

## EARLY HOUSES OF YORK COUNTY

The first houses built in York County were mostly log houses with one large room and a "sleeping loft." The log cabin on the Anne Springs Close Greenway above Fort Mill is a good example of the type that prevailed for 50 years or more.

The Jackson home built about 2 miles east of present-day Clover is an example of a larger log dwelling. According to an old account, large and straight pine trees were selected. The logs were hewn down to 18 or 20 inches in width and about 6 inches in thickness. The roof was made of "handmade heart shingles, fastened to the heavy sheeting by means of wooden pins." There was not a single iron nail in the entire structure. The chimneys were made of stone and brick.

In the late 1790s, George and William Pettus, brothers, built identical houses near each other on present-day Pleasant Road in Fort Mill township. Steve Epps described the William Pettus house in the 1920s, saying that the house was still in good preservation. "Every piece of timber was hand sawed, every nail square and handmade, the immense sills put together with wooden pegs. It is a weatherboarded house filled with brick and plaster. The fireplace is six feet wide, arch in center—five feet. The mantel reaches to the high ceiling. It is a work of art, made and engraved by hand but it is not of hardwood."

The Pettus house was further described as having 6 large rooms besides 2 in the basement walled with rock. And, typical of the times there was an outside kitchen in addition to dairy and servants' quarters. The work done by the servants might be described as pre-industrial. There was also a hat factory, shoe shop and weaving room.

The weaving, or loom room, was constructed by Carpenter Sam, a free black, whose name frequently appeared in John Springs' account book. It appears that Carpenter Sam was an artisan of great skill who commanded top prices for his labor.

The William Pettus house burned in 1976 and the area is now occupied by Bailiwyck housing development.

In 1830 William Elliott White of Fort Mill hired Thomas B. Hoover of Yorkville to build him a home. Using an English book showing various architectural plans, White selected as his model the plans of a Georgian manor in Yorkshire, England. The plan had been popular in the previous center in the South Carolina lowcountry but was unusual for the upcountry.

T. B. Hoover had constructed many of Yorkville's lovely homes and rented a set of iron brick molds, made in England, from Robert Clendennin of Yorkville. These he brought to Fort Mill and used them to shape the nearby red clay into bricks. So far as is known, the White Homestead is the second oldest brick structure in York County.

When the White Homestead was renovated in 1991 the brick work in the basement was revealed as unusual. A series of arches, 3 bricks thick, supports the house. The handhewn oak beams measure 14 x 16 inches and the pine floor joists are 4 x 12 inches. The flooring is heart-of-pine.

Most unusual for an upcountry farm house was the treatment of the doors, mantels and baseboards. The interior doors were grained in imitation of rare wood. The mantels and baseboards were marbelized using 3 patterns—light blue-gray with dark veins, light and dark gray and white with gray veins. Rooms were painted in light blue and rose. While the exterior of the house was Georgian, the interior was Greek Revival. The original cost of the house was \$5,000.

The Jackson and Pettus houses have not survived but the White Homestead, on Highway 160 just north of Fort Mill, restored to its former glory, remains to remind us of the skill of early builders using only primitive tools.