

THE EVENING HERALD

ROCK HILL, S. C.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON, FEBRUARY 3, 1949.

SECTION TWO

Old Robertson House Thought To Have Been Built In Early 1800s

L. F. Waldrop Now Owns Property On Bethesda Road

BY ELIZABETH REED

According to all available information and to records on family tombs, the old Robertson home on the Bethesda road, almost within sight of Rock Hill is well over 100 years old. In all probability the Robertson home and the Merritt home up the road a short distance, were built about 1820 or 1830.

Adger Huey who lives in the community is 76 and has spent his entire life in the same locality. Huey says that the house was an old one in his boyhood days. He thinks that the wooden section of the home was built first and that the one story brick wing was added later.

As Huey remembers, the builder of the home was Major William Robertson, who lived in the home for many years and carried on extensive farming operations on the broad acres surrounding the house. Mr. and Mrs. Robertson had three sons, Edward, Charles and Thomas, according to Huey. Graves carrying these names on the inscriptions are found in the old cemetery near the house.

When the Robertson family moved from the plantation near Rock Hill they lived for a time at the corner of Johnston and Trade streets. The three brothers operated a store where Friedheim's now stands. The store was the forerunner of the modern dime store and sold a varied line of merchandise at somewhat cheaper prices than were charged in other stores.

The Robertson boys later moved to New York and became very successful business men. A descendant of the family living there today is Mrs. Cleo Robertson DuPre.

Huey also tells of the well-known sulphur spring which was a mecca for young and old in the Gay Nineties. The sulphur spring was in the Robertson place pasture and was so popular that a dancing pavilion was built nearby. Gay Rock Hillians—and perhaps some not so gay—found the dancing pavilion and the "healing waters" of the

Century-Old Structure



Standing on an eminence on the Bethesda Road near Rock Hill is the lovely old Robertson home, well over 100 years old. The view seen above was originally the rear of the house. The house arrangement was reversed when the road was changed. The property now belongs to L. F. Waldrop, well-known Rock Hill business man. (Herald Staff Photo.)

spring a favorite place to visit. At length the pavilion fell into disrepair and the vein of water was lost. Huey thinks that he could find the spring again, however, if he tried.

The Cemetery

A wrought iron fence, by all evidence about a century old, surrounds the Robertson graveyard near the house. In it are perhaps 25 graves. The huge boxwoods and saplings have in many cases covered the tombs. By holding back the slow growing shrubs the inscriptions can be read with care. Many of the gravestones mark the last resting places of children. The fact that graves of children and young people so outnumber those of adults proves that medical science has come a long way in the past 100 years.

One of the most interesting tombs and proof that the Robertsons were hospitable, even to the point of sharing their last resting place, is the grave of a young minister. These words can be read: "The grave of the Rev. Simeon C. Bradway. He was born in Sumter district, So. Ca. March 2nd, 1819 and died August 19, 1843. Many admirable qualities distinguished him as a friend, brother and son. Sincere and devout Christian he pursued his ministry with growing zeal. He died in service of Bethel Association by whom this tablet is erected."

Thomas Robertson died July 7, 1849 at the age of 79 and his wife, Rebecca died February 1, 1857 at the age of 74 years, nine months and 11 days. They are buried side by side.

An entire row of graves of children of Thomas and Rebecca Robertson is to be found in the cemetery. Two read "Mary J. Robertson, youngest daughter of Thomas and Rebecca Robertson, died October 27, 1849 at the age of 19; Charles Robertson, youngest son of Thomas and Rebecca Robertson, died October 13, 1843 at the age of 17.

Graves of two children are marked with one stone, "In memory of Mary Ann, daughter of Allen and Susan Robertson, who died October 9, 1842 and of her brother, John B. Robertson, who died in 1842."

Coming down to the period of the War Between the States, are graves of Victoria and "Little Johnny," children of W. L. and L. V. Robertson, who died in 1868 and 1888. The story is that there is at least one grave of a Confederate warrior in the old cemetery but search failed to find it.

Recent History

The house and property passed from the Robertson family to Capt. Lyle Roddey who owned the house and four or five hundred acres of land. He died about 1910 and later his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. O. S. Poe owned the property and lived in the lovely old house.

L. F. Waldrop is the present owner of the home and operates it as a farm for the raising of pure bred Black Angus cattle. Mr. and Mrs. J. K. Rodgers live in the house and Mr. Rodgers has charge of the farm.

What was the rear of the home originally is now used as the front. The road once went by the back of the house. The home is well fitted for comfortable and modern living and has been extensively remodeled on the inside and a kitchen built. However no material changes have been made in the exterior and the brick wing and substantial chimneys are evidently of hand made bricks, molded and baked with slave labor.

This is one of a series of articles on York County's older homes and farms.