

White Family Still Occupies Ancestral Home Built More Than 100 Years Ago

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House Has Colorful History, Dating Back To 1838

BY ELIZABETH REED

One hundred and ten years old—yet admirably adapted for gracious and comfortable modern living—that is the White home on East White street.

The beautiful 14 room home, built in 1838 by George and Ann Hutchison White, has been occupied by four successive generations of Whites.

George and Ann Hutchison White lived in a little house in the yard while the main house was constructed. It was built in three parts—the east section, the west section, and a wing, now used as an office. The upstairs rooms are on two levels.

George and Ann Hutchison White had four children: Andrew Hutchison White, father of B. J. White and Hiram H. White, the present owner; the Rev. James S. White, father of James S. White, Sr., of Saluda street; (the home of the Rev. James White was where the present A. & P. Store now stands); Mary E. White, who never married and died in 1926 at the age of 88; and Mrs. Adelaide Witherspoon who lived where St. John's Methodist church now stands.

Furnishings

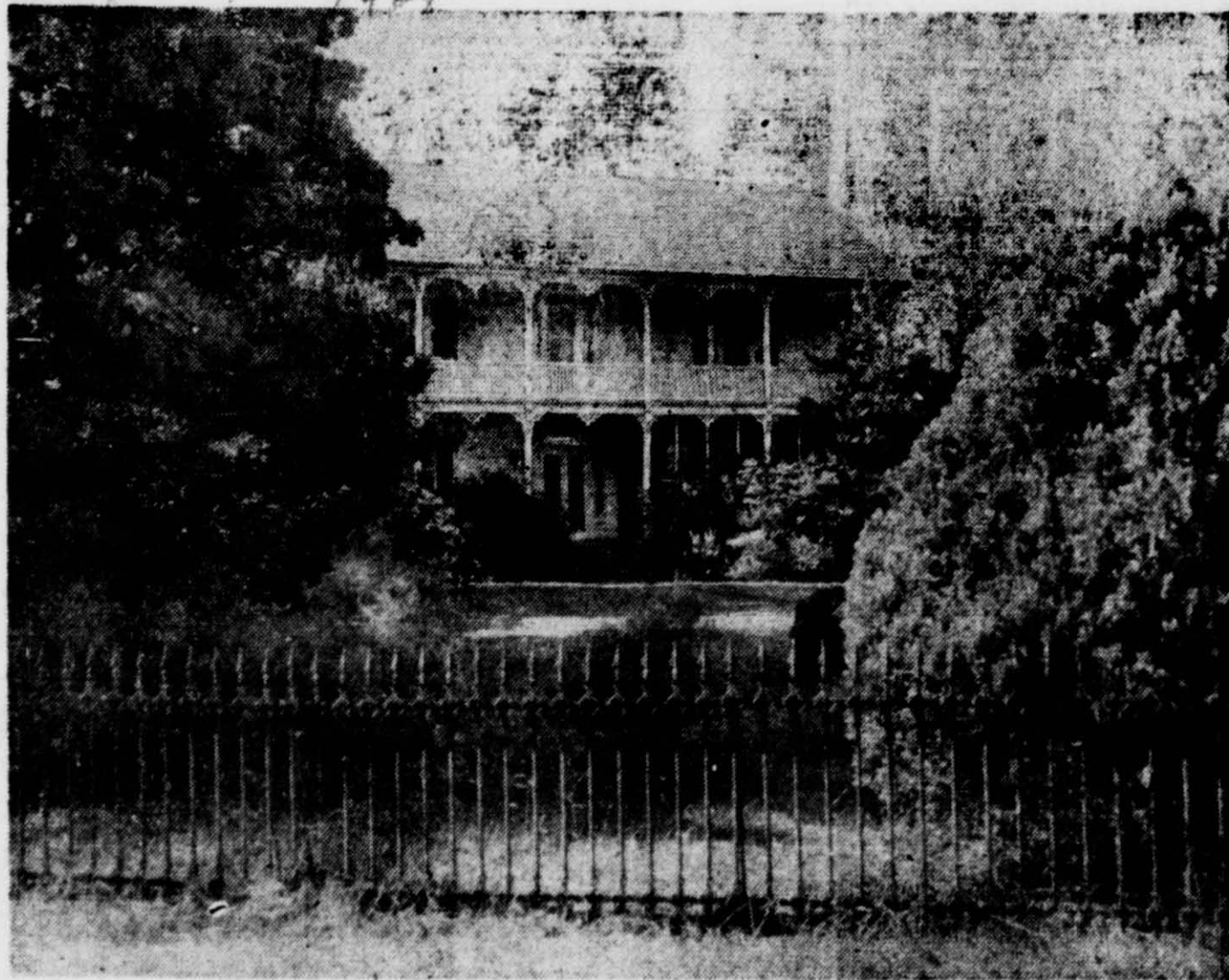
Each article of furnishing is meaningful with history. A massive secretary and a very large platter were articles left by Charleston refugees fleeing when Sherman's March to the Sea threatened to destroy that city. Many of the refugees found that the heavy articles brought with them had to be left behind because of their weight.

Other precious articles were sent from Boston and New York by Hiram Hutchison, a brother of Ann White. He represented a cotton firm in the east and bought for the home a rare and beautiful pink Wedgewood pitcher, a silver water set with insulated pitcher, and an organ with the nameplate "Peloubet-Pelton and Company."

Ebenezer Communion Service

Most interesting of all the articles in the home associated with Hiram Hutchison are two silver goblets. These were presented by him to Ebenezer Presbyterian church, mother of Rock Hill's Presbyterian churches sometime before 1850. When the church adopted the individual communion service as more

The White Home



The spacious White home stands today looking substantially as it has for the past 110 years. The double porches were constructed in 1838 when the house was built. (Staff Photo by Roberts.)

sanitary the goblets were presented to the Whites and now stand on the dining room mantel.

The Prophet's Chamber

Of all the stories connected with the home, the one concerning the Prophet's Chamber is the most interesting. Mrs. Ann White must have been a most remarkable woman. In the days before hotels were known in towns as small as Rock Hill was then, Mrs. White furnished and set aside an upper chamber for the sole use of visiting ministers to the town—of any denomination.

Inspiration for naming the room The Prophet's Chamber was derived from 2 Kings 4:8-9, which relates how a woman of Shunem set aside a certain room of her home for the exclusive use of the

Prophet Elisha.

The Prophet's Chamber was reached by a second stairway which made the room private enough for visiting ministers to go and come as they chose. Inside was maple furniture brought by ox cart from Charleston. Over the door was a scroll with the Biblical inscription which gave Mrs. White the idea of setting the room aside for ministers. On a table was a book where each minister might write his name, the date of his visit and any message he sought to leave behind him. The room was fitted to the needs of the visitor even to a stand for a jar of shoe blacking and a brush for its application. The first minister to use the room was Edward Pierpont Bishop—1838. Names of earlier visitors are almost erased by time—but some of those using the room include William M. Anderson, 1888; George W. Gardner, 1897; R.

W. Sanders, 1888; F. R. Beattie, 1889; Wm. McCully, 1890; and W. B. McElwaine, Kochi, Japan, 1889.

The Nullification Quilt

As the result of agitation over the high tariff rates of 1832, Rock Hill women (no doubt inspired by Ann White) resolved to buy no more imported good and to make all articles of clothes on their own spinning wheels and looms. As a consequence in the early days of the home, a group of them gathered one day with Mrs. Ann White with samples of their weaving. The day was spent in piecing together a quilt which has been known over the century as The Nullification Quilt. It is remarkably well preserved. The lining is made of a very coarse white homespun and the design has some 15 or 20 different patterns of material—evidently as clear in color today as when dyed by walnut or poke berry.

About 25 years ago the home was extensively remodeled and modernized. The separate stairway leading to the Prophet's Chamber was removed and a number of other alterations were made.

At the same time the grounds were planted with azaleas—the first of the many thousands of beautiful ones which now flourish in the city. Some of these are now 12 to 15 feet in height. Most of them are of the tall variety—the Indicas.

Still standing, a few feet removed from the house, is the old kitchen of the slave time era. It was built of logs with huge seven foot fireplace. A narrow brick walk leads from the kitchen to the main part of the house.

At the time of Sherman's March through Lancaster he sent a patrol out to burn and pillage the Rock Hill section. By a fortunate circumstance the leader of the group was a Mason and Mrs. Ann White was able to use her influence as the widow of a Mason to have the men spare her home. Incidentally the hospitable home was used by many weary and war worn Confederate soldiers making their way from home to the Virginia battlefields.

Shortly after the house was built the Southern Railroad was constructed through the hamlet known later as Rock Hill. Mr. White tells today that one of the dividends paid stockholders in the railroad company was a yearly pass to Augusta on the new line.

(This is one of a series of articles on York County homes).