

IZARDS AT LANDSFORD

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York, Chester and Lancaster Districts were a part of the South Carolina backcountry that was increasingly attractive to low-country plantation owners after 1800. The state had bought Eli Whitney's cotton gin patent and encouraged the building of gins. It was believed that the ready market for cotton abroad would bring economic prosperity to all.

Besides tantalizing visions of great profit, Charleston planters looked upon this area as healthy – certainly much healthier than the low country swamps. By custom, Charleston planters spent their winters in the city and early spring on their outlying plantations. Summers were spent in the northern United States or in Europe.

The Izards of Charleston had extensive holdings in the low country and an estate called “Landsdowne” near Philadelphia. In 1812 Henry Izard (1771-1826) of “The Elms” and his brother Ralph along with Lewis Morris, Jr., began purchasing land on the Lancaster side of the Catawba River at Landsford in an area known as the Waxhaws.

Henry's sister, Margaret Izard Manigault, wrote their mother, March 16, 1812: “If this Catawba proves healthy, which they have good reason to believe it will--& they should not find it too difficult of access it will be a blessing to those who have their property in this country, & who cannot afford to live in Charleston. It will take eight days traveling from the Elms to their Wigwam.”

The Wigwam was a proposed circular house with a “stack of chimneys in the middle.” Margaret made a sketch showing Henry Izard's projected Wigwam with two entrances on the first floor which had an entrance hall facing double staircases, drawing room, dining room, kitchen and two closets. Henry didn't build the Wigwam, ending up with a more conventional home according to a sketch of Henry Izard's home by the great architect, Robert Mills, while he was sitting on Mr. Davie's (W. R. Davie) piazza at Landsford.

In February 1812 Ralph Izard and Lewis Morris, Jr. purchased the Blair Place, 150 acres at Landsford from Thomas and Mary Cantzon Blair McDow as the nucleus of their future plantation. On the tract was a small log house and a grist mill.

Ralph and Henry's mother, Mrs. Alice Delancy Izard, wrote that Ralph would occupy the small house for the summer and operate “a mill to which all the neighbors are obliged to resort & which according to these gentle men will soon be made to bring in \$10,000 a year.”

By January 1815 Henry had four workmen building a mill with new lumber. His mother termed it “a troublesome and very expensive business,” but by October she was writing that Henry “...is much taken up with his mill and his cotton machine, which works by water. I wish he had contented himself with a common mill to grind for the country, for I think he is too far from a market to make a merchant mill profitable.”

Henry Izard's family, including his mother, spent several summers at "The Fold," as they named their Landsford home.

The year that Henry died (1826), Robert Mills published in his *Statistics of South Carolina*: "The cultivation of the vine has been carried to some extent in this district (Lancaster) by Henry Izard, Esq. of Charleston, who has a beautiful farm on the Catawba River, opposite Landsford. He planted a vineyard here some years ago, and from the experiments made, there is very little doubt that the grape may be cultivated in this district."

Henry's son, Walter Izard, a civil engineer, inherited the estates. In 1827 Walter married Mary Cadwallader Green of Rose Hill, near Landsford. They had five children. Walter died at the Landsford estate in 1835. By 1900 only one Izard, a grandson, was left in the area. He was Allen Cadwallader Izard who lived in Rock Hill.