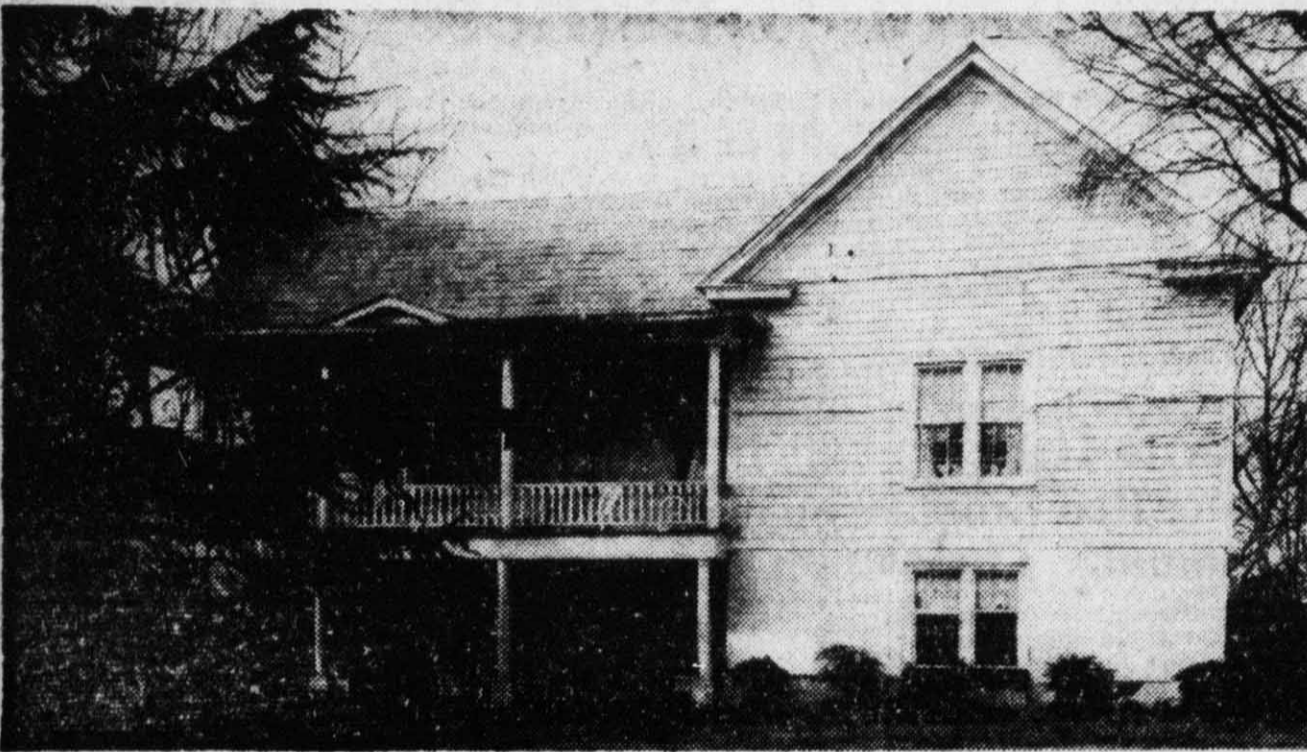


Cornwallis' Headquarters on Winnsboro Tour



The home of Mr. and Mrs. J. Roy Robinson at Winnsboro is one of the show places for the Home and Garden Tour, from 2 to 4 o'clock Wednesday afternoon, April 14. It was at this home that Cornwallis made his headquarters during the Revolutionary War. An added feature of the tour will be a rare collection of heirloom silver and crystal.

COLUMBIA, S. C., SUNDAY, APRIL 11, 1954 *The State*:

# WINNSBORO

*Pure Americana*

By RUSSELL HENDERSON

**WE UP HERE** in Winnsboro South Carolina, have just about every distinction one would expect of such a center of culture except the fact that George Washington never slept here—and we missed that honor by a mere whisker.

It seems General Cornwallis had reservations that particular season. Washington's distinguished contemporary, along with his entire army of British Red Coats, was an uninvited guest from October, 1780 to January, 1781.

However, we gained a groat's worth of consolation from that scrambled state of affairs: the General upon awakening one sparkling bright morning, poked his head out of his tent, looked about him and declared that "These rolling hills are indeed

fair." Thus the birth of our county's name, Fairfield.

But it must be admitted that that was about all we got out of it, for it is on record that not a mule, not a horse, not a cow, nor a chicken, (to say nothing of an egg) was left to the sturdy patriots for months to come after he decamped for Charlotte, Guilford Court House and Yorktown.

**Garden Spot**

The Scots, in their restless 18th Century surged down the Appalachians, reached their farthest south-by-west point of mass settlement when they arrived at this Garden Spot, perched so gracefully on the lovely Piedmont Plateau. Casting about for choice bits of land, they unleashed their axes, reared up log cabins, sprin-

kled seed around the stumps, picked out likely church sites, cranked up their bag pipes and saluted their new home. The semi-pacified Cherokees and the Catawbias were their only neighbors.

In time the Germans down around the Coast, getting wind of the glories of the rolling hills, pure sparkling water and fertile land, moved in. About a century later the Huguenots and English of Charleston, tired of fighting mosquitoes and dodging Sherman's troops, also became aware of the advantages of the Upcountry paradise. Bundling up their chattel and corraling their slaves, a fair portion of them also made the long trek. And now, after 200-odd years and the inevitable molding of the four European bloods, we stand as a proud and

healthy slice of pure Americanism.

The face of Fairfield has changed in these latter years. The county has come all the way from "cow pens" (grand-daddy of the Western ranch), to cotton, to pines and back to cattle again.

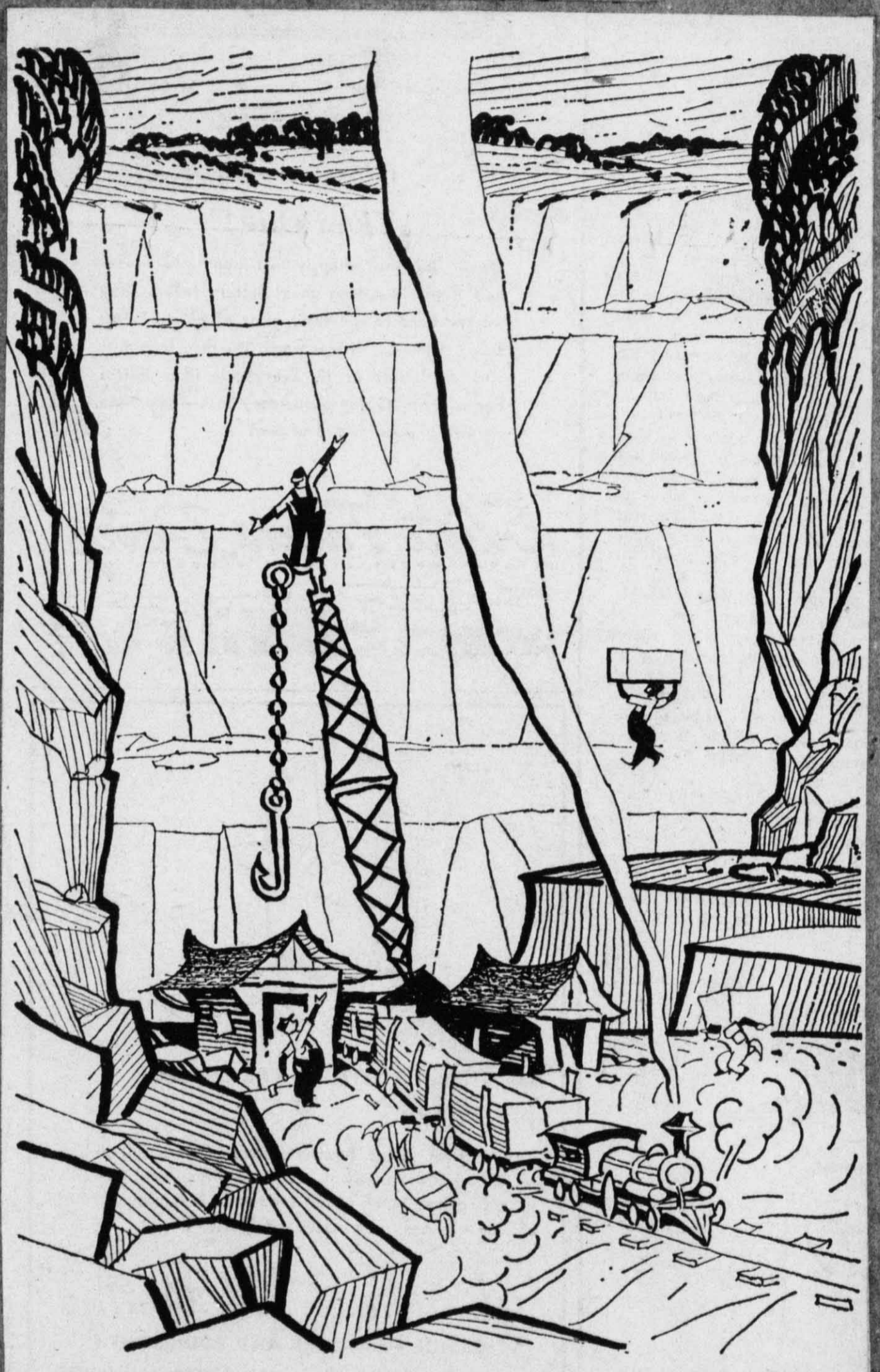
The influx of the Lowcountry folk, with their all-necessary

slaves, was responsible for the establishment of the oddity of an Upcountry cotton empire. At one time 92,000 acres were given over to that staple. Now a scant 500 are planted, and that mostly by the descendants of the slaves. And by the way, the colored citizens now out-number the whites by a 60-40 ratio, and either own or

rent 900 of the 1,440 farms in the county.

**Bonanza**

When the process of converting pine trees into newsprint was perfected and paper mills established in the south, our particular section of Dixie was in for not only



Col. John Heyward is down in the earth well over 200 feet.

a bonanza but a radical evolution in farm methods and economy. A great number of land owners laid down the plow and hoe and picked up the ax.

And therein lies the reason why so many of our colored folk stayed with us rather than dashing off to chase the rainbow bending over certain northern cities. Ample work was at hand for them in the vast tracts of pine forests.

In trimming the ragged edges of the forests, new fields were added to the many practically idle ones which once blossomed forth with Old King Cotton. And on these grassy hills came the re-birth of our second most valuable farm asset; beef and dairy husbandry.

With the increase of cattle herds, came the need for more water, and as matters now stand there are 500-odd man-made lakes or ponds (averaging three acres) snoozing among the undulating pastures. And almost all of them teem with bream and bass, planted there by the State Game Commission.

And angling hereabouts has become so prevalent that it behooved a popeyed stranger to allow that more people fished accidentally in Fairfield than anywhere else on purpose.

Be that as it may, there is the story of an out-of-stater, coming down here to live, found himself not being any too well accepted socially, looked about for the reason. He soon found it. On any day now you may observe a long cane pole protruding from his car . . . and he never goes near the water.

### Blue Granite

The early settlers were a bit put out in having to plow around certain curious boulders jutting up through the rich virgin soil. But a few years later attitudes were altered. A newcomer, one Captain James Kincaid, found the offenders to be pure blue granite.

From that discovery came the nationally-known Winnsboro Blue Granite Quarry, as well as a number of private and lesser ones, producing material for homes, tombstones, banks, barns, and fences. Although the present owner of the main quarry, Col. John Heyward, is down in the earth well over 200 feet he is unable to determine the extent of the strata.

Captain Kincaid reared a stately mansion adjacent to the new operation, and in those halls a significant event reportedly transpired: Eli Whitney, a stop-over guest on his way to a touter's position down Georgia way, took a peek at a contraption the Captain had assembled, quietly made notes and sketches and went along

his way to later patent the revolutionary cotton gin. Be that true or false, the first workable gin in the South was put into operation by Kincaid.

Not being satisfied with that distinction, he galloped off to England, got ahold of a handful of love apple seeds, came home, planted them and became the first American brave enough to nibble on a tomato!

Within a stone's throw of the quarry stands the Old Brick Church with not a chunk of granite in it! Some sort of perverse urge must have gripped the good Scot Presbyterian people of that year of 1788, for they had English ballast brick carted all the way up from Charleston for its construction. But that doesn't matter much and is purely incidental.

But what does carry weight is that its first Moderator, the Rev. James Rogers, in the year 1788, organized the Associate Reform Synod of Carolina, which in turn proved to be the forebear of all the A. R. P. Churches now in existence throughout the nation.

When Kilpatrick's Union cavalry came galloping and whooping down the road on the way to Columbia via Winnsboro they found the bridge at Little River destroyed by Confederates. They retired to the Old Brick Church nearby to take stock of matters. Their conclusions are clearly in evidence until this day; for inscribed on the inner doorjam of the church's entrance is this greatly appreciated message:

"To the Citizens of this County: Please excuse us for defacing your house of worship. It was absolutely necessary to effect a crossing over the creek. Signed, A. Yankee."

The floor boards have been replaced.

### Fine Old Homes

In Winnsboro, the county seat, are many fine old homes, but

there are two buildings that really give her a flavor: The Old Market Place (lovingly known to the citizens as the Town Clock) and the classical Court House, designed by that famous Charleston architect, Robert Mills, who also distinguished himself by becoming associated with a French architect in swiping the idea of the Capitol dome at Washington from a Belgium cathedral. Mills also designed the Washington Monument.

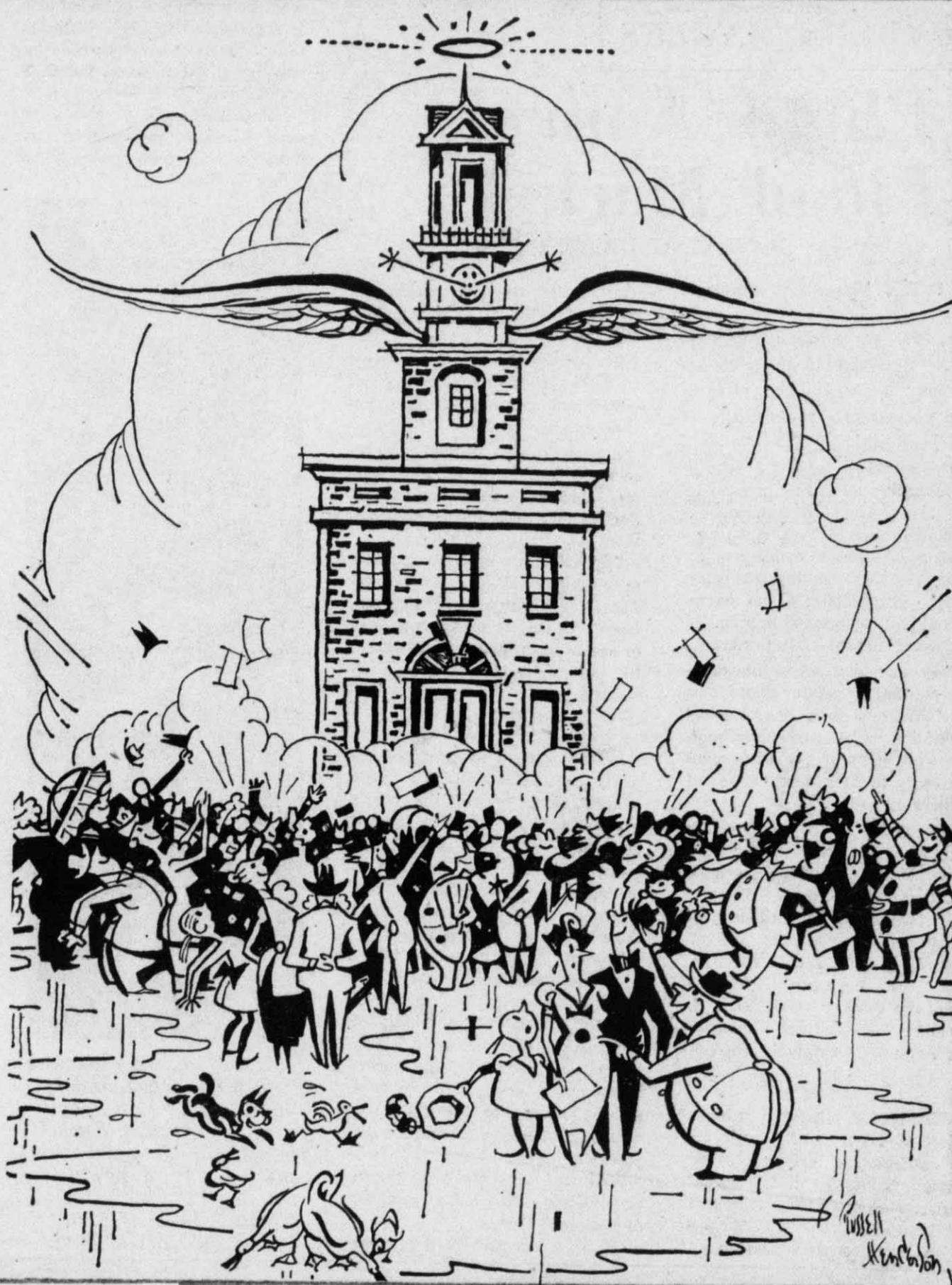
In 1785 one Angus Cathcart, suffering a charitable mood, deeded his duck puddle to the township for a site upon which to build the Market Place. This pond lay smack in the middle of Washington Street and our Old Town Clock now occupies that same prominent position (see illustration)!

High up in its breast it stuck four clock faces, the mechanism having been ordered made in Switzerland; carried across the Atlantic in a sail boat to Charleston and lugged up country by mule and wagon. It must have had loving care throughout its rather rugged trip, for it is still a-ticking and a-tolling, and is conceded to be the longest continuously running clock in America.

All of which does not alter the fact that the building is an architectural curiosity, if not a monstrosity. Just the same, it is the pet of the town and loved by all from cradle to grave.

These two buildings and the charming countryside drowse here on the Piedmont Plateau for all to see and enjoy. So if you happen to be cruising on U. S. Route 321 from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Atlantic seaboard (or vice versa), slow down, light and set a spell.

*It is the pet of the town and loved by all from cradle to grave.*



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