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# Massive Old Springsteen Home Stands Today In Its Original Simple Design

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This picture of the Springsteen house does not do the massive structure justice. This is a rear view of the home; a front view was not possible to photograph because of the amount of undergrowth and the number of trees.—Photo by Roberts.

## Some Rock Hillians Recall Gala Festivities Of A By-Gone Day In 100-Year-Old Mansion

BY ELIZABETH REED

York county possesses few homes, older, larger or with more general interest than the old Springsteen house two miles east of Ray Carter's store in the Friendship community. If its many cubic feet of area could be divided into efficiency apartments, more than a city block could be housed in its rooms.

Springsteen is synonymous with Springs, name of a pioneer family of the section. The Springsteen family was Dutch and its family heads were builders of many country seats about a century ago. Later the final syllable was dropped and the name Springs was left.

The Springsteen dwelling was erected about 100 years ago by Richard Austin Springs, great uncle of Col. Elliott Springs of Fort Mill, and grandfather of the present four owners. The property has been in the Springs family since the erection of the mansion.

Mrs. E. E. Poag and Mrs. J. B. Johnson are two Rock Hillians who remember the house in the day of its glory. They recall gala holiday visits to the home more than 70 years ago when Mrs. Janie Springs sent for Rock Hill belles and beaux in the "spring wagon" and carried them to Springsteen for a festive Christmas holiday. It is said that the entire fourth floor was left unfinished for the gala holiday dances enjoyed there.

### The House

The four story house of modified Georgian design is massive beyond expectations. Not fancy—but genuine down to the last peg and heart pine board. Perhaps not many homes built today will, with the best of care, survive a century of use, and in more recent years, of neglect. The Springsteen home barring fire, seems good for many more years.

A visitor to the home is struck with the size of doors and windows. A modern small house window is about one eighth the size of the windows on the first and second floors and its doors are equally large in proportion. Windows on the ground and fourth floors are quite small. A veranda on the front of the house leads to a simple but massive front door, outlined with glass panels on either side and at the top. On either side of the wide hall are two large rooms, each with its fireplace.

The stair is made of walnut and is beautiful. It leads to a second floor very much like the first. From the second floor a narrow stair leads to the partly finished attic or fourth floor—much larger than the average city home.

A set of steps leads from the back porch down to the ground floor, divided into several large rooms and provided with a number of fire places. It is said that the slaves, at least the household servants, were housed in the basement.

The foundation begins with a yard-wide stone base, upon which is about a 20-inch thickness of hand-made bricks. The chimneys do not go up on the outside of the house as was the custom in a later day—but are within the walls. On the fourth floor they are open to the sight of the visitor.

Proof that the house is now as it was when built is the identical simple design used in all doors, windows, mantels and clothes presses. The large clothes presses were the forerunners of the modern closet. Needless to say Springsteen was built without closets.

### Interesting Tiles

Most interesting feature of the house and one that distinguishes it from other old homes of the county, are the mosaic and floral tiles used to form the hearths. That they have remained almost intact through a century is almost beyond belief. They show evidences of having been brought from Holland for use in the new home.

Those who remember the house years ago recall the stone gate posts, topped with stone balls; the two little stone men used for hitching posts, and the log cabin at the back used for the kitchen (only the chimney is now left).

At a distance behind the house is a huge grape arbor, which time has not destroyed.

### Church Organizers

An interesting side light on the Springsteen house is the fact that its early mistress, Mrs. Janie Springs, wife of Col. Richard Springs was one of the organizers of the first Methodist church in this section. At about the same time Mrs. Annie Jones, and her husband, Col. Cadwallader Jones of Mt. Gallant Plantation organized the first Episcopal church and Mrs. Ann Hutchison White, mistress of the large Hutchison estate nearby, helped organize the first Presbyterian church in this section.

The restoration of Springsteen to its former glory would take a lot of money—but it should be done. No home with so many years of eventful history should be allowed to disappear from the face of the earth.

Restoration of Springsteen would make every lover of York county history glad.

(This is one in a series of old homes in the county.)