

BALWEARIE

DOUGLASS

BALWEARIE takes its name from the Douglass castle of Balwearie in Scotland, the ancestral home of the Douglass family that settled in the New Hope section of Fairfield County in South Carolina. The land on which this house is located was granted by George III of England to the Douglasses.

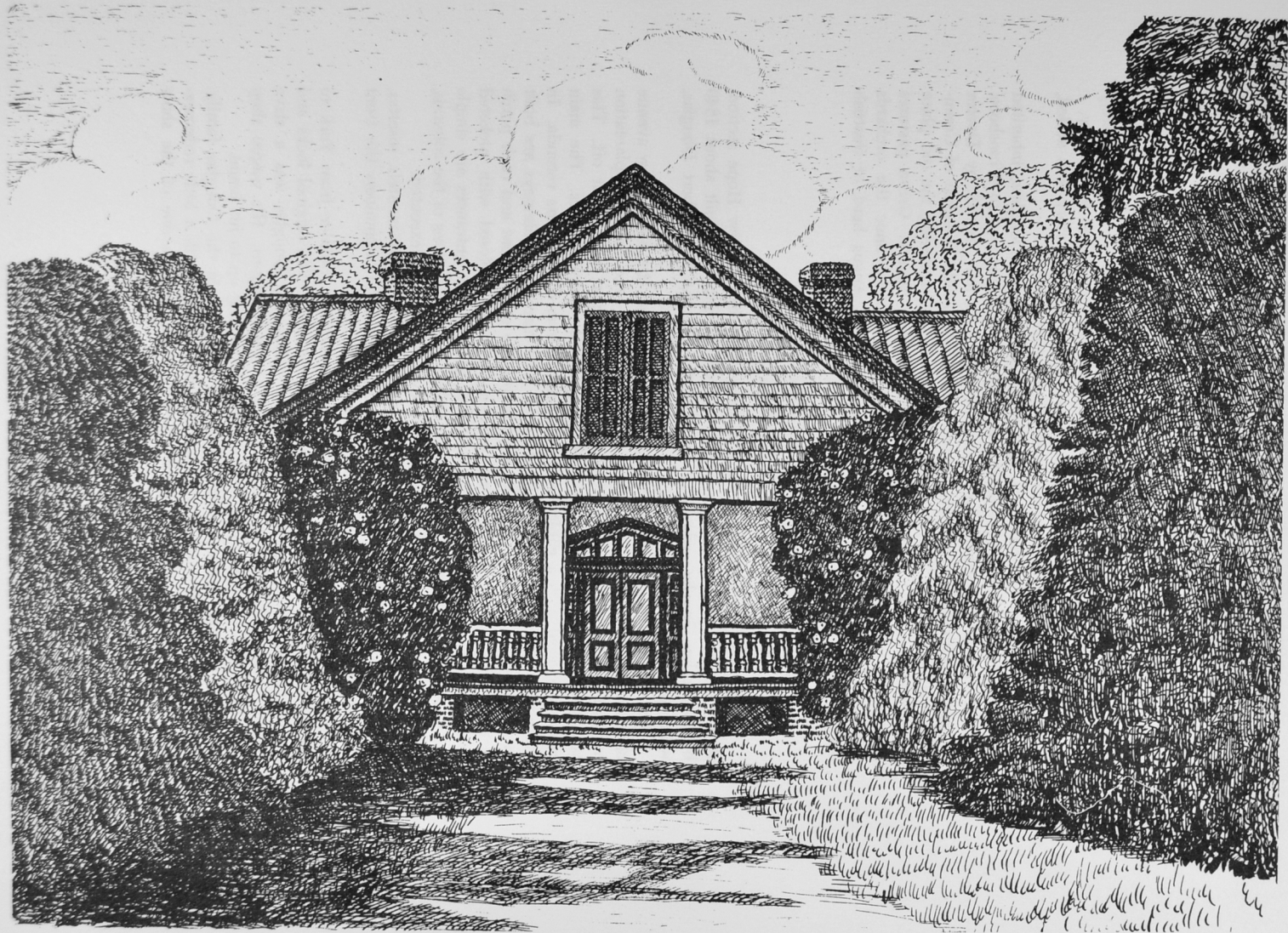
When the house was built or by whom has not been determined. The first known owner was James Douglass, a bachelor and a man of wealth. He owned much land, many slaves and was evidently a devoted horticulturist as well as a successful planter.

In the ante-bellum period the gardens and orchards of BALWEARIE were known for their beauty and neatness — and — well must they have been beautiful and well tended, for, according to the Douglass records, twenty Negroes were assigned to the task of keeping them. On either side of the broad walk in the front of the house was a boxwood hedge behind which were intricately laid out mazes of smaller-growing, well-trimmed English boxwoods, embellished with bulb and flower-beds. To the rear of this and around the house were lilacs and rare shrubs, all well-pruned and geometrically-shaped.

Across the road, in front of the house, were the stables, carriage-house, and Negro quarters, surrounded by the fruit orchards. The nut orchards screened the barns and outbuildings outside of the gardens on one side of the house. On the other side was the kitchen, smokehouse and cook's house with the vineyards beyond them.

The manor-house itself was a rectangular building on great granite foundations, rather low to the ground, with thick, plantation-made brick walls. It was covered with a gabled roof from which a front gable extended over the porch supported by square wooden columns and enclosed with hand-turned bannisters, entered by broad granite steps. The chimneys are built inside and affords a fireplace for each room. On the sides of the building the bare red (some of which are burned almost black) brick, while the front and rear walls are covered with a heavy white plaster. A broad entrance composed of large double doors framed with glass panes and a glass-paned gable above them is one of the distinctive features of the decoration. Elongated, double windows with four panes over four further dress the front. On the rear there was originally a porch which protected the double back doors and the windows.

As before stated, James Douglass was a large slave owner. During the stormy days preceding South Carolina's secession from the Union he was also one of the few Unionists in the county, although a staunch supporter of slavery. This made him unpopular among his kinsmen and neighbors. After South Carolina seceded, the Confederacy was organized, and the war ensued, he still advocated "preservation of the Union." When Columbia fell and Sherman's greedy hordes were moving on Fairfield and New Hope he was ridiculed but he stood firm to his convictions until the Federal troops appeared at his very doorsteps. He told them that he was a Union supporter and should be respected as such but to his dismay they paid him no attention and looted his property. This in itself was a shock to the old man but when the soldiers



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began to abuse him and demand that he give them his gold and silver he became stubborn and irate, giving them no satisfaction. Before leaving they completely wrecked his home and furnishings, set fire to the house and hung him by his thumbs to a tree.

After the war the house was repaired and when James Douglass died he left this property to his nephew, Doctor Thomas Douglass. During the "cyclone of 1886" the old house was damaged again. The second story was completely demolished. Portions of the roof of this house were found later miles away.

The house was repaired again but this time only a half story was added, with a large gable with an oversized window in the center.

Doctor Thomas Douglass' son, another Doctor Thomas Douglass, inherited the place. He lived in a house nearby and later his family moved to Winnsboro. This old house was vacant for a long period. It is now owned by Doctor Douglass' children, Doctor John Douglass and Miss Maude Douglass of Greenville, South Carolina. They are now in the process of restoring the old place and have done much to bring it back to its former dignity. Green pastures and ponds spread to the front, sides and rear, where once the orchards flowered, but are now the habitat of a fine Black Angus herd of Scottish origin.

ALBION

DOUGLAS

ALBION is the largest and most elegant home in the New Hope section. It is the ancestral home of the Douglas family having been built about 1840 by Alexander Douglas, who was a grandfather of the late Albert Douglas, whose widow now owns the place.

The house is beautifully located on an elevation at the head of an avenue of ancient trees. Its appearance is commanding; a true Southern plantation mansion in the best tradition. Green lawns and larger trees set it off. This tall, three-story manor house is built along simple Colonial lines. The main body is covered with a gabled roof and extends over the upstairs veranda. In the center of the roof is a beautiful gable. The mammoth chimneys are built in the house. Two-story piazzas extend across the entire front and each porch is supported by ten large square columns and are enclosed with picketed bannisters. The windows are long and well placed. The entrances are simple but decorative, surrounded by glass side lights. The decorations of the columns, doorways, windows, and trim are beautifully designed and executed.

As would be expected, the interior is spacious with elegant mantels, rosettes, cornices, and mouldings. A graceful stair of three flights domineers the front hall. A narrower stairway rises from the rear hall.

The original owner of this old house employed a builder from York to construct his home. The best of materials were used. The original locks and hardware are still in good working order. Alexander Douglas was a slave owner, a successful planter and a builder of good wagons. His wagon shop was located on the main road near the avenue leading up to his home.

Down through the years this place has remained in the Douglas family. It has been well kept and is still in good condition and with a little redecoration, proper furnishings, and landscaping it could well be one of the show places of the Upcountry.