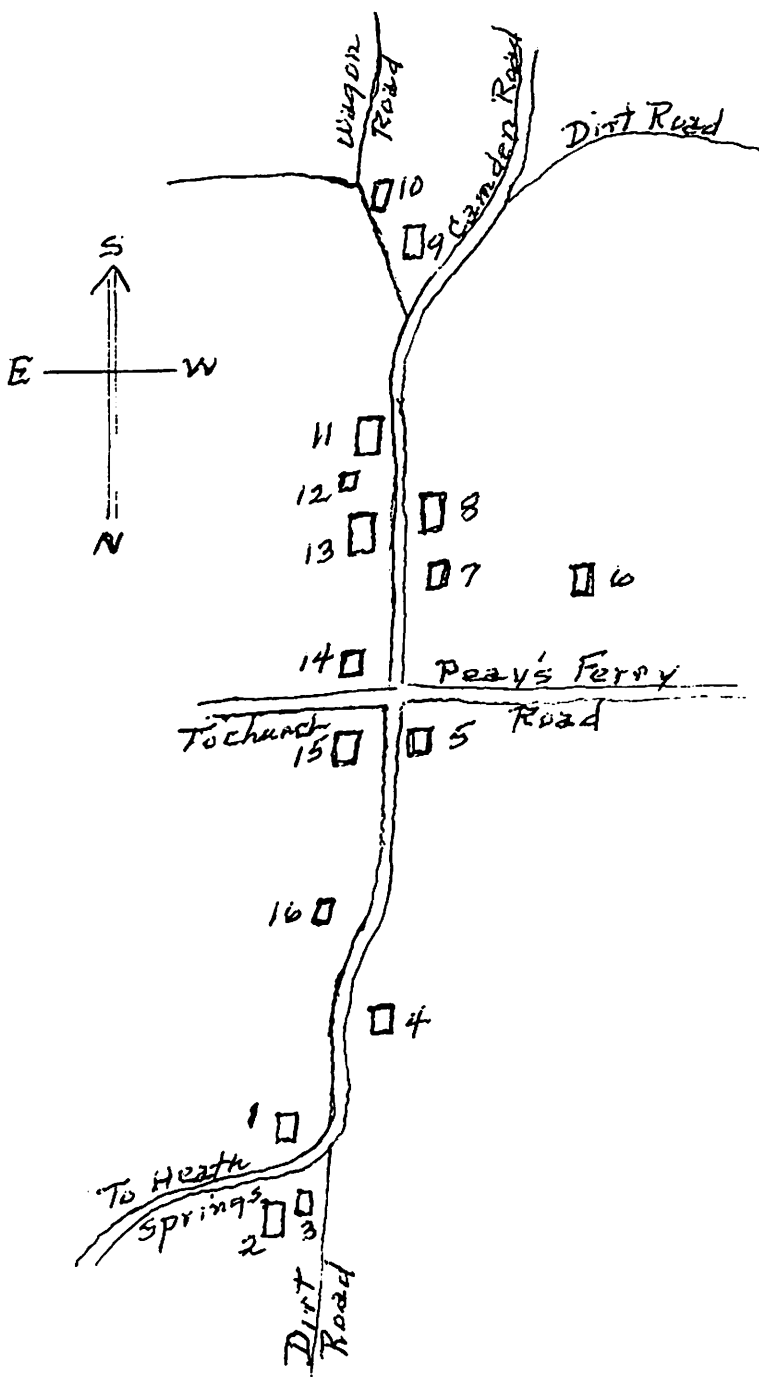
Liberty Hill 1996



Liberty Hill Stores 1813 - 1938

1. Peter Garlick Store
2. The Grange Hall
3. Higgin's General Store
4. Wyatt Patterson Store & Post Office
5. Wardlaw Service Station
6. R. J. Patterson Mill
7. Ned Brace Tailor's Shop
8. Mackey-Jones Company
9. Richards Brothers
10. Richards Company
11. John Brown Store & Harness Shop
12. Jordan Lane Blacksmith
13. Mackey-Jones Company Gin & Grist Mill
14. Rev. J. G. Richards Store
15. C. D. Cunningham Store & Post Office
16. Doctor's Office (The Little Office)

Liberty Hill Stores 1813-1938



THE GILBERT HOUSE

This house was so called as it was at one time occupied by a family by the name of Gilbert. It was located on the Wyatt and Mary C. Patterson property, just beyond the John Jones house on the right side of the road to Stoneboro, now Highway 522. (1)

Joseph R. Gilbert and his wife Ellen came from Adams Run near Charleston and settled at Liberty Hill some time before the Civil War. They came here probably because Ellen Gilbert was a devoted friend of Aurelia Patterson, the daughter of Wyatt and Mary Patterson. (2)

Mr. Gilbert's name appeared on The Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church records for the years 1851-1868. Mr. Gilbert had an exceptionally fine vineyard which he tended. Church records indicate that wine was purchased from him to be used for communion. One such purchase entered April 16, 1863 - Joseph R. Gilbert \$9.50 - wine. pd.. (3). Mr. Gilbert was also a taxidermist and displayed many stuffed animals and birds in glass showcases located in the hallway of his home. It was said the walls in his house were plastered, indicating it was well built. (4)

In later years Mrs. John Jones, a friend and neighbor of the Gilberts, had in her possession a lovely arrangement of bird eggs attached skillfully to the twigs of a small tree limb and placed under a glass dome for protection. No doubt this unique arrangement was one of Mr. Gilbert's works of art.

Miss Rebecca Cunningham, known fondly as "Miss Pet", who married Mr. Louis Perry, acquired a homemade hickory chair that once belonged to Mr. Gilbert. It was said that he had also made his own coffin and kept it under the house. Very small children were afraid to go there to visit.

After living at Liberty Hill for a number of years the Gilberts moved back to Adams Run. No further information is know concerning this family. The house was destroyed by fire in the early 1920s.

THE BRACE HOUSE AND TAILOR SHOP

Mr. Ned Brace was a tailor by trade and he and his wife, Jane, lived in a house which stood where, at one time the Mackey Jones Company store was located, this being on the main road through Liberty Hill, south of Peay's Ferry Road. The shop was located on the first floor of the house. (1)

The family lived above the shop. Mr. and Mrs. Brace had two children, a boy and a girl. The daughter married a Mr. Hutchinson and they had one son who lived on Rich Hill on The Wateree River. He died there about 1947 and was buried at New Hope Baptist Church near Mr. Jim Cauthen's in Lancaster county. Mrs. Hutchinson had a marker put to her Mother's grave located in the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Cemetery. The marker reads: To the Memory of Jane R. Brace, Died October 8, 1880, Aged 77 years. It is said before Mrs. Braces' death she became somewhat feeble-minded. After her death it is supposed that Mr. Brace moved away from Liberty Hill.

Mary Ellen Small, wife of Robert B. Cunningham, and Jane Brace were very good friends. In later years when Charles Cunningham, the youngest son of Mary and Robert Cunningham was a young boy, he said it seemed that "All his boyhood days his Mother had him clear off Mrs. Braces' grave." It is almost uncanny that Charles Cunningham was buried in a plot adjoining the plot where Mrs. Brace is buried. (2)

The son Tom Brace was crippled from a club foot so did not serve in the Confederate Army. Sherman's Army was camped at Liberty Hill for nine days, February 22 - March 2, 1865, when on their march through South Carolina after burning Columbia. They took Tom Brace from his home, and not withstanding his old father and mother's pleading, they

compelled him to walk so far that he was taken sick and died about twenty miles from his home. He is buried beside his mother in the Liberty Hill Cemetery.

Pat Thompson said he remembered as a boy Mr. Brace having long white hair. He also remembered there were several fierce dogs which were kept penned under the shop and that the dogs would growl and bark at the young boys looking at them through the cracks or whenever they were passing by the shop.

At one time W. K. Thompson and Lewis C. Thompson, brothers, had a general store in the old Brace House. Mr. Darl George was the clerk.

THE CUNNINGHAM HOME PLACE

At the time in the early part of the 1800s when Liberty Hill was just beginning to come into existence as a small village, John Stover Cunningham, grandson of Arthur Cunningham, bought a tract of land of 165 acres. It was located in the upper part of Liberty Hill on the westside of Hwy 97, between the home tracts of James S. Thompson on the northside and Col. Lewis J. Patterson on the southside. (1)

The original house built by John S. Cunningham in the early 1800s was of the same plan as the John Brown house. It was three story, with the porches both up and down being only across the front. This home place originally had a square front yard.

After the death of John Cunningham, in 1851, his estate was sold for division and his younger brother Robert B. Cunningham bought the property. At that time Robert was living on a large 2600 acre plantation located on Cedar Creek in Lancaster County, five miles north of Liberty Hill.

Robert made some improvements to the large three story, twelve room house by adding wide porches with columns across the front on the main floor and upstairs and extending the porches the full length on both sides of the house. Steps at each end led from the first floor to the ground. The two bottom steps were granite.



Front Walk with Gardenia Hedge

These steps are still in the original location today.

Extensive land scaping was done to the front yard, changing the one or more acre square yard into a large circle. All this was filled in with dirt, hauled in. The circle was divided in half



Front Gate and Walk

by a ten foot wide terraced walkway leading from the house to the entrance gate. A hedge of gardenias lined the walkway on each side. The gardenia plants were rooted in the pond branch located down the hill on the north side of the yard. In the center of each half-circle a small summerhouse was built of granite posts with heavy strands of wire between the posts. Yellow jasmine vines covered the summerhouses providing shade. Around each house there were flower beds in the shape of four sided diamonds.

The driveway approached the house down a long avenue of Cherokee roses growing along the three strand, heavy wire fence supported by granite posts. The drive entered the yard through a gate, flanked on each side by massive granite posts, each capped with an



The Circle Driveway and Yard Fence

artistically shaped cap stone. The circular drive, lined with granite, led up to the house from both sides. The drive way is in use today, however it is rather narrow for the present mode of transportation, which is far different from the

horse-drawn buggy, carriage or coaches coming 'round the drive in the early 1800s.

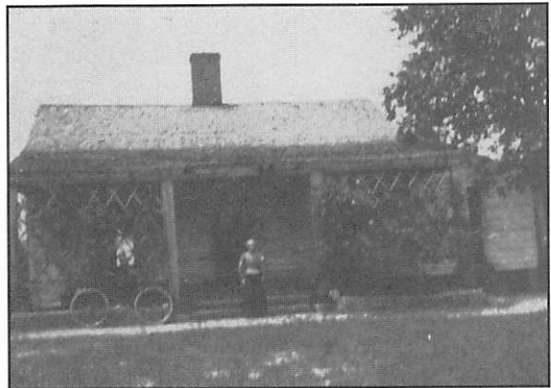
The spacious yard was enclosed by a wooden panel fence made of

heart pine. The pickets were mortised through a one inch square hole through the three cross rails. The ends of the three rails rested on iron pegs in the granite post. The bottom rail of each panel rested on a granite slab, so none of the fence came in contact with the ground. Not a nail was used in construction of the fence! This fence enclosed the front yard from the entrance gate to the two small side gates, one on each side of the yard, and opposite each summerhouse.

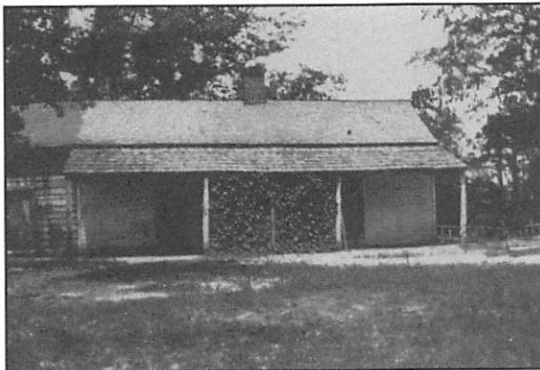
Construction of the fence was interrupted by the Civil War, 1861-1865. After the war the fence was completed from each side gate to the lot on the north side and to the garden and orchard gate on the southside. Square wooden post were used instead of the granite, these were of solid pine and the three rails were mortised into them. Approximately one third of this fence near the front entrance is still standing today.

The large twelve room house is thought to have been burned by stragglers of Sherman's army, after the troops had camped in and around Liberty Hill for nine days. The members of the family barely escaped as the doors and windows were locked.

Buildings located in the back yard and not destroyed were the cook's house with a large kitchen attached, the carriage driver's house, the well, the dry well or cellar with storage room, and the two-story smokehouse.

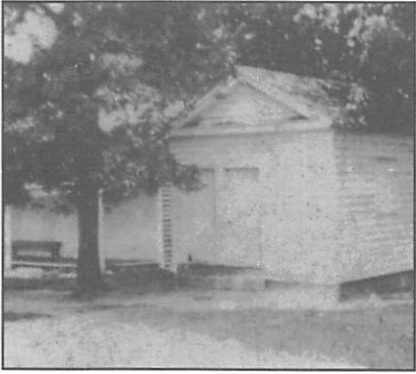


The Cook's House



The Carriage Driver's House

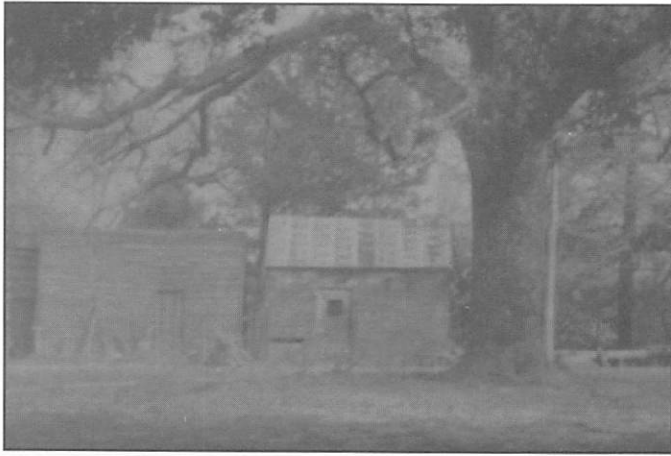
Located in the lot was the big double door carriage house. It was not destroyed, but the Yankee soldiers took the carriage and pushed it down the ravine nearby, completely demolishing it. After the big house was burned the family then occupied



The Drywell and Storage Room



The Old Well



Woodshed and Old Kitchen - now The Shop



Small Corn Barn and Old Carriage House

the houses formerly used by the cook and carriage driver.

The two-story smokehouse was nearby. A floor was put in the upper half, with stairs and a small porch added at the front. This upstairs room was used as a bedroom by the sons of the family when they were growing up, and as a guest room in later years.

Robert Cunningham II died in 1888 and the home place was kept as an estate by his heirs until 1925, when by division, it became the property of Charles D. Cunningham, youngest son of Robert and Mary Ellen Small Cunningham.

Charles D. Cunningham and Nelle Thompson were married on October 24, 1912. They first lived in Rock Hill, S.C. where Charles Cunningham worked and then owned his own grocery store, the last being, C. D. Cunningham Groceries - "Good Things To Eat." Mary and Sarah, twins, were born



Dad and Mother



Charles and Rollo

in Rock Hill before the family moved to Liberty Hill in November 1917. They lived in the three room house that was the cook's house and was formerly used by the Cunningham family, after the big house was burned in

1865. Charles Dunlap Cunningham, Jr. was born in this house in 1919.

After the division of the property in 1925, Charles Cunningham had the cook's house and the carriage driver's house moved up onto the old foundation where the big house once stood. A hallway was built between with a bedroom and bath added on one side, and a kitchen on the other side. A back porch, a side and front porch were added. The work was done by a black carpenter, Sam Levy from Camden for the sum of \$2000 dollars. The seven room comfortable house was completed in October 1925.



The Cunningham Home

When the old foundation was being prepared for the new house a small coffee cup and porcelain jewelry box were found among the old bricks and rubble. Altho blackened from the fire the cup is in perfect condition.



Porcelain China Cup and Jewelry Box

While the above house was being built the Cunningham family lived in the two-story smokehouse, with the bedroom

upstairs and the dining room and kitchen on the first floor. The cooking was done on a four burner oil store. There were no screens in the windows or doors. It was an extremely hot summer.

With the division of the original 165 acres in 1987, twenty three acres and the home place went to Sarah C. Eskridge; Mary E. Cunningham received the middle section of fifty-five acres; and Charles



Sarah and Mary with Spups bringing water from the Spring

D. Cunningham, Jr. the back section of eighty-five acres, and also two acres on the front section, at the northeast corner on Hwy 97. None of the property is to be sold without the consent of all parties.

The drywell or cellar, and storage room, the two-story smokehouse, the old well, the carriage house, the old kitchen and several barns are still standing (1996). Even the little garden-house (a five hole toilet, three for grownups and two for children) is still in its original location at the back edge of what once was the big garden. The original well, which is 40 feet deep and lined from top to bottom with granite, still has water although it hasn't been used since about 1936 or 1937, when a new well was drilled. For many years all drinking water had to be brought from the spring. This spring is still flowing freely. The new well is 100 feet deep, being fifty feet in dirt and fifty feet in granite rock. It supplies plenty of water at all times.

In 1976 after 30 years with the FBI in Washington, DC, Mary E. Cunningham retired and returned to her old home, Liberty Hill to live. Mary resides in the back yard at the old home place in the old two-story smokehouse. In 1980 the smokehouse was made into a very comfortable apartment, with kitchen and dining area and bath downstairs; and steps leading upstairs to a large bedroom and half bath. In 1989, a large living room was added at the back on the first floor. In winter a small wood stove is used to heat this unique, comfortable living quarters. All who see it fall in love with it. Do you blame them!!!



The Smokehouse - Home of Mary E. Cunningham

THE THOMPSON HOME (1) THE COLUMNS

James Shropshire Thompson (1815-1897) was born at what is now known as the Brewer Place in the Flatrock Township, on the headwaters of Beaver Creek, about nine miles east of Liberty Hill. He married Charlotte Patterson (1816-1890), who was born a few miles nearer Liberty Hill, but also across Beaver Creek.

James S. Thompson may have secured land from his wife's relatives as it is said the Pattersons owned land in the upper part of Liberty Hill. James Thompson acquired the track of land at the time plantation owners were building houses and moving their families to Liberty Hill in order to be nearer a school and church. This land was bounded on the southside by lands of Robert Brown Cunningham.

Before moving his family, Mr. Thompson first built a large four room house with front and back porches, and also a two-room kitchen a short distance north of this house. These two buildings were located in what would become the backyard of the Big House. The family occupied the four room dwelling while the Big House was being built. This family was a large one, as there were six children born on the big plantation on Beaver Creek, the ages ranging from fifteen years to one year. The one year old, John born in 1850, may have been born at Liberty Hill as 1850 was the year the family moved there. Two of the children, Marnie, 1852, and James Ross, 1854, were born in the four-room house.

The large antebellum type house was built by slaves. It took four years for it to be completed, 1850-1854. The architect was Robert Hamilton a noted master builder at that time. The house is a large square building with large fluted columns across the front and back porches. It

is three stories as there is a cellar under the house on the ground floor and also a finished room known as the ironing room. From this room a stairway leads up to the second floor to enter the back hall, under the main stairway.

A small portico is at the top of the stairs of the front porch. It is flanked on each side by four large fluted columns. Upon entering the house from the porch through big double doors, there is a wide hall. On the left is the drawing room or parlor, entered through a large rolling or pocket door which runs on a brass track. Behind this room is a small bedroom. Both rooms are heated by fire places. On the right of the hall is the spacious dining room, also entered through a large rolling door to match the one leading to the parlor. Behind the dining room is a



The Front Door Knocker



The Thompson Home

large bedroom with an adjoining room, first used as a nursery. A chimney is between the dining room and the bedroom with fireplace in each room. The nursery has a separate chimney and fireplace. Mantels at all the fireplaces on the main floor are of cast iron.

The ceilings in the hall, parlor, dining room and bedrooms on the main floor are thirteen feet, and the double windows in each room reach from ceiling to the floor. All windows have heavy weights which aid in raising the large sashes. Also all the windows have double green shutters on the outside.

The room next to the dining room was originally the Butler's pantry and a Lock pantry. Because of the danger of fire, long ago the meals were prepared in the kitchen located some distance from the house, and brought to the Butler's pantry, and from there they were served. The china and serving dishes along with glasses and goblets were kept in a large closet in the Butler's pantry.

By 1890 the original kitchen in the back yard was no longer used. The backroom that was originally the nursery was made into a kitchen as that had a chimney and fireplace. By that time woodstoves were used for cooking. It wasn't until the mid-1920s that the kitchen was moved again to its present location, the Butler's pantry just off the dining room. The big china cabinet which was in the original pantry was used in the new kitchen.

In the backhall is the semi-circular stairway with a solid mahogany handrail and newel post. This stairway of twenty seven steps leads to the third floor hall and four large upstairs bedrooms. Unlike the windows on the main floor the windows in these rooms do not reach all the way to the floor.

The large front yard was originally enclosed by a paling board fence constructed with a flat surface on the top, and each panel placed between granite posts. Entrance into the front yard was through a double wrought iron gate supported by two massive granite posts. The gate was locked with a large block lock and key. The gate and posts are still standing, although this



Charlotte and Nelle On The Front Yard Fence

entrance is no longer used. Several beautiful holly trees and the remains of an English boxwood still adorn the spacious front yard.

Located back of the house were stables, a smokehouse, the chicken house, the old four room house (used later as a barn), the old two room kitchen and a dug well. All these buildings have disappeared, as some were torn down and the timbers used for other purposes. The first dug well, which was near the smokehouse had to be abandoned because salt seeped into the water. (Meat at that time was cured with salt.) A second well was dug and used until a third well was drilled nearer the house. At the present, water is supplied by Cassatt Water Company. North of the house was a large garden. There were also many fruit trees, including fig trees and a large scuppernong arbor.

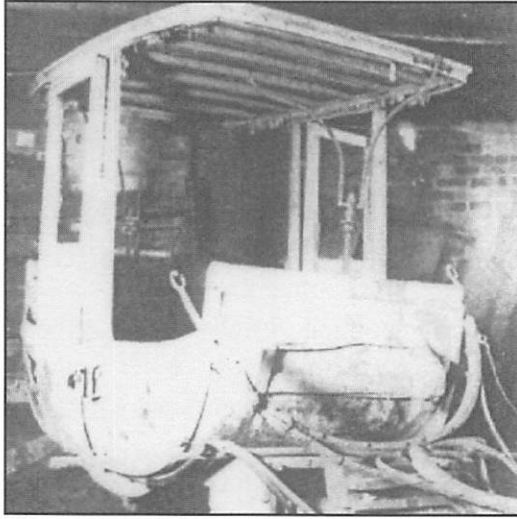
Mr. James S. Thompson was too old to serve in the war, 1861-1865, but he traveled around the country collecting food and supplies for the Confederate Army. One day he was riding home and was wearing a pair of new boots, when some Yankee soldiers stopped him, took his boots and watch and left him to go home bare-footed.



The Front Entrance Gate

For over a hundred years and resting in the same place, on the ground floor of the Thompson home, is the Thompson's carriage. It was a wedding present to James Thompson and his wife Charlotte when they were married in 1835. While the Yankees were camped at Liberty Hill they took the carriage from the home, and later when found all the wheels were missing, and all the windows were broken as well as other damage. The carriage was brought back to the house but it could not be used again. It continues to be a silent reminder of days past. (2)

The big house and surrounding property has passed down through the succession of generations of James Shropshire Thompson: William Kilgore Thompson, Lewis Patterson (Pat) Thompson, John Anderson Thompson, John Anderson Thompson, Jr.. At the present John, Jr. and



The Old Carriage

his wife V.V. and their two sons, John III and James, are living in the big house. These two sons are the sixth generation to live in the ancestral Thompson home.

The late afternoon view from an upstairs room or from the back porch of this beautiful home is breath taking. To watch the changing clouds and see the setting sun sink below the horizon is beyond words. It is hoped that many more generations will enjoy the works of "The Master Painter".

Published in The Camden
Chronicle or The waterree
Messenger
About 1902-1904

A Very Sad Death of a Faithful Servant.

Violet Collins, who lived on the Thompson plantation near Liberty Hill, had been sick for some time, but not confined to her bed all the time, was left in her house on last Monday morning, the 9th inst., by her husband and daughter after giving her breakfast. About 11 o'clock of same morning, her body was found lying on her floor, midway between the fire place and bed fearfully burnt, her clothes all burnt off and she dead. Trial Justice R. C. Jones, acting coroner, held an inquest, and the jury found to the best of their belief, that she was accidently burnt, which caused death. Violet as a slave, belonged to Mr. Jas. S. Thompson, and was always a faithful hand and was a great favorite with Mr. Thompson and she was devoted to him and his children. Since the death of Mr. J. S. Thompson in 1897, Mr W. K. Thompson and his family have taken special care of aunt Violet and her husband, Antony, she being perfectly devoted to Mr. Thompson's wife and children and they to her, and her untimely and sad death cast a gloom over all of them and over the community in which she lived. She was probably something over 70 years old though well preserved, and a very active, energetic woman, walking 4 1-2 miles to home of Mr. Thompson, working for Mrs. Thompson in any way she wished and then walking back home as sprightly as a young person. Only Saturday before she died, she told Mr. and Mrs. Thompson that she was ready when it was the Lord's will. She was buried on Tuesday in the colored people's graveyard on the old Patterson plantation, Thus passed away a faithful and devoted servant and an honest, good Christian woman. "Peace to her ashes." Her aged husband has the sympathy of all, and especially of the Thompson Family.

THE GRANGE HALL

The National Grange or Patrons of Husbandry was the first general farmers organization in America. Membership consisted of men, women and children interested in agriculture and rural development. In 1866 Oliver H. Kelly from Minnesota, an employee of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, came to the South on official business. His observation on this trip impressed him with the need of a general farmers organization that would unite all farm people and bring them together in regular meetings. The National Grange was formally organized December 4, 1867 at a meeting in Washington, D. C. The first State Grange was instituted in Minnesota in 1869 and by 1873 this farmers organization had become fairly well established in all states of the Union except four. (1)

A local chapter of The National Grange, known as The Grange, was soon organized at Liberty Hill and monthly meetings were attended by farmers of the surrounding plantations. The Grange Hall at Liberty Hill was built sometime probably between 1869-1880 on about 3/4 acre of land owned by Col. Lewis J. Patterson. The original building located at the intersection of South Carolina Hwy 522 and Hwy 97 was a large structure comprised of one big room used as an auditorium. At one end of this room was a big fireplace wide enough that four-foot length logs could be used on the fire. Small doors on each side of the big chimney led into the two small dressing rooms. These were used by actors or players, as at times a stage was set up for plays and other types of entertainment. At the opposite end of the large room from the fireplace there were two medium size rooms, one being the kitchen and the other a dining room. The china for serving the meals was stacked on shelves along the wall in the dining room.



The Grange Hall

Many Grange conventions were held at the Liberty Hill Grange Hall. Visitors of note came from various sections of South Carolina and many sections of the United States to lead discussions relating to farming. Hot dinners were served at these meetings. The food for these dinners was prepared by the black cooks at the homes of members and friends and brought to the Grange Hall to be served. In hot weather the dinner was served on long tables set up under the big oak trees in the yard. Visitors enjoyed and praised the delicious food served at these conventions.

W. K. Thompson of Liberty Hill was very active in The National Grange from its early inception. His uncle John R. Thompson, a direct descendant of Adam Thompson, who came to this country from Ireland and landed in Charleston December 1767, was one of the group of men known as "The Seven Founders of The Grange". W. K. Thompson served in many capacities over a period of about 30 years. In about 1880, he was elected Master of The South Carolina State Grange. One of his duties was to establish a Grange organization in each district. He was very successful and his reward was a paid trip to a meeting of The National Grange, which was held each Fall in a different city in the United States. (2)

By late 1890s interest declined in The Grange organization and the

meetings were discontinued. The Grange Hall property was returned to the Patterson estate. Later it was owned by W. K. Thompson, a nephew of Col. Lewis J. Patterson. This did not mean the Grange Hall was not put to good use. W. K. Thompson rented the building and over the years, at different times, it was used as a general store operated by the following individuals: Walker Floyd and Henry Hunter; W. K. Thompson and Dr. J. P. Richards; Jim Cureton and Jack Whitaker; and Hilton and Barber. (3)

Sometime about 1898 The Grange Hall was used as a Bachelor Quarters by James W. Thompson and Rob Wardlaw who were cousins. Dr. J. P. Richards taught school there. Also while the present Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church was being built (1879-1880) services were held at the Grange Hall.

In 1907, W. K. Thompson sold the property to Mr. Robert B. Johnson of Camden, who turned it into a summer residence and hunting lodge. Mary Johnson, daughter of Robert B. Johnson and fondly known as Duster, married Dan Jones of Lancaster. They lived there for several years then were followed by Mr. Frank G. Perry and sons who bought the property from Mr. Johnson. Other families who resided at the Grange Hall were Mr. & Mrs. J. H. Small and then Mr. & Mrs. Clyburn Perry and family. Mr. & Mrs. Henry Smith Higgins and family purchased the property from the Frank G. Perry estate in 1925. The original Grange Hall was extensively remodeled, several rooms were added with a porch on the front and side, thus changing the appearance of the original structure. This property has changed ownership several times since 1965. (4)

The following are recollections of Nelle Thompson Cunningham, youngest daughter of W. K. Thompson:

(1) "When Mr. Thompson was elected Master of The South Carolina State Grange one of his duties was to establish a Grange in each district. His reward was a paid trip in the early fall to a meeting of The National Grange. He was permitted to be accompanied by his wife, Sallie Whitaker Thompson, if he paid for her train ticket. Mr. and Mrs. Thompson enjoyed a trip to the following cities: Washington, D.C. twice; Portland, OR; Sacramento, CA; Lansing, MI; Concord, NH and Tacoma, WA. On these trips the Thompsens were gone from home three or four weeks. When the parents were away a relative from Camden would come stay with the children. This might be Aunt Ellie McDowall, Margaret McDowall or Aunt Scota or Cousin Loulie Salmond or anyone

who was available at the time. One time Miss Mattie Baxley the school teacher stayed with the children. Nelle remembered vividly when her parents returned from Tacoma, WA. They brought back apples in their trunk. She could remember the wonderful smell of those apples and how good they were when they ate them.”

(2) “In the local Grange the farmers tried two projects. One year each member tried to see who could raise the biggest hog. Another year, members tried to see who could grow the most corn per acre. I do not remember the outcome.”

(3) “Two facts Nelle remembered in connection with The Grange Hall. One is the Thompson children often played under the building, telling a little bug, “Doodle Bug, Doodle Bug come out, come out, or I’ll blow your house down.”, and the little bug would come out of his hole in the sand. The other fact, the school teacher at Liberty Hill gave an entertainment at The Grange Hall at the closing of school in 1889. One little girl was to recite “The Three Little Kittens”. She got as far as “The Three Little Kittens”, burst into tears and fell into the arms of her Mother, who was sitting nearby. This little girl was Bessie Floyd only 3 years old. She later married William Edgar Cunningham.”

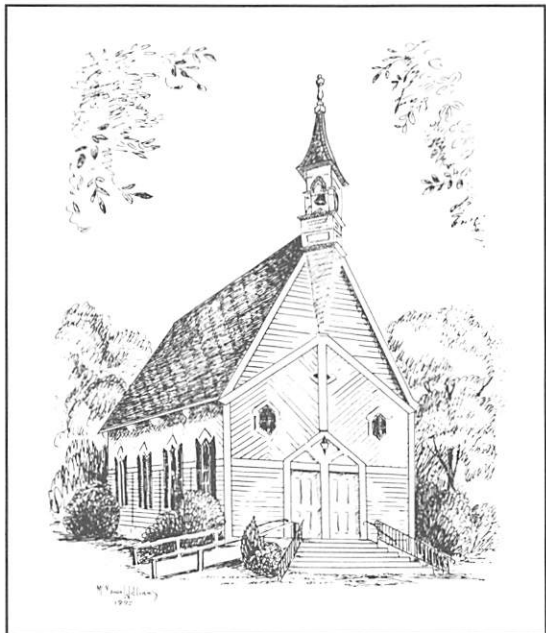
(4) “Nelle also remembered one meeting of The Grange held at Liberty Hill. The dinner was served under the big oak trees on long tables. The food having been prepared by the slave cooks at the homes of members and friends was brought to the Hall on big tin waiters, balanced on the heads of the carriers.”

(5) “The Grange Hall, with the large room as an auditorium, was often used for plays and other entertainment. One night a minstrel show was put on by white men, all “blacked up.” During the show Mr. Lewis Richards came to one of the dressing room doors behind the stage and shook his foot up and down while the minstrel play was going on. This almost broke up the show! After the program was over all the players went down to the Cunningham pond to clean up. This pond was located in the woods just across the road and down the hill.”

THE LIBERTY HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ORGANIZED IN 1851

The Mother Church, Beaver Creek Presbyterian Church, was organized in 1771, and there in the wilderness near a stream called Beaver Creek a group of staunch Scotch-Irish Presbyterians erected a small church. At times, this small church was served by itinerate ministers from Ireland or Scotland. When there was no minister to officiate the members gathered for prayer, scripture reading and “Songs of Worship”. These services were conducted by one of the elders, James Miller, William Russell, Hess Summerville, or Adam Thompson.

For more than 50 years Beaver Creek was the only Presbyterian Church within a days horseback ride from Liberty Hill and the other small settlements in the Carolina back country. As more settlers moved into the area three chapels or churches were formed: Tolerant, Mount Bethel, and Liberty Hill. These chapels were estab-



The Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church

lished in the early 1820s as shown in the old Deed Book "K" p. 322, State of South Carolina, Lancaster District. A deed for land for Tolerant Church was recorded on October 2nd, 1821. One minister and one session served the mother church and the three chapels: Tolerant, Mount Bethel and Liberty Hill. (1)

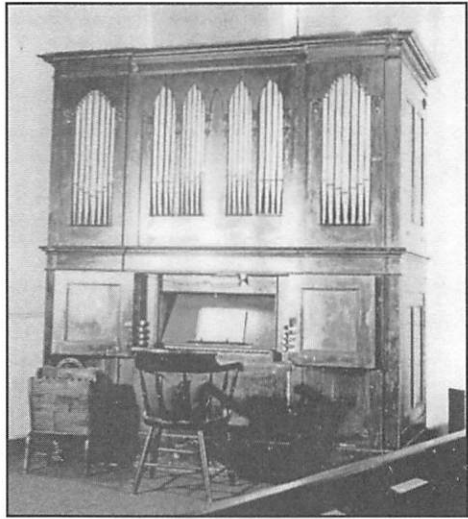
In the early years before 1850 some of the Liberty Hill people were still members of either Beaver Creek or Tolerant Church. These members felt the need of a more centrally located house of worship, so consequently a petition to organize a church at Liberty Hill was presented to Harmony Presbytery in October 1850. In October 1851 the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church was declared organized. The roll of original members included 10 men and 16 women. Records also show that at one time there were 130 slaves who were active members. The first call was extended to Rev. T. A. Hoyt. (2)

The original congregation worshiped in the log school house. Shortly after the church was organized a larger and more comfortable building was constructed by Mr. Hammond in 1852 on the same site as the present building. Land for the church was given by Joseph Cunningham. This building had a gallery for the slave members and it was reached by a stairway from the outside. On September 23, 1873 twenty-five colored members were granted permission to organize a separate church. (3)

Construction of the present Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church building was begun in August 1879. While it was being built the congregation met in the Grange Hall. The church was designed by Mr. E. C. Jones, architect from Memphis, Tenn., and was built by Mr. F. J. Hay of Camden. Suitable materials from the old building were used in the new one. Also at that time the steps which led to the gallery, and had been on the outside of the old church, were moved inside. The large brass bell with his name on it, and given by Mr. John Brown in 1851 and had been located on a small stand near the cemetery gates, was removed from its original location and placed in the beautifully designed offset belfry, atop the new building. This new church, which was begun in August 1879, was completed and turned over to the congregation on June 17, 1880, debt free. It was dedicated on September 20, 1880 by Rev. John G. Richards, Pastor. (4)

The pulpit lamps and two brass chandeliers, one still in use today, were given by Mr. R. M. Kennedy, Mr. Walker and Mrs. Charlie Dunlap of Camden. Mrs. Jack Perry gave the handsome communion service in

1851. It consisted of two large silver goblets, a large pitcher and two silver plates. These were used in the old church and in the present one until 1924, when this communion service was replaced by an individual service given in memory of Stephen M. Richards by his family, Mr. and Mrs. John G. Richards. The old communion service is now kept in a lovely display cabinet in the foyer of the church. It is used at communion services on Christmas Eve. The beautiful sofa in the pulpit was given by Mrs. Frank G. Perry. (5)



*The Organ
One Of Two Located In The United States*

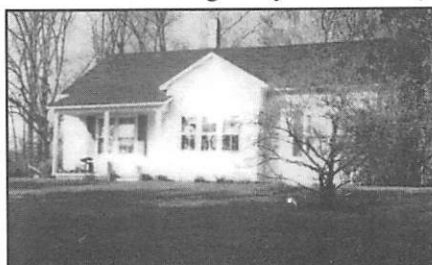
For many years a small organ, pumped by foot peddles, was used. It was replaced by the present organ. This beautiful organ was originally given by John Chesnut to the Bethesda Presbyterian Church when that church was built around 1820. This organ is probably one of the oldest organs in use in the state today. It has a brass plate bearing the name of "James Jackson, New York". This was probably the firm from which it was bought. The organ was made in England and was considered the finest pipe organ of its time. It was bought from Bethesda Presbyterian Church for \$200 and installed at the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church in 1907. In 1956 when the organ was repaired, the hand pump used to pump air to the organ pipes was changed and an electric motor was installed. Over the years Mrs. Bettie Richards, the faithful organist for almost 50 years, often had the organ tuned and repaired. (6)

Through the years from its early beginning the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church has had periods of growth and decline. Since the early 1970s there has been a continuing period of growth. In 1977 a Lakeside Service was started, with a 9 o'clock a.m. service on Lake Wateree, beginning the first Sunday in June and continuing through Labor Day. This gave the people living on the Lake and those on vacation a place to worship. The average attendance has grown to around 200 for a Sunday morning worship service. Many of those who started with the Lakeside Services on Sunday morning during the summer months of

June, July and August have joined the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church. The membership has now reached over a hundred. (1992). (7)

The Education Building was erected in 1970 through the generous donations of members, former members and friends. By 1992 it could no longer accommodate the growing membership of the church. A Building Committee was formed along with a Finance Committee and plans went forward to enlarge the Education Building. Again with donations of members, former members and friends, combined with the various talents and hardwork of church members and friends, the building was enlarged to include a spacious fellowship hall, a kitchen, more classrooms, a nursery and the church office. The building was completed in nine months, debt free. On May 31, 1992 members and friends of the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church gathered to dedicate this new addition and named the fellowship hall, "The Miss Bettie Richards Hall."

In 1982 the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church purchased the current manse, which is located near the church. It was originally the Liberty Hill School built in 1908. This building had previously been bought in 1954 by Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Wardlaw, Jr. and remodeled and made into a comfortable home. Through donations from members, former members and friends funds were raised to remodel this building again. On the second Sunday, June 13, 1982, this home was dedicated as the manse, to be used by the pastors who would serve the church over the years to come.



The Manse

The Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church purchased the land adjoining the manse property in 1989. This property extended up the church hill to Hwy 97. On it was the Old Store, which was built about 1919. It had served as a general store and Post Office for many years. Changes were made to the building. A comfortable apartment was built in part of it to be used as living quarters for the caretaker of the church and grounds. The other area was converted into suitable storage space.

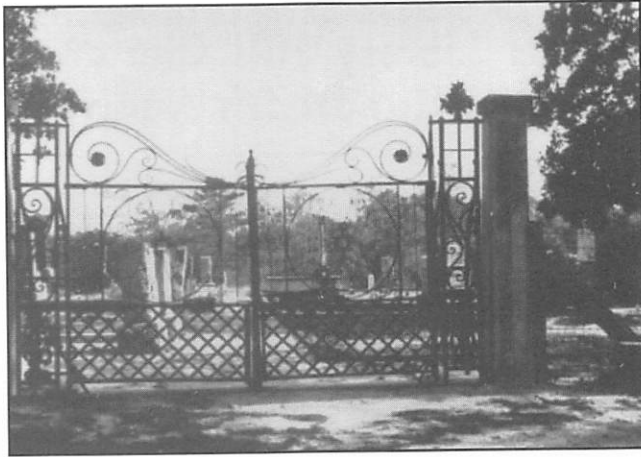
The one acre corner lot on Hwy 97 across the church road from The Old Store was deeded to the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church on November 15, 1991 by eighteen descendants of the late Gov. and Mrs. John G. Richards. Perhaps in the distant future, if the church continues to grow, a new sanctuary will be built on this corner property.

As the years passed “the little white church on the hill” had many new coats of paint, new steps, and several new roofs. It had weathered many storms, several tornadoes and hurricanes, even Hugo in 1989. In 1993, when a new roof was being put on the church and one of the workmen leaned against the belfrey tower it moved. It was discovered that the belfrey and steeple had deteriorated from the weather and storms of 112 years, and these years had taken their toll. On April 22, 1993, the entire belfrey and steeple was painstakingly hoisted off the roof by a big crane and very gently laid on the ground. Besides the brass bell in the belfrey, there were active bees and a monstrous comb, measuring five-and-a-half feet long, four-and-a-half wide, filling the entire area.

Three church members, Bill Harrington, Gene Sheorn and Carl Van accepted the task of building a new structure. In about four weeks and 400 hours they assembled an exact duplicate of the belfrey and steeple. The brass bell which had summoned worshippers to the church for 112 years was placed in its new home. One June 7, 1993 the new structure was hoisted by the large crane to the roof, and the new belfrey and steeple fit as if the old one had never been removed. After worship service on June 13, 1993, all worshippers went outside to gather and hold hands in a big circle for a prayer of dedication by Gene Rollins, Pastor. (8)

On November 8, 1978 the village of Liberty Hill was entered on the National Register of Historical Places and designated as Liberty Hill Historic District. The Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church was listed along with the twenty-four other mid-19th century and early 20th century buildings. In a short sentence the church was described thus: 1880-features a small belfrey and wooden siding which is laid in a “novelty” pattern. (9)

Over the years since its early beginnings, many changes have come to the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church. There is that fervent prayer that God will continue to bless her and help her to continue to grow—to always reach out to those around her, and supply that inner need one longs for in this life on earth.



The Cemetery Gates



The Cemetery

1851

1951

The Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church

Cordially Invites You To Attend The

Centennial Celebration

On Sunday, August the Nineteenth

At Ten o'Clock In The Morning

Basket Lunch

The Camden Chronicle Aug. 21, 1951
**History Of Liberty Hill Church Is
Read At One Hundredth Anniversary**

The following very interesting historical sketch of the Liberty Hill Presbyterian church was prepared by John A. Thompson, assisted by Mrs. C. D. Cunningham and was read by Mr. Thompson at the service Sunday morning:

"The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ our Lord for other foundations can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ."

Previous to 1850, some of the Liberty Hill people were members of either Beaver Creek or Tolerant church, both located some miles from the settlement. These members felt the need of a more centrally located house of worship. Consequently, a petition for this organization was presented at a meeting of Harmony Presbytery, held at Winnsboro, October 1850. As Beaver Creek, the mother church protested, the question was submitted to Synod for determination. A commission was appointed for the organization of this church. This commission, consisting of Rev. S. Davis, D. D., Rev. M. D. Frazer, and J. K. Douglass, was to report at a meeting of Presbytery at Bishopville, April 1851. At this time, the commission reported that the duty assigned to it was not accomplished. The commission was continued with the addition of Rev. S. H. Hay.

The petitioners, showing their great desire for a final completion of these plans, did not wait for the commission to report, but at a called meeting of Presbytery, July 11, 1851, presented the Rev. T. A. Hoyt with a pastoral call. Mr. Hoyt accepted this call at the regular meeting in October, having been given permission by Presbytery to hold same until that time. The commission then reported that it had organized a church, to be known as The Liberty Hill Presbyterian church. The said organization was officially declared and enrolled as a member of Harmony Presbytery, October 1851. She remained in this Presbytery until 1896, when at her own request was transferred to Bethel Presbytery.

The roll of the original members include: R. J. Cunningham, Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Dixon, Mr. and Mrs. John Brown, Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Cunningham, Mr. and Mrs. James Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. Willie Patterson, Mrs. Wyatt Patterson, Mr. and Mrs. J. Sonerville, J. Montgomery, Mr. and Mrs. John Barnes, Mrs. Jack Perry, Mrs. Matheson, Mrs. W. E. Johnson, Mrs. Hudson, Mrs. John Jones, Mrs. S. George, Miss Sarah George.

Records also show that there were 130 slaves, who were active members.

Original ruling elders were: John Brown, James Thompson, William Dixon, John Barnes.

There is no record of deacons at this time.

A Presbytery commission, consisting of Rev. J. C. Coit (to preach and preside), Rev. M. D. Fraser (to charge the pastor), and Rev. S. H. Hay (to charge the people), installed Rev. Hoyt on Saturday before the first Sabbath in November 1851.

The following ministers have served this church in the following order: The Revs. T. A. Hoyt, Arthur Small, J. G. Richards, W. L. Boggs, T. F. Boozer, supply; C. O. Martindale, supply; Chalmers Moore, S. C. Caldwell, supply; I. E. Wallace, L. B. McCord, T. W. DeVane, D. A. Miller, S. B. Hay, Seminary student supply; H. N. Alexander, Seminary student supply; F. A. Drennan, R. W. Joplin, supply; J. T. Dendy, supply; J. S. Robinson, present pastor.

Between the pastorates of Rev. McCord and Rev. DeVane, several Seminary students supplied the church.

The shortest pastorate, May 1857 to April 1858, was that of the Rev. Arthur Small, an uncle of Willie, Robert, Edward and Charlie Cunningham. The longest pastorate was that of Rev. J. G. Richards, December 1858 to July 1837. During Mr. Richards pastorate, he volunteered as a private in the Confederate Army. Later he was selected to serve as a chaplain. After the war Mr. Richards re-

sumed his work as pastor at Liberty Hill. During his absence, Sherman's Army had passed through Liberty Hill and left much devastation, but under his faithful guidance, his followers made a remarkable comeback. In 1885, Mr. Richards was elected evangelist of Harmony Presbytery. Two years later, he resigned and his faithful and valuable influence is felt in this community to the present generation.

Elders who have served this church: John Barnes, John Brown, William Dixon, James S. Thompson, R. B. Cunningham, James Somerville, W. K. Thompson, S. M. Richards, J. C. McDow, F. J. Hay, J. P. Richards, M. D., R. C. Jones, J. G. Richards, W. A. Cunningham, J. B. Johnston.

Present elders: N. S. Richards, L. P. Thompson, E. J. Cunningham, W. E. Cunningham, Will Wardlaw, John Thompson.

Deacons who have served this church: John Montgomery, Wylie Patterson, Henry Brown, L. C. Thompson, R. B. Patterson, J. P. Richards, M. D., W. J. Jones, R. C. Jones, J. G. Richards, E. L. Jones, N. S. Richards, J. B. Cureton, G. R. Clements, R. J. Wardlaw, L. P. Thompson, H. F. Haile, W. A. Cunningham, N. S. Richards, Jr., Prof. Prioleau Richards, W. C. Wardlaw.

Present deacons: C. D. Cunningham, Ed. Jones, John H. Clement, R. J. Wardlaw, Jr., John B. Cureton.

John B. Cureton has the distinction of being the youngest deacon in the service of this church.

It is interesting to note that two members of this church held the office of Sexton, Darl George and W. A. Cunningham.

The Liberty Hill Presbyterian church has had the honor of having these commissioners to the General Assembly: W. K. Thompson, S. M. Richards, J. P. Richards, M. D., R. C. Jones, John G. Richards, a former governor of S. C., L. P. Thompson, N. S. Richards.

J. S. Thompson, an elder, had the honor of being a commissioner to the first General Assembly of the Southern Presbyterian church, Augusta, Ga., April 1861, and also being the ancestor of the two youngest elders of this church; a son, (W. K. Thompson), and a great-grandson (John A. Thompson).

The clerks of session include: J. S. Thompson, W. K. Thompson, Dr. J. P. Richards, R. C. Jones, J. G. Richards, N. S. Richards, L. P. Thompson.

Sunday School superintendents have been: J. S. Thompson, W. K. Thompson, Dr. J. P. Richards, J. G. Richards, L. P. Thompson, R. C. Jones, W. E. Cunningham, F. L. Jones.

At the present time, L. P. Thompson is again serving as superintendent.

Missionaries

This church was privileged to have Miss Charlotte Thompson serve as a foreign missionary to Japan, October 1903-April 1916. She is now Mrs. MacLauchlin, widow of Rev. A. M. MacLauchlin. Two granddaughters of this church, Charlotte and Mary Thompson, of Atlanta, were missionaries to China, and a grandson, F. N. Wardlaw, was a missionary to Cuba. Another granddaughter, Miss Charlotte Wardlaw, of Augusta, Ga., served as a home missionary.

Ministers, elders, and deacons who are serving or have served in other churches and who are sons or grandsons of former members of this church:

Ministers: The Revs. C. M. Richards, S. H. Hay, F. J. Hay, Frank Wardlaw, Roy Brown, John Edwards Richards, J. McDowell Richards, Bob Hall, Edward Hay.

Elders: A. P. Brown, Reid Brown, J. B. Cureton, John C. Cureton, Eob Cunningham, Chester Co.; R. B. Cunningham, Decatur, R. B. Cunningham, Jr., Columbia; Dr. Edward Cunningham, Decatur; R. B. Cunningham, Alendale; Walter Cunningham, Edgar Cunningham, Charles Hunter, Brown McCallum, Wm. Thompson MacLauchlin, John C. McDow, Richard McDow, Nick Peay, Rob Peay, Gardiner Richards, Prof. Prioleau Richards, J. R. Thompson, W. K. Thompson, Jr., Glenn Springs; James Thompson Wardlaw, Joseph Patterson George, Sam George, Frank George, William Stinson, Robert Stinson, R. J. Cunningham, Texas; Frank M. Jones, W. M. Dixon, R. B. Patterson.

One of these elders, R. B. Cunningham, of Decatur, is present and celebrates his 83rd birthday today.

Deacons: Arthur Cunningham, Willie Floyd, Harold Haile, deacon of Baptist church; Jack Hunter, W. S. Jones, Charlton Jones, Wardlaw May, Marion McCallum, T. F. McDow, Gibbes Richards, James Richards, Johnny Richards, Norman Richards, steward in Methodist church; Congressman J. P. Richards, James W. Thompson, Charleston; James W. Thompson, Jr., Decatur, and John Wells Todd, III.

This church is the mother of the Liberty Hill Colored Presbyterian church, as an application by 25 colored members was granted in 1873, to become an organized, separate church. From this church, there have gone out several ministers and elders. It is now under the control of the Northern Presbyterian church. Of great interest is this fact: an original slave member, Catoe James, served the mother church for years and years as sexton. His grandson, Catoe, did likewise. And now his great-grandson, Johnny James, is serving, assisted by his son, Franklin.

The original congregation worshipped in a log school house. Shortly after this, a larger and more comfortable building was constructed by a Mr. Hammond in 1852, on the same site as the present building. This building had a gallery for the slave members, and was reached by a stairway from the outside. The pres-

(Please turn to page three)

History Of—

(Continued From Page One)

ent building, began in August 1879 and completed in June 1880 (71 years old his year), was designed by E. C. Jones of Memphis and built by F. J. Hay, of Camden. The suitable material from the old building was used in the new one. While this building was under construction, the congregation worshipped in the Grange Hall, the present home of Mr. and Mrs. H. S. Higgins.

Two brass chandeliers, one of which is still in use, were given by R. M. Kennedy, Mr. Walker, and Mrs. Charlie Dunlap, of Camden. Mrs. Jack Perry gave a handsome communion service to the old church and it was used in the new until 1924, when Mr. and Mrs. John G. Richards and daughters gave an individual service, in memory of Lieut. Stephen M. Richards. The bell in the church tower, given by John Brown, was used in the old church also.

The cemetery nearby is entered through wrought iron gates given by Mr. and Mrs. W. K. Thompson. The granite posts were given by Mr. Wm. C. Brown.

The first manse was an old log house, known as the Logan House. It is still standing today. The present manse was built in the late 1850's.

The land for the church was given by Mr. Joseph Cunningham; for the cemetery by A. P. Brown and heirs. The land for the manse was deeded to the church by James B. Cureton for 150 dollars, Oct. 22, 1856. This deed is in the hands of the deacons. Copies of the plats for the church, cemetery and manse properties, are recorded in the Court House in Camden.

On Feb. 15, 1874, the session adopted this resolution; "that from this time in the absence of the pastor, the church be opened regularly, and service be conducted by some member of the session." This resolution has been kept down to the present day with the exception of a brief period during the flu epidemic in 1918.

With humility, we say that we are proud of our rich spiritual heritage.

"The Son of God goes forth to war
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams
afar;

Who follows in His train?

"A noble army, men and boys,
The matron and the maid,
Around the throne of God re-
joice,

In robes of light arrayed.
O God, to us may grace be given
To follow in their train."

A LOVELY DECEMBER WEDDING

CURETON-JOHNSTON

December 10, 1908 (1)

The little church at Liberty Hill was the scene of a lovely morning wedding on Wednesday the 10th inst, when Miss Hannah, the youngest daughter of Mrs. M. C. Cureton was happily married to Mr. W. T. Johnston, the only son of Mr. and Mrs. T. L. Johnston of Fairfield county. Rev. J. M. Holladay of Winnsboro officiating.

The church was crowded with the relatives and friends of both parties, and seldom in the history of old Liberty Hill, has there been a more interesting and artistic wedding.

Under the perfect skill and taste of Mrs. S. H. Cunningham, the church was transformed into a bower of beauty and art. The color scheme, red and green, was successfully and gracefully carried out to the minutest detail. Holly, in rich profusion and the ever graceful and clinging smilax forming the decorations. Festoons of smilax, brightened by the crimson holly berries, were hung and twined in and out from every available place.

The chancel was draped with white and decorated with smilax and evergreens, forming a picturesque background for the bridal party. A handsome arch of evergreens and holly berries, from which was suspended a large silver wedding bell, was the central point of beauty and interest. For 'neath it the charming bride and handsome groom plighted their vows that made them one.

Just before the ceremony, which was unusually beautiful and impressive, soft and tender strains of familiar love songs were played, the vein of sentiment harmonizing with the happy event. The music for

the occasion was furnished by Mrs. J. G. Richards, Jr.

At the first peal of Mendelsohn's inspiring wedding march, the two little pages, Arthur Cunningham and Flynn Johnston, came slowly down the aisles, heralding the approach of the bridal party by opening the gates of red and white near the chancel. Next came the two ushers, Messrs. Tom Cunningham and Edward Haile, followed by the brides maids and groomsmen from opposite sides, crossing in front of the chancel: Miss Lou Perry and Mr. Fred Floyd, Miss Bessie Floyd and Mr. W. C. Cunningham, Miss Kittie Richards and Mr. Tom Johnston, Miss Nellie Thompson and Mr. Belton Cureton. These, with the handsome dame of honor, Mrs. A. W. Cunningham, formed a horseshoe in front of the arch, the officiating minister standing in the center.

Entering from the right of the church, came two lovely little flower girls, dressed in white with red ribbons, Clara Cureton and Caroline Cunningham, and just following them, came the fair young bride on the arm of her maid of honor, Miss Clara Johnston. At the same time, from the left, the groom and his best man Dr. J. S. Beaty came in. These met neath the wedding bell and the happy circle was complete.

The bride was handsomely gowned in a traveling suit of becoming brown and carried a beautiful bouquet of carnations and ferns. The bride's maids were dressed in street costumes of dark blue and carried large bouquets of holly tied with red ribbon.

The bride is a young woman of rich and rare attractions of mind and form, gifted with womanly qualities of grace and beauty, beloved and admired by all who know her. The groom is a manly young farmer of Fairfield county, prominent and promising, a young man of sterling worth and high toned character.

The numerous and handsome presents proved the esteem and affection the young couple hold in the hearts of a host of friends.

Immediately after the ceremony, the whole party left for the home of the groom's parents, in Fairfield county, where a handsome and delightful reception was accorded them in the afternoon, loving wishes following the happy couple from many hearts.

May this union of hearts begun so happily upon earth be for eternity, and these young lives, under the benediction of Him whose favor is life and love. Joy and Peace be "one grand, sweet song."

HISTORY OF THE LIBERTY HILL CHURCH

delivered on the first Sabbath in
December 1883 - delivered by The
Reverend John Gardiner Richards on
the 25th anniversary of his connection
with The Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church
as pastor. 1858 - 1883 (1)

1st Samuel VIII v.12 — "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

Today is the 25th anniversary of my connection with this church as pastor. On the 1st Sabb. of Dec. 1858, I preached to you my first sermon as your minister. At that time I was a young man, and one of the youngest ministers in Harmony Presbytery. Today I am the oldest minister who is engaged in the active duties of the ministry, and been Pastor longer of our Church than any other minister in the Presbytery.

Twenty-five years ago, my name was at the foot of the roll of Presbytery on which there were between 25-80 names, now it stands third. The roll now runs thus, W. N. Reed, J. Leighton Willson, J. G. Richards. These facts show that the changes which affected in a quarter of a century are neither few nor slight.

It's a fit celebration of this day to propose to present an Historical Sketch of Liberty Hill, The Liberty Hill Church and from that history such practical lessons as may with God's blessing be of benefit to us in the years to come.

Early History of Liberty Hill

My information with regard to the early history of Liberty Hill does not reach back further than 65 or 70 years ago. At that time the citizens of the place were Garlic, Golesbury, Gardner and 3 or 4 families of Clanton and possibly the late Dr. T. P. Bush, who was quite a young man and physician.

At that period the reputation of the place was not good. It was a rallying point for the fast young men, of the surrounding county. It was distinguished for its horse racing, cock fighting, gander pulling, (2) shooting matches, and whiskey drinking—I remember to have heard a gentleman remark that there had been “whiskey enough ‘round where Garlick’s store stood (just in front of where Thompson Bros. now stands) (3) to float a steamboat,” and Dr. Bush himself told me that when he first came to Liberty Hill many of the people would have nothing to do with him—either as a man or a physician. He could not understand it, and finally a friend said to him, “Dr., don’t you know why the people treat you in this way?” “Why it is because you won’t drink with them and for that reason they think you are proud and stuck up.” “Ah,” said the Dr., “Is that it?” Immediately he invited the whole company into Garlick’s and bought whiskey and drank himself and toasted all round, and when that was out he bought more and invited everybody to help themselves, and from that day his standing as a man and his fortune as a physician were secured.

Indeed, such was the reputation of Liberty Hill at that period that a good old Mother in Israel, long since gone to her rest, she lived some miles away (Mrs. Shropshire) remarked, “When I pray for the heathen I always think of the people of Liberty Hill.” And here permit me to mention as a singular fact, that a grandson and three great grandsons of this good woman are today prominent members of this community and three of them are officers of this church. (4)

At the time of which I have been speaking there was a small log church standing somewhere near Mr. William Dixon’s spring, but who preached in it, or how often the people had preaching, I have not been able to learn. (5)

Improvements

About the year 1840 a better class of people, attracted by the beauty and healthfulness of the locality began to settle at Liberty Hill. Among the first of these were Joseph Cunningham, Mrs. Flake, Wyatt Patterson and John and Henry Brown. These were soon followed by other prominent families and the whole face of the community was changed in character and in appearance.

They who were thus brought together were for the most part wealthy planters from the adjacent county and the controlling motive with them seems to have been that they might secure for themselves and their families social, religious, and educational advantages—fine houses were erected and a school house was built in which Messrs. Spencer (?), Gore and others taught the children. There was no organized church at Liberty Hill at this time and no church building, but Rev. Campbell, Pastor of Beaver Creek Church preached occasionally to the people in the school house. Very soon after this a church was erected and Liberty Hill became one of the out stations of Old Beaver Creek Church and the people had regular preaching by the pastors of that church.

Separate Organization

In the year 1850, the people of Liberty Hill feeling the importance of a separate church organization and being able to support a pastor of their own, petitioned Harmony Presbytery to organize a church at this place. This request was granted and a committee was appointed to discharge the duty. The people immediately proceeded to the erection of a handsome parsonage at a cost of \$2500.

On the 7th day of June 1851 the committee of Presbytery consisting of Rev. Malcomb Frasier and Rev. Samuel H. Hay met with the people of Liberty Hill. Mr. Hay preached the opening sermon and Mr. Frasier presided over the congregational meeting. The church was organized by this committee and consisted originally of 26 white and 10 colored members. Of the white members of the church 10 were gentlemen and 16 were ladies. I will call the roll of the church as it stood on the 7th day of June 1851: T. L. Dixon, William Dixon, John Brown, H. R. Brown, Wylie Patterson, J. S. Thompson, William Dunlap, James Sommerville, D. J. George and H. R. Dulin. These were the original

male members of this church. Mrs. Susannah George, E.A. Dixon, Jane Brown, E. Brown, Mary Patterson, Charlotte S. Thompson, Ellen Gilbert, Sarah Hudson, Mary H. Matheson, Sarah S. Dunlap, _____Dunlap, Rebecca Clanton, M. A. Stinson and the Misses Sarah George, Amanda Sommerville and Amelia Sommerville.

Ha, how the calling of this roll must carry the minds of some of you back to the scene of that day when you were first banded together as a church of Jesus Christ and began a career, the results of which eternity alone can reveal. It was a day of joy and a day of hope.

Of the 10 original male members of this church only 3 now remain: William Dixon, J. S. Thompson and D. J. George. And of the 16 female members only 4 remain—Charlotte S. Thompson, E. A. Dixon, Mary H. Matherson and M. A. Stinson, and now Mrs. John Brown. Only 7 of the original 26 now remain. Most of the 19 have passed away from the scenes of this world and have, as we humbly trust gone up to join “The general assembly and church of the first born whose names are written in heaven.”

*“Part of the host have crossed the flood”
“And we are to the margin come, And soon expect to die.”*

The first elders of this church were James Sommerville, James S. Thompson, John Brown and William Dixon. Of these Elders Messrs. Brown and Dixon were ordained on the day of the organization of the church—Messrs. Sommerville and Thompson having previously been elders in old Beaver Creek Church.

The first Deacons were Wylie Patterson and Henry R. Brown. Of these Mr. Brown was ordained on the day of the organization, Mr. Patterson having been a deacon of Beaver Creek Church.

The Church being thus equipped and ready for work, the congregation met on the 17th day of June, 10 days after the organization and proceeded to the selection of a pastor. Rev. T. A. Hoyt was unanimously chosen and a salary of \$600 and a parsonage presented him. Mr. Hoyt’s name appears on the sessional record for the first time on August 7, 1851 and for the last time on the 11th of February 1855. The pastoral relation was dissolved on the 24th day of Jan. 1855. It thus appeared that Mr. Hoyt was pastor of this church about three years and a half. He was a man of fine abilities and a good preacher and during his pastorate there were quite a number of additions to the church. After Mr. Hoyt left, the

church remained vacant about two years. During a part of this period, Rev. Douglas Harrison supplied the pulpit.

Rev. A. M. Small was the second pastor of this church. His name appears on the Sessional records for the first time May 2, 1857, and his pastoral relations with the church was dissolved sometime in April 1858. It thus appears that he was Pastor of the church about one year. The records do not show at what time he was installed or who constituted the installing committee.

Mr. Small was a man of good abilities, a fine character and of splendid preaching powers. He was greatly beloved by this church and congregation. And of all his friends, both in this sadder state, there were none who more sincerely lamented his untimely exit than did this, the people of his first pastoral charge. (6)

I knew him well as a college boy, as a Theological student and as a minister and he was worthy of all the affection and all the honor that was bestowed upon him. From its organization to the close of the pastorate of the beloved and lamented Small, this church grew slowly but steadily. After Mr. Small left, the church remained vacant from April to December. During this interval Mr. Harrison again supplied the Church.

On the 1st Sabbath of Dec. 1858, I preached to you my first sermon as your Pastor. And my brethren, I shall never forget the impression that was made upon me as I stood in the pulpit and looked over the well filled house - I can today recall the face of almost every member of the congregation as it there appeared - the choir, the Elders, the Deacons, the congregation and all - I felt then "This is a people whom I can love and whom I would like to serve," and I thank God that from that day until this, in prosperity and in adversity, my feelings in that regard have never changed towards this church and congregation.

I was installed Pastor of the Church by a committee of Harmony Presbytery consisting of Rev. S. H. Hay and Rev. W. W. Williamson. Mr. Hay preached the sermon and delivered the charge to the Pastor and Mr. Williamson charged the Congregation. I shall never forget a remark which Mr. Hay made to me in his charge that day. It was the quotation of sentiment uttered, I think by John Brown of Hadington under similar circumstances and was something like this - "My brother, you may now think your pastoral charge a small one, but you will think it large enough when you are called to account for it at the bar of God." My brethren, I expect to remember that sentiment and feel its power as I never felt it before when I shall meet you and those who have gone before from this

congregation, before the judgment bar of the Almighty.

When I became Pastor of this church it consisted of 40 white and 60 colored members. - Since that time there have been added 82 white and 72 colored members. We have assigned 37 to other churches and 25 have died. And in September 1873 the colored members of this Church were, at their own request organized by the Session of this Church into a separate Church, to be known as the "Liberty Hill Colored Presbyterian Church." Thus, my brethren, has this church become the Mother of one church and sent forth her sons and daughters to strengthen and bless at least 7 churches in this state. One in Georgia, 1 in Alabama, 1 in Miss. and 1 in Texas. And yet today we have 60 members more than we had in 1858.

If it had not been for the peculiar circumstances in which we were placed from 1865-1876 which caused so many of our young people to leave us, and chiefly those in young families, Liberty Hill would now have been twice the size that is it; the Church would have had to double its present membership and this house would not have seated the congregation.

During the greater part of my pastorate here everything moved on smoothly, pleasantly and encouraging additions were made to the membership of the Church, the people were wealthy and liberal and I shared of their bounty.

In 1860 the country from Maine to Texas and from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean was shaken by furious political strife and in 1861 war was declared.

The people of Liberty Hill were without exception, intensely southern in their feelings and convictions. And during the war which lasted for more than four years, almost every family had its representative in the Confederate Army - some families had three or four representatives in the bloody strife.

Of those who went forth from us at the time, some fell with their faces to the foe, gallantly battling for their homes and their love ones. Some succumbed to the ravages of exposure and disease, some languished in foreign prisons, while others were present at the firing of the last gun at Appomattox, Va. When the war had ended those of Liberty Hill's gallant sons who survived the conflict returned to her bosom and a few of them are with us today.

The Period of The War

I do not intend to attempt to speak today of the details on varying fortunes of "The War between the States." At this distant day the whole thing seems like a horrid nightmare in which there was intense anxiety, intense suffering, and intense effort. But we awoke at last to find ourselves a prostrate and ruined people. In the spring of 1863 by the appointment of Presbytery and with the consent of this congregation, I became a chaplain to the Confederate Army. I joined the 10th S.C. Regiment, whose varying fortunes I shared until the close of the war. During most of the period the pulpit was supplied by my friend and classmate the Rev. William J. McCormick, who has recently gone to his reward.

On the 22nd day of Feb. 1865 Sherman's Army made its appearance on Liberty Hill where it remained for nearly a week. During these dreadful days, our houses were pillaged, some of them burned to the ground, our families were insulted and every species of property upon which ruthless soldiery could lay its hands was destroyed. Our Academy was burned and the very house of God did not escape the vandal horde. During these days our old men and boys, like hunted hares, had to fly to the woods for safety.

When the army left, some of our houses remained to us, but there was little of value left in them. And our families had for days literally nothing upon which to subsist except such corn and fragments of meat as they could gather up from the Federal camps. There was scarcely a horse, mule, cow, hog or chicken left in the whole congregation. There was but one lone rooster left to crow for day on Liberty Hill and he seemed to be astonished that he was left. (constant crowing). Thus we were left ruined and about helpless. If it had not been for the gracious aid of friends abroad we certainly would have suffered for the necessaries of life. The very breath of heaven was for months polluted by the putrid carcasses of the valuable animals which had once belonged to us, but had been ruthlessly and wantonly slain by a relentless foe.

During these dark days the house of God was regularly opened and the people met on every Sabbath for this worship.

The year 1865 was remarkable for the generous yield which the earth gave in response to the crudest cultivation. Wherever the face of the ground was even slightly scratched and seed of corn or cotton were deposited an abundant harvest followed. So that the winter of 1865 found us tolerably well supplied with the absolute necessaries of life,

and hope began again to rise and our people began to put forth more energy.

The Reconstruction Period

But, my brethren, the darkest period of our whole history was that which intervened from the years 1866 - 1874 (?). This was the "Period of Reconstruction" as our conquerors were pleased to devise it. The period when our former slaves were our masters. The period when (to use a favorite phrase of fable politicians of that day) "The bottom rail was on top."

During this period a horde of unprincipled men, like hungry vultures swooped down upon us, that they might rend, and devour, whatever was left of poor South Carolina and her people. Their first work was to array one race of our people against the other, that both might the more easily fall into their hands a helpless prey. How well they accomplished that work, you and I well know.

This was a period of uncertainty, anxiety and dread to all of us. None of us knew what a day might bring. Property of all kinds depreciated in value, and our people were oppressed by unjust law, and burdened with enormous and unrighteous taxation. Those days and years of perplexity and anxiety left their mark upon some of us who are now living, and but for them, some of our people who now sleep in the grave might have been with us today.

During all these years as a burdened people we struggled on together—

"We shared our mutual woes
Our mutual burdens bare
And often for each other flowed
The sympathizing tear"

All this while the Church was regularly opened, and the people met to acknowledge God, to listen to His word and to offer Him their supplications. But the Sessional Records show meager results in the way of conversions and additions to the Church. They are for the most part, records of meetings, to appoint delegations to Presbytery and Synod and to attend to other routine business. This was the time of the trial of the faith of God's people.

The Dawning Of A Brighter Day

Jn 1876 a brighter day dawned upon us. The Government of South Carolina was again restored to her own people. The cloud of despondency and gloom which had settled upon the hearts of our people dispersed. New hope, new life and new energy manifested itself on every hand. And be it recorded to the everlasting honor of the people that their first thoughts were of the house of God. They did not wait to repair or rebuild their own houses, but determined to build a house for the Lord.

Accordingly in September 1877, funds having been raised, a building committee was appointed - Col. L. J. Patterson, A. D. Jones, R. B. Cunningham, W. K. Thompson, Mrs. H. M. Patterson, Mrs. S. E. Richards, constituted the committee. On the 15th day of September 1877 the committee was organized for business. Mrs. Patterson being elected Treasurer and Mrs. Richards Secretary. Mr. E. C. Jones, of Memphis, Tenn. furnished the committee with the plan of the church. And in December 1878 the contract for erecting the building was given to Mr. F. J. Hay. Mr. Hay began pulling down the old church, August 4th, 1879. On the 18th day of Sept. 1879 the committee, the church and this community sustained an irreparable loss in the sudden death of Mrs. H. M. Patterson. The grim messenger came suddenly, but he found her with her lamp "trimmed and burning."

The church was completed in June 1880 and on the 17th day of that month, the committee turned it over to the congregation "free of all debt", and were discharged with the hearty thanks of our whole people.

On the 20th day of September 1880 this house was publicly dedicated to the worship of Almighty God, the Father, The Son and the Holy Ghost.

And, my brethren, our Covenant - Keeping God accepted the offering; for during those very dedicating services, He poured out His spirit upon us, and twenty of our neighbors and our children were brought into the fold of Jesus. Oh, that He would stretch forth His hand and save others whom we love, and who helped to erect this house to His name. Since the dedication of this church one of our members has been called from the scenes of life and service and some have been added to our communion.

And now, brethren, when we look back through these past years, and consider our present position today, can we not from the heart say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." "Bless the Lord O my Soul, and

forget not all His benefits.”

A quarter of a century, with its lights and shadows, has rolled over us since we were first united as Pastor and People. We have within that period, witnessed many and great changes, political, social and religious. During these 25 years 154 members have been added to this church; I have officiated at 48 funerals, I have married 38 couples and baptized 80 children.

And now I have done - this imperfect Historical Sketch is finished. There is much that I would like to say, and feel like saying, but I have already trespassed too long upon your patience.

Brethren, many of you will not be here a quarter of a century hence. One by one we shall drop out of our places here, and “They shall know us no more forever.”

“But there is a happier shore, and there, released from toil and pain, Dear Brethren, we shall meet again.”

**EIGHT DREADFUL DAYS WHEN
“YANKEE” OFFICERS OCCUPIED
THE HOME OF
MRS. MARY E. CUNNINGHAM IN 1865 (1)**

The 22nd of February 1865 is indelibly stamped upon the hearts of the inhabitants of our peaceful little village, Liberty Hill. 'Twas a beautiful sunshiny day. The children had holiday (it being George Washington's birthday) and so had enjoyed a delightful dinner, the last one we ever had the pleasure of eating in our lovely home.

'Twas just after the burning of Columbia, giving Sherman's Army time to cross the country, we never dreaming of them coming through our hilly country. When Sherman burnt Columbia, we could see the reflection very plainly even though it was fifty miles away. We went to our upper piazza from where we had a fine view - which filled our hearts with horror; but we did not for a moment feel that we would so soon have war with all its horror in our midst.

Part of Sherman's Army crossed the Wateree River at Peay's Ferry, 5 miles from Liberty Hill; another part crossed at Rocky Mount, 8 miles above Liberty Hill. The first intimation we had of Sherman's Army crossing the river was the burning, just before they crossed over, of the elegant mansion owned by Col. M. A. Peay. Then after they crossed, a large distillery was burned and from there until they reached Liberty Hill, all gins and barns were burned. The first building burned after entering the village was our beautiful two-story academy.

The first excitement about three o'clock was seeing two of our soldiers, who were home on furlough, racing at full speed past our gate

with Yankees in pursuit. They did not follow them far as they were afraid of getting into trouble. Then about 4 o'clock a Company of Cavalry came dashing in, and in a short time our yard and house were over-run with soldiers of all descriptions. The first soldier who stopped at the door of the room filled with frightened women and girls bowed and said, "Ladies, I am a Yankee." I replied, "I am aware of that fact." With this he wheeled around and walked upstairs with his sword and spurs clanking. You may imagine my consternation, a young woman with six young girls under my care— we were huddled together in our sitting room. By that time others had come in demanding our guns, pistols, gold and silver. I told them that our soldiers had our guns and that our gold and silver had been sent off and that we had no idea where they were hidden.

From that hour for over a week our house was never free from the vandals. The stream of soldiers did not molest us. They went about the house at will. Later we went to see what was broken. They had pulled out drawers and thrown them down after getting what they wanted. Some general or captain made our house his headquarters, every night going in and out at will. It depended upon the style of man the officer was whether the house was quiet or otherwise. One night a Capt. Hinson with his men took possession of the house, except the one room we were in which was the dining room, and the one we occupied as long as the army was passing through. In the room next to us we had 3 young Negro girls and three boys about 18 who begged us to let them stay in the house and that the boys would keep up the fire for us (which they did).

The Captain was a rough uncouth man. He allowed his men to take great liberties throughout the house. Some of his men had the basement beneath the dining room where we were. They knocked off the splashing and chipped off pieces from the joices (joists). I appealed to the Capt. for protection from such treatment. He replied in a sarcastic manner, "Oh, they are only getting a little kindling." Then in the morning, when they were ready to start (go), one of the men came to our door and said, "We left a nice piece of beef for you all." When I looked in my room, for it was my room, I saw the carpet covered with soft soap and a feather bed opened and spread over it. Everything was abused in the room. The piece of beef was laid on my pretty work table with kerosene oil poured over it. I did not enter the room but our good cook, Aunt Sophie, went in and with tears in her eyes she said, "Missie, I never knowed there was such men in the world."

If it had not been for Aunt Sophie I don't know what we would have done; she would manage some way to get something for us to eat. We were really hungry sometimes and my dear little girl would cry. The second day after the Yankees commenced to come we all got very hungry. Our cook would cook what she could get and just when she started to bring it to us then it would be snatched from her. That evening General Charles Smith came and made his headquarters with us. He was told how we were being treated and he expressed his sympathy. He and his staff were gentlemen and that was the only night during the raid that any of us slept. The General told me that I might feel perfectly safe as long as he and his men were in the house. He said he would order a good supper and would leave supplies with us for several days. We had all been staying in our dining room but gave it up to them to have their supper in. All of us, Gen. Smith and staff too, were in our parlor until their supper was ready. Then the folding door was thrown open and it was a beautiful sight. The silver fairly sparkled in the bright light and the table was covered with a feast of good things. We were invited to eat with them but just that minute our cook came in with a feast for us. After supper The General and staff, who seemed to be perfect gentlemen, came in the parlor and asked for some music. Our young ladies didn't wish to play so some of his men went to the piano and played Yankee Doodle and other of their war songs. That made our girls go and play Dixie and Bonnie Blue Flag, for them.

That night we heard of the burning of our house on the plantation in Lancaster Co., five miles away. The General saw that we had heard something to worry us. We told him and he asked if the house was occupied. When told what was in it he said if it had been occupied it would not have been burned. We asked if there was any chance of the one we were in being burned. He said, "No, unless we left it." When The General left next morning he left a guard and told him to see that we had another guard before he left, which each guard did as long as the army was passing through.

General Smith did give us enough provisions to last us several days. We divided the sugar and coffee and each one hid it about their person. We had a bag of meal in the barn and when we went to get some the Yankees would come with a cup and get some of it too.

We had a very faithful servant, Fannie, who took charge of our little girl Annie. They would be out on the piazza most of the time. (It was not cold.) The Yankees would try to pet little Annie and offer her money but

she would turn proudly away. They would say to Fannie, "That child is a _____." At the same time the dear old nurse would be watching what the soldiers were doing. Three different times she came running in saying, "They are going to set fire to the house, Missus." I would rush out to some man who seemed to have some heart, and beg him to stop that man from burning the house. Each time they would order them off. Once the man took the torch to our neighbor's barn and set fire to it. Some days later, this beautiful two-story house where these incidents took place and in which these people were living, was burned by some of Sherman's soldiers or some unknown persons.

Sherman's men came into Liberty Hill February 22, 1865, and left March 2, 1865.

They burned at Liberty Hill:

Mill on Creek

2-story Academy

2 stores (filled with cotton)

Wylie Patterson house

Chum Cureton's house

John Brown's barns and stables, houses at the Tannery and buildings, and his store.

R. B. Cunningham's Plantation house (Lancaster County)

R. B. Cunningham's beautiful 2-story home, barns and stables. The house was set on fire and burned by Yankee soldiers or army stragglers. The family and others in the house barely escaped through the windows as all the doors were locked. Mrs. Mary E. Cunningham went out the burning house carrying little Annie in her arms.

From this first person account of the indignities and fears imposed on those of this one household, one can well understand the animosity that would be felt by any human being because of such treatment.

I SAW SHERMAN'S ARMY (1)

I saw Sherman's Army on its terrible march though South Carolina. It is something no one could ever forget.

I was a boy at Liberty Hill that fateful year.

My father, Andrew Bowie Wardlaw, of Abbeville, was graduated from South Carolina College in 1852. He studied law for a time in the office of his uncle Frank (Chancellor Francis Hugh Wardlaw). But he was in need of money and decided to teach. Through his friend John Elliott, uncle of the late William Elliott, he obtained a position at Beaufort. He succeeded so well as a teacher that he was elected president of Beaufort College. Believing that great proficiency in Latin and Greek were necessary for the successful discharge of the duties of this new position, Father studied these languages intensively although he had made an excellent record in them while at college. His eyes gave out under the strain, however, and he was forced to abandon thoughts of teaching and of the law.

In 1858, Father was married to Sarah Elizabeth Thompson, daughter of James Thompson, a well-to-do planter of Liberty Hill. They established their home in Liberty Hill and Father planted there until the war began.

Liberty Hill was an unusual community of substantial planters who had been drawn to it because of advantages of health, education and church. Their plantations were not in Liberty Hill proper, which was hilly and rocky, but in the fertile country surrounding it.

Mother's father, James Thompson, was the son of William Thompson, who died while quite young. His two sons, James and John, were entrusted to a friend who took care of them until they were 16 and

14 years of age respectively, when the management of their estates was turned over to them. It is remarkable that boys so young should have been able to assume such heavy responsibility successfully.

The Thompsons came from Lancaster county originally. James' grandfather, Adam, owned extensive property both in Lancaster county and on Beaver Creek near Liberty Hill. My Grandmother Thompson was born Charlotte Patterson, the daughter of "Squire" Joseph Patterson, one of the most prominent planters in the Liberty Hill section. Her grandfather was Lewis Collins, another prominent and progressive planter, whose plantation was named "White Oak." His country-bred horse, White Oak Split, created a sensation by winning the four-mile race at Camden one year.

Lewis Collins died in the early 1800's, and his plantation was managed thereafter by his widow, Charlotte Collins, a remarkable woman who lived until the age of 98, remaining active to her death. She was one of the finest plantation managers of the section, ably carrying on the progressive tradition which her husband had established. Mr. Kennedy (R. M. Kennedy in Historic Camden) said that her cotton was always stamped with the initials C.C., and that it was just about the best then grown, being famous even in the Liverpool market.

Grandfather Thompson was an unusually fine man. He was not a college graduate, but he was exceedingly well-read. He was an enthusiastic student of history, particularly Presbyterian history. I can remember hearing him say: "I'd rather read Macaulay's account of the Battle of the Boyne than to eat." He became so engrossed in his reading that the children could play all over him and he would never notice it, but if anyone whispered near him his attention would immediately be distracted. He was an honorable, upright gentleman with great strength of character and charm of manner.

Before the war, Grandfather Thompson was quite well-off, owning extensive farming lands on Beaver Creek and in Lancaster county. He owned a very large number of slaves, exactly how many I cannot estimate. Most of them lived on the plantation proper, but a large number, the house servants, lived on the place at Liberty Hill. There were really more of these house Negroes than were needed. He cared for his Negroes well, seeing to it that their needs were supplied. He remained almost constantly in the saddle, conducting the extensive business of the plantations. The life of the Southern planter was not the life of ease that it has sometimes been depicted.

I can remember the looms and spinning wheels in the home, where the clothes for the slaves and the everyday garments for the family were made. The family's good clothes were brought from Charleston.

I was born in Liberty Hill in 1859.

When the War began, my Father went back to Abbeville and enlisted in McGowan's Brigade. He later became its commissary general, with the rank of major.

Mother and I lived with my Grandfather Thompson in Liberty Hill throughout the War except for one winter when we stayed with Father in Virginia. I was three or four years old at the time. The army had gone into winter quarters, and Father took lodging in Orange Courthouse in the home of Mrs. Conway, a very fine gentlewoman in the best Virginia tradition. He came back to Liberty Hill on leave and took Mother and me back to Mrs. Conway's with him. We remained there until spring. I can remember being taken to Richmond to begin the trip home.

We left Richmond on the same train with the family of Col. Harry Hammond of Beach Island, the son of Senator James H. Hammond. They had been in Virginia spending the winter with Col. Hammond. Our families were great friends from that time on. It was later reported to me that the Hammonds said that Father and Mother were the best friends they made while in Virginia. My Mother told me that little Julia Hammond, who was sound asleep at the time, kissed me when she was being taken from the train. That kiss became a mild family joke. Several times, while we were young, I sent her the message that I intended to return it some day. Years later I had the opportunity to claim that kiss, but somehow it didn't quite come off. Miss Julia grew up to be a very lovely lady.

Life at Liberty Hill went on very much as usual until the latter part of the war. Some items of food and equipment had become scarce, but the produce of the farm was bountiful and we really wanted for little.

And then the Yankees came.

I am not sure that we had heard about the burning of Columbia—news traveled slowly in those days—but we had heard that Sherman's army was approaching Liberty Hill. The first Yankee we saw was an officer who rode up to the gate at the foot of the back steps and demanded to know who lived there. My Grandmother told him, and he said something about taking possession. The following day the whole place was overrun with hordes of plundering soldiers.

Grandfather Thompson, who was an old man, and Uncle John, then

a boy of 14, left before the arrival of the Yankees, as did most of the other old men and boys of the community. I believe they had some vague idea of evading capture and continuing resistance. They were captured by the Yankees in Lancaster county. Their horses and firearms were taken from them and their boots were stripped from their feet. About a week later, after the last of the Yankees had left, they returned home—worn, bare-footed and half-starved. They came back to desolation.

The Yankees had literally taken everything that could possibly be of use to them and destroyed much that could not be. Our place was filled with them for several days. Men ran through the house, cursing and shouting. They took many of the dresses of the women, presumably to send them home, and they cut those they didn't want into shreds with their swords. They destroyed the furniture and slashed the family portraits. I can remember making traps for sparrows with broken-up wood from what had been fine furniture.

Of course all the food on the place was confiscated or destroyed, and nearly all the animals were slain. Many of the soldiers took bestial pleasure in shooting the dogs and other animals. My father had a fine pointer called LeGare, named after his friend, Mr. LeGare Walker of Charleston, who had given the dog to him. LeGare was killed. I have a very vivid recollection of the stench of slain animals, mostly dogs, where bodies lined the road.

A scrawny old setting hen and two puppies were the only animals left alive on the place. The hen pecked a Yankee when attempted to remove her from the nest, and he left her alone probably deciding that she would be too tough to eat anyhow.

Several days after the Yankees left one of the servants found a small, misshapen old pony wandering around in the woods. He had evidently been considered too sorry to carry off. Our first crop after the war was made with this decrepit old pony. We called him Joe Sherman. I can remember seeing Grandfather riding Joe Sherman, his feet dangling almost to the ground on either side.

Most of the Yankees appeared to have no regrets or pangs of conscience about what they were doing, but there were several exceptions. One private, a middle-aged man, stood in our house while the plundering was going on, and the tears streamed down his face.

"My God!" he said, "If I thought my wife and children were going through this I would fight until there wasn't a man left to kill!"

My Mother told me always to remember that man's name and I

have. It was Stephen Coleman.

Another Yankee, an officer—I believe he was a captain offered to have an exchange of references with my mother on behalf of Father. This was not an uncommon practice. Letters of reference would be exchanged, in which each partner agreed to help the other if he were wounded or captured. Mother accepted his offer. His name escapes me.

The Yankees seemed to have a very well-defined plan. Their orders seemed to be, “Take what you want and destroy the rest, but offer no personal violence to individuals.” I don’t believe there was any case of violence to women or rape. If there had been, I am sure I would have heard about it in later years.

Some of the Negroes left voluntarily with the Yankees, and some were seized as contraband of war and forced into service for the Northern army. (For some years afterward the slang expression for Negroes was “contraband.”) However, a surprisingly large number of the ex-slaves remained on the place. Many of them had greater faith in their former masters than in their “liberators.” There were numerous instances of great devotion

Old Bartlett, who had been our carriage driver but who was then a semi-invalid, was threatened with death if he failed to disclose where we had hidden the family jewelry, but he refused to tell. The threat was not carried out.

In later years there was repeated to me many times a story about Bartlett and his clothes. A Yankee went into his cabin and began to question him about the way his master had treated him. Bartlett maintained that he had always been well-treated.

“Does he give you good clothes?” the Yankee asked.

“Yes suh!” Bartlett said emphatically. “He give me fine clothes.”

The Northerner expressed doubt and demanded to see the clothes as proof. Bartlett proudly exhibited them, and his questioner promptly appropriated them.

When the Northern soldiers first entered our house, my nurse, Aunt Jennie, fainted. Mother put a sack of beans in a pillow case under her head while she was down with the faint. Those beans were about all we had to eat for the next several days.

Dr. McDow used to say that Aunt Jennie was the only Negro he ever saw who had nerves. And it wasn’t put on. She actually had all the feelings and sensibilities of a white woman. She was the wife of my father’s body servant Wylie, who went through the entire war with him.

Of course, everybody in the community had hidden most of their family silver, jewelry, firearms, and other similar valuables when they learned that the Yankees were coming. Much of this was found by the enemy, but some of it was saved. Most of the Thompson family silver was lost. My Father had sent a fine gun down from Virginia which he had captured from the enemy. He said it was to be my gun. We hid it in a hollow tree, propped up by a stick, but the Yankees found it.

How did we live after the Yankees left?

The food situation was really desperate. The place was stripped bare of everything they thought we could possibly eat.

All the corn was taken from the cribs and used to feed the horses of the army. The ears were piled on the ground in front of the horses, and, of course, some of the grains fell off into the dirt. We children spent many hours painstakingly picking up the grains of corn which had been left on the ground in this fashion. Bartlett's wife, Aunt Charity, our cook, made lye hominy out of them.

The Yankees also overlooked the hills of seed potatoes—miserable little scraps of potatoes they were. But we children dug them up and they were roasted over the fire and we ate them.

During the war my Grandfather naturally was unable to get a sufficient supply of barrels for liquids. The wood was readily available but the metal bands could not be obtained. In the last winter of the war, he built a huge tank in the cellar. In fact, it almost entirely filled the cellar. Grandfather filled this big tank with sorghum molasses, which was one thing he could raise in large quantities.

When the Yankees came, they took all the molasses they could use and then opened the cocks to the tank, letting the molasses run out in the cellar. After they had gone there were still several inches of sorghum standing in the cellar. We salvaged all we could, straining it through cloth.

But the squirrels which Uncle John shot really kept us going. I don't know where he got his gun; probably it had been successfully hidden from the enemy. The powder and lead were salvaged from scraps which the Yankees had left scattered about the place. Uncle John had to cast his own shot and he didn't know how to do it very well. He would melt the lead in a groove of a piece of fat lightwood, letting the drops roll off to the ground. But each pellet had a sharp end on it, and Uncle John spent many hours cutting the ends off those shot. He killed many, many squirrels with his home made shot; in fact, we practically lived off of them for some time.

The winter before Sherman came had been an unusually cold one. I remember being taken out to the mill-pond about four miles from Grandfather's house. The pond was covered with very thick ice. It was then that I saw ice skating for the first time. There was only one pair of skates in the community. They belonged to Mr. Fenn, a Northerner, who was the schoolmaster. He was a very well-educated man and a good man, I believe. When war came, he sided with the Southerners and elected to stay on in Liberty Hill.

Grandfather had lots of ice cut from the pond and stored it at home. Some of this ice was still in storage when the Yankees came. I remember its being uncovered from the sawdust.

Another distinct recollection which I have is of the first time I saw a house afire. It was one of the houses which were burned by the riff-raff which followed in the wake of the soldiers. This house belonged to Mr. Perry, and it was situated across Singleton Creek about a mile and a half from our house. I remember the effect that the sight of that house burning had on me. It was an absolutely still evening and the fire seemed almost stationary, painted against the night.

When Father returned from Virginia after the surrender, he decided to leave Liberty Hill and make his home in Abbeville county again. For one thing, the region around Abbeville had not been visited by the enemy and had not been stripped bare of everything as had the Liberty Hill section and the rest of the territory traversed by Sherman.

Father took over Coilsford plantation, which belonged to Uncle Lewis (Judge David Lewis Wardlaw), about 12 miles from Abbeville. Mother and I went with him there. Uncle Lewis had never lived on this place, having left it in the hands of an overseer. The overseer's house was the only one available for us, and it was a very poor one. We cleaned it out thoroughly, but it still was a sorry looking place. However, there was a lot of white clay on the place. We dug up a quantity of this clay and made whitewash from it and whitewashed the entire house.

The next year, however, Mother and I went into Abbeville and lived with my Grandfather Wardlaw (Robert Henry Wardlaw) so that I might go to school. Father came in from the plantation every weekend. In 1870, Father went into the mercantile business in Abbeville with John G. Edwards. He later became president of the National Bank of Abbeville.

The period of reconstruction was a terribly difficult one. Everybody lived under constant strain. The fear of trouble with the

Negroes was always present. My Father had little difficulty with the Negroes on the plantation; he managed them with a firm hand. But the town Negroes became more and more impertinent.

This fear was always present in our minds. It was climaxed on election day in 1876. My Father gave me a Derringer pistol and several cartridges to put in my pocket and told me: "Don't use these unless you have to." He was a man of great prudence and was absolutely free from the rashness which characterized many South Carolinians. The fact that he thought it necessary to give me that pistol is strong evidence of the tenseness of the situation.

People in the active part of life had two great burdens to carry: they had to take care of the old people who could not become adapted to the new order of things and take care of the children under terribly difficult conditions. At least three generations were required before any real adjustment could be made to the new order.

We should remember that this was a period of very rapid transition—much too rapid, in fact—and that it was a period of great insecurity and unsettlement. Some of the changes which were wrought in our State were necessary and some were undesirable.

If there is a lesson which we should learn from that period it is that all change must be gradual. If great changes are forced too rapidly, their purposes are defeated. We should remember that particularly today.

I am proud of the Confederacy and of the part my people played in its cause, but I am glad that we were not permitted to leave the Union in peace as we wished. Sooner or later we had to be one people. It was our destiny. America's greatness depends upon both the North and the South, and neither could be America without the other.

BURIED TREASURE

As the dread news arrived at Liberty Hill that Sherman's Army had reached Columbia, burned, shelled, destroyed and ravaged the city and everything in its path, there was mounting fear that the Army would soon cross the Wateree River only a few miles away and enter the village of Liberty Hill. It was inevitable! These were very trying times. Members of each household went about devising various plans to try and save valuables and food from the soon invading Army - "The Yankees".

One of the houses located on Peay's Ferry Road on entering Liberty Hill was The Church Manse, the home of Rev. John G. Richards and family. Only the family was there as Rev. Richards was away serving as a Chaplain in The Confederate Army.

Fearing that the soldiers would soon arrive, the Richards family made an attempt to hide a beautiful gilded edge set of china by burying it in the ground beneath the wooden floor of the hog pen. This was to no avail as the China was soon discovered and destroyed by the Union Soldiers, who took pleasure in throwing the china, piece by piece, down the hill behind the house. The family silver and Mrs. Richards' jewelry were so well hidden that it was not discovered by "The Yankees." (1)

Charles A. Robinson III., a direct descendant of the John Leroy Jones family, who also lived on Peay's Ferry Road, writes a very interesting account of his Great-grandmother gathering up valuables and hiding them. Ma' ma' Jones, as she was called, gathered up her wedding jewelry, her watch, Mr. Hudson's watch chain and cuff links from Ma' ma' Hudson, put them in a tin powder can and ran out behind the house beyond the servants quarters into a field and quickly buried them. After the "Federal Invaders" had left the family could not find where the

watches and jewels had been buried. Some years later the tin powder can was plowed up. The contents was returned to the Jones family. Charlie Robinson III has in his possession the tin powder can. His brother Bill Robinson has the cuff links and his brother Ted has the watch chain. Charles Alexander Robinson IV has the gold watch.” (2)

There are two stories that were told regarding the Robert B. Cunningham family silver. One, a wooden box was filled with the silver and then the box was placed in the swimming hole located on a branch between the Thompson and Cunningham property. A grape vine was tied to the wooden box, which was weighted down, and the other end of the vine was tied to a small tree growing at the edge of the water. This hidden box was not discovered by the soldiers and the silver is still in the possession of descendants of the Robert Cunningham family.

The other story often circulated among the Cunningham family members was that some silver, and perhaps other valuables, were buried near a holly tree located on the south side of the lane leading from the house up to the main road. These treasures, if ever buried in that location, were not found by the soldiers who spent nine days in the village of Liberty Hill. Neither, in later years, were they found by the young boys of the family nor by any of the many young cousins who spent hours digging around the holly tree, hoping to find buried treasure. The holly tree survived all the digging around it and grew into a large tree. Time eventually took its toll and in 1992 after an unusually hot dry summer the holly tree died and took with it the secret of the buried treasure of 127 years.

A very interesting story is told of how the Alexander Matheson family hid the family silver in a very unique place. Pretending that she was sick Laura Matheson, a young girl only 13 years old was put to bed by her mother. Around this sick girl was placed the silver. Although the soldiers pierced the mattress in several places with their swords the silver was not discovered. What an experience for a thirteen year old! In later years “Miss Laura”, as she was affectionately called, often told of this early childhood experience. (3)

Besides silver, jewelry and other valuables the families of Liberty Hill made every attempt to hide food. The food supply was already scarce as all that could be spared had been gathered up to supply the Confederate Armies.

The story is told of the faithful servants of Rev. John G. Richards. When they heard the news of the advancing army, they killed the hogs

and canned some of the pork in glass jars. These jars were then buried in a freshly plowed field near the house. Alas, this was to no avail, as the soldiers soon found the buried jars by probing the area with their bayonets. Most of the jars were broken so the meat was unfit to be used. (4)

Another effort to save meat, especially hams, was told in later years by a daughter of Mr. William C. Cunningham. Mrs. Rebecca Cunningham Perry known as "Miss Pet", related that hams were stored around the edge of the cistern located under the carriage house back of the big house. Also servants hid other items of food under the steps. (5)

At the James S. Thompson home the Yankee soldiers found the molasses stored in the cellar under the house. They took all they wanted then pulled the bung (stopper) from the bunghole in the big wooden tank and let the molasses run out onto the dirt floor. After the army had moved on the family salvaged what they could by straining the mixture, molasses and dirt, through a cloth.

The following incident occurred at the home of Robert B. Cunningham when it was occupied by Union Officers. One morning when a Captain and his men were leaving, one of the men came to the door and told Mrs. Cunningham that a piece of meat had been left for them. When she looked in her room, the piece of meat was laid on her pretty work table and kerosene oil had been poured over it.

As told in these brief accounts of the struggle to protect valuables and what food these people had, one can get a glimpse of the inhumane actions of "the Yankee" soldiers, and can feel the sufferings inflicted upon these helpless families. The invading army took all livestock and anything edible..what they didn't take with them they destroyed or left it unusable.

Devastation and desolation was everywhere. Some families lost their homes, others lost only stables, barns and stores as they were set fire and burned. Most houses were ransacked. Drawers were pulled open, contents searched and then scattered about the room. All valuables were taken. No part of a home was left untouched.

After the Union Army had left Liberty Hill there was very little food. The people depended on squirrels, rabbits and other wild game that could be found. Corn was picked up from the ground where the horses had been fed, washed clean and cooked as hominy.

When Rev. John G. Richards returned to Liberty Hill after serving as a Chaplain during the war he saw the plight of his congregation, how destitute they were for food. He did something about the situation. Rev.

Richards went to Ebenezer, the small church in York County near Rock Hill where he was Pastor before coming to Liberty Hill in 1858. Sherman's army had not passed through that part of the state. Rev. Richards preached on a Sunday and reported the horrible almost starving conditions that his congregation was experiencing. The people of Ebenezer responded most generously. Provisions were given, enough to fill a four horse wagon and in two days it arrived at Liberty Hill. There were prayers of thanksgiving and joy. (6)

The war had brought a drastic change to the way of life for the once wealthy and prosperous families of Liberty Hill. With courage and determination they struggled through the injustices and hardships of Reconstruction. Although life was difficult and different Liberty Hill never lost its uniqueness and charm, nor its ways of showing hospitality.

**REMINISCENCES OF MRS. C. P. POPPENHEIM
DURING HER STAY AT LIBERTY HILL AS
A REFUGEE FROM CHARLESTON, SOUTH
CAROLINA, AND DURING GENERAL
SHERMAN'S OCCUPANCY OF THAT
PLACE IN FEBRUARY 1865 (1)**

"**A**t 10:15 a.m. we leave Camden, I having a most comfortable seat that Mr. Atkinson took great pains to prepare for me; take my first view of a beautiful country from a wagon. Camden is a lovely little town, with considerable wealth. The long, long road to Liberty Hill has few houses to relieve the monotony; but most beautiful scenery on both sides of the Wateree River. We wind along the bends of the river and in view of the water for many miles; at last we near Liberty Hill and, through the kindness of a Mr. Cureton, put up at his unoccupied house, well furnished and comfortable. There we find a train of refugees from Columbia, including Governor Adams' daughter; and very unexpectedly I met my old schoolmate and friend, Harriet Sophia Clarkson. Spend a pleasant night. Stopped there at 6 p.m. and leave next morning at 5:45 o'clock; in a little while we reach Liberty Hill, and must stop awhile, admiring the grandest and most extensive view my eyes ever feasted on; told Christie I could spend one month on that spot and my eyes would never tire of the scene, little dreaming then how many days of fearful anxiety I would spend at this lovely place."

"Sunday morning, ride through the place and lose our way for two miles; but it surely gives us a splendid view of the Hill; return and cross at Peay's ferry; a miserable road, a tiresome jolting in the wagon, and

excitement grown greater every mile. Stop a few minutes at Mr. James Caldwell's. Dr. Kinloch kindly invites us in; his wife sends us out a hot lunch, and we conclude to go on as far as possible, though every one is wild with excitement and hourly looking for the Yankees. Arrive at General Clayton's headquarters at dark; have a beautiful view of campfires; all stop and doubt the safety of going on to Blackstock; Christie goes in to see General Clayton, who advises him not to go on, as the Yankees are very near, and Kilpatrick's raiders all through the woods. All hopes are disappointed; with heavy hearts and tired limbs, we turn our course back to Liberty Hill as the only place of safety, there to remain until the Yankees pass through and we have a safe road. In the wagon until 10 p.m.. Stop at a large brick house - Dr. Hall's - and there we find two lunatics from the lunatic asylum in Columbia, placed there to preserve the house from destruction by the Yankees. It was a night of horrors; the crazy woman walked into my room, with a candle in her hand, after I was in bed, drew the curtains aside, and peered into my face to see if I was asleep, I suppose, which I did not pretend to be. We left the place bright and early, and felt that our escape from danger had been very narrow. A long, tiresome day's ride; recross Peay's ferry; much excitement all the way; met many of Butler's men, and do not feel safe until we cross the ferry; joy that we have crossed the river. Arrive at Liberty Hill at 4 p.m., put up at Mr. John Brown's; very kind people; large house and every appearance of abundant means; large grounds, and hundreds of poultry around."

"Tuesday, February 21st. - The excitement was even reached here, and the place that we thought, of all others, safest, seems to fear the Yankees; so we calmly resign ourselves to our fate of meeting them."

"February 22nd. - Great anxiety; many of the citizens send off trunks and bury all their valuables. Mrs. Brown feeds a great many of our soldiers. Several scouts come in, and Christie wants to go to Columbia with one 'Orchard,' who lives in Columbia. At 4 p.m. several horsemen came dashing in; we are eager for the news; I beg Christie to go and hear; he had not left me five minutes before I saw the bluecoats and realized I had sent him to meet the Yankees; I ran to the front door and down the steps; saw them halt him, then pass and seize a negro boy, take his horse and make him lead them to the lot. In a few moments, a band of ruffians, a wild, savage looking set, dashed in the house, into the dinning-room, and swept all the silver from the table, that was set for dinner; ran upstairs, broke open doors, locks and drawers, and the utmost

confusion prevailed; the hammering sounded like one dozed carpenters were at work, and soon all the floors were covered with scattered papers, in their search for money and valuables. I go to the commanding officer and ask for assistance; he promises protection. Christie and myself go upstairs; my trunks broken open, and everything scattered in confusion over the floor. Oh! what a scene, impossible to describe! Money, jewels and clothing of every description taken by these demons! Lieut. B. Ulrich gives us a guard, and stays himself in the house, to protect us; but little sleep for any of us this night.”

“**February 23rd.** - Thousands of Yankees coming in; one command follows another in quick succession; all robbing and plundering; poor Mrs. Brown is robbed of provisions, silver, and almost everything; they go down in the cellar and pour kerosene oil, molasses and feathers all together, then stir them up with their bayonets. Mrs. Brown and myself go out to meet General Logan. What an awful feeling to come so close to hundreds of Yankees who are burning and destroying everything on the face of the land! Several staff officers tell us General Logan has just passed; but if we wait long enough, another Cops will pass, and we can see General Wood. While waiting for the Yankees to pass, and looking on their fine horses, and hundreds of stolen cattle, the refugees from Columbia who followed Sherman’s army began to pass; among them I recognized Mary Boozer and her mother in a carriage, she in a lively conversation with a gay looking officer riding by the carriage; the scene is so sickening, I beg Mrs. Brown to let’s return; waiting for the General won’t pay!

“**Friday, February 24th.** - Today, Yankees throng the house, search and rob what others left. They ask Christie repeatedly how he keeps out of the army. Mrs. Brown and myself again go out and wait to see the General, but again he has just passed; the staff officers whom we meet look and speak as heartless as stones. Another sleepless night of suspense.

“**Saturday, February 25th.** - Still they go through-hundreds and thousands - all gayety, with bands of music, and burning houses light their march; last night we could count twelve burning residences, and imagine the horror of those who dwelt in them. Mr. Brown’s large mill burnt.”

“**Sunday, February 26th.** - Anything but a quiet Sabbath; Yankees still plundering and the negroes following them. Mr. Brown’s large store burnt. A sleepless night of suspense, expecting every hour to have the torch set to the house we were in.”

“Monday, February 27th. - The wicked Yankees! How they torment the people! The brutal wretches! How they insult helpless women! They take every morsel of food that is being cooked in the kitchen; every fowl and every living thing they have killed and destroyed but one lone goose hidden in the cellar by a faithful servant. We had no meat for three days, when this servant attempted to save and cook the goose for us by cooking it in the dining-room; the savory smell of roast goose was perceived by Mrs. Brown and myself, who go to the dinning-room and find a horde of ruffians devouring the last remnants of the goose, and we only say, ‘The last morsel of meat is gone!’ A foraging party, led by a lieutenant, and a squad, led by a captain, plunder every corner of the house that has not been already searched. Christie goes up in the garret to keep them from setting fire; they want to arrest and carry him off to camp; they say he is a Captain in the Rebel army by his grey vest, with brass buttons; and they find an old sword up in the garret, which they swear is his. I fear he is up with them too long; I fear foul play, and tell Mrs. Brown I must go up and see what they are doing, although my knees tremble at every step, and I fear they will hear the bumps made by the sound of the money sewed up in the lining of my dress; I had over one hundred thousand dollars sewed up in the lining, to save it from the Yankees; they had taken four thousand dollars out of one of my trunks, and thought that was all. When I reached the top of the stairs, the sharp little captain had him, and Christie said, ‘Mary, this man thinks I am a captain in the Rebel army, and wants to take me prisoner to camp.’ I had to swear that he was not, and that we had been married a very short time, and now were on our way to my father’s plantation. Then I gave him the Masonic sign of distress (which my brother gave me before going to war); he looked down, shut his mouth tight, then said, ‘Go on.’ And we lost no time in going. When this party came down stairs they captured Mr. Atkinson and Mr. Steinmyer and took them off to camp. How we all pitied their fate!”

“Tuesday, February 28th. - Still harassed by the vile Yankees, and spend sleepless nights, seeing the skies lit by burning fires; at midnight, the academy is in flames, and we expect every moment to see the flames burst out from the house we are in; once a vile Yankee was caught with the torch applied; the flames were put out, and I appealed to an officer to give us a guard for the night.

“Wednesday, March 1st. - Dr. Robert Kinlock and Lieutenant Swinton Bissell came in quite early and tell us of their escape from the

Yankees, after having marched several days through mud knee deep. The Yankees were pushing rapidly for Camden, to plunder and rob the peaceful, quiet little town. We are starving here; have nothing to eat but sorghum molasses and black short bread. Sherman's army has left no living thing on their route; nothing but blackened chimneys and smoking ruins mark their footsteps here; a sigh of relief and a prayer of thankfulness that our lives were spared was breathed, as we saw the last Yankee soldier disappear from the devastated little village."

Mrs. C. P. Peppenheim
Charleston, S.C.

“EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS” (1)

In the winter of 1864 Mr. F., a rich banker of Washington, D.C., wrote to me, asking me to try and locate a cousin of his - one Lieut. Holbrook of Pennsylvania who was taken prisoner while serving in Sherman's army in the West. This prisoner had been confined where Mr. F. could reach him and supply his wants, in the Libby prison at Richmond, for year and a half. He had been removed. I was requested to find him, and Mr. F. offered to reciprocate favors on any Confederate I should designate. I promptly instituted a search of the prisons in Columbia, Andersonville and Charleston. Lieut. Holbrook was found in Charleston, where he had been placed "under fire" as it was designated within the city limits and in reach of the shells fired by the Yankee fleet.

I learned through friends that the prisoner had been ill with Pneumonia and was then in the Rikersville Hospital, just outside the city on the South Carolina Railroad.

He was in precarious health, and I opened a correspondence with Gen. Wardel, asking permission to transfer Lieut. Holbrook to my house in Winnsboro, stating that a reciprocal exchange of courtesies would be exercised on a prisoner North. I was soon honored with the necessary "permit" and brought my prisoner home myself and nursed him into convalescence.

Through Provost Marshall Gayer of Charleston (who recently died) my prisoner was exchanged in the course of a few weeks. The poor fellow however, died in less than a year from the effects of his long confinement and illness in prison. My substitute was Capt. John L. Jones of Liberty Hill, one of the captains of the 7th Battalion, who about that time was made prisoner and confined at Fort Delaware. The rich banker,

as soon as he was informed of the services rendered to his cousin, reciprocated in a magnificent manner. The jolly captain, who imprisonment, even in this dreary Yankee prison, could not entirely, depress, was lying around no doubt expecting to rot where he was until the war ended. He was aroused one day by a brief and astounding letter from a perfect stranger with a still stranger German name, with an enclosure of \$15.00 in greenbacks. "Who the devil is this Dutchman Fahnestreck, and how did he know me?" He could hardly believe his eyes and this windfall. But the Captain was ever "cock of the walk," and in his natural element treating friends and enjoying himself as far as it was possible considering his surroundings. News was slow reaching Washington in those days but as soon as Mr. F. heard that my Lieut. had been sent on for exchange he fixed up Capt. Jones' papers.

In two weeks after the first surprise, a second letter reached him, announcing his release and a cordial invitation extended to spend a few days in Washington with Mr. F. He was entertained handsomely and shown the sights of the city. A \$100 bill was quietly thrust into the Captain's hands next day, "to enable him to make some little purchases for his family at home." - "only begging him for a little reservation in one corner of his trunk for a small package for my cousins in South Carolina." Capt. Jones ever retained a feeling of relationship to that noble Yankee who was not ashamed to entertain a Confederate soldier in princely style, not with-standing his ragged Confederate uniform.

Capt. Jones never had the remotest idea how the thing all came about until he got to Washington and his debt of gratitude to me was paid with interest.

M. C. Rion

LETTER (1)
Cunningham Chapter - U.D.C.
Liberty Hill, SC

South Carolina
Camp
Near Camden
February 26, 1865

My dear wife,

I have no time for particulars. We have had a glorious time in this State, unrestricted to burn and plunder was order of the day. The chivalry has been stript of their valuables. Gold watches, silver pitchers, cups, spoons, forks, etc are as common in camp as black berries - the terms of plunder are as follows: The valuables secured are estimated by Co., each Co. requested to exhibit the results of its operations at any given place, one fifth and 1st choice to the "Commander in Chief and Staff", one fifth to corps commander and staff, one fifth to Field officers of Regiments, two fifth to Co., (officers are not allowed to join in expeditions unless disguised as privates). One of our corps Commanders borrowed a suit from one of my men and was very successful at this place. He got a large quantity of silver, among other things was an old time silver milk pitcher and very fine watch from a Mr. Desaussure of this place. Desaussure is one of the FFV's of this place and was made to fork out liberally. Officers over the rank of Capt. are not made to put their plunder in estimate for general distribution. This is very unfair and in order to protect themselves, subordinate officers and privates keep back everything they can carry about their persons, such as rings, earrings, breast pins, etc of

which, if I live to get home, I have about one quart. I am not joking - I have at least one quart of jewelry for you and the girls (and some number one diamond rings and pins among them). Gen. Sherman has silver and gold enough to start a bank. His share in the gold watches and chains in Columbia was (275). But I said I could not go into particulars all the general officers and many besides have valuables of every description. We took gold and silver from the d—d who have redeemed in currency twice over. The currency when we find it we burn it as we consider it worthless. I wish all the jewelry this Army has could be carried to the old Bay State. It would deck her out in glorious style, but alas! it will be scattered all over the North and middle states. The Damned negros preferred to stay at home after they found we only wanted the able bodied men to tell the truth (the youngest and best looking women) sometimes we took off whole families of Niggers, by way of paying some influential secessionist but the useless ones of these we managed to lose sometimes in crossing rivers and in other ways.

I shall write again to you from Wilmington, Goldsboro or some other place in N.C. The order to March has arrived and I must hurriedly close.

Love to Grandmother and Aunt Charlotte. Take care of yourself and the children. Don't show this letter out of the family.

Your affectionate husband,
Thos. J. Myers, Lieut.

P. S. I will send this by 1st Flag of Truce to be mailed unless I have an opportunity of sending it to Hilton Head. Tell Sallie I have a pearl bracelet and earrings for her. Bob Laubers got the necklace and breast pin of same set. I am trying to trade him out of them. These were taken from the Misses Jamisons, daughters of the President of So. Car. Secession convention.

We found these ladies on the trip through Georgia.

(This is a copy of the original letter which is in the possession of Miss Laura Matheson, Liberty Hill, S.C. a “daughter of the sixties”)

Mrs. W. C. Perry

Historian of the W.A.
Cunningham Chapter U.D.C.
Liberty Hill, S.C.

William Arthur Cunningham was born August 1848 at Longtown, SC, across the Wateree River from Liberty Hill where he lived all of his adult life. He was only fifteen years old when the call came for volunteers. He volunteered and went as a substitute for his father William Curry Cunningham, who was too old to serve in The Confederate Army.

William was attending the Arsenal Military School in Columbia when Sherman’s Army reached Columbia. He was called and served under Col. John P. Thomas until the war ended. He was mustered out at Greenville, SC on April 9, 1865.

EXPERIENCE OF A MARYLAND WOMAN IN SOUTH CAROLINA DURING THE RECONSTRUCTION (1)

(By Mrs. Joseph W. Floyd)

In 1869, the Governor of this state was a man from Ohio whose name I forget, a carpetbagger, as they were called. The state offices were all filled with men like them from the North, and negroes who had developed a certain power to lead their race. The legislature was composed mostly of negroes, most of whom could not read or write, with a few degenerate whites who joined them for the chance of plunder. The State Superintendent of Education, as well as those of the several counties, were fellows of the worst class.

As you may know, all negroes at that time were furnished by the U. S. Government with arms and ammunition for so-called "self defense." U. S. soldiers were stationed at the polls to see that they voted freely; and incidentally to prevent any white men from doing so who had in any way made themselves obnoxious to the authorities then in control—a very easy thing it was to do.

In spite of taxes so high that, one after another, nearly 75% of the old plantations were sold at sheriffs' orders to pay them; the roads were mere troughs of mud, never worked, and schools were open only two months of the year.

Year by year, the Legislature levied more and more taxes, and the money was spent to pay for dress suits, silk hats, pianos, carpets and furniture for the homes of those then in office.

The next governor, F. B. Moses, was a native of Sumter, S. C., a

degenerate son of a prominent Jewish family, wealthy and highly respected in the state. He carried things with an even higher hand, stumping the state prior to election day with what he called a message for his colored brethren, in which he told them that all white people had, they (the blacks) had made for them, that for long ages they had been defrauded unrighteously of their share, and were justly entitled to take it all by any means they chose.

This condition continued for several years and the oppression of the former ruling class became more and more unbearable. Then Chamberlain, a man from New England, I think, at any rate a carpetbagger, was made Governor. Being a distinctly better man personally than several who had preceded him, he honestly tried to better conditions, but could accomplish very little on the whole, as the legislature would immediately pass over his veto any bills he failed to approve.

When President Hays took his seat he immediately ordered the withdrawal of troops from the state, and in 1876, when another election was pending, the white people determined to redeem the state, peaceably if possible, but if not, at any cost. Chamberlain was again the nominee of the negro party, and General Wade Hampton consented to lead the Democrats.

An association known as the Red Shirt Brigade was formed, including almost every white man of voting age, not of course, the scalawags. Every precinct, county, and district was organized, and they insisted upon an even distribution of time for speaking at all political gatherings.

Donning shirts of brilliant scarlet, and without coats, the men from each community would enter the town where the meetings were held, in groups on horseback, at a gallop, and giving almost continuously the rebel yell. This spectacular performance would often so disconcert the negroes that they hastily sought cover, leaving the meeting almost entirely to the Democrats.

Though the negroes were supposed to be without arms, they would at times have them concealed and at the close of the meeting as the Red Shirts were mounting for the return trip, they would open fire from behind trees and fences. Many a gallant soldier was killed, thus dying as truly in defense of his home as those who fell on the battlefields some years before.

In the community where I lived, Liberty Hill, there were at that time about 200 whites, men, women, and children, and about 600 or 800

negroes in the village or on the plantations immediately surrounding it. Oftentimes during this tumultuous campaign the men were away at political meetings. I would hear, about 3 o'clock in the morning, the roll of the drums in the swamp about half a mile from our place, calling the negroes together for what purpose I could only lie awake and shiveringly conjecture, and suffering agonies of fear of an insurrection with the unspeakable horrors which always accompanied such an uprising.

We had been told by some friendly negroes who worked for us that we would be warned in time to escape if such a step was planned. The danger was that violence would follow so closely upon such a decision that there would be no opportunity for any warning, and the most kindly disposed of our servants would not dare for their own sakes to give us any aid openly.

I would often, when alone in the house with my three babies, lie awake all night with pistol at hand, trying to plan some place where I could hide my little ones. The men were obliged to go, all of them, for they were few enough after the war, and the women, brave and determined as they were, bade them go and never to give up the fight until we were in control again.

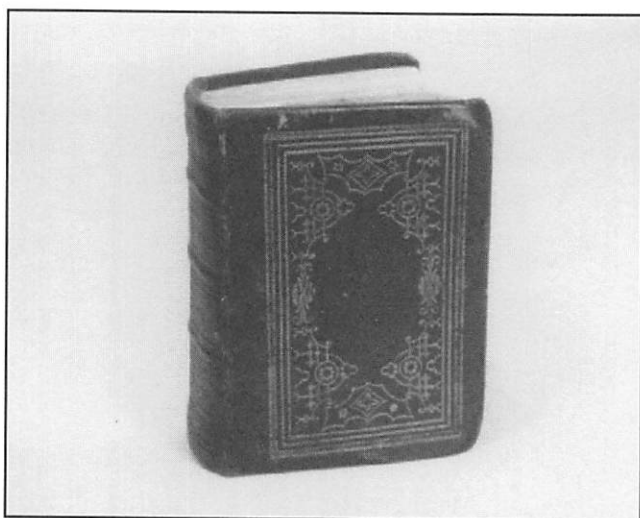
The final struggle came in November, 1876. Both parties claimed the election and both legislatures met in Columbia; one secured the State House and another met in another public building. After a severe contest and some bloodshed, the white men triumphed. General Hampton was seated as Governor with the Democratic legislature, and the state was redeemed.

Debt had been piled upon debt and the work of reconstruction was difficult. It was many, many years before the debts incurred by the ignorant and vicious men who held control so long could be repaid. The state scorned to repudiate its obligations, as many of the Southern states felt justified in doing, and finally cleared them all off.

A LITTLE HYMN BOOK COMES HOME (1)

In 1907 after 42 years, a letter from Quincy, Ill. was received addressed to M. E. Cunningham, Liberty Hill, S.C. It was a letter telling of having a small hymn book picked up at a spring near Liberty Hill in the spring of 1865. The letter asked if the owner was still living and wanted the book, he could reply. The writer Uriah Lawber from Quincy, Ill. said he was getting old and wished to return the book.

M. E. Cunningham was Mary Ellen Cunningham. She wrote a letter to Uriah Lawber saying she was the owner and would like very much to have the book returned to her.



Hymn Book of Mary E. Cunningham 1859

Written on the back fly leaf of the hymn book, 3-1/4 x 2-1/4 x 1-1/4 inches in size, was this notation:

“This is from Uriah Lawber
Co. K, 78 Regt. Ill. Vol. Inf.
Quincy, Ill., 802 Nee St.
(1907)”

On the front fly leaf is the name -
M. E. Cunningham 1859

This hymn book is bound in leather with gold embossed design on front and back covers. Although over 135 years old, it is in almost perfect condition. This book is now in possession of Mary Ellen Cunningham a granddaughter of the original owner.

DOCTORS

During the early years at Liberty Hill was there a doctor to take care of the families physical needs? The answer is "Yes". Although records are brief in some cases, it appears that Liberty Hill was blessed with faithful doctors during the early 1800s and into the turn of the next century.

The first to serve the little community was Dr. T. P. Bush. He was known to be an early resident at Liberty Hill, during the time that Peter Garlick had the first store, this being around 1813. Dr. Bush was a young man when he came to Liberty Hill and was considered a good physician. (1)

Note: Daniel Pomeroy Bush, MD (1795-1873) is buried in the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Cemetery. Could it be that Dr. T. P. Bush and Dr. Daniel Pomeroy Bush are one and the same? Dr. Pomeroy Bush had an office in the basement of the John Brown home. (2)

Dr. Wiley J. McKain (born approx. 1815) a graduate of South Carolina Medical College for a time practiced medicine in Liberty Hill and Lancaster County. He then moved to Camden. From advertisements in local papers in 1848 Dr. McKain and Dr. Charles John Shannon (1826-1876) established the Infirmary for Chronic Diseases in Camden. It was in existence a very short time for at that period there was strong opposition against hospitals. (3)

There is very little information to be found regarding Dr. Willie (William W.) Patterson who was born at Liberty Hill. At one time when he practiced medicine his father, Wyatt Patterson, built an office for him. It was located on the south side of the Patterson home. This building was similar to the Little Office built in 1847 for Dr. Robert Johnson. (4) Dr.

William W. Patterson is buried in the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Cemetery. He served in the Confederate Army as a 2nd Lieut., Company G. 2nd. SC Inf. CSA. He was wounded at Sharpsburg and surrendered at Greensboro. (5)

Dr. Robert B. Johnson (1825 - 1914) attended Charleston Medical College and graduated in 1847. His father William E. Johnson lived at Liberty Hill and in 1847 or 1848 built an office for his son. This was a small one room building, being only 20 feet long and 15 feet wide. It was heated by a fireplace at one end. This building still standing today is known as The Little Office. (6) Dr. Robert Johnson practiced at Liberty Hill about five years then he moved to Camden and served as a prominent physician until the out break of the Civil War. After the war Dr. Johnson moved to Mississippi. He returned to Camden in 1909, where he died in 1914. (7)

Dr. Thomas F. (Franklin) McDow (12/20/1821 - 11/14/1884) married Isabella Louisa Cunningham (5/11/1834 - 7/31/1896). Until their house was completed in 1856 they lived in the old Logan house located about a half mile back of the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church. (8)

Dr. McDow was a surgeon in the Confederate Army. A few years after his return to Liberty Hill he sold his home in Liberty Hill and moved to a large house built by Thomas Ballard, located a few miles



The Little Office Built in 1847

north of Liberty Hill in Lancaster County. Dr. Tom McDow continued to practice medicine, traveling on horseback and carrying his medicine and supplies in the saddle bags. (9) At one time Dr. McDow was Vice-President of the Medical Association of South Carolina. (10)

Dr. J. Walker Floyd, Jr. (1874 - 1915) was born at Liberty Hill. He was the son of Joseph W. Floyd and Harriet Pettit Floyd who settled at Liberty Hill after the Civil War. Dr. J. Walker Floyd attended Ruffordton College for two years where he received his preparatory education and spent one year at the Medical College of Charleston. He left college in 1898 to volunteer for the Spanish American War, where he served as a Hospital Steward in the First Brigade while in Cuba. (11) Upon return home after the war Dr. Floyd resumed his studies at the Medical College at Charleston and graduated in medicine with distinction in the class of 1902. He practiced one year in his home town of Liberty Hill using "The Little Office" as his office.

In 1903 Dr. Floyd moved to Green Sea, SC and then to Tabor, NC in 1906. He enjoyed a wide practice until his sudden death on June 3, 1915 at the early age of 41. Besides his medical profession Dr. Floyd was chairman of the Board of Trustees of the city schools, a banker, a druggist and farmer; he was very influential in the affairs of his hometown of Tabor, NC. Dr. J. Walker Floyd is buried in the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Cemetery beside his wife Rebecca Cunningham Floyd and his parents. (12)

Dr. James Prioleau Richards (8/18/1861 - 1/12/1902) born at Liberty Hill was only about three and half years old when Sherman's army passed through Liberty Hill. He had memories of the hardships suffered by the families after the war. Before going to the Medical College in Charleston Prioleau Richards taught school to help pay for his education. After graduation he came home to practice medicine and farm in his native village. (13)

Dr. Richards was considered an excellent doctor by his patients, some of whom were his aunts and cousins. One Aunt even named her first son for him. Dr. Prioleau Richards' oldest daughter Mrs. Annie Richards Heriot, now 104 years old, told that her father's office was a small brick building located in the side yard, west of their house. This small room was built over a cellar. It was here Dr. Richards prepared and mixed the medicines for his patients. In one corner of the small room was a ladder which led down to the cellar, or dry well below. In the summer the children were allowed to go down and bring up watermelons,

which were stored there. (14)

Dr. Prioleau Richards practiced medicine for a number of years but later decided to give up his practice and turned to farming. At one time he was the mail carrier and Assistant Postmaster. Dr. Richards died in 1902 at his home, after fighting a fire on the house roof the day before. He left a wife, Caroline Jones Richards, with five daughters and four sons. His last son James Prioleau Richards, Jr. was born a week after his father's death. (15)

After Dr. Prioleau Richards' death Liberty Hill citizens depended on Dr. W. S. Moore who lived in Heath Springs thirteen miles away. When someone was taken sick the order of the day was "send for Dr. Moore" or take the sick person to the doctor. Only one or two families at Liberty Hill owned a car so a neighbor was called on to either go for the doctor or take the patient to him. Dr. Moore's fee was \$2.50 for a visit. Dr. Moore died in 1941.

As the years passed by more families had their own cars and also the roads were improved, with new ones being built. It was then the Liberty Hill people started going to doctors located in Lancaster, Camden and Great Falls.

SOLDIERS OF THE SPANISH AMERICAN WAR

Almost a century has passed since the young men of Liberty Hill, South Carolina answered the call to serve their country in the time of



*James W. Thompson (Left)
Charles D. Cunningham (Right)*

war. This, The Spanish American War 1898-1899, was one of the shortest wars engaged in by American Armed Forces. It was brought on by the Cuban struggle for independence from Spain which began in 1895. The United States became involved because of humanitarian concern for the suffering Cubans and the need to protect the U.S. trade and investments on the island, which at that time amounted to millions of dollars.

James W. Thompson withdrew from Clemson College, and he with

Charles D. Cunningham, a young farmer at Liberty Hill, traveled to Chester to enlist in the Volunteer Army. It was July 20, 1898 that they joined the 2nd SC Volunteer Infantry, Company "F". They were first

occupied. Selwyn Cunningham described the country as “the prettiest I ever saw; a land of big oranges, coconuts and pineapples.” Robert Lee Cunningham often caught cows that were roaming the countryside and milked them. Other soldiers paid little Cuban boys to climb the tall coconut trees to pick the nuts and throw them down to the men.

2nd Sgt. Charles D. Cunningham was a supply officer for Company “F”. He often worked on his books at night by candle light. Early in February, Charles in a letter from Cuba to his mother Mrs. Mary E. Cunningham, wrote that he and others had been in swimming. At Liberty Hill about the same time, February 14, 1899, the temperature was hovering around three degrees above zero. The school had been closed for a period of 10 days or 2 weeks as one to three feet of snow covered the ground. (5)

Shown in the photograph is a joint of Cuban cane a part of the 40 foot U.S. flag pole of which Charles Cunningham cut and cleaned with his pocket knife. Inscribed on this canteen made from the joint of cane are the names of the officers of Company “F” and the camps. (6)

Col. Wilie Jones
2nd SC Reg. Vol. Inf.
July 20, '98

Camp Columbia (Cuba) 1st Div. Brig. 7th A C
Company “F”
Capt. Crawford
Lt. Kent
Lt. Howze
1st. Sgt. Thompson
Qm. Sgt. Hyatt
2nd. Sgt. Cunningham
3rd. Sgt. Brooks
4th. Sgt. Gowley
5th. Sgt. Stone

Tent M	Havana, Cuba
Cunningham	January 30, 1899
Brooks	Co. F 2nd. SC Vol. Inf.
Stone	Com Corps Gen. Lee
Howie	Com Brig Gen. Douglas
	Com Reg Maj. Eaves
	Com Reg Col. Jones

Camp Lee
Columbia, SC
July 20 to Sept. 15, '98
Cuba Libre
Panama Park, Fla
Sept. to Oct. 20, '98
Camp Onward
Savannah, GA
October 20, '98 to Jan. 3, '99

Camp Columbia
Havana, Cuba
Jan. 6 - Mar. 2, '99

On March 2, 1899 four days less than two months, having arrived in Cuba January 6, 1899, the 2nd SC Volunteer Infantry, Company "F" left Cuba to return to Savannah, GA. While stationed there, waiting to be discharged some of the soldiers developed yellow fever and a few died. From Camp Onward, Savannah, GA the company moved to Camp Lee in Columbia, SC.

2nd Sgt. Charles D. Cunningham was discharged from service in April 1899 and Corpl. Selwyn H. Cunningham was mustered out on August 19, 1899 at Augusta, GA. 1st Sgt. James W. Thompson was discharged on April 19, 1899. Dates of discharge for Robert Lee Cunningham and Dr. J. Walker Floyd, Jr. are unknown.

Perhaps it would be of interest to relate what took place in the lives of these young men after the brief time they served in the Spanish American War. J. Walker Floyd, Jr. returned to the Medical College of Charleston where he graduated in medicine with distinction in the class of 1902. Following his graduation he practiced medicine one year at Liberty Hill then moved to Green Sea, SC to be there three years, 1903-1906. In 1907 Dr. Floyd moved with his family to Tabor City, NC where he practiced medicine until his sudden death on June 2, 1915, at the early age of 41. Dr. Floyd was well liked. He served his community in many ways and was respected by all who knew him. (7)

2nd. Sgt. Charles D. Cunningham returned home to find it difficult to locate a job. He subscribed to The State, a Columbia SC newspaper, in order to get the advertisement section. Finally after seeing an ad and applying he was accepted for a job in a bank located in Rock Hill, SC.

THE POSTAL SERVICE AT LIBERTY HILL THROUGH ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS

Liberty Hill was one of the early South Carolina back country settlements. Historians have recorded that as early as 1813 Peter Garlick had a store located in the area. It was a gathering place for the early settlers and plantation owners of the surrounding countryside. This store, as best as can be determined, was located on the southside of what is now Hwy 522, at the junction with Hwy 97. (1)

The first recorded Postmaster at Liberty Hill was Joseph McD. Garlick, January 19, 1818. (2) Post Office records in the National Archives in Washington, D. C. indicate J. McD. Garlick as being commissioned Postmaster at Liberty Hill on June 30, 1830. Most probably he was related to Peter Garlick. Robert Goldsberry posted \$600 dollars bond for Mr. Garlick on May 25, 1830. (3)

As early as 1810 South Carolina had a well established pattern of Post Roads criss-crossing the state, thus connecting the small frontier settlements with the main Post Roads of the larger developed towns. It was through Acts of Congress of May 8, 1794, February 25, 1795, March 2, 1799, April 25, 1810 and others, that these roads were established. Indian Trails and backcountry paths and roads were used as the designated Post Roads. (4) Liberty Hill was on the Post Road from Camden to Lancaster and it can be assumed the mail was transported possibly from point to point by "Pony Express". Most probably for a number of years, Peter Garlick's store was the drop off and pick up point for the Liberty Hill mail.

The next Postmaster listed in the records at the National Archives

was Wyatt Patterson, commissioned on January 8, 1838. The Post Office at that time was located in his store near the section of road through Liberty Hill known as "Rattlesnake Bottom". The Patterson home was on a hill on the east side of the road from the store. It was said one could sit on the front porch and at a certain time of the year see the sun set by looking through the front and back doors of the store.

The Post Office at Liberty Hill was still in operation on June 1, 1861 when the Confederate States of America Post Office Department took over the postal system in South Carolina. This Post Office also has the distinction of still serving the same community it served in 1860. There are 115 other post offices with this same distinction. (5) (6)

Wyatt Patterson died in 1866. Archival records show that the Post Office was discontinued at Liberty Hill on January 14, 1867 and re-established on September 23, 1867 with James L. Brown as Postmaster. He served only about a year as the Post Office was discontinued again on August 31, 1868.

These were trying times for the South and the village of Liberty Hill. It was a period of Reconstruction when the South was trying to establish some kind of order after the defeat in the Civil War, 1861-1865. Chaos was everywhere; any semblance of state government was in turmoil, all industry was paralyzed. "Native white radicals were branded scalawags and were far more detestable than the Carpetbaggers who had come from beyond the state and arrived with the invading Federal Troops." (7)

Federal Troops marched through Liberty Hill after crossing the Wateree River at Peay's Ferry. Many camped in and around Liberty Hill, with some of the officers taking over the spacious homes to use as their headquarters. Troops were in the area for nine days - February 22, 1865 - March 3, 1865. When they left they burned, they plundered; what they could not take with them they destroyed. (8)

For a period of about eight years Liberty Hill was without a Post Office. As previously stated, the office had been discontinued in August 1868.

During reconstruction days and Republican rule Reub Gaither, a colored citizen from Liberty Hill served for a time as a representative to the South Carolina legislature from Kershaw County. It was during his term that he appointed his son Pete Gaither to be Postmaster at Liberty Hill. Pete Gaither used the Little Office for the Post Office. This was a small, one room building built in 1847 and originally used as a doctor's

office. Archival records show that Peter D. Gaither served for only one year from April 27, 1876 - April 27, 1877. He misappropriated postal funds and was fired and sent to jail. (9)

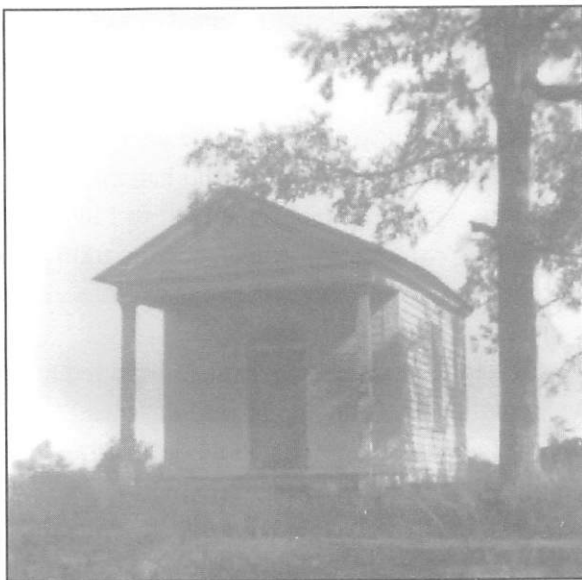
At the time that Pete Gaither was Postmaster, Col. Lewis J. Patterson along with others did not wish to receive mail at the

Liberty Hill Post Office. Col. Patterson rented a box in Camden. His wagon made two or more trips to Camden weekly to get provisions and to pick up the mail. Friends of Col. Patterson also received mail in this rented box in Camden.

Archival information lists the shortest time served by a Postmaster at Liberty Hill as the term of Darling J. George, who held the position for about six weeks, the dates being July 26, 1877 to September 4, 1877. This was shortly after Pete Gaither had been fired from the postal service in April 1877.

Mr. Stephen M. Richards was appointed September 4, 1877 to serve as Postmaster. He held the position fifteen years, until his death in August 1892. He succumbed to the dread disease of typhoid fever. At that time the Post Office was in a small store located on the corner of the old baseball field on the southside of the road leading to the Presbyterian Church. This store was owned by Rev. John G. Richards.

For a short period at the death of Mr. Stephen Richards, his assistant and also brother, Dr. James Prioleau Richards filled in as Postmaster. According to Archival records Mrs. Lily McK. Richards, widow of Stephen Richards, was appointed Postmaster on November 18, 1892 and served until June 18, 1898. It was during her term that the Post Office and store located at the top of the church hill burned. All Post Office records were destroyed in this fire. The Post Office was then



The Little Office Used As Post Office 1876-1877

moved to the old Goodwyn Jones store. This building was one of the oldest buildings in Liberty Hill having been built sometime before the Civil War by the late John Brown.

At this point it is appropriate and interesting to give some history of the mail carriers and those who had charge of the mail routes. In the late 1870s a carrier brought the mail to Liberty Hill from Lancaster one day, went on to Camden, came back the following day on the return trip to Lancaster. The mail carrier made his arrival known by blowing a bugle. (10)

Over the years the mail was transported by various means of travel: sometime on foot, horseback, in two-wheel cart, buggy or a two-horse wagon. In later years a Model-T-Ford was used, and then the newer cars as they came on the market. Often it was late afternoon or night before the mail carriers arrived back at Liberty Hill with the mail.

During the early years of the mail routes Mr. Norman S. Richards had charge of the route at Liberty Hill. He employed Wyatt James, called Uncle Pete, a faithful colored citizen, to carry the mail daily to Heath Springs and back to Liberty Hill. Uncle Pete rode in a two-wheel cart and sat on the mail bags. As he arrived with the mail his loud call "Mail, Mail" could be heard from quite a distance. Henry Bailey, another faithful colored citizen, was also a mail carrier in horse and buggy days. At one time Mr. Norman and his brother Dr. James Prioleau Richards had the mail carrier contract together. They hired two colored men to walk and carry the mail to Heath Springs and return to Liberty Hill.

In the early 1890s Mr. George R. Clements of Lancaster County and his brother-in-law, Mr. Creighton, acquired the first Star Route contract to carry the mail from Liberty Hill to Heath Springs. At this time Mr. Clements moved his residence to Liberty Hill. He and his sons, Eddie and John Henry, gave many years of faithful service. The thirteen miles traveled to Heath Springs over muddy, slippery, unpaved road and in all kinds of weather, sun, rain, freezing rain or snow, was quite a trip to make up and back the same day.

It is interesting to note here several well known points on the old dirt road traveled in all weather conditions. Creighton Hill located about a half mile on this side of Heath Springs was a long moderately steep red clay hill, dusty in dry weather, deep rutted and almost impassible in wet weather. It wasn't unusual for the buggy or wagon, and in later years the car, to get mired up to the axles. The Bell Hill was another section of road difficult to travel in bad weather.

A well known section of road, “The Devil’s Backbone”, and rightly named, was located on the road to Heath Springs about two miles outside of Liberty Hill. Here in the road for a distance of about one tenth of a mile was an outcropping of rock very much like a wash-board, interspersed with loose rock and gravel. This section of road went up a hill on a curve, thus making it very treacherous to travel.



The Monkey Roost - 1941

Quoting from a newspaper article from the Camden Chronicle January 29, 1943, “The mail has arrived at

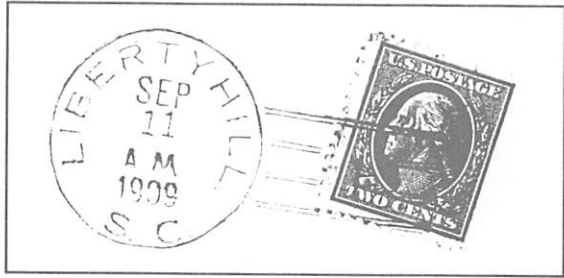
Liberty Hill at different hours—noon, late afternoon, and night. When it came in the late afternoon, during the summer time especially, the young people used to gather on the “Monkey Roost” and wait for the mail. Many are the good times had there during the past years”. “The Monkey Roost” was located just across the road from the store at the bottom of the Johnston Hill, where the Post Office was located from approximately mid 1890s to 1918. “The Monkey Roost” was built of large granite slabs and was four feet high and fifty feet long. It was a big retaining wall located in front of the old John Brown house near the junction of Hwy 97 and the old Camden Road, now known as Singleton Creek Road. It was here that the young folks gathered in the afternoons. Many tales were told, many games played, and fun was had by all. It was quite exciting when one was considered old enough to join the crowd at “The Monkey Roost”.

To continue with the Postmasters who served at Liberty Hill, Archival records show that Frederick J. Hay was appointed Postmaster on March 6, 1899. The Post Office had been moved from the old John Brown store to a building located at the bottom of the Johnston Hill. This store was owned by Mr. N. S. Richards.

Mr. Hay resigned as Postmaster on May 14, 1903 and he was followed by Mr. James B. (Barklay) Johnston. He was appointed to take over the position on June 26, 1903. Mr. Johnston served until September

26, 1907 when Mr. William A. Cunningham was appointed as Postmaster. It was during Mr. Cunningham's term that Money Orders were first put into effect at the Liberty Hill Post Office, this date being December 1, 1914. Mr. Cunningham served eleven years as Postmaster and retired on October 1, 1918.

(11)



Postmark 1909

Post Office records indicate that Mr. Charles D. Cunningham was appointed Postmaster on October 1, 1918. At that time the Post Office was located at the bottom of the Johnston Hill, where it had been located since the mid 1890s. Records show that shortly after "Mr. C.D.", as he was affectionately referred to, became Postmaster, the Post Office was moved on December 1, 1918, 240 yards north to a store at that time owned by Mr. G. R. Clements. While at this location during a severe thunderstorm, lightning struck the iron bars over the window and caused a fire. Only minimum damage was done to the building as the fire was quickly put out. The Post Office had previously been located in this same building in the mid 1890s. It remained at this location about two and a half years until once again on March 23, 1921 it was moved 200 yards farther north into a new store building built by Will Thompson and



C. D. Cunningham Store And Post Office 1921-1957

owned by "Mr. C. D.". This new store was located at the top of the Church Hill and about in the center of the little village of Liberty Hill. Over the little window and area in the store where the Post Office was located there hung a sign LIBERTY HILL spelled out with white quartz arrowheads. This sign was crafted by "Mr. C. D.". The arrowheads, found in the area, were attached to screen wire and placed in the cedar frame, thus making an attractive sign.

(12)



Sign Over Post Office Area

During a period of time the Star

Route mail carrier Mr. Johnny Clements left Liberty Hill about 7 o'clock each morning to begin his daily trip to Heath Springs to take the mail, and to pick up the mail there for Liberty Hill. "Mr. C.D.", The Postmaster, would arrive at the Post Office about 6:30 a.m. to have the mail ready to go. Early one cold morning the following took place: Since it was dark and there were no lights in the building "Mr. C. D." would drive his car up to the front door of the store to shine the car lights on the door and then inside the building when the door was unlocked and opened. This particular cold morning he opened the door as usual. As he walked into the building and towards the back to turn on the lights he saw the shadow of something following him. Gathering up all the courage he could muster, he quickly turned around and shouted, "Get out of here." Much to his relief it was only a poor old dog who had followed him in to get out of the cold.

There were no holidays for a Postmaster of a small Post Office. On Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years or Fourth of July the mail was sent to Heath Springs and received back at Liberty Hill as usual. The only difference on a holiday was the Post Office was open only for a very short time in the early morning and again at noon. Very few customers called for their mail on a holiday.

For many years Mr. George R. Clements and his son John H. Clements continued to be faithful Star Route carriers. As noted earlier the mail was transported by various means and over various conditions of the road and all kinds of weather. In 1940s this drive became easier as the road from Liberty Hill to Heath Springs was paved. In 1940-1944 Mr. R. J. Wardlaw took over the Star Route service. Later Mrs. John H. Clements assisted by Johnny James, a colored citizen, had the carrier contract.

Due to failing health, "Mr. C.D." Cunningham retired as Postmaster on December 31, 1942 after serving almost twenty-four years. He had the distinction of serving next to the longest period of time as Postmaster. Wyatt Patterson, the second Postmaster to serve at Liberty Hill Post Office, served the longest time. This was twenty-eight years.

The store building in which the Post Office was located when "Mr. C. D." was Postmaster is still standing today. It was purchased by the Liberty Hill Presbyterian church in 1987, remodeled with a comfortable apartment located in the back part, and a large storage room at the front.

Upon the retirement of "Mr. C. D." Miss Louise Johnston became the new Postmaster. The Post Office remained in "Mr. C. D.'s" store until February 1957 when it was moved to the present location, the small store building once owned by the late Mr. N. S. Richards and now owned by his daughter Mrs. Edith Richards Wardlaw. This building is located at the bottom of the Johnston Hill at the junction of Singleton Creek Road and Hwy 97. (13)

During Miss Johnston's term as Postmaster the schedule for receiving and dispatching the mail was changed several times. In 1955 keyless boxes with combination locks were installed and made available to those who wished to use them. This was a big change. For more than a century

patrons of Liberty Hill Post Office had been served through general delivery, where they called for the mail at a small window and the mail was handed to them by the Postmaster. (14)



Present Day Post Office

Due to mandatory retirement Miss Louise Johnston retired on June 29, 1962 after almost twenty years with the

postal service. Mrs. Edith Richards Wardlaw was appointed Postmaster on June 30, 1962. She served almost sixteen years, then due to mandatory retirement, retired on May 31, 1978. It can be noted here that Mrs. Edith

R. Wardlaw was the last person to serve as Postmaster who had been born and raised at Liberty Hill.

With the retirement of Mrs. Edith Wardlaw in 1978 Liberty Hill did not have an appointed Postmaster for several years. The following Officers-In-Charge (OIC) appointed by the U. S. Postal Service were at Liberty Hill: John C. Catoe, Charne O. (C.O.) Linderman and Mary E. (Lib) Truesdale.

Postal Records indicate that Mrs. Laura M. Catoe began serving at Liberty Hill as OIC on October 18, 1980 and then appointed as Postmaster on October 10, 1982. Laura Catoe would almost qualify as being a "Liberty Hillian". Her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. John H. Small lived at Liberty Hill several years during the early 1900s. (15)

The number of patrons to use the Liberty Hill Post Office greatly increased over the years. Home owners on Lake Wateree were increasing each year, as more people were retiring and living permanently on the lake. Lake Wateree, only a few miles from Liberty Hill, was the fastest growing recreation area in South Carolina.

Soon after Mrs. Catoe was appointed Postmaster the small store in which the Post Office had been located since 1957 was completely remodeled. Many new locked boxes were installed in the lobby; the work space was enlarged and a restroom and storage space added. A cooling and heating system was also installed. Now, Liberty Hill had an up-to-date Post Office!

Mrs. Catoe retired as Postmaster on October 23, 1987. At that time Mrs. Brenda Barrineau from Olanta, S. C. was appointed as Officer In Charge. She served at Liberty Hill until Mr. Walter L. (Lloyd) Taylor



175th Anniversary - January 19, 1993

from Great Falls took over as Postmaster on January 30, 1988. Mr. Taylor commuted from Great Falls daily, a distance of about fifteen miles one way. Mr. Taylor took early retirement, so left the post office on October 2, 1992 after being at Liberty Hill almost five years.

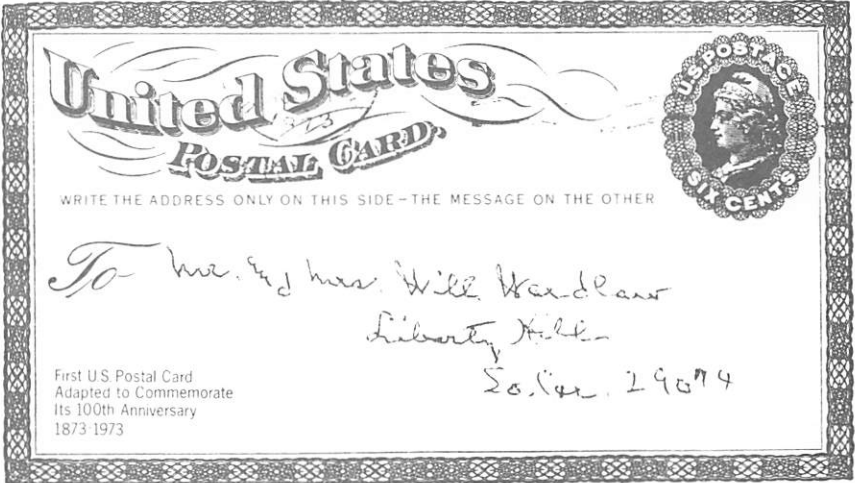
Mrs. Sylvia C. Hudson was appointed Officer in Charge and took over the duties at the Post Office on October 31, 1992. Although Sylvia Hudson was not born at Liberty Hill she is a direct descendant of Mr. Alexander Matheson one of the early settlers in the area. Sylvia, her husband, Jim Hudson and son, Matt (Matheson) live in the old Matheson home built in 1853.

Mrs. Hudson was followed by several Postal employees who served short terms as Officer In Charge (OIC). These employees were Henry Dixon, Mrs. Brenda Barrineau and Linda Taylor.

Sylvia was OIC at Liberty Hill when on January 19, 1993 the Liberty Hill Post Office celebrated its 175th anniversary. The tiny Post Office, all decorated for the occasion with flags and red, white and blue bunting, was filled with former Post Office employees, patrons and friends. A cake with red, white and blue icing in the flag design was served along with cookies and hot or cold drinks. One Liberty Hill resident remarked, "Liberty Hill is such a small community, and the Post Office is one of the last symbols of our identity..." (16)

It was on September 18, 1993 that Mrs. Phyllis D. Dufrene was appointed Postmaster at Liberty Hill. Mrs. Dufrene is a career employee as she began working for the U. S. Postal Service in 1968. She came to Liberty Hill from the New Orleans Division where she worked at the Post Office at Ama, LA. Phyllis, as she is known by all at Liberty Hill, plans to retire from the Postal Service in July 1999.

From its early beginnings on January 19, 1818 with Joseph McD. Garlick as the first Postmaster, the Liberty Hill Post Office has seen many Postmasters come and go. The Post Office today along with the church is "the glue" that holds the community together. It is hoped there will always be a Post Office at Liberty Hill, South Carolina 29074.



The owner of a small crossroads store in South Carolina was appointed postmaster. Over six months went by and not one piece of mail left town. Deeply concerned postal authorities in Washington wrote the postmaster to inquire why.

They received this short and simple explanation:

“The bag ain’t full yet.”

THE DEATH OF A SMALL VILLAGE (1)

The purpose of this writing is to project or emphasize the necessity of having the present United States Post Office remain in existence at Liberty Hill, South Carolina. Phasing this Post Office out of existence means the death of the name of Liberty Hill. A Robert Mills map of Kershaw County, dated 1820, shows Liberty Hill as a community. This Post Office is on the list of South Carolina offices still serving the same communities they served in 1860.

In the early part of the nineteenth century large landowners in the northwest section of Kershaw County, desiring to have a neighborhood and church and school connection, divided this section—known as Liberty Hill—into home tracts containing 20 to 200 acres and built houses. Each owner retained his plantation in surrounding lands. As early as 1813 farmers gathered at Peter Garlick's store located in Liberty Hill.

Liberty Hill was born of these wealthy planters. Here atop lofty rolling hills, planters could be free from the mosquito and malaria-ridden miasma that was the Carolina lowcountry. Cooled by upcountry breezes and made rich by soil as fertile as the best of the lowcountry, the planters of Liberty Hill were favored by Mother Nature. Their cotton was a special long staple, demanding premium prices and bought directly by the London buyers. Here a wealthy aristocracy flourished.

But war, a depleted soil and loss of slaves took their toll after 1865. The citizens of the Liberty Hill community remained just as solid, but wealth was not so great and new money was rare. Being an agricultural community, it was slow adjusting to the new conditions during the Reconstruction period. Many young men left home for more promising fields.

The Liberty Hill village continued to produce leaders—real men and women. From this community many have contributed largely to their village, state, and nation. Among such that have gone out from their home at Liberty Hill are, to name a few, a governor, state legislators, U. S. Congressman, school superintendents, principals, teachers, nurse, doctors, lawyers, businessmen and businesswomen, missionary, ministers, elders, deacons, and veterans from all wars. The small village of Liberty Hill holds fond memories for all its sons and daughters who have gone out into these different occupations. Many return often. At the present time homes are being restored and new families have moved here, and others talk of coming to live here.

Liberty Hill needs the Post Office. This Post Office has served the community well since the early nineteenth century. The keyless lock boxes were installed in 1955 and several more sections were added within the last several years. At present it serves the local patrons as well as hundreds of patronizers from the Beaver Creek area and the Nosoca Pines Ranch, which is a campground facility for various groups.

The community needs the Post Office. It serves the local people, who enjoy the social aspect of “going to the Post Office” to pick up the daily mail. The Post Office has always been a focal place to meet and to hear the NEWS. The Liberty Hill village is listed with the National Historic Foundation as an Historic District.

Keep Liberty Hill alive and on the map. Keep this Liberty Hill Post Office in existence.

Contributors: Signed:

Sarah C. Eskridge

Mary Ellen Cunningham

Marion Richards

STORES AT LIBERTY HILL

A small trading post and store located at the present junction of Hwy 522 and Hwy 97 was the first store known to exist in the early settlement at Liberty Hill. This was as early as 1813. The owner was Peter Garlick, a very early settler, and around his store the village of Liberty Hill came into being. Peter Garlick's store served the community in many ways, as it was said he was a tinker of all trades. He had a wine cellar and the store was a popular gathering place. A Post Office was also located in Garlick's store. (1)

Wyatt Patterson had a store located in the upper part of Liberty Hill. Very little is known about it other than that he was appointed Postmaster in 1830 and the Post Office was located in his store. Wyatt Patterson died in 1866. (2)

John Brown (1796-1865) another one of the early settlers completed building his three story home in Liberty Hill in the mid 1840s. Across the road and a short distance farther north, Mr. Brown constructed a large building which was used as a general store, with a shoe and harness shop located in the basement of the building. A Tannery owned by John Brown was located on his property on a stream behind the present Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church. Leather processed at the Tannery was used at the local shoe and harness shop. Leather was also furnished the George Allen Shoe Factory in Camden. The Tannery was burned by Sherman's Army when it passed through Liberty Hill in February 1865. (3)

It might be of interest here to note that in the late 1930s a swimming pool was built by the WPA on the stream at the site of the old Tannery. During the excavation some of the old vats in which the leather

was being cured were dug up. They still contained partially cured hides.
(4)

The John Brown store and shoe shop was operated by John Brown and his brother Henry Brown. It was similar to other stores at that time and was a gathering place and trading center for the early settlers in and around Liberty Hill.

There are conflicting records about John Brown's store. One tells that it was burned when Sherman's army passed through Liberty Hill in 1865. The other, that it was torn down as late as 1952. Probably the old store was not completely destroyed by fire, as after the deaths of John Brown in 1865 and his brother Henry Brown in 1868, the building was used for many years by other men of the community. (5)

Alex Perry and Arthur Pomeroy Brown, son of John Brown, operated a store in the old building as The Mercantile Company. They remodeled the building as the shoe and harness shop in the basement had been closed for many years. The building was lowered approximately four feet and was then entered by only a few steps. (6)

Later the Jones brothers, Jimmie, Goodwyn and R. Charlton Jones had a business known as Jones Mercantile Company. It was in the late 1890s when A. Goodwyn Jones ran the store and the Post Office was moved to this location, after the Rev. John G. Richards' store located at the top of the church hill burned. The next group of men to operate a business at the location was Henry Haile, Stewart Haile and Frank Perry. Their business was known as The Liberty Hill Mercantile Company.

Some years later the old John Brown store building and land was bought by Mr. George R. Clements. Mr. Clements was running a small grocery store there, in 1918, when Charles D. Cunningham, recently appointed Postmaster, moved the Post Office to Mr. Clements' store. In 1921 when the Post Office was moved again, Mr. Clements continued to run the store for some years. It was in 1952 that the old building was torn down and the timbers sold. This old store, an ancient land mark at Liberty Hill, had been in existence for over a hundred years, 1840 - 1952. (7)

Rev. John G. Richards owned and operated a small store located on the northwest edge of the old baseball field, near the top of the church hill. This area today is the open, one acre space on the right as one drives down to the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church. Stephen Richards and Prioleau Richards, sons of Rev. John G. Richards, worked at their father's store. Stephen Richards was Postmaster when the Post Office

was located there and the store was destroyed by fire some time between 1892 and 1898. (8)

It is probably sometime in the mid 1890s that the three brothers, Norman S., Prioleau and Johnnie Richards started a business known as The Richards Brothers in a building once used by their father Rev. John G. Richards. Richards Brothers was located where the present Post Office is now (1996) at the junction of Hwy 97 and Singleton Creek Road, formerly the old Camden road. After some years the partnership was dissolved. (9)

Mr. Norman Richards continued to operate the store for a number of years, with the Post Office being located there when Mr. Fred J. Hay, Mr. J. Barklay Johnston, William A. Cunningham and Charles D. Cunningham were Postmasters during the years 1899-1918. It was after the Post Office was moved to another location that the store ceased to exist, and was torn down.

In later years, around the mid 1930s and Hwy 97 had been completed, Mr. Norman Richards opened a new store and filling station. This small store was built by his son John Edwards Richards and was known as Richards Company. Mr. Richards ran this small business for many years. In 1957 the post office was moved to this building. (10)

The following article appeared in The Camden Chronicle, April 21, 1949. On the night of April 11th burglars entered the Richards Company store by prying the back door apart and working loose the bar. The burglars stole the change in the drawer, cigarettes and a radio. No clues have been found as to the guilty parties.

It was sometime between 1880-1900 that William K. Thompson and his brother Lewis C. Thompson opened a store in the old Brace house. This old building was located on Hwy 97 south from the corner of the road known as Peay's Ferry Road. It was in existence before the Civil War when a Tailor's Shop was located



Mackey-Jones Co. Inc. - Store

in the building. Mr. Darling George worked as a clerk at this small store. (11)

Around 1900 after the local Grange, a farmer's organization, discontinued its meetings because of lack of interest, the Grange Hall, then owned by W. K. Thompson, was rented and a General Store was operated at different times by the following men: J. Walker Floyd and Henry Hunter; W. K. Thompson and Dr. J. Prioleau Richards; Jim Cureton and Jack Whitaker; and W. Z. Hilton and Barber. (12)

It was in 1905 that Mr. Charlton Jones built a new store at Liberty Hill known as Mackey-Jones Company, Inc. Located just south of Peay's Ferry Road on Hwy 97, this large frame building was on property purchased from W. K. Thompson and others. This general merchandise store served the Liberty Hill community for many years. Miss Louise Jones, daughter of Charlton Jones, was the bookkeeper. Mr. Henry Haile was clerk, also Belton Cureton and other young men of the community. Charles Cunningham clerked for a short time until he was appointed Postmaster in October 1918. Ed Jones was a clerk at his fathers store for many years. (13)

Just across the road from the store Mackey-Jones Company operated a cotton gin and grist mill which was run by steam. Each year beginning in late August there would be long lines of wagons filled with cotton waiting to have the cotton ginned. When the gin operator saw that the line was getting short, he would then blow the whistle to let the farmers, with their wagons full of cotton, know to hurry and get to the gin. This whistle blowing lasted some times three to five minutes. It was always exciting to children to hear the whistle.

Connected with the gin some years later was a grist mill for grinding wheat for flour, and corn for meal and grits. It was only in operation on certain Saturdays. The farmers would be notified when the mill would be running.

A disastrous fire destroyed the Mackey-Jones Company store on December 14, 1935. Ed Jones had spent all that day decorating the store for the Christmas holidays. It was believed the fire was caused by faulty electrical wiring. Being a wooden frame building, built in 1905, it burned quickly and very little was saved. The cotton gin across the road was not harmed nor were the many bales of cotton on the platform nearby.

It wasn't long before a new store was erected on the same location. According to an article appearing in The Wateree Messenger April 13,

1936 - Since the advent of good weather work on the new brick store of Mackey-Jones Company is progressing rapidly. The building will soon be open for occupancy.

Given here are three interesting articles: The Wateree Messenger August 16, 1937 - Mackey-Jones Company has built a new cotton platform and is having the cotton gin overhauled and put in good condition in anticipation of the upcoming cotton harvest.

The Wateree Messenger September 5, 1938 - The sound of the whistle and the whirr of the cotton gin was a welcome sound in our village last week as the ginnery of Mackey-Jones and Company prepared the first cotton of the season for the market.

The Camden Chronicle September 9, 1941 - The gin of Mackey-Jones Company began operation last week and Fred Ealy, colored tenant of Abe Hilton, had the first bale of new cotton ginned.

Mr. Charlton Jones died in 1943. The business, Mackey-Jones and Company, was carried on by Miss Louise Jones and a son Edwin (Ed) Lamar Jones. In November 1945, Ed added a saw mill in connection with the gin, and at that time the operation was changed from steam to electric power. As the years passed less and less cotton was planted, so the use of the cotton gin gradually went out of existence.

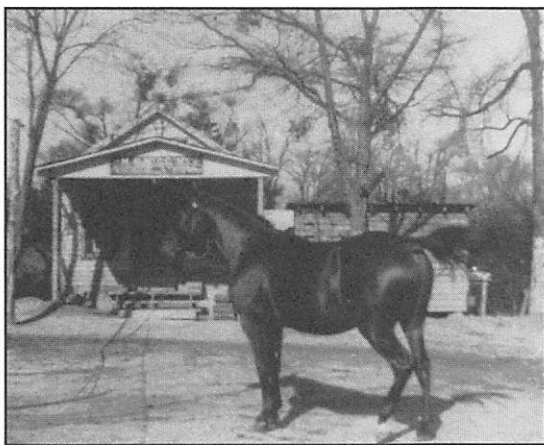
Ed Jones died suddenly of a heart attack in 1958. Mackey-Jones Company closed, having served the Liberty Hill community as a general store for over 50 years.



The Post Office And Store

The old store building still standing on Hwy 97 at the top of the church hill is one of two structures still in existence today that were originally used for stores. The other building is the present day (1996) Post Office. The Old Store was built around 1920 by Will Thompson for Charles D. Cunningham on land owned by Mr. Cunningham. A full line of groceries were sold. In the late twenties gasoline pumps were installed. At that time his store was usually known as The Post Office as "Mr. C D" was appointed Postmaster in 1918. For over 21 years this store was in operation. It was closed in 1942 when "Mr. C D" retired as Postmaster because of failing health.

Mr. Henry S. Higgins bought the old Grange Hall property from Mrs. Mary Johnson Jones in 1925. In 1927 Mr. Higgins opened a small



H. S. Higgins General Store

business known as H. S. Higgins - General Store. It was located in the side yard on Hwy 97 near the corner, and at the junction of Hwy 97 and Hwy 522. This small store, which today would be called a "convenience store", served the community from 1927 to the early 1940s. In 1938 the building was moved to

the back yard. A few years after the move Mr. Higgins closed the store.

The building was then used mostly for storage.

(14) It might be of interest to note that the Higgins General Store was located just across the road, Hwy 522, from where the first known store in Liberty Hill was located and operated by Peter Garlick in 1813.



Wardlaw Service Station

Robert J. Wardlaw, Jr. a native of Liberty Hill, returned to his old home from Columbia in 1938. A building was erected on the Callie Richards' property corner at Peay's Ferry Road across Hwy 97 from the Post Office. Rob Wardlaw opened a business known as Wardlaw Service Station. A line of groceries, car accessories and gasoline were sold here. There was also a grease rack for oil changing.

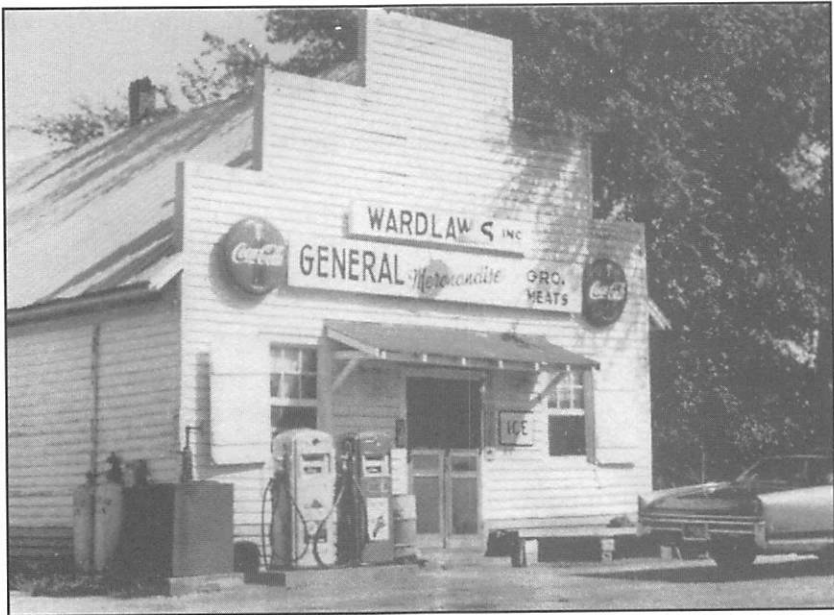
In 1946 R. J. Wardlaw bought the Old Store and Post Office building from C. D. Cunningham and moved his business, Wardlaw Service Station, across Hwy 97 to the larger building. The stock and merchandise was expanded. This store was known as Wardlaw's Inc. General Merchandise. This business changed hands when in 1953 Rob Wardlaw sold his stock and merchandise to J. Abe Hilton, who operated the business under the name of Hilton's Grocery. He added other items to the stock with the addition of fresh meat. Mr. Hilton operated Hilton's Grocery in Liberty Hill for about four and a half years, then in January 1958 he moved the stock of groceries to a new store he had built on his 1500 acre farm on Beaver Creek. (15)

Rob J. Wardlaw owner of the building vacated by Mr. Hilton opened a business known as Wardlaw's Grocery. Mrs. R. J. Wardlaw (Frieda) and Tillman Bowers were the clerks. This was in January 1958. (16) After a few years in operation Wardlaw's Grocery closed in July 1960, when Mr. Wardlaw and Abe Hilton bought the old Mackey Jones Company store to open a new business known as Wardlaw & Hilton - General Merchandise. Unfortunately they were in business for only a few months as the building was destroyed by a disastrous fire. (17)

After the fire Rob Wardlaw then moved back to his building, The Old Store, at top of the church hill. He reopened a business known as Wardlaw's Inc. General Merchandise. Those who worked at the store were Rob's wife, Frieda Towne Wardlaw, bookkeeper; Charlotte and Charlie Presley. The store was a thriving business for the village of Liberty Hill until the early 1970's when the store closed for good. Thus ended the era of there always being a grocery store at Liberty Hill.

Abe Hilton the other partner of Wardlaw & Hilton, after the disastrous fire, opened Hilton's Grocery at Stoneboro. This store was in operation approximately 1961 - 1969, when Mr. Hilton closed and moved back to the small store on his farm on Beaver Creek, which he operated until 1972. (18)

Starting in the 1930's all the stores in Liberty Hill put in gasoline pumps and sold gasoline and oil products. Amoco was sold at H. S.



Wardlaw's Inc. General Merchandise, Meats

Higgins, General Store; Wardlaw Service Station and later Wardlaw's Inc. General Merchandise sold Pure Oil gasoline; C. D. Cunningham at the Post Office and Ed Jones at Mackey Jones Company, Inc. sold Esso gasoline and oil. Mr. Norman Richards at Richards Company sold Pure Oil gasoline. At the Wardlaw stores other auto accessories were available. There was also a grease rack for changing oil and greasing cars.

Camden Chronicle
 May 4, 1945 - Some of the business houses at Liberty Hill are in line with the other towns. Mackey Jones Company, the Wardlaw Service Station and the Post Office will close at midday on Wednesday.

Camden Chronicle
 September 26, 1947 - Miss Lal Richards is now in charge of "The Ice Cream Shop" which was opened this summer by the four



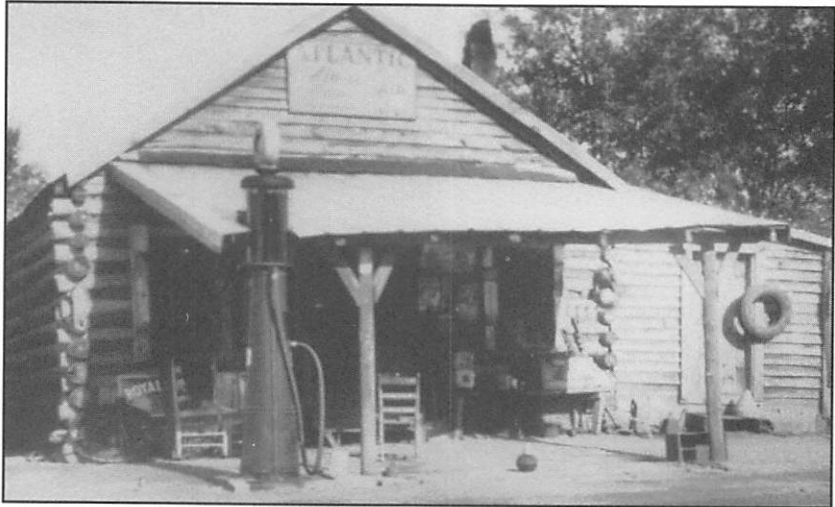
Charlotte Wardlaw Presley, Clerk - 1961

Richards sisters, Misses Lizzie, Sophie, Lal and Marion, and thus our village grows.

Sometime during the 1970s The Old Store was used by Mrs. Clara Kaylor when she opened a shop - Kaylor's Korner Antiques. After a year or so this business closed. Sometime in the 1980s Bob Mickle used the building for a grocery store, but soon closed for lack of business. Super Markets had come to the nearby towns of Lancaster and Camden, only about 20 miles away; and then too there were small grocery stores in Great Falls, Heath Springs and Kershaw, where the Liberty Hill people could go to shop.

In 1989 The Old Store and adjoining land was purchased by the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church. Changes were made to the building with an apartment being made in the back section, and the other area converted into a large storage space.

It was probably in the mid 1930s that Mr. W. B. Fort ran a small grocery store, snack bar and fishing bait shop located near Beaver Creek bridge on Hwy 97. In the early 1960s a larger store was built with an adjoining restaurant. Over the years the business changed hands several times and the store eventually went out of business. Beaver Creek Restaurant and Lounge opened under new management in 1996 and is open several days on the week-end.



W. B. Fort - Snacks - Fishing Bait

THE LIBERTY HILL SCHOOLS

The early records of a school at Liberty Hill are very scarce. It has been said many times that the driving force which led the plantation owners to build their homes and move their families to this location was the desire to establish a church and school in the central locality. This brought about the further development of Liberty Hill as a community. A store was at Liberty Hill as early as 1813, (1) and the first Postmaster was appointed at Liberty Hill in 1818. (2) A small chapel was established in the mid 1820s. (3)

When the Liberty Hill church was organized in October 1851 records state that church services at that time were being held in the old log school house. This was the first record that gave any information of a school being at Liberty Hill. This log school house was a large one room building with a big fireplace at one end. This building was located near the present Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church.

Mr. James Wilson Hudson, a great educator of the period preceding the Civil War, was a teacher at Liberty Hill before he left in 1834 to become principal of Mount Zion Institute in Winnsboro. (4) In The History of the Liberty Hill Church delivered as a sermon on first Sabbath of December 1883, Rev. John Gardner Richards names Messrs. Spencer and Gore as early teachers in the log school house.

The following ad for a teacher appeared in the Camden Journal of December 13, 1850. (5)

Wanted: A teacher to take charge of the Female Academy at Liberty Hill. He will be expected to be a gentleman and a scholar, also that he come well recommended. A liberal salary

will be given. For further particulars apply to either of the subscribers at Liberty Hill.

J.S. Thompson) Committee
Wm. Dixon) of
H. R. Brown) Trustees
Dec. 13, 1859

Mrs. Rachel Hay Hayward, daughter of Dr. Samuel H. Hay and Rachel McMaster Hay, made available the following information regarding Mr. George Hunter McMaster her grandfather. Mr. George McMaster taught at Liberty Hill in 1851. She did not say if her Grandfather was at Liberty Hill previous to that date. Mr. McMaster would have taught school in the old log school house. (6)

In 1852 Mr. James B. Cureton deeded two acres of land on which to build an academy. Soon a four room two story frame building was erected. There were wide porches on three sides. It was located on Peay's Ferry Road just east of the Manse. (7)

The names of only three teachers are known to have taught at this Academy, which was in existence from 1852 - 1865. Captain and Mrs. Orchard taught at one time. (8) Mr. Fenn, a well educated Northerner, was schoolmaster at the Academy before and during the war. When the war started in 1861, he sided with the Southerners and remained at Liberty Hill. (9)

Two interesting stories are related concerning the Academy. A pupil of the old Academy remarked that goats often entered the building, went up to the second floor rooms and then out onto the roof of the porch. From this high perch they jumped to the ground. (10) The other story is told of Annie Righton Richards (Hay). As a very young child she fell from the second story balcony of the Academy, which was located next door to the Manse where she and her parents lived. She suffered a severe head blow and cuts but these had no lasting effects and she recovered quickly. (11)

The two story Academy built in 1852 on Peay's Ferry Road was the first building set on fire and burned by the federal troops as they entered the village of Liberty Hill on February 22, 1865. (12)

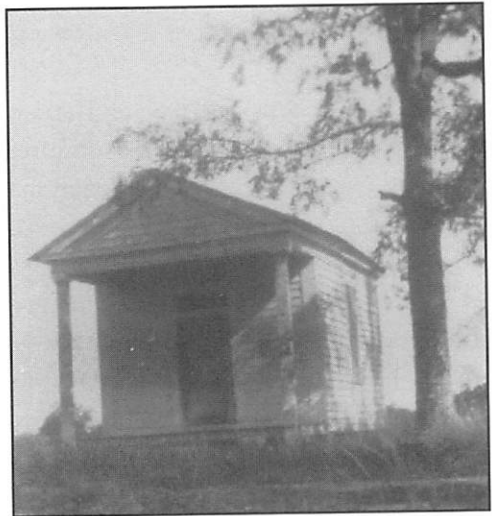
After the Civil War the South was left in ruins. The Yankees had taken what they did not destroy. The rift-raft which followed the army

were held responsible for some of the burning and destruction. The lives of the Southern people had been disrupted by the ordeal of this terrible war, which they lost, but with undaunted spirits they began to put their lives back into some kind of order. These people faced a completely different way of life and they met the challenge.

The school system of the state had to be reconstructed. There was little money in the counties and the state to provide facilities and teachers. To quote from *History and Homes of Liberty Hill* by Louise Johnston she gave this interesting information: "The Rev. John G. Richards, chairman of the school board, assisted materially by Mr. R. B. Cunningham and Dr. Tom F. McDow, set about to improve the intolerable school conditions. They employed competent teachers, who were paid thirty or thirty-five dollars per month and were given free board. The teachers were boarded free among the different families." (13)

The first school after the war was taught in the old church building, which was the old log school house, a large frame building with a huge fireplace. The teacher Capt. Alston came to Liberty Hill with his bride from Ebenezer. He was highly educated but had no discipline with the larger boys, William E. and Robert Johnson, Tuck and Selwyn Cunningham and John Thompson, dentist, who later moved to Atlanta. Younger pupils were Stephen Richards, Jim Thompson, Robert Cunningham and John McDow. Girls were Marnie Thompson, Mannie Dixon, Adella Jones, Rebecca (Pet) Cunningham, Ida and Janie Brown, Lou McDow and Annie Richards. (14)

At various times school was taught at The Little Office, a building built in 1847 and used by Dr. Robert Johnson, a young doctor, in 1847 - 1852. This building was a one room, 20 feet long by 15 feet wide and had a fireplace at one end, a large window on each side and a large front door with a transom above to let in additional light. This Little Office is still standing today.



*The Little Office
Used As A School After the Civil War*

In a letter to Nelle T. Cunningham dated June 16, 1938, Robert B. Cunningham gave the names of some of the teachers that he could remember and where they taught when he attended school many years ago. He started school in about 1873. The teachers and locations are as follows: Cousin Sallie Brown, The Henry Brown House; Annie Richards, in one of the rooms at the Rev. John G. Richards house (The former Joseph Cunningham's); J. J. Palmer (an Englishman) at the old log school house. Miss Alice Perry; Pomeroy Brown, basement of his home (the John Brown house); and Prioleau Richards in the Grange Hall and in the building known as The Little Office. (15)

Other teachers who taught at the school when located at The Little Office were Reverend Douglas Harrison, Arthur P. Brown, Dr. James Prioleau Richards, Mr. Fred J. Hay and possibly others. The Liberty Hill citizens who attended at one time or another were: Callie Jones, Lou McDow, Selwyn, John, Robert, Edward and Charlie Cunningham, Mannie Dixon, Mary Harrison, Pat and Margie Thompson, Lidie and Jennie Cunningham, Stuart Gibbes, Charlie, Johnny, Lewis, and Norman Richards, Birdie and Walker Floyd, Jim Cureton, Patty Johnson, Adella Jones and her brothers, Flake and Ted. (16)

The following are some interesting happenings that took place at school and were told by former pupils in later years. "Adella Jones once related that she and her brothers, Flake and Ted, were at school at The Little Office when an old colored man came and told them their Mother said, "Come on home now, the Captain is come." Capt. John Jones, their father, had been held in a Union prison in New Jersey for several months."

"Lou McDow said teacher Harrison was very cross and some of the citizens would not send their children to him. One day a pupil Tom Williams had his feet on the bench in front—his usual position—when Mr. Harrison slipped around, shoved Tom's feet off and the poor boy fell to the floor."

"Edward Cunningham remembers Mrs. Annie Richards Hay substituting one day for her husband Mr. Fred J. Hay, and she told him at recess he should be playing and not sitting on a post holding a book in his hand, studying or pretending to be studying."

"Mannie Dixon said Stuart Gibbes kept untying hers and Mary Harrison's apron strings and when they got to their Grandmother's Mrs. William Dixon's in the afternoon, Mary would snatch off her apron and put it out in the sunshine."

“Lidie Cunningham tells how all the children played “Dry Brush” in the school yard, south of the building. Callie Jones remembered an “Acting Bar”..now known as “Skin the Cat”..being used by the boys.”

“Jim Cureton said he remembered a sister and brother had a big fight at school one day and neither one won. They just fought ‘til they were exhausted and had to quit.”

“Pat Thompson relates that one day Mrs. Tom McDow stopped by to talk to Mrs. Hay, the teacher. She told the children to be good and she went outside. Walker Floyd cracked the door to peep out, and Ted Jones gave his head a push. The door slammed and Walker’s head came near being cracked.”

“In the winter the drinking water left in the bucket often froze; also the children’s ink. One morning while Robert Cunningham was thawing his ink on the pot belled stove the stopper shot out, hit the ceiling and ink splattered his face and many children nearby. Mr. Fred Hay, the teacher, began to scold but the black faces were too much for him, he laughed and had quite a time regaining his composure. Birdie Floyd says she well remembers that both of Marnie Thompson’s eyes were unusually dark for several days. Charlie Richards was so inspired by the ink episode that he composed a poem about it.” (17)

Over the years school was also taught at several other locations. Dr. Pomeroy Bush had school in one of the basement rooms at the John Brown house. Miss Eugenia A. Brown once had a school in a large one-room building located in the side yard at her father’s home, Henry Brown. This was the first school attended by the late John G. Richards. This would have been in about 1870. (18) Dr. Prioleau Richards, at one time, taught school in The Grange Hall and also at The Little Office.

Some records show that school was taught at one time at the home of Selwyn H. Cunningham and also in a building in the back yard of the Joseph Cunningham home. It was during this period and at one of these locations Miss Nannie Floyd was the teacher. (19)

No records are available to show exactly when a school house was built after the war. There is a picture of a two room school located near the present church. There are records to show this church was completed in June 1880, and it was built by Mr. Frederick J. Hay. Records also state that the school was built by Mr. Hay. Most probably this was in the late 1880s or early 1890s. In the picture Miss Mattie Baxley is shown with the children standing in front of the two room school. Miss Baxley came to Liberty Hill in 1893. In 1891 a Miss Lila Riley was the teacher. She



The School House - Probably Built in the 1880s

with her pupils had gotten up an entertainment to be presented at the end of the school year in May 1892. Miss Riley became ill, so Mrs. Sarah Russell Jones, Mrs. John Jones, took over, and the children were not disappointed with not having an entertainment at the school closing. Miss Riley returned for the beginning of school in September 1892, but due to continued illness had to resign. It was then that Miss Mattie Baxley came to teach in January 1893. (20)

Miss Baxley was a very popular teacher with the citizens of Liberty Hill as well as with the pupils she taught. She had a firm but gentle way of getting cooperation from her pupils. Not only did she teach them “the three R’s” but there were other things that were important to be learned. It was on Friday, inspection day, when the boys would be lined up and Miss Baxley would inspect their hands to see if each had washed them good, and also cut and cleaned their fingernails. Another inspection was their shoes, to see if they were polished to a good shine. Of course the girls were put through the same inspection.

When the bell rang for the children to march into the school room at the beginning of the school day or after recess, they would line up by two’s outside the door. Again Miss Baxley would see that they marched in step, with shoulders held back and heads high. What wonderful training these young people were given, and something they would always remember.

In December 1951 Mr. Sam Hay wrote a letter to his former teacher, Miss Baxley. In it he said he wanted to remind her of days gone

by, and the effect her wonderful teaching had on him including a well deserved licking. "I still live in wonderment of the soundness and thoroughness of that early teaching". Sam Hay was one of the pupils in the school picture taken at school in 1895. (21)

It would be interesting to list the names of the children and their teacher appearing in the school picture made at the school in 1895. Starting at the bottom row and from left to right; 1. Katie Clements 2. Gardiner Richards 3. Hannah Cureton 4. Kittie Richards 5. Jessie Clements 6. May Kain Richards 7. Lizzie Richards 8. Sallie Cunningham 9. Bessie Floyd 10. Louise Jones 11. Frank Clements 12. Belton Cureton 13. Miss Mattie Baxley, Teacher, 14. Clyburn Perry 15. Willie Thompson 16. Nelle Thompson 17. Lou Perry 18. Sophie Richards 19. Mag Cunningham 20. Louise Hay 21. Sam Hay 22. Fred Floyd 23. John Hay 24. Johnny Clements 25. Rob Cunningham 26. Elise Cunningham 27. Charlotte Thompson 28. Mary Cunningham 29. Sophie Hay 30. Tom Cunningham 31. Fannie Floyd 32. Annie Thompson 33. Becky Cunningham 34. Jenny Richards 35. Rena Clements 36. Willie Floyd.

Mr. George R. Clements correspondent for The Wateree Messenger wrote a very interesting account of the 1894 May Party put on by the school children. This was when Miss Mattie Baxley was the teacher at Liberty Hill. (22)

Miss Mattie Baxley married Mr. Jim (James B.) Cureton in 1899. They continued to live at Liberty Hill for a number of years before moving with their children to Camden.

The teacher to follow Miss Baxley was Miss Eva Moore. The following was written many years later by one of her pupils, Nelle Thompson (Cunningham).

Eclipse of May 28, 1900

The children gathered at the school house and our teacher Miss Eva Moore went with us to the Johnston's Hill. We watched the shadow creep up the hill from the East. Lizzie Richards' Uncle, Edwin Jones, brought his telescope and let whoever wanted to look at the eclipse through it. It got real dark and each one had a queer feeling. The chickens went to roost, and when the darkness left the roosters crowed, maybe thinking it was morning. (23)



School Children and Teacher Miss Mattie Baxley - 1895

Miss Rachel McMaster, daughter of George Hunter McMaster and Mother of Rachel Hay Hayward, came to Liberty Hill to teach in the Fall of 1901, exactly 50 years after her father was a teacher at Liberty Hill. She taught three years, 1901 - 1904. Miss McMaster was from Winstonsboro and she used to chuckle whenever she told of one of her trips back to Liberty Hill. Mr. Pat Thompson had evidently driven over to Winstonsboro for her. In mourning for her father who had recently died, she had dyed her straw hat black. The open buggy was vulnerable to the rain, which came of course while they were enroute, drenching the riders and causing the dye to run down her face. (24)

Through the years the Liberty Hill school continued to have good teachers. Listed here are the names of some of those teachers. They may or may not be in the correct order and also some of the teachers taught several years at



New School built in 1908

different times: Miss Eva Moore, Miss Emmie Tindle, Miss Louise Emmerson, Miss Rose McIntosh, Miss Amy Gasque, Miss Pauline Anderson, Abe Richards, Miss Lizzie Richards, Miss Lillian Kibler, Miss Gertrude Dick, Miss Sophie Richards, Miss Rena Clements, Mrs. Louise Hay McCaskill, Miss Leila Lucas, Miss Pauline Seabrook, Miss Julia Hunter, Miss Callie Jones, Miss Louise Johnston, Mrs. F. A. Drennan and Miss Lizzie Richards.

Some of the teachers taught in the old school house built in the 1880s by Mr. Fred J. Hay. Then a second school house, a more modern and much larger building was built in 1908. At the front entrance of this building was a small covered porch with a cloak room on each side. There were two large classrooms with a removable wall between the two rooms. Each room was heated by a large wood stove.

Entertainments were put on at the close of the school year. The removable wall between the two classrooms was taken down and a stage set up in one room. The audience sat in the other room. Many excellent

plays were presented on this stage and they were enjoyed by the families and friends who came to see their children perform.

Given here are two pictures of children who attended school before the new



Picture No. 1 Children At The Old School

school was built in 1908. Those that could be identified in picture No. 1 were Louise Johnston, Marie Cunningham, Mable Haile, Frank Richards, Prioleau or Gardiner Richards, Stephen Richards, Bettie Richards and Jennie Jones.

In picture No. 2, those that could be identified were Mildred Richards, Lulabelle Haile, Phoebe Richards, Virginia Richards, Jo Wardlaw, Lois Haile, Lottie Clements, Francis Clements, Jeneal Haile, Kathleen Matheson, Betty Haile, Laura Matheson, Jennie Jones, James Richards, Flynn Johnston, Rob Wardlaw, Prioleau, Abe, Johnny, Norman and Gibbes Richards, Harold Haile and Ted Jones. (25)



Picture No. 2 Children At The Old School



New School built in 1908

School Children With Teachers Miss Lizzie Richards and Mrs. F. A. Drennan - 1926 or 1927

A picture taken about 1926 or 1927 shows the two teachers and the pupils sitting on the front steps of the school. Listed here in front row left to right are Ellison Cureton, Louisa Drennan, Margaret Perry, Dorothy Matheson, Ann Thompson, Willie Lee Higgins, Annie Mae Cureton, Mary Cunningham, Charlotte Wardlaw, Lucy Clements and Sarah Cunningham; second row Mr. Stokes, County Superintendent of Education; Lizzie Richards, Teacher, Mrs. F. A. Drennan, Teacher, ___?___. Cunningham Cureton, John Edwards Richards, and Abe Hilton.

When school closed in the spring of 1932, Sarah and Mary Cunningham were the last eleventh grade students to finish at the Liberty Hill School. They were the only students in their class all the way through school. Most classes at that time had only one, two or three students per class, so one can see this school had become very small. Each year there were fewer children to attend.

Sarah Cunningham (Eskridge) made available the following list of teachers she and Mary had from first grade until graduation - 1921 - 1932: 1st, Mother (Mrs. Nelle T. Cunningham); 2nd, Miss Rena Clements; 3rd, Miss Leila Lucas; 4th, Miss Callie Jones; 5th, Mrs. Louise Hay McCaskill; 6th, 7th, 8th Mrs. F. A. Drennan and Miss Lizzie Richards; 9th and 10th, Miss Lizzie Richards and Miss Louise Johnston; 11th, Miss Lizzie Richards.

In September 1932 a change was made at the Liberty Hill School. The School Trustees decided that the students who would be in the 8th through the 11th grades should be attending an accredited school. It was decided to transport these students by car, a Model A Ford, to the Great Falls High School, which was the nearest school. Miss Louise Johnston was the first driver. A year or two later when there were more students a regular school bus was purchased and Miss Edith Richards, now Mrs. Edith Wardlaw, was appointed as driver.

Miss Lizzie Richards continued to teach the grammar school students at Liberty Hill until 1937 when the school was discontinued. It was decided by the School Trustees that all high school students attending school at Great Falls and the grammar school children at Liberty Hill would be bused to the schools in Camden. The date was September 6, 1937. With this decision it was the end of a school at Liberty Hill.

It should be noted here that Miss Lizzie Richards was the last teacher to teach at the Liberty Hill School. She also set another record, she taught for 12 years and during that time never missed a day, and she also walked to school every day.

It was strange not to have a school at Liberty Hill after so many years. Through those years school had been held in the old log school, the Academy, back to the old log school, the one room school, and then last in the more modern two room school built in 1908. In a span of over a 100 years Liberty Hill had been blessed with many good teachers who believed in their students and required of them the best.

Liberty Hill can well be proud of her citizens. From those early school years many went on to college and to graduate, and then on to take their place in the business and professional world.

SCHOOL PARTY

1894

May Party at Liberty Hill.

[Reported for The Messenger.]

For a week past every school child has been quite exercised about the May party which was to come off on Tuesday night, 1st of May.

At an election held in the academy, Mary, daughter of Mr. John S. Cunningham, was declared elected queen, while Charlotte Thompson was selected crownier; Sophy Hay, scepter bearer; Nellie Thompson and Hannah Cureton, maids of honor; Sophy Richards, Kitty Richards, Maggie Cunningham and Louise Hay were selected flower girls.

By 7½ o'clock on Tuesday evening the school children began to assemble at the residence of Mr. & Mrs. W. A. Cunningham, where the party was to be, and by 8 o'clock parents, friends and all had gathered. Soon orders were given to clear the way, when the beautiful little girls all dressed in white bearing wreaths of flowers, headed by Beckie Cunningham and Jeannie Richards, came marching through the space made for them to the tastily arranged throne, while Mrs. W. A. Cunningham played on the piano a well selected march. The little girls marched by twos, with as steady a step and perfect time as a well drilled body of cadets. After marching up to the throne the first two separated, one filing to the right, the other to the left passing back in the direction they had come till the beautiful queen reached the chair awaiting her at the further end of the throne. When all was quiet and the crowning was done, each one performing her part beautifully, it was indeed a beautiful picture and interesting performance, and reflected great credit on their very efficient and ladylike teacher, Miss Baxley.

The school boys, dressed in their best, then paid homage to the queen and her court, and the children all enjoyed themselves to the utmost. A most bounteous and delightful supper was awaiting them in an adjoining room to which the children were soon invited, and after they had eaten to their heart's content, the table was re-arranged and the guests were all invited in and everybody enjoyed greatly the hot rice, tender chicken, roast turkey, pork, pickles, macaroni, tomatoes, cold slaw and the sweets of the table, consisting of custard, cake, etc., etc. Everybody did justice to the occasion and seemed unwilling to leave the supper table—in fact we thought we would have to help some out of the room. The children, after enjoying themselves for an hour or so, left with their parents to go home and dream of their happy May party, while the young ladies and gentlemen remained much later, enjoying themselves.

Several friends from abroad were with us, among whom we noticed four of Camden's young men, several ladies and gentlemen from Fairfield, one young lady from near Flat Rock, and our popular and much loved former pastor, Rev. J. G. Richards.

Thus has passed a most delightful and enjoyable entertainment, in which the children were made happy and the older persons made glad to see the children so happy, while the young ladies and gentlemen always enjoy themselves when they have such an opportunity.

Geo. R. Clements OCCASIONAL.

Geo. R. Clements

AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE
DECATUR, GA.

R. B. CUNNINGHAM,
BUSINESS MANAGER

June 16, 1938.

My dear Nelle,

In your letter to Bess sometime ago you asked me to write something about the days when the room you are now using for a library was used as a school house. This request set my memory running back; but it did not stop just there, it ran on back to a day about seven years earlier (say about 1873). I recall the day Mother went with Willie and me on our first day to school. Cousin Sallie Brown was teaching the village school in her home, the Henry Brown house, located just about where John Clements' house now stands. Next, we were taught by Mrs. Hay in one of the rooms of the house in which Gov. Richards now lives. After this, we used the old log school house which stood where the Church now stands. Near this old house stood a little tower in which the Church bell was placed. As I recall, the tower consisted of four oak posts with a small shed over the bell. Our teacher here was J. J. Palmer, an Englishman, who, I think, came to Liberty Hill while he was tramping around America; and he decided to remain at this place for a while. Mr. Palmer did not have a permanent boarding place, but took a month about with the various patrons of the school. Miss Alice Perry taught us for a short while, my recollection is not distinct as to whether she preceded or followed Palmer. Pomeroy Brown conducted the school next in a basement room of his home - the house now occupied by Charlton Jones.

Our school was taught by Prioleau Richards in the Grange Hall for a while and in the little house now used as the Library. I do not clearly recall which of these places was used first. The little house was built for a doctor's office by Dr. Robert Johnson. In "carpet bag" days it was used as a post office with one-eyed Pete Gaither as postmaster.

An amusing incident occurred in this little room that remains very vivid in my memory. We had a small cast iron wood heater to keep us warm. One cold day I found my ink frozen, so I placed the bottle on top of the stove to melt the ink. When I attempted to remove the stopper the steam that had formed blew out throwing ink in splotches all over my face. You can imagine my surprise and the comical spectacle

AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE
DECATUR, GA.

R. B. CUNNINGHAM,
BUSINESS MANAGER

- 2 -

I presented. There was quite a lot of laughter by the amused children. My appearance was so ludicrous that it inspired Charlie Richards, now the sedate Prof. of Bible, to write a poem describing my appearance.

A few years ago, after the lapse of over 50 years, I discovered this little poem among my belongings, and I sent it to Charlie that he might show it to his grandchildren to prove to them that he was smart enough, when he was young, to write poetry.

A vivid picture of the dear old village, as it was in the days 1876 to 1886, comes to me as I allow my memory to recall that time. The faces of the high-minded old people, their struggles to overcome the terrible disaster of the war, and their desperate efforts to begin life again under such changed circumstances - all of these memories fill my heart with great admiration for them.

I recall with great pleasure my boyhood companions. I follow them as they have gone into various parts of the world, and it fills me with joy and pride to bring to mind the great good that has been accomplished by them, their children and grandchildren.

Ours was a goodly heritage, and I am grateful to God that in His mercy He has enabled us to try to be worthy in some degree of that great blessing.

I hope I have to some extent set down some of the things you wished to know about - If there is any particular thing that you are in doubt about, I would be glad to try to help you.

July 4th comes on Monday, and I am writing Edward to ask if he could go with me to Liberty Hill on the afternoon of July 2nd and stay until afternoon of 4th or morning of 5th.

I wonder if your family will be at home at that time and if it will be entirely convenient to you to have us come then. Please let me know.

With lots of love from Bess and me to each of you,

Affectionately yours,

Robert B. Cunningham



PASTOR
SAMUEL H. HAY, D.D., L.L.D.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
MORRISTOWN, TENNESSEE

December 21, 1951

Dear Jim & Miss Mattie:

I got to thinking about you two good friends the other day, and I believe I will send you a note to remind you of us and of days gone by but still with us in their effect upon us, and with us in valued memories. Last summer I was called upon a college rostrum where they added the top degree, and my mind ranged back to the wonderful teaching, including a well-deserved licking or so, by you, Miss Mattie. I still live in wonderment of the soundness and thoroughness of that early teaching, and Jim has always been such a good and dear friend. I don't know your children, but I know they are bound to be fine. God love and keep you all.

Sincerely,

Mrs. J. B. Curshaw, Camden, S.C.

S. H. Hay

Pastor Samuel H. Hay, D.D.,
L. L.D.
First Presbyterian Church
Morristown, Tenn.
December 21, 1951

Dear Jim and Miss Mattie:

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God love and keep you all.

Sincerely,

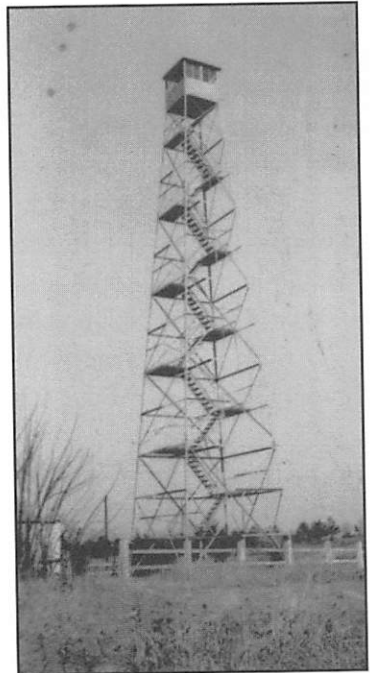
S. H. Hay

FIRE TOWER AT LIBERTY HILL

The Liberty Hill Forest Fire Tower was constructed in 1932, it being the second of five other lookout towers erected in Kershaw County by 1936. Camden Tower (1930) was the first, then followed the others - Liberty Hill (1932), Blaney (1933), Westville (1936) and Cassatt (1936). Later a tower was built in the Buffalo section of the County to cover a "blind spot" in the network. (1)

In 1928 the South Carolina Commission of Forestry was established by the South Carolina General Assembly. The Kershaw County Forestry Association was organized in March 1930 by interested land owners who recognized the importance of protecting vast areas of woodlands and timber. The association's area, at that time, was comprised of about 35,000 acres of timber and potential timberland. An extension of the Kershaw County Forestry Association was established at Liberty Hill in 1932, consisting of twenty-four landowners, covering about 30,000 acres, thus making a total of 65,000 acres under protection. (2)

"At a meeting of the Liberty Hill Unit of The Kershaw County Forestry Association last week (July 17, 1932) Mr. F. B. Floyd was re-elected Pres.;



Liberty Hill Fire Tower

Mr. John G. Richards and R. C. Jones, Committeemen; Mr. C. D. Cunningham, Secy & Trea.; Mr. W. C. (Clyburn) Perry, Ranger. Mr. W. (Will) Wardlaw "fire Ranger" resigned to accept a position with the CCC Camp at Blaney." (3)

The Kershaw County Forestry Association was already actively engaged in efforts of fire protection, selective cutting and reforestation on the large holdings in the County. Forest fire prevention was promoted - schools were visited, news articles written, posters displayed, talks given on radio, all to get the public to realize the importance of fire prevention and conservation. All fires were thoroughly investigated and persons guilty of fire law violations were given trials in Magistrate Courts. The theme was teach fire prevention and enforce the fire law. (4)

In 1933 CCC Camps came into existence. There were sixteen camps in South Carolina. Several were located in Kershaw County. Much of the construction of the lookout towers, telephone lines and fire-breaks were done by the men and boys in the CCC Camps. In November 1933 the area was surveyed for the location of the telephone line to be constructed to connect the lookout tower at Liberty Hill with the Camden Tower. This would enable both sections to better locate fires and cooperate in their control. (5)

The 80 foot steel tower erected at Liberty Hill (1932) was located on land leased from L. P. Thompson. The elevation at this site is 575 ft. as indicated by a National Geological Survey Bench Mark. The tower is in a strategic location as it overlooks three counties - Kershaw, Lancaster and Fairfield, which is across Wateree River.

During the early years Mr. Clyburn Perry was Forest Ranger for the Liberty Hill Unit. In 1934, twenty-four organized crews were formed within the County with a fire Warden heading up each crew. Mr. W. E. (Edgar) Cunningham was the Fire Warden for Liberty Hill Unit. (6)

Fire fighting units of about 10 men each were located within certain boundaries. Each crew used specially constructed forest fire hand tools, backpacks, pumps, fire swatters and fire rakes. Comments of some of the early crews who fought the fires summed up the work as "rough, dirty, exhausting and endless work". (7)

Mechanized equipment for use in fighting forest fires came in the early 1940s as a Ford-Ferguson tractor and a terracing plow were added to the fire fighting unit.

In February 1938 a four-room house, barn, smokehouse, chicken house and latrine were completed for a Towerman at Liberty Hill. These

were located on ten acres of land which was fenced. Also a well was drilled. The property was located east of the tower, down a lane about three-quarters of a mile. Mr. Broadus Bradley and his family were the first to occupy the house. (8)

In the 1940s and early 1950s two-way radio equipment gradually replaced the CCC constructed telephone lines. In March 1952 two-way radio equipment was installed at the Liberty Hill Fire Tower. County Ranger L. E. Smith said it would be a big improvement as it helped to communicate from remote areas. (9)

There is no record available (to the writer) as to who was the first regular watchman at the Liberty Hill Fire Tower before Mr. Broadus Bradley was hired as Towerman. The fire wardens were used as Towermen, then if there was a fire spotted they would go out with the fire



Mary E. Cunningham - Watchman

fighting crew. Mr. Edgar Cunningham served in this capacity when he was first hired as a fire warden. At that time, early 1930s, Mr. Clyburn Perry was the Kershaw County Forest Ranger.

The following are the names and dates of men and women who served as watchmen at the Liberty Hill Fire Tower: (10)

_____ - February 1937	_____ Mahaffey (?)
February 1937 - June 1938	Mary Cunningham
October 1938 - January 1943	Broadus Bradley
February 1943 - June 1943	Mary Cunningham
June 1943 - Fall 1943	McCleery Cunningham
Fall 1943 - June 1953	James Lee (Mac) McManus
June 1953 - October 1953	Colie Trimnal
October 1953 - December 1953	Mrs. Colie Trimnal

December 1953 - May 1955	William (Bill) Higgins
May 1955 - June 1963	James E. Mical
June 1963 - October 1966	John B. Priester
October 1966 - January 1973	Troy G. Collins
January 1973 - September 1975	Barbara Collins
September 1975 - 1978	Annie Knotts
February 1979 - October 1993	Jerry Cauthen
October 1993 -	Tower closed.

In 1993 a number of the Kershaw County Lookout Towers were closed. The Liberty Hill Tower was one along with many others in South Carolina. In the future a small plane or helicopter will be used to locate and investigate fires. The Liberty Hill Fire Tower now stands as a stark sentinel, but for over sixty years it served well. The panoramic view was magnificent! During the summer months it was often the gathering place for young people who came from near and far to enjoy the view. They came at night to view the lights far away and to enjoy the moonlight and cool breezes. Now the Tower is closed to all.



Cunningham Home Place As Seen From the Tower - 1943

RECREATION

Something of interest was always taking place at Liberty Hill. There were parties, plays, receptions, games and other forms of entertainment for young and old.

On the night of May 24, 1893, W. K. Thompson gave a reception in honor of his guests Mrs. Scotia Salmond and daughter Loulie from Camden, and others who were visiting there. Their elegant parlor was filled with a merry crowd of young people, together with many of mature years. Delicious refreshments were served during the evening.
(1)

Christmas Week - Christmas holidays at Liberty Hill was a time of entertaining and fun, as relatives returned home to enjoy the holidays with their families on "The Hill". On Christmas night all gathered at one of the big houses for the Community Christmas Tree. There were presents for everyone on the tree that reached to the ceiling. First, Santa arrived with his pack full of small toys. Each child was called by name to come and reach in Santa's bag for a toy. Then Santa with his helpers called out the names for the presents on the tree. When this was over the small children went home. The grown-ups stayed on to play games till the wee hours of the morning.

Lancing Tournament - The day after Christmas was looked forward to with much anticipation. It was the day for the Lancing Tournament, the contest between the Knights of Cool Spring, the Knights of Hoyt Hill, the Knights of Goose Neck, and others. The Knights represented the big plantations. All rode horses with bridles, manes and tails colorfully decorated with ribbons.

The tournament ground was a stretch of the road in Liberty Hill



The Tournament Ground

starting at the top of the church hill and ending some distance pass the Liberty Hill Fire Tower to what was then known as Rattlesnake Bottom. At that time the road was a dirt road and there was a slight hill, coming up from the starting point - the top of the church hill. Along one side of the road, and about 150 feet apart three poles were put up, each with a long arm extending out over the road. From this arm a stiff wire with a prong hung down. On the prong was placed a small white ring.

When called to the starting point at the top of the church hill, the Knights rode four abreast pass the crowd gathered along the roadside. When the Knights turn came the Master of Ceremony called him by name, such as "Knight of Goose Neck" and gave him the lance. The object of the game was to catch the three rings from the poles on the lance, as he galloped up the course. Each Knight was given three tries. This required a good eye and a lot of skill! After all Knights had tried his skill for capturing the rings, the one with the most rings was declared the winner. First place winner chose his sweetheart as Queen; second and third winners chose their sweethearts as the two Maids of Honor.

All rushed home as the crowning ceremonies would take place that night. The crowns were made of holly, smilax, mistletoe and flowers that happen to be blooming at that time.

At the appointed time the people gathered at one of the big houses

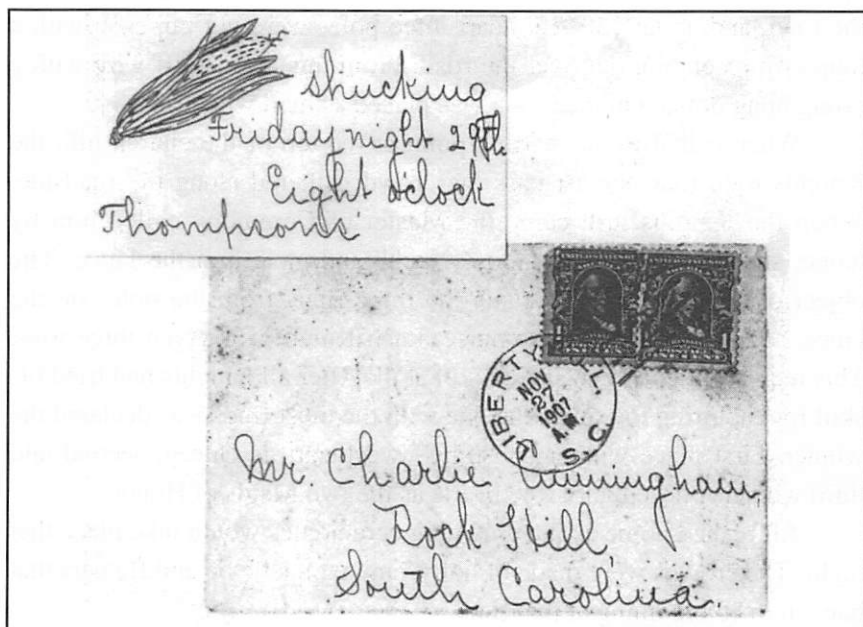
for the crowning ceremonies. All was quite formal. The Queen and her Maids of Honor were each escorted to the three beautifully decorated high-backed chairs. The crown was brought in on a silver tray by a page. Each Knight made a short speech before placing the crown on his sweetheart's head.

No refreshments were served at this gathering. After the ceremonies were over everyone joined in the merriment with music, singing and games. (2)

Listed here are some of the Knights who rode in the Lancing Tournaments long ago at Liberty Hill: Walter and Edgar Cunningham, Johnny and Eddie Clements, Pat and Will Thompson, Mr. Norman and Mr. Johnny Richards, and there were many others.

Corn Shucking - Invitations were mailed out to the young people on November 27, 1907 inviting them to come to the Thompson's to a corn-shucking on November 29th at 8 o'clock. There was probably a full moon to shine on the activities taking place that night. Contests were held to see who could shuck the highest number of ears in a given time. One can imagine the fun those young people had together - joking, laughing and talking. (3)

Plays - Plays and entertainments were given at The Grange Hall, the school house or at one of the big houses. Margarett Richards and



Corn Shucking Invitation

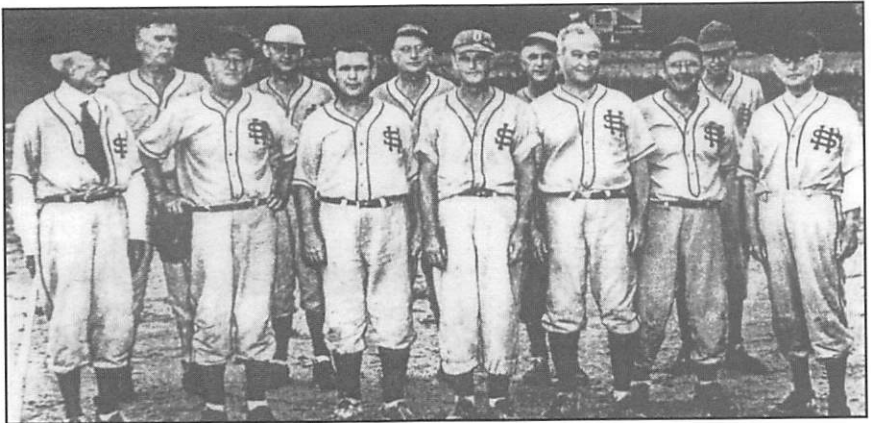
Virginia Sauls tell of a play they were in at the Grange Hall. It was The Old Maids Convention. Righton Richards also played one of the characters. From the play Margarett remembered one line from her part - "A man to me a kingdom is". Virginia remembered the following: "I want a man, and I want one bad; if I don't get one my life will be sad".

Another play remembered by Virginia Sauls was The Trial. Betty Haile was the star and Virginia remembered these few lines from Betty's part:

*She stood at the bar of justice,
A creature wane and wild;
A form too small for a woman,
And features too old for a child.*

A small child was being tried for having taken a loaf of bread. She began her testimony, "You see my mother is ill" and continued by saying there were so many children and there was no food in the house. Virginia said she remembered how sad she felt when she heard this small child give her testimony. This play was given about 1912. (4)

Baseball - The baseball diamond was located in the open area on the right of the road going to the church. The Richards Nine organized in 1915 never lost a game. Was it the superstition that they practiced? A black cat runs across the road. The car stops and all players get out, and



The Richards Nine in 1949

(L-R) Front Row: umpire, N. S. Richards, Sr.; center fielder, James Richards; utility player, Dr. John Edwards Richards; pitcher, A. J. Richards, Sr. right fielder, Dr. J. McDowell Richards; catcher, N. S. Richards, Jr.; and umpire, Dr. C. M. Richards. Second Row: first baseman, J. P. Richards, Sr.; third Baseman, J. G. Richards; second Baseman, J. P. Richards, Jr.; left fielder, P. G. Richards; and shortstop, J. G. Richards, Jr.

they do not travel on until the poor cat is run back across the road. Salt spills on the table, some is picked up and thrown over the shoulder of a player. All players saved pins and pennies found along the way.

This ball team made up of all Richards men played many teams from all around the state. Eventually the team disbanded as the players left Liberty Hill to enter their respective professions.

In the summer of 1949 eight of the old timers met in Heath Springs to play a team made up of the younger generation of Richards men. The old timers - The Richards Nine-won; the final score was 4 - 3. (5)

Fishing Trip - At least one time during the summer a group of young girls would take fishhooks, lines, (no poles as they would be cut at the creek), swimsuits and walk to Singleton Creek, north of Liberty Hill to where Hwy 97 crossed the creek. At that time the road was dirt and there was very little traffic. This is where the group would spend the day.

Each one found a favorite spot to fish, with all the fishing done in the morning. Sunperch and catfish were caught. They may have been small but, "oh how good they tasted" fried in the iron frying pan. Hush puppies were also cooked and enjoyed. It might be added each person brought a lunch in case the fish didn't bite!

A rest period was after lunch, with much talking, joking and telling stories. Soon everyone changed into swimsuits, and this of course was done behind the bushes. There was a fairly deep hole on the northside of the bridge which made for good swimming in the cool stream. Eventually the time came for the walk back to Liberty Hill. It may have seemed like a long trek but no one cared as all enjoyed a day together "up on the creek".

A funny thing happened on one of the trips. Hushpuppy mix had been



Bathing Beauties on Fishing Trip - 1931

(L-R) Carolyn Drennan, Mary Cunningham, Edith Richards, Johngy Richards, Mannie Wardlaw, Charlotte Wardlaw, Annie Mae Cureton, Sarah Cunningham, Ann Thompson

brought in a two-quart jar. The mix had become warm so when Charlotte Wardlaw unscrewed the jar lid, it shot off, and Charlotte ended up with mix all over her face and in her hair. That time there were far less hush-puppies to be eaten, but everyone had a good laugh.

Tennis - For many years the game of tennis was played at Liberty Hill. Courts were located in many different places: behind The John Brown store; in an area south of The Little Office; and in the northeast corner of the Thompson's front yard. In later years (late 1920s) a court was located in the Callie Richards' yard - on the westside of the house. In the 1930s two tennis courts were built on the corner across from The Old Store.



*The Tennis Court In The Thompson's Front Yard
Nelle Thompson, Liza Wardlaw, Clara Johnston*

There were many excellent tennis players, too numerous to name. The older

players taught the younger ones as they came along. The courts were dirt and not always smooth, with dips, uneven places, and also sandy spots making it difficult to return a well placed ball. Lots of good games were played and enjoyed by many of the citizens of Liberty Hill.

The last tennis tournament played at Liberty Hill was about 1939. Righton Richards organized the matches held at the two courts across from The Old Store. Players in the finals were Marion Richards and her partner Gibbes Richards, representing the lower part of Liberty Hill, and Mary Cunningham and Will Wardlaw representing the upper part. This was an exciting match and lots of spectators came to watch and pull for the players. The match was won by Mary and her partner Will Wardlaw.

Picnics and Truck Rides - Another activity was truck rides. A flat-bed truck was used to gather up the young people to go to a selected destination for a picnic or water-melon cutting. The young people sat along the sides and hung on for dear life. The roads traveled were dirt, and often rough. There was much yelling with squeals of laughter as they traveled along. It was a thrill when the very young were invited to go on a "truck ride".



Truck Ride

Those that can be identified Left to Right James Cunningham, ????, Rob Wardlaw, Charlotte Wardlaw, Lisle Hay, ????, Phoebe Richards, Jean Richards, Abe Richards, Mannie Wardlaw

Listed here are numerous games enjoyed by young and old:

PARTY GAMES:

Candy pulling
Musical chairs
Who's got the thimble
Pinning the tail on donkey
Hearts (Halloween)
Candy knocking (Christmas)
Grab bag (Christmas)

YARD GAMES:

Tag
Dry brush
Statue
Baseball
Skip-rope
Playing on red gullies
Sliding down a hill on pine straw
Last one on the rock



Big Snow About 1915

(L-R) James Richards, Marion Richards, Bill Thompson, Anne Thompson, Soph Richards

TIDBITS - HERE AND THERE (1)

Logan House - In 1848 James D. McIlwaine a surveyor re-surveyed and chained out unto John Brown (In Trust) for Mrs. Margaret E. DuBose a track of land containing 5.2 acres, lying on the eastside of the main road at Liberty Hill, and joining lands of Joseph Cunningham, Wylie Patterson and Wyatt Patterson. Surveyed June 23, 1848.

A story and a half house of handhewn logs mortised and anchored with wooden pegs was built on the lot. This house was used as the manse by Rev. Logan, who was at one time pastor of the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church. (An infant of Rev. and Mrs. Logan is buried in the Cunningham-Summerville Cemetery). (2)

The Logan House was once the home of the Rev. Hampden Coit DuBose, noted missionary to china. Dr. Tom McDow and his wife Isabella Cunningham McDow lived in the log house while their home, opposite the Thompson's, was being built. Their son John Cunningham McDow was born there on January 13, 1855.

The house was used at sometime by Rev. T. A. Hoyt the first pastor to serve the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church. This was 1851-1855.

This property was located across the branch, back of the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church. In the mid 1950s it was owned by Miss Callie Jones who later sold it to a timber company. The log house has almost disappeared.

Maj. Edward E. Sill (1831-1905) of Camden lived in the Logan House. It is supposed his father was an overseer for someone at Liberty Hill at that time. Maj. Sill married first Elizabeth McKain, and after her death he married Henrietta McKain. They were aunts of Lily McKain Richards who married Steven Richards, oldest son of Rev. John

G. Richards.

Hoyt Hill - Southwest and a short distance beyond the Matheson house on a section of the old Peay's Ferry Road, (this section now known as Wildlife Road) is a very high hill called Hoyt Hill. It was probably named this as at one time Rev. T. A. Hoyt lived in a house located there, while he was pastor of the Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church (1851-1855).

Long ago on this hill was a group of very tall pines, some were long leaf, which could be seen for miles around. Mr. George R. Clements owned the property and he and his family lived there. In later years, 1950s, his son John H. Clements had the pine trees cut as they were dying. In recent years the property was sold to some black families who live there at the present.

Cody Hill - At one time a family by the name of Cody lived on a Hill located a short distance northwest of Liberty Hill off Hwy 97. After the Cody family left the area a Hammond family lived in the house. They were followed by black families - Jake Brown, Henry Canty, Billy and Savannah Canty, Tony Carlas and Willie White.

Wild grapes and muscadines, also called bullises, grew abundantly on Cody Hill and often groups of young people would go "wild grape hunting". The writer remembers as a small child going along on one of those wild grape hunts. Some people took water buckets, tin gallon containers that lard came in, or white cotton flour sacks. The juice from the grapes stained the white sacks, also the mouths of those who feasted on the luscious grapes!

Huey Place - Originally a part of the Wylie Patterson lands, it was mortgaged to a Mr. Nolkin of Camden after the Civil War. Rev. John G. Richards bought the property and he and his heirs owned it until it was bought by Mr. R. Charlton Jones in 1915. It is not known why it was called the Huey Place. On the property is a stream called Huey Branch, which flows over big rocks creating small waterfalls. This branch crosses

the old Peay's Ferry road about a mile beyond the Community Center.

The Huey Place property changed hands several times and is now owned by Edmund H. (Beaver) Hardy of Columbia, SC. Mr. Hardy bought the property in the early 1970s.

Mr. Chislohn Adams came to Liberty Hill from Chester and was overseer of the farms of Rev. John G. Richards. Mr. Adams married a Miss Denton and they lived in the old Hudson House, later called by some the Alfalfa Field House. The house was located on the southside of Peay's Ferry Road in an area a short distance from the junction of the present Hwy 97.

Miss Denton's brother was the miller for Col. Lewis J. Patterson. The mill was located on a stream some distance back of the Hudson House.

Note - Nelle Thompson Cunningham, mother of the author, was born in the Alfalfa Field House, July 27, 1884. The property at that time was owned by her father William K. Thompson.

Mr. and Mrs. George Clements first lived in the Alfalfa Field House when they moved to Liberty Hill from near Heath Springs. Several of their children were born in this house.

would run down the side of the church along the floor under the side pews. All the ladies would hold their feet up and try not to let out a sound. Muffled snickers could be heard as the mouse ran back and forth. After several runs the mouse decided it had had enough so went back to the hole in the organ and disappeared. During the whole episode the Minister held his composure and continued with the sermon.

The Dogs - Long ago everyone at Liberty Hill walked to Church as this was before the families had cars. Often a pet dog would follow its owner to Church. This was the case with Buck a beloved dog of the John G. Richards family. Buck for many years came to Church to take up his accustomed place under the back pew on the right, where Miss Laura Matheson always sat. Buck slept through all the good and not so good sermons, but was very faithful in attending church.

One summer Sunday afternoon, Rollo a bird dog who belonged to Charles Cunningham, Jr. decided to come to Sunday School which was held in the afternoon. The service had started when in came Rollo who very slowly, to the time of the music, walked up one aisle, across the front and down the other aisle and out the door. Rollo never looked to the right not to the left! That was the first and last time he ever tried coming to Sunday School.

THINGS THAT HAPPENED IN CHURCH

The Wasp - It was a cold winter morning. The church was beginning to get comfortable with the heat from the fires in the wood stoves, each located at opposite ends of the sanctuary. The church was noted for its wasps and bees that liked to fly around the church as it became warm. On this particular Sunday a big wasp flew around and finally lit on the shoulder of Annie Mae Cureton. She and Ann Thompson were sitting in the pew in front of Mary and Sarah Cunningham. Sarah turned around and looked at her Dad sitting behind her. He motioned to flip the wasp off with her finger. Sarah did this, and to the surprise of all the wasp sailed straight to Mr. Barklay Johnston's bald head. There the wasp walked around and around and around until it decided to fly to one of the windows. Mr. Johnston said later he knew the wasp would sting him good if he tried to brush him off so decided to let the wasp leave of his own free will.

No Air For The Organ To Play - Mannie Wardlaw tells of the time she and Edith Richards were pumping the organ at one of the church services. When the Preacher began his sermon she and Edith climbed out the window back of the organ. They misjudged the length of time the Preacher would take to give his sermon, and they didn't get back in time for the last hymn. When the organist tried to play the organ there was no sound, only dead silence. Don't you know there was a ripple of laughter that went through the surprised congregation!! (1)

The Mouse - Most churches have a church mouse and Liberty Hill was not left out. Several times over the years a poor little mouse who lived in the big organ would come out through the space under the organ pedal and scurry around. Of course it was scared to death. He or she