

2011 Fall Meeting of The Edgefield County Historical Society

Celebrating Halcyon Grove



3:00 P.M., Saturday, October 16, 2011
Halcyon Grove
406 Buncombe Street

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Edgefield County Historical Society
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Also available from the
Edgefield County Historical Society:

The Story of Edgefield

by the Edgefield History Class
a full color, 128 page visitor's guide
\$20.00 each plus \$5.00 for postage and handling.

The Founding of Edgefield

by Bettis C. Rainsford
a 33 page book outlining the background and history of the Founding of Edgefield
County and the Construction of the Public Buildings with 16 images, including
photographs, maps, plats, documents and a full index
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***The Early History of Johnston:
The Founding & Development of A Railroad Depot Town***

by Hendrik Booraem, V., Ph.D.
a 155 page book with a general discussion of the early development of Johnston
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By Gloria Ramsey Lucas
A hardbound book of 432 pages containing a comprehensive compilation of
records from the Edgefield County Archives pertaining to the purchasing and
selling of slaves
\$50.00 each plus \$6.00 for postage and handling.

Edgefield County Historical Society

2011 Fall Meeting

3:00 p.m. October 16, 2011 • Halcyon Grove

Program

Invocation

Welcome – Mr. William Morgan Benton, President of the Society

Pledge of Allegiance

“The Spirit of Edgefield”

Report on the State of the Society – Mr. Benton

Historical Period – Mr. Bettis C. Rainsford, Historian of the Society

The Story of Halcyon Grove

The Lipscomb Era – Charles Andrews

Reflections on Growing up at Halcyon Grove – Frank Feltham

Unveiling of the Historical Marker – Grace & Elizabeth Viseth

Closing Remarks – Beth & Tim Worth

Benediction

Reception & Tour

The Spirit of Edgefield

(Air: The Bells of St. Mary's)

The Spirit of Edgefield,
Whatever betide,
Is calling her children,
From far and from wide;
In city and village
Or far out at sea,
They hear her voice calling,
"Come back, sons, to me!"

The Spirit of Edgefield
Is calling today
Her young men and maidens,
Her youth, to the fray
To build a great nation
As strong men of yore;
A challenge she offers:
"Go forward once more!"

Old Edgefield, dear Edgefield
Thy children all love thee;
Thy great men, thy good men,
Wherever they be,
Turn back to the scenes off'
Remembered in story
Thy children all come back,
 come back
To thee, to thee.

Old Edgefield, dear Edgefield
Thy children all love thee;
Thy great men, thy good men,
Wherever they be,
Turn back to the scenes off'
Remembered in story
Thy children all come back,
 come back
To thee, to thee.

Hortense Caroline Woodson (1896-1990)
Officer of the Society for Half a Century

The Story of Halcyon Grove

By: Bettis Rainsford

The Development of the Neighborhood

In order to understand the full history of Halcyon Grove, it is important to know the history of the neighborhood in which the house was built. Who owned the property originally? When were the properties around Halcyon Grove developed? How were these properties developed? Who were the people who developed them? Where did these people come from and what did they do? What were the relationships between the neighbors?

In the Beginning: In the mid-1780's, at the same time that the County of Edgefield was being created, Arthur Simkins (1742-1826), the prominent settler who has often been referred to as the "Father of Edgefield," was busy acquiring land for his family in the vicinity of the site which would be chosen for the new courthouse.¹ Having emigrated from the eastern shore of Virginia prior to the Revolution, Simkins had received a grant of land in 1772 on Log Creek, some three miles north of where the courthouse would ultimately be located. In 1773 he had purchased 300 acres in what would become the southeast quadrant of the town.² At some point he had also purchased another 100 acres adjoining the 1773 purchase which stretched down the ridge along what is today our Main Street.³ He had served as Justice of the Peace before the war, as a member of the Provincial Assembly at the outset of hostilities and as a Captain in the patriot militia during the war. After the war he became a member of the South Carolina House of Representatives, one of the Commissioners charged with dividing the Ninety Six District into new counties, a State Senator and a Presidential Elector.

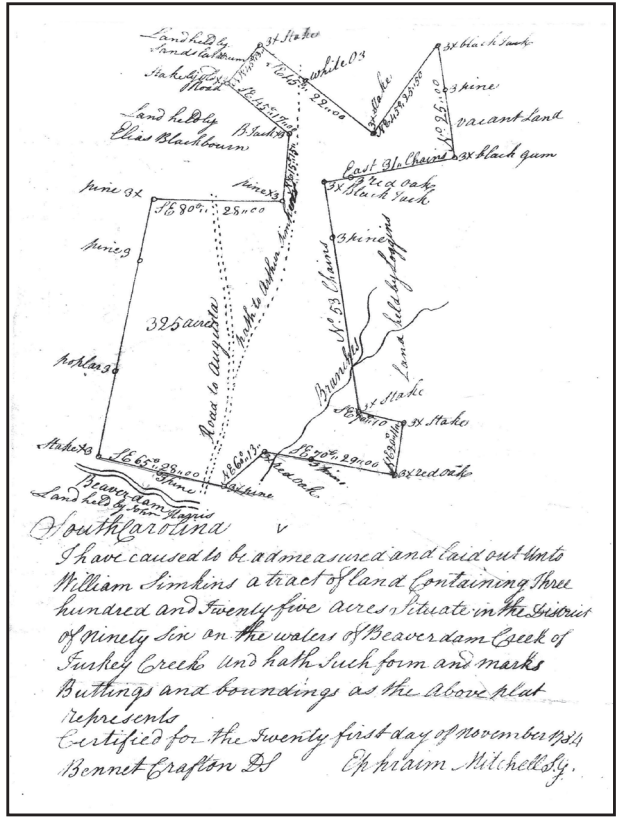
¹ For the full story of the establishment of Edgefield County and the development of the county's public buildings, see "The Founding of Edgefield County," by Bettis C. Rainsford, Edgefield County Historical Society, 2010.

² Lease and Release of Peter Youngblood to Arthur Simkins dated November 29, 1773, Deep Book 2, page 171, Edgefield County Archives. (Note that this is recorded in Edgefield County even though the deed was written and executed before the War and long before the founding of Edgefield County. Presumably he had not been able to file it in Charleston and kept it in his possession until the new county was formed.)

³ This was a tract that had been surveyed for Nicholas Dillard on November 12, 1772 (Land Plat folder 461, South Carolina Department of Archives & History) and granted to him on July 26, 1774 (Grant folder 489, South Carolina Department of Archives & History). We have not been able to trace the title from Dillard to Arthur Simkins, but he definitely owned it as he began to develop it after 1800. The deed or lease and release for this tract may have been lost during the War or was just not recorded.

The William Simkins Grant:

It was natural then that Arthur Simkins should have more than a passing interest in the location of the new courthouse for the county in which he lived and for which he had expended so much effort to help create. In 1784 as the county was being formed, he began working to secure a grant of land from the state for his son William Simkins (1764-1802) for 325 acres which extended northward from the site that would be designated for the courthouse and across the "Three Quarter Branch" (later known as the "Academy Branch") for nearly a mile. This tract of land straddled the "Road to Augusta" from Cambridge (as Ninety Six had been renamed following the Revolution) as well as the "path to Arthur Simkins," (later known as the "Road to Newberry.")⁴ This William Simkins Grant encompassed the land upon which Halcyon Grove would ultimately be built.

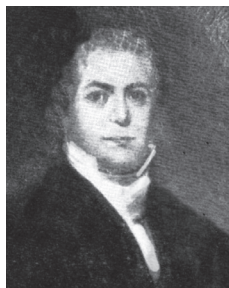


1784 Plat for William Simkins

The Dr. V. P. Williamson House: After acquiring this 325 acre grant, William Simkins developed it by building on it a dwelling house and a mill. In 1795, he sold to Dr. Vincent Peter Williamson (c.1750-1802)⁵ four acres upon which the dwelling

⁴ See plat of land to be granted to William Simkins, dated November 21, 1784, South Carolina State Plats, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, volume 9, page 52. Grant dated May 2, 1785.

⁵ It is unclear who Williamson was. He is described as "a distinguished physician and Revolutionary soldier" (O'Neill, John Belton, *Bench and Bar of South Carolina*, S. G. Courtney & Co., Charleston, 1859, vol. 1, p. 191). There is some possibility that he was a son of General Andrew Williamson (c.1730-1786), commander of the South Carolina militia during the Revolution. Andrew Williamson had two daughters and two sons. The daughters



W. D. Martin
(1789-1833)

house and a mill house already stood. This four acre parcel was located where Edgewood Apartments now stand. The Williamson family lived here for about two decades. It was in this house as a foster child that the orphaned William Dickinson Martin (1789-1833) spent several happy years from 1807 to 1809. He subsequently married the Williamson's daughter, Harrietta Maria, and went on to become a member of the South Carolina House of Representatives, Circuit Court Judge and Congressman.⁶ In 1817, after the death of Mrs. Eliza Williamson, widow of Dr. Williamson, some of the most prominent residents of the county joined together to create a female academy on her property.⁷ The record is not clear as to whether this was successful. Sometimes after 1818, a remarkable young lawyer, George McDuffie, who went on to become Congressman, Governor and United States Senator, moved into this house. There is no record that he ever owned the house, but a deed to the adjoining property refers to the "Branch on which the old Bridge to G. McDuffie's house stood" and reserves an easement "to the said George McDuffie from his house out to the said Cambridge Road."⁸ In the late 19th century this property was a home of Governor John Calhoun Shepard (1850-1931) and later of Judge J. W. DeVore (1856-1927).

The Isaac Lesesne Tract and the Presley Bland Tract: To the east of the William Simkins tract was a tract of approximately 500 acres for which a Royal Grant had been issued to Isaac Lesesne on June 1, 1775.⁹ Interestingly, more than twenty years later, in 1796, the State of South Carolina issued a grant for the same property to Presley Bland.¹⁰ This was an obvious mistake by the state's Surveyor General and may seem egregious today, but it is remarkable that this did not happen more often, given the

married two lawyers (Charles Goodwyn and Ephraim Ramsey), both of whom spent time in Edgefield. Of the two sons "no records are given" (Watson, Margaret, *Greenwood County Sketches*, Attic Press, Greenwood, 1970, p. 47). We know that after Dr. V. P. Williamson's death, his heirs sold another piece of property that he had owned (100 acres at Holly Hill) to Charles Goodwyn (the deed to which was apparently never recorded), establishing at least that the Dr. V. P. Williamson family knew the Andrew Williamson family.

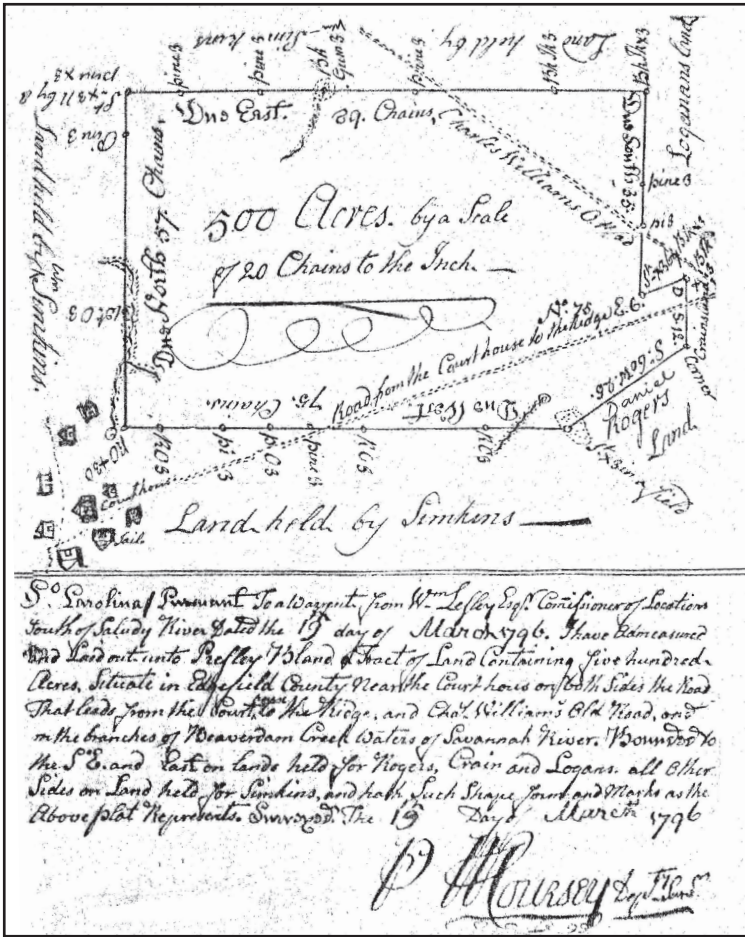
⁶ *Journal of William D. Martin*, Anna D. Elmore, Editor, Charlotte, 1959. See also O'Neill, pp. 191-194.

⁷ See Deed Book 38, page 127.

⁸ Deed of Eldred Simkins to Dr. William Brazier, dated March 18, 1824, Deed Book 40, Page 468, Edgefield County Archives. Although the Edgewood Apartments have been accessed from Jeter Street since they were built in the 1970's, previously the access to this property was out to the road to Cambridge (Buncombe Street), running parallel to, and on the north side of, the Three Quarter Branch, and crossing the little drain over which what has been known through the years as "McDuffie's Bridge" arches.

⁹ Royal Grant of South Carolina, vol. 37, page 3; Grant dated June 1, 1775; Plat dated January 11, 1775, South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

¹⁰ South Carolina State Grant, vol. ____, page ____, South Carolina Department of Archives and History. See also South Carolina State Plats, vol. 32, page 609; Plat for Presley Bland, recorded April 1, 1796.



1795 Plat for Presley Bland

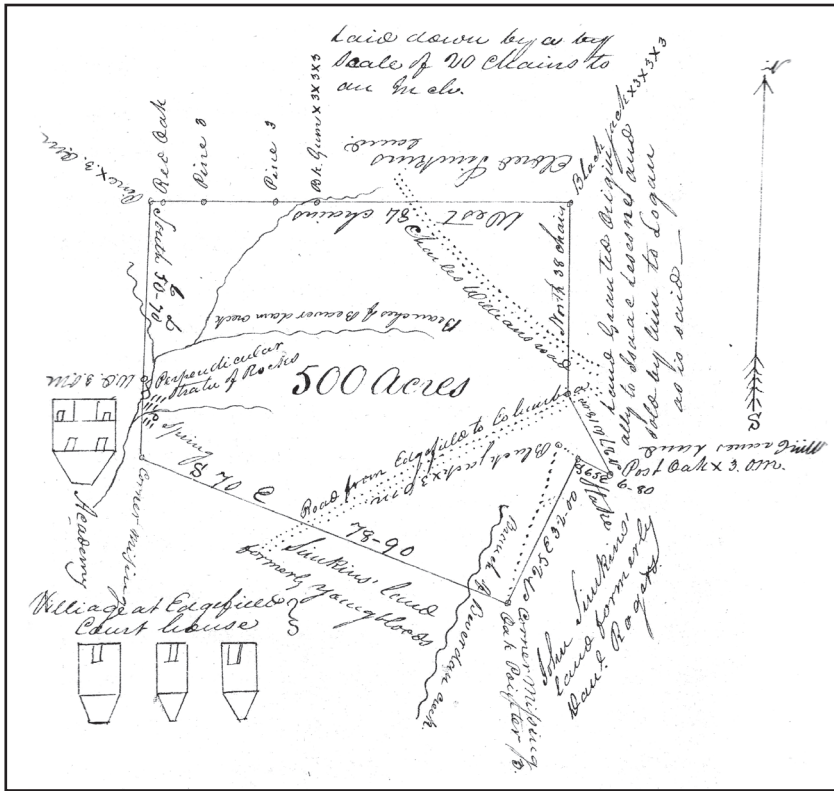
fact that the colonial government was making grants of land in the vast unsettled and poorly mapped backcountry over many decades, particularly when grantees did not settle on their land or maintain the original survey marks. In any event, after a decade of having his grant, Bland sold 200 acres of this property to John C. Allen in 1806.¹¹ Allen in turn sold it to Samuel Scott in 1807¹² and Scott sold it to Charles Martin soon afterwards.¹³ In 1811, Martin sold this tract, together with nine acres which had been a part of the William Simkins grant,¹⁴ to Edmund Bacon (1776-1826), a lawyer who had

¹¹ Deed Book 29, page 273, Edgefield County Archives.

¹² Deed Book 29, page 274, Edgefield County Archives.

¹³ Scott apparently died before he could execute the deed to Martin. See Deed Book 32, page 210, Edgefield County Archives for the deed of Charles Martin to Edmund Bacon which contains the explanation that Scott died before executing the deed to Martin.

¹⁴ We have not been able to find any record by which Charles Martin may have acquired the



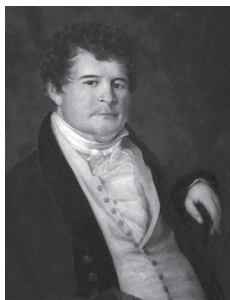
1816 Plat for Hannah Lesesne

moved to Edgefield two years before.¹⁵ Several years later, when it came to light that the earlier grant had been made to Lesesne, Bacon had to purchase this same land all over again. This time he purchased the entire Lesesne tract, acquiring 500 acres which extended eastward all the way across what is now Columbia Road.¹⁶

nine acres, nor is it clear that the nine acres were a part of the William Simkins tract.

¹⁵ Deed Book 32, page 210, Edgefield County Archives. The line between the Simkins and Bacon tracts was agreed upon by a line agreement executed on an original plat dated May 21, 1814 in the possession of Mrs. Robert (Sally Bolton) Norris. A copy of this plat is in the possession of Bettis C. Rainsford.

¹⁶ Deed Book 34, pages 333-339, Edgefield County Archives. In the files of the Equity Court for Edgefield County (package 213) we find an 1821 suit in which these issues were addressed. The documents tell us that Isaac Lesesne had indeed received the grant for the property and that, after her husband's death, Mrs. Hannah Lesesne had had the property resurveyed, determining "beyond a possibility of doubt" that the land belonged to her. The documents also reveal that Charles Martin had died insolvent and his warranty of title was therefore worthless. The court valued the 200 acres sold by Martin to Bacon at \$900 even though Bacon had paid Mrs. Lesesne only \$400 for the full 500 acres. Mrs. Lesesne may have accepted such a low figure in order to avoid litigation. Interestingly, Prudence Martin, widow of Charles Martin, was successful in recovering from Edmund Bacon \$200 for her dower even though her husband had no valid interest in the land when he sold it.



Edmund Bacon: Edmund Bacon was a remarkable man who brought much to the Edgefield Courthouse Village. Born in Augusta in 1776 to parents who had emigrated from Virginia, Bacon was orphaned at an early age and became the ward of his brother-in-law, General Thomas Glascock. He attended Richmond Academy where, in 1791 at the age of fifteen, he was chosen to deliver the welcoming address for President George Washington who was visiting Augusta on his Southern tour.¹⁷ After reading law, Bacon initially settled in Savannah. His health, however, was badly affected by the climate there and his physician urged him to move to higher ground.

After a brief stop in Beech Island, he visited Edgefield where he was hospitably entertained by the Clerk of Court, Stanmore Butler (1766-1830).¹⁸ Butler convinced Bacon to settle here and even offered to let him live in one of his houses which was vacant.¹⁹ Bacon accepted the offer and began to practice law in Edgefield in the year 1809.²⁰ After purchasing his property from Charles Martin in 1811, he had a house erected.²¹ The home was on a site at what is now the northeast corner of present-day Simkins and Wigfall Streets, encompassing the properties owned by Mrs. Eda Stertz, Mrs. Hazel Whatley, and the Edgefield County Hospital (the Mental Health facility). For the next seventeen years, Bacon had a remarkable impact upon the development of Edgefield Courthouse Village, adding considerably to the legal community as well as to the society and culture of the Village. Regrettably he died prematurely at the age of fifty in 1826.²² His family continued to live on at the Bacon property for more than a century.²³

¹⁷ *Augusta Chronicle*, June 4, 1791, cited in *Memories: The Academy of Richmond County 1783-1983*, by Alethia E. Bigbee, R.L. Bryan Company, Columbia, 1982, p. 9. The full text of Bacon's welcoming address to President Washington is printed in *Memories*, pp. 156-157.

¹⁸ A son of Captain James Butler of Big Creek (1735-1781), Stanmore Butler became deputy sheriff and Clerk of Court (1808-1814) of Edgefield County. He was married to Ann Patience Youngblood (1787-1861), daughter of Nancy Simkins Youngblood and granddaughter of Arthur Simkins who, after Stanmore's death, married Allen B. Addison (1788-1850).

¹⁹ O'Neill, p. 223. These particulars supplied to O'Neill by John Edmund Bacon are believed to be correct, except that Stanmore Butler was the host of Bacon rather than his nephew George.

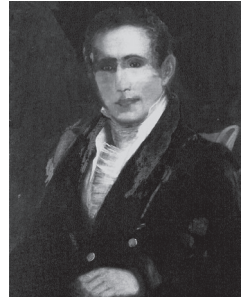
²⁰ O'Neill, p. 227. This date, supplied to O'Neill by James T. Bacon, appears to be correct, given the fact that Bacon acquired the Martin property in 1811.

²¹ According to the account of John Edmund Bacon in O'Neill, Edmund Bacon's first house burned not long after it was built. Thereafter he rebuilt it in a grander fashion.

²² O'Neill, pp. 223-230.

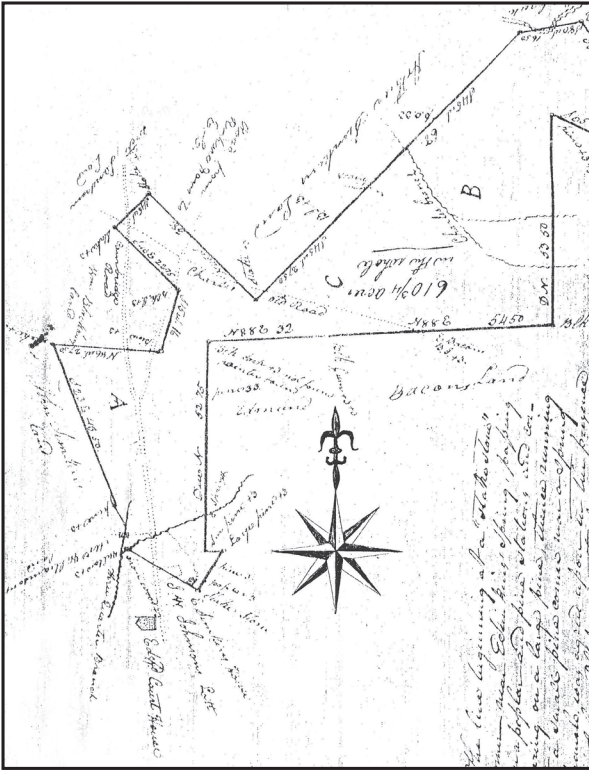
²³ The Bacon house again burned to the ground in 1878 (*Edgefield Advertiser*, November 7, 1878), but was rebuilt on the same site. The rebuilt house was also burned in the late 1930's when it was owned by Mrs. Ella Mays Allen Edwards (afterwards Mrs. W. E. B. Tompkins). She decided not to rebuild on the original site, but rather subdivided the lot into three parcels and built a smaller house on the parcel facing Wigfall Street where Mrs. Hazel Whatley now lives.

Eldred Simkins: Other than the property conveyed to Dr. Williamson, the rest of the William Simkins tract was left largely undisturbed for the next few decades. After William's death in 1802, the property went to his father, Arthur,²⁴ who deeded most of it to his youngest son Eldred Simkins (1779-1831) in 1810.²⁵ Born in 1779, Eldred studied with the renowned educator, Dr. Moses Waddel, during which time he became the "earliest & best friend" of John C. Calhoun. After finishing his studies with Dr. Waddel, he went to the Law School at Litchfield, Connecticut where he studied for three years. He returned to South Carolina and read law under Chancellor DeSaussure in



Charleston. He was admitted to the bar in 1805. About this time, he returned to Edgefield where he began his practice of law. In 1807 he married Eliza Hannah Smith, granddaughter of Georgia Revolutionary hero Elijah Clarke.²⁶

Sometimes between 1805 and 1814, Eldred Simkins built a substantial house at the edge of the William Simkins grant on what later became known as Simkins Street. This house survived until about 1914 when it burned²⁷ and was replaced by the Lynch family with two new



1814 Plat of Eldred Simkins land

²⁴ No document has been found which shows how Arthur acquired the property from his son William.

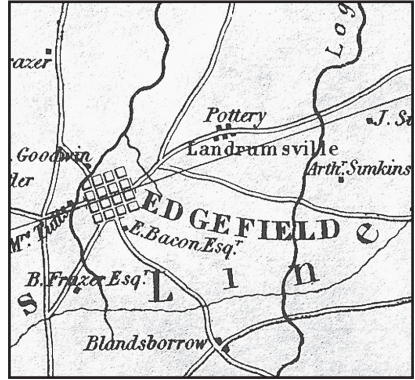
²⁵ Deed Book 31, p. 143, Edgefield County Archives. Some of the property on the western side apparently went to Arthur Simkins' oldest son, John.

²⁶ Bailey, N. Louise, Mary L. Morgan and Carolyn R. Taylor, Editors, *Biographical Directory of the South Carolina Senate, 1776-1985, Volume II*, by University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, 1986, pp. 1460-1461.

²⁷ *Edgefield Advertiser*, March 11, 1914..

houses that faced the newly-cut Lynch Street.²⁸ The house is shown as being there in 1814 when Simkins had a resurvey done of the property given to him by his father in 1810.²⁹ This plat shows that the majority of the William Simkins property was still untouched and in tact as of 1814.³⁰

Pottersville: During this period, about a mile and a half north of the Courthouse Village, an exciting development was occurring. Dr. Abner Landrum had discovered a type of clay which he determined was ideal for making pottery. He had also developed a new process for making stoneware using an alkaline glaze. On land which his family owned about halfway between Cedarfields and the Courthouse, he began his pottery-manufacturing enterprise which was to revolutionize the pottery industry and create in the Edgefield District a new economic engine. In 1826 Robert Mills reported in his *Statistics of South Carolina*:



1825 Map showing Pottersville

There is a village of sixteen or seventeen houses, and as many families, within a mile and a half of Edgefield court house, called the Pottery, or Pottersville, but which should be called Landrumville, from its ingenious and scientific founder, Dr. Abner Landrum. This village is altogether supported by the manufacture of stoneware, carried on by this gentleman; and which, by his own discoveries is made much stronger, better, and cheaper than any European or American ware of the same kind. This manufacture of stoneware may be increased to almost any extent; in case of war, &c. its usefulness can hardly be estimated.³¹

The development of Pottersville certainly would have had an impact on life along the Road to Cambridge in Edgefield Courthouse Village. It brought new activity and new people into the neighborhood.

²⁸ See the Sanborn Insurance map of 1909 for the location of the Simkins house and the map of 1918 for the location of the Lynch houses.

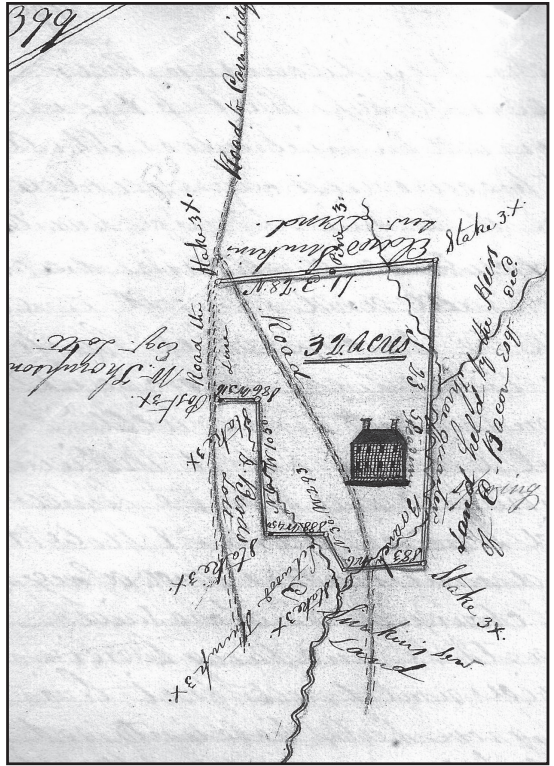
²⁹ See original plat of land belonging to Eldred Simkins dated May 21, 1814, in the possession of Mrs. Robert (Sally Bolton) Norris. A copy of this plat is in the possession of Bettis C. Rainsford.

³⁰ Except for the J. W. Johnson lot (See below).

³¹ Mills, Robert, *Statistics of South Carolina*, Hurlbut and Lloyd, Charleston, 1826, page 523-524.

The Edgefield Village Academy:

At the opening of the 19th century, Arthur Simkins, who owned most of the land surrounding the courthouse and down the ridge extending eastward, decided that the time had come to do some urban planning. He engaged the surveyor Robert Lang to draw a plan for the Edgefield Courthouse Village. The plan was completed and certified on October 22, 1800. Regrettably a copy of this plan has not survived, but we have numerous deeds which refer to it and tell us much about this first scheme for the development of the Village. The main street leading eastward from the courthouse (our Main Street) was named "Jefferson Street," obviously for the candidate whom Arthur Simkins hoped would be elected President in the following November, 1800 election. One of the sites which was denoted on the plan was a two acre "beautiful eminence reserved for a public Academy."³² This property was the hill in the rear of the Marsh-Stark house at the corner of today's Simkins and Johnson Streets. Thus, from the outset, Arthur Simkins had planned for the Village to have a seat of education.



Plat of the Academy. See the notation "D. Bird's Lott" where Halcyon Grove is located.

The first evidence that an academy was actually started in Edgefield comes from a copy of one of Edgefield's earliest newspapers, the *Edgefield Anti-Monarchist and South Carolina Advertiser*, dated September 28, 1811, where a notice was printed informing the public that a meeting had been held, a site selected and a committee named to develop plans for an academy building.³³ However, the site selected

³² Deed Book 35, page 120, Edgefield County Archives.

³³ *Edgefield Anti-Monarchist and South Carolina Advertiser*, volume 1, no. 10, dated September 28, 1811, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina. The full notice reads as follows: "Pursuant to the notice heretofore published a meeting of the subscribers to an Academy in this place was held yesterday in the Court House. After the appointment of a Chairman and Secretary, a scite [*sic.*] for the Academy was agreed on, and a committee of five persons appointed to form and report a variety of plans for the building at the next

was not the site which was reserved for it in the Robert Lang plan, but rather a site “northeast of the Three Quarter Branch” on present-day Church Street where the seat of education in Edgefield remained for more than 150 years. No record was left suggesting why the new site was chosen, but it may have been because of the excellent spring on the Three Quarter Branch where a good supply of water could be obtained for the students and teachers.³⁴ Following the decision to locate the academy on the new site, Eldred Simkins sold the lot which had been previously reserved for an academy.³⁵ Although we have no written description of the academy building, an 1816 plat of an adjoining property has a sketch of the Academy building, showing it to be a two story structure.³⁶ It was not until 1825 that Eldred Simkins got around to deeding this property to the “Trustees of the Edgefield Village Academy,” in which the property is described as that property “whereon the Village Male Academy now stands.”³⁷

One might surmise that the building of the Academy was instigated by the movement into school age of some of the sons of the prominent citizens in the Village, including Nancy Simkins Youngblood’s son Erasmus born in 1800, Pierre LaBorde’s sons Maximilian and Pierre Fabian born in 1804 and 1807 respectively, John Simkins’ sons born in 1797, 1802, and 1807, Edmund Bacon’s sons born in 1802 and 1805, and Benjamin Frazier’s four sons all born in the first decade of the 19th century. Early teachers at the Academy included William Wash, Esq. who was there in 1812, Robert Armstrong who was there during four of the early years of the Academy and James Caldwell who was there in 1819.³⁸

J. W. Johnston Lot: The first property that is recorded as being sold by Eldred Simkins out of the William Simkins grant was a lot which he sold to a fellow attorney, John William Johnston, in 1812. That lot, which was in the vicinity of the John Kemp Antique shop, is shown on the 1814 plat. Little is known about who Johnston was or whether this lot was intended by him to be a residence or an office.

meeting of the subscribers, out of which one might be adopted. Saturday the fifth of October next was then appointed for the next meeting, at which time, a general attendance is most respectfully solicited. September 21.”

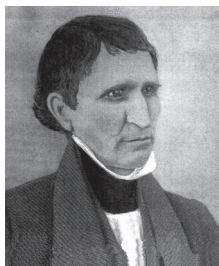
³⁴ See Deed Book 42, page 399, Edgefield County Archives on which a plat shows a spring just east of the Academy.

³⁵ Deed Book 35, page 120, Edgefield County Archives.

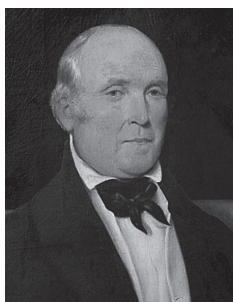
³⁶ Deed Book 34, page 336, Deed and Plat of Hannah Lesesne to Edmund Bacon, October, 1816.

³⁷ Deed Book 42, page 395, Edgefield County Archives. The plat which accompanied this deed also has a sketch of the Academy building, showing it to be a two-story structure.

³⁸ For the information about William Wash as principal of the Academy in 1812, see a manuscript page in the Basil Manly file of Bettis C. Rainsford which was possibly written by Mrs. Mamie Norris Tillman. Maximilian LaBorde has left some interesting memories about the Edgefield Village Academy under Robert Armstrong (see the Memoir in LaBorde, M., *The History of the South Carolina College*, Walker, Evans & Cogswell, Printers, Charleston, 1874, pp. vii-x. For the Caldwell tenure at the Academy, see O’Neill, p. 285.



George McDuffie: As noted above, one of the people who moved into the Halcyon Grove neighborhood around 1815 was a young lawyer by the name of George McDuffie (1790-1851). Born to poor Scotch-Irish immigrants near what is now Thomson, Georgia, McDuffie was adopted by the Calhoun family and educated at Willington, the school of the eminent educator, Dr. Moses Waddel (1770-1840). There McDuffie earned the reputation of being one of the most brilliant young men that Waddel ever taught. After graduating from the South Carolina College, he arrived in Edgefield in December of 1814 to become the law partner of Eldred Simkins. McDuffie quickly developed a very successful law practice and, in 1820, was elected to Congress where he became one of the most influential leaders of antebellum South Carolina. As architect of the Nullification controversy of the 1830's, and as Governor and United States Senator, he did more to create and promote the sectional divide in America than any other person.³⁹ When he came to Edgefield, McDuffie lived in the Dr. V. P. Williamson house, across the street and through the woods from Halcyon Grove.⁴⁰ This brilliant and highly successful lawyer and political leader undoubtedly added an interesting dimension to the neighborhood in the years during which Halcyon Grove was being built.



Whitfield Brooks: Another person who came to Edgefield in this period and was to play a major role in the development of the Village was Whitfield Brooks (1790-1851). The son of Zachariah Smith Brooks (1765-1848), a prosperous planter from the Big Creek section of the County (now Saluda County) and his wife, Elizabeth Butler Brooks (1766-1802), daughter of Captain James Butler, Sr., he received his early education at Mount Bethel Academy in Newberry District. He studied at the South Carolina College, graduating in the Class of 1812. He came to Edgefield Courthouse Village to read law with Eldred Simkins and shortly thereafter

³⁹ O'Neill, pages 463-468; Edmonds, Bobby F., *George McDuffie, Southern Orator*, Cedar Hill, Unltd., McCormick, S.C., 2007, *passim*; Freehling, William W., *Prelude to Civil War, The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina, 1816-1836*, Harper & Row, New York, 1965, *passim*.

⁴⁰ We have not been able to determine for certain how long McDuffie lived here, but believe that this was his South Carolina home until at least until 1829. (As Congressman, he also resided for much of the year in Washington.) In 1829 he was married to Mary Singleton and lived part of the next year at her father's plantation in the Sumter District. After her death the next year (1830), he purchased Cherry Hill Plantation in the Abbeville District (present-day McCormick County) and built a house there where he resided until the end of his life (Moore, Alexander, *Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives, vol. V, 1816-1828*, South Carolina Department of Archives & History, Columbia, 1992, pages 167-170).

ter became Commissioner of Equity for the Edgefield District.⁴¹ In 1818 he married a beautiful young woman from Charleston, Mary Parsons Carroll (1800-1870). We do not know where Brooks lived when he first came to Edgefield Village, but given his practice of law and his duties as Commissioner of Equity, he certainly lived in, or very close to, the Village. During the first half of the 19th century, Whitfield and Mary Parsons Carroll Brooks were involved in almost every new initiative in Edgefield Village. They and their children left their imprint on the community in more ways than almost any other family except the Simkins family.

The Mims-Norris House: One of the earliest houses built on the road to Cambridge north of the Courthouse was a house built on property acquired by Matthew Mims (1779-1848) in 1817, just north of the William Simkins tract. The son of Drury Mims (1730-1818), Matthew Mims was married to Eliza Tutt (1790-1874),



Mims-Norris House, 1817

daughter of Captain Richard Tutt (1749-1807) of the patriot militia, a man who was the first sheriff, the Ordinary, and the Clerk of Court of the County.⁴² Matthew was a planter who also served as a Clerk of Court from 1814 until 1822.⁴³ The house Mims built was in the forks of the roads to Cambridge and Newberry (the present-day Buncombe and Pickens Streets). For its time this house was substantial and architecturally significant. In the forks of the road, it had fan-light double door entrances facing each road with a porch looking toward the village.⁴⁴ This house has been continuously owned by Mims descendants for the nearly 200 years since it was built.

⁴¹ O'Neill, pages 473-475.

⁴² Richard H. Tutt, a brother of the more-famous Captain Benjamin Tutt who had secured the arrest of Robert Cuninghame, the respected Tory leader, in 1775, also fought in the Revolution and also attained the rank of Captain. He was the first Sheriff of the County, the Ordinary or Probate Judge from 1795 to 1803 and the Clerk of Court from 1800 to 1807. He constructed a house on the road to Augusta, now Penn Street, in 1791. This house, which was located in the curve of the road just south of the Gray Street intersection, survived into the 20th century. A photograph of the house is preserved. A descendant, William Claude Lyon, III of North Augusta has Richard Tutt's Revolutionary War sword. Another descendant, Richard Tutt Norris of Atlanta, has the cornerstone of his house with the date 1791 etched into it.

⁴³ Chapman, page 417.

⁴⁴ Deed of Joseph Eddins to Matthew Mims, dated January 22, 1817, Deed Book 33, page 379, Edgefield County Archives.

The Name “Buncombe”: The introduction of highly-profitable short staple cotton as a new crop in the late 1790’s resulted in a general prosperity spreading throughout the Edgefield District. Because of this general prosperity, a significant trade developed during the next several decades. One result of this trade was to create a major flow of cotton and other products from the upper part of South Carolina, and particularly from Buncombe County, North Carolina down to the market towns on the Savannah Rivers: Augusta and, after 1821, Hamburg.⁴⁵ The preferred routes to these markets from the upstate became the roads through Edgefield Courthouse Village.

The “wagoners” carrying these goods to Augusta and Hamburg had, of course, to camp along the way during their journeys. The half-mile long area from where the roads to Cambridge and Newberry converged (the present-day intersection of Buncombe and Pickens Streets) down to the Three Quarter Branch became a popular campsite for these wagoners. From here, Augusta or Hamburg was just a day’s travel. Presumably Eldred Simkins gave these wagoners permission to camp along here. In time, because apple and tobacco wagoners and other tradesmen from Buncombe County, North Carolina were constantly camping along this stretch of the road, this area became known as “Buncombe.” From the *Edgefield Advertiser* in 1851 we find the following:

Well, many years ago when Augusta was the great mart, not only for all the upcountry of our State, but for various other regions and among the rest, the State of Buncombe, the amount of wagoning done on this route was immense. This part of our village was then a forest; and here was a favorite camping ground for the Buncombe wagon gentry. We have been told by an old inhabitant that there were sometimes as many as 50 wagons camped here at a time, and the whole wood was illuminated by their fires. Hence, it was called Buncombe.⁴⁶

The name was also applied to other stretches of the road from North Carolina, most notably near Greenville in the northern part of the state. Documentary evidence of this name being applied to this part of Edgefield Village is contained in several deeds: an 1827 deed of William Brazier to James Terry in which the Cambridge Road is said to be “leading through Buncombe”⁴⁷ and an 1834 deed of Andrew Pickens to James Terry in which Pickens described the property as “lying in that part of the Town of Edgefield commonly called Buncombe.”⁴⁸

⁴⁵ See Chapman, John A., *The History of Edgefield County*, Newberry, 1897, p. 236, for a description of the magnitude of the trade which was drawn by Hamburg in the years after its founding.

⁴⁶ *Edgefield Advertiser*, August 7, 1851.

⁴⁷ Deed Book 43, page 104.

⁴⁸ Deed Book 48 at Page 214. See also “An Old-Fashioned Edgefield Mince Pie,” in the *Anderson Intelligencer*, June 27, 1906, which confirms that the name was derived from the

Billy the Fiddler: One of the most interesting people in the neighborhood was a former slave by the name of Billy Porter or “Billy the Fiddler.” Born in Maryland circa 1771 and formerly the property of Benjamin Porter of Wilkes County, Georgia, Billy was a popular entertainer in Edgefield County. He had been freed by his master through a deed of manumission in 1814, with Eldred Simkins and John Jeter being named as trustees to insure his freedom.⁴⁹ Later in 1819, another deed of manumission was executed in which Billy’s wife was freed by a group of Edgefield’s prominent lawyers: Eldred Simkins, Edmund Bacon, John Glascock and John Jeter.⁵⁰ One can just imagine this elite foursome standing around talking to Billy at a party for which Billy was providing a very entertaining performance. Upon hearing that his fondest wish was to have his wife freed, the four Edgefield men apparently decided to go together and free her. Billy the Fiddler is memorialized in a short story, “The Dance” in Augustus Baldwin Longstreet’s *Georgia Scenes*.⁵¹ From the deed records we discern that Billy lived on a lot on the west side of the Road to Cambridge at the southwest corner of the Brooks Street intersection.⁵² Billy died in 1821,⁵³ just at the time when other properties along the street were being sold and developed.

John Presley: Other than the 1812 sale to J. W. Johnston, Eldred Simkins did not sell any of his properties along the Road to Cambridge until July 3, 1820. On that day he sold two lots: one to John Presley⁵⁴ and the other to Waddy Thompson, Jr. John Presley (1755-1837) was a Revolutionary War veteran who had fought at the Battle at Rogers Old Field near Edgefield in July of 1781 and who moved after 1822 to Henry County, Georgia where he resided in 1832.⁵⁵ The lot sold to Presley was on the northeast side of the road and northwest of the Academy. This is the property that is now encompassed by Buncombe, Brooks and Church Streets and probably extended up to, and included some of the Adams-Mims house property north of Addison Street. Although the deed states that the property contained one acre it was probably larger. The deed also states that the property “was originally settled by Pleasant Taylor.” This probably meant that Taylor, whoever he was, had cleared the land and was farming it as a tenant of Simkins. There could not have been a house on the property as Simkins sold it for only sixty dollars.

wagoners of Buncombe County, N.C.

⁴⁹ Deed Book 32, pages 32-34, Edgefield County Archives.

⁵⁰ Deed Book 36, pages 157-159, Edgefield County Archives.

⁵¹ Longstreet, Augustus B., *Georgia Scenes Characters, Incidents etc.*, Beehive Press, Savannah, 1992, pages 8-9. Billy Porter’s role in Edgefield is also described in “Edgefield Long Time Ago,” an article which appeared in the *Edgefield Advertiser*, October 24, 1878.

⁵² Deed Book 39, pages 303-304.

⁵³ Longstreet, page 9.

⁵⁴ Deed Book 37, page 183, Edgefield County Archives.

⁵⁵ Pension Account of John Presley, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, S 7338. See Moss, Bobby Gilmer, *Roster of South Carolina Patriots in the American Revolution*, Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., Baltimore, 1983, page 785 for Presley’s date of death.

Waddy Thompson, Jr.: On the very same day that Eldred Simkins deeded the lot to John Presley, he deeded another lot to a young lawyer who had recently arrived in Edgefield, Waddy Thompson, Jr. (1798-1868).⁵⁶ Thompson's father, Waddy Thompson, Sr. (1769-1845), was a respected lawyer and judge in Pickensville who later moved to Greenville. Thompson was graduated from the South Carolina College in 1814 and came to Edgefield where he read law. He was admitted to the bar in 1819.⁵⁷ About this time he married Emmala Elizabeth Butler (1800-1848), daughter of General William Butler (1759-1821) and Behethland Foote Moore (1764-1853). Emmala's first cousin, Whitfield Brooks, was already living in Edgefield and serving as the Commissioner of Equity for the District. Additionally, Emmala's brother, Andrew Pickens Butler (1796-1857), came to Edgefield about this time and went into practice with Thompson.⁵⁸

The lot which Thompson purchased was on the west side of the Road to Cambridge, between present-day Brooks Street and Carroll Street, and encompassed 9¼ acres.⁵⁹ He built the house which we now know as the Brooks-Tompkins House. This was a substantial house with elaborate woodwork and distinctive architectural features. While Waddy and Emmala lived here their two children were born: William Butler (b. 1821) and Eliza Williams (b. 1823).⁶⁰

Behethland Brooks Simkins: In the meantime, John Presley, who had kept his property for a little over two years, sold it in September of 1822 to John Mims for \$650, thus indicating that he had built a house on it while he owned it.⁶¹ The next month John Mims sold this property to Matthew Mims⁶² who immediately sold it to Behethland Brooks Simkins (1793-1864), widow of Jesse Simkins (1784-1821) for \$800.⁶³ Jesse was the eldest son of John Simkins (1762-1833) who was the brother of Eldred Simkins (1779-1831) and son of the founder, Arthur Simkins (1742-1826). Jesse had been a merchant at "The Ridge" (present-day Ridge Spring) in partnership with George Butler (1786-1821).⁶⁴ Behethland was the daughter of Zachariah Smith Brooks and Elizabeth Butler Brooks, the sister of Whitfield Brooks and the

⁵⁶ The deed to Waddy Thompson was apparently not recorded, but Simkins' deed to Presley notes that he had sold the lot to Thompson on that same day.

⁵⁷ Moore, Vol. V, page 266-267. Huff, Archie Vernon, Jr., *Greenville, The History of the City and County in the South Carolina Piedmont*, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, 1995, p. 117.

⁵⁸ Chapman, John A., *The History of Edgefield County*, Newberry, 1897, p. 171. Andrew Pickens Butler went on to become a Judge and a United States Senator. It was he who Senator Charles Sumner insulted, causing Edgefield's Congressman Preston Brooks to cane him.

⁵⁹ Deed Book 42, page 21, Edgefield County Archives.

⁶⁰ Source for the Thompson children's names and dates of birth.

⁶¹ Deed Book 39, page 306, Edgefield County Archives.

⁶² Deed Book 40, page 226, Edgefield County Archives.

⁶³ Deed Book 41, page 42, Edgefield County Archives.

⁶⁴ Equity Court Case William Butler vs. Jesse Simkins, Equity Court file 183.

first cousin of Emmala Butler Thompson and Andrew Pickens Butler. When Jesse Simkins died prematurely in 1821 at the age of 37, he and Behethland had five children: John Smith (b. 1810), John Lawrence (b. 1814), Elizabeth (b. 1815), Emmala Ann (b. 1816) and Zachariah Smith (b. 1818). Behethland may have decided to move to Edgefield because her brother and a sister, her first cousins, and her husband's father and uncle all lived here. Additionally, the Edgefield Village Academy, located just a short distance from John Presley's house, probably played a part in her decision, as she had two sons who were about school-age. Sadly, several years after moving to Edgefield, Behethland's eldest child, John Smith, died on April 6, 1827.⁶⁵

Edgefield Village Baptist Church: Another important development was going on in the neighborhood during this time: the Edgefield Village Baptist Church was being organized. In 1822 Basil Manly, a South Carolina College classmate of Eldred Simkins (1802-1845)⁶⁶ and Baptist minister, was invited to preach at the Edgefield County Courthouse.⁶⁷ He so impressed those who heard him preach that he was asked to join Little Stevens Creek Baptist, some eleven miles north of Edgefield and was ordained there.⁶⁸ Because of his powerful sermons, a number of people in the Courthouse Village began to think about the desirability of starting a Baptist Church here. Meetings were held, subscriptions solicited and soon the church began to be organized.⁶⁹ A site was selected on part of the William Simkins grant where the church now stands and Eldred Simkins gave 1¼ acres of land for the church.⁷⁰ This was just across the Three Quarter Branch and up the hill from Halcyon Grove. The long list of those who responded to the initial request for contributions gives a strong indication that the church was destined to be very successful and a major institution for the Village and environs. By March, 1823 the church building was completed and a dedication service was held on April 20, 1823.⁷¹

⁶⁵ Montgomery, Erick, "Descendants of William Butler, Gentleman Justice of Prince William County, Virginia," p. 28.

⁶⁶ This Eldred Simkins was the son of John Simkins (1762-1833) and the nephew of Eldred Simkins (1779-1831). This information was found in a manuscript page in the Basil Manly file of Bettis C. Rainsford, possibly written by Mrs. Mamie Norris Tillman. Eldred Simkins (1802-1845) was the father of William Stewart Simkins (1842-1929) who was one of the Citadel cadets who fired the first shots of the Civil War on the *Star of the West* as it was trying to resupply Fort Sumter and who went on to become a distinguished and much beloved professor of law at the University of Texas.

⁶⁷ The official invitation was from Matthew Mims and Abner Blocker (See Manly, Louise, *The Manly Family, An Account of the Descendants of Captain Basil Manly of the Revolution*, Greenville, S.C., 1930, page 98).

⁶⁸ Ibid. This was the church where Arthur Simkins worshipped

⁶⁹ Woodson, Hortense, *History of the Edgefield Baptist Association*, Edgefield Advertiser Press, Edgefield, 1957, page 211.

⁷⁰ Deed of Eldred Simkins to the Trustees of the Edgefield Village Baptist Church, dated February 10, 1824, Deed Book 41, page 173, Edgefield County Archives.

⁷¹ Woodson, pages 212-213.

Dr. William Brazier: In this same period another remarkable man arrived in Edgefield. From a respectable family in England, Dr. William Brazier (1740-1843) initially came to the West Indies as a collector at the port of St. Christopher. After periods as a Methodist missionary to the Negroes in the West Indies, a pastor for a Methodist Church in Charleston, and a student of medicine in Philadelphia, he came to this area in 1795 where he began a medical practice first in Augusta and then in Edgefield Courthouse Village.⁷² In 1827 in partnership with Dr. Abner Landrum, he purchased the South Carolina Republican, a newspaper which was located at Pottersville.⁷³ Later that year, he left Edgefield to travel to the Mississippi valley. After five or six years out there, he returned to South Carolina where he died in Aiken in 1843 at the remarkable age of more than 103. A man of considerable intellect, he was well respected as a physician and a clergyman. He was an inveterate talker and a bold listener, but “for want of cultivation and discipline . . . and owing to an ardor of temperament which rendered him impatient of contradiction, he was not successful.”⁷⁴

In 1824 Dr. Brazier purchased property directly across the Road to Cambridge from Halcyon Grove.⁷⁵ His property extended from the Three Quarter Branch up to present-day Brooks Streets and included the lot which had previously been occupied by Billy the Fiddler. Certainly Dr. Brazier would have added color for the Halcyon Grove neighborhood.

Halcyon Grove

The Daniel Bird Era

Thus, by 1824, there had been a considerable development in the neighborhood on the north side of Edgefield Courthouse Village and a number of interesting people lived here. It was in that year that Halcyon Grove came into being. The story of this home follows:

Background and Early Life: Another young man, just a bit older than Whitefield Brooks who was circulating about the Edgefield District in the first decades of the 19th century, was Daniel Bird, Jr. (1784-1865). He was the son of Daniel Bird, Sr. (1755-1807) who had come to Edgefield County from Virginia in the 1770's. Sources have suggested that he was a member of the illustrious William Byrd family of Vir-

⁷² *Edgefield Advertiser*, November 27, 1843.

⁷³ *South Carolina Republican*, February 17, 1827.

⁷⁴ Chapman, John, *History of Edgefield County*, Newberry, 1897, pages 344-345.

⁷⁵ He acquired one lot from John Presley (Deed Book 41, Pages 16-17) who had acquired it from Eldred Simkins in 1822 (Deed Book 39, Page 303, Edgefield County Archives). The other lot he acquired directly from Eldred Simkins (Deed Book 40, Page 468, Edgefield County Archives).

ginia, but it appears more likely from genealogical sources that Daniel Bird, Sr. was the son of Solomon Bird, Sr. (1704-1784) of Accomack County, Virginia who was the son of John Bird (1673-1727) who was the son of Edward Bird (1645-1697).⁷⁶ It appears that Daniel Bird, Sr. came to South Carolina with his brothers, Solomon, Jr., Elijah and Hezekiah. Daniel Bird, Sr. lived on Turkey and Log Creeks approximately ten miles northwest of Edgefield Courthouse Village. When he died in 1807 he left a substantial estate, including land and slaves, some of which were inherited by his eldest son, Daniel, Jr.⁷⁷ As early as 1815, Daniel Bird, Jr. was referred to as “Captain Daniel Bird,”⁷⁸ which suggests that he may have served in the War of 1812. However, we have not yet found any evidence of his service.⁷⁹

Daniel Bird, Jr. was first married in 1806 to Sarah Oliver (1791-1812), the granddaughter of Revolutionary hero Dionysius Oliver (1735-1818) of Elbert County, Georgia.⁸⁰ Although the couple had two daughters, Sarah Oliver Bird died tragically in 1812 and the two daughters, a year later.⁸¹ Left a childless widower, in 1814 Daniel Bird, Jr. married Lucinda Brooks (1791-1826), the daughter of Zachariah Smith Brooks and Elizabeth Butler Brooks, the younger sister of Whitfield Brooks and the older sister of Behethland Brooks Simkins. The couple had four children: Louisa Ann (b. 1816), Thomas Butler (b. 1818), Mary S. (b. 1821) and Cornelia (b. 1825).⁸²

Having inherited some wealth from his father, Daniel Bird was a well-to-do planter. In 1810 he owned ten slaves and by 1820 had increased his holdings to twenty-one.⁸³ Additionally he had obtained several grants of land from the state for hundreds of acres.⁸⁴ In 1817 he was elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives where he served in the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth General Assem-

⁷⁶ One source (unidentified single sheet in the Bird file in the Tompkins Library) shows Daniel Bird, Sr. as being the son of William Byrd, III and notes that “Daniel Bird, I, Elijah Bird, Solomon Bird, Hezekiah Bird, and John Bird all settled in the 96 District.” One obvious question is “Why would Daniel Bird, Sr. and his brothers adopt a new spelling of the name (Byrd) which was so illustrious in Virginia.” See “Birds of Jefferson County,” in Ancestry.com which has the more likely genealogy: Edward, John, Solomon, Sr., Daniel. Tonya Browder of the Tompkins Memorial Library contributed significantly to searching the genealogy of Daniel Bird.

⁷⁷ Daniel Bird, Sr. Estate File, Box 33, Package 1208, Edgefield County Archives.

⁷⁸ See Plat of John Blocker of land on Beaverdam Creek dated April 12, 1815, in the Loose Papers File in the Edgefield County Archives.

⁷⁹ We have looked at McClendon, Carlee T., *Edgefield, South Carolina in the War of 1812*, the Hive Press, Edgefield, 1977, but it contains no reference to Bird.

⁸⁰ Register of Marriages of Moses Waddell, 12-25-1806 & Marriage Records of Elbert County, Books L-F, p. 28.

⁸¹ Coulter, E. Merton, *The History of Old Petersburg*, page 84, cited in Hunter, Jane B., “Daniel Bird (1784-1865), A Research Report,” undated, copies are in the Tompkins Memorial Library, Edgefield, S.C. and in the Daniel Bird file of Bettis C. Rainsford.

⁸² Marriage to Lucinda & children & DOB’s

⁸³ United States Census for 1810, United States Census for 1820.

⁸⁴ Grants

blies (1818-1822). In 1822 he was elected Clerk of Court for the Edgefield District in which office he served from 1822 until 1830.⁸⁵

Acquiring the Site: The records are not clear as to where Daniel and Lucinda Bird lived when they were first married. As a well-to-do planter, Daniel probably had a substantial home on one of his plantations, but when he became Clerk of Court, he undoubtedly found it more convenient to live in the Courthouse Village. On October 2, 1824, Bird purchased from Eldred Simkins two acres of land on the east side of the Road to Cambridge.⁸⁶ This property was adjacent to the home of Lucinda's sister, Behethland, who had moved there just two years before. It was also just down the street from the home of Lucinda's first cousin, Emmala Butler Thompson, and just a short walk from the Edgefield Village Academy.

Building the House: On this two acre parcel, Daniel Bird built the magnificent mansion which has been known through the years as "Halcyon Grove." The house was three stories, including the full attic. Two huge chimneys were at each end, providing fire places for the front rooms on the first and second floors. Two smaller chimneys were behind for the back rooms. The front porch was a narrow, two-story portico which was common in the early antebellum period. (This would later be changed to the porch we see today which extends across the entire front of the house.)⁸⁷ Other architectural features included elaborately-carved mantelpieces, wainscoting, and an arch dividing the downstairs hallway. Additionally there were fanlights over the main hall doors upstairs and down, and a partially hidden staircase at the back hall leading to the second floor. The hardware for all of the doors was brass and of the best quality, for the hinges and locks have lasted for nearly two centuries. By any standards, this was, as a later commentator described it, "a handsome establishment, and a large and comfortable one."⁸⁸

Many printed sources over the years have stated that Halcyon Grove was built in 1817 by Andrew Pickens, but this is not correct. That mistake resulted from the fact that among title documents for the house which had been kept in a drawer of the secretary in the library at Halcyon Grove were manuscript accountings of Andrew Pickens which showed clearly that he was building a house in 1817. However, there is nothing in those documents to suggest that the house that he was building was Halcyon Grove. In fact, there is no evidence to suggest that he was even in Edgefield at the time. It is believed that he only arrived here sometimes after 1829.

⁸⁵ Moore, page 19.

⁸⁶ Deed to Daniel Bird from Eldred Simkins, Sen., dated October 2, 1824, Deed Book 40, page 482, Edgefield County Archives. The deed notes that the property was "originally occupied by Stephen Clement, but now by the said Daniel." We assume that this language means that Clement was farming this property as a tenant of Simkins.

⁸⁷ The foundations for the original porch can be seen today under the current porch. Also see the *Edgefield Advertiser*, August 7, 1851 for a comment on the "narrow Portico with the diminutive pillars."

⁸⁸ *Edgefield Advertiser*, August 7, 1851.

The strongest evidence that Bird built the house is the fact that he paid Eldred Simkins \$135 for his two acres in 1824 and then sold the property five years later in 1829 for \$3,000, clearly establishing that he had made substantial improvements to the property while he owned it.⁸⁹

Family Life: When Daniel Bird moved into his new house in 1825, he and Lucinda had three children, Louisa Ann (9 years old), Thomas Butler (7 years old), and Mary (4 years old). In the year that he moved in, a fourth child was born, Cornelia. About this same time another event occurred in the neighborhood which impacted the family life of the Birds: That event was the decision of Waddy and Em-mala Thompson, Lucinda's first cousin, to sell their home just up the street where they had lived for five years to Lucinda's brother, Whitfield Brooks. On February 28, 1825 Waddy Thompson, Jr. executed the deed to Brooks.⁹⁰ Thus, the three Brooks siblings – Whitfield, Lucinda and Behethland – now all lived within a block of each other. Their children were all about the same age. One can imagine that these children all played together up and down the street.

Death of Lucinda: However, the following year a tragic development occurred which certainly must have put a pall of sadness over the homes along the Road to Cambridge: In October of 1826, Daniel's thirty-five year old wife, Lucinda Brooks Bird, died, leaving her husband with four children ten years old and younger. From her tombstone in Willowbrook Cemetery, one discerns that Daniel was deeply saddened by his loss, as his eloquent epitaph ends with the sentence "This piece of marble was placed over her remains as a tribute of love and respect by her affectionate husband."⁹¹

Marriage to Behethland: Needing someone to help raise his children, Bird would certainly have looked around for a suitable mate. He found one right next door: his deceased wife's widowed sister, Behethland Brooks Simkins. The year following Lucinda's death, on August 17, 1827, Daniel and Behethland were married.⁹² Interestingly, the couple entered into a marriage contract just before their marriage with Behethland's brother, Whitfield Brooks, acting as trustee for Behethland's property.⁹³ Thus, with the marriage, Daniel's four children and the four surviving children whom Behethland had from her previous marriage were merged into one

⁸⁹ Compare deeds: Deed Book 40, page 482 and Deed Book 44, page 192, Edgefield County Archives.

⁹⁰ Deed Book 42, page 21, Edgefield County Archives.

⁹¹ Tillman, Mamie Norris and Hortense Woodson, *Inscriptions from Edgefield Village Baptist Cemetery, including Trinity Episcopal Church Section and Willowbrook Cemetery*, Edgefield County Historical Society, 1958, page 73.

⁹² McClendon, Carlee T., *Edgefield Marriage Records*, R.L. Bryan Company, Columbia, 1970, page 13

⁹³ Deed Book 43, page 9, Edgefield County Archives. Could this have reflected a concern about Daniel Bird's financial stability, or was this just to protect Behethland's property for her children from her prior marriage?

big family. Daniel and Behethland then went on to have four children together: Daniel Butler Bird (b. 1828), Sarah Oliver Bird (b. 1831), Pickens Brooks Bird (b. 1833) and William Capers Bird (b. 1835).⁹⁴ One can imagine that while the family lived in Halcyon Grove, there was a lot of activity.

Selling Halcyon Grove: Just when one would think that he was positioned for a life of happiness in the new house, on October 20, 1829, Daniel Bird sold Halcyon Grove to Francis W. Pickens.⁹⁵ One of the mysteries which we have encountered in the Story of Halcyon Grove is what caused him to do this. In the prime of life, with a beautiful new house, a new wife, a houseful of children and the whole world ahead of him, why would he sell the wonderful home he had built just several years earlier? Was the sale occasioned by financial pressures resulting from a bad cotton crop? Did the sadness occasioned by the loss of Lucinda cause him to want to change to new surroundings? Was he preparing to leave Edgefield? So far we have no answer. We do know that between 1829 and 1831 Bird began selling his Edgefield properties – six tracts of land totaling 1,716 acres for which he received \$6,793.

In January of 1830 Bird was challenged in his race for reelection as Clerk of Court of the Edgefield District by two opponents: Jefferson Richardson and William Thurmond. Richardson won the election with 1,216 votes. Bird was second with 913, and Thurmond had 258 votes.⁹⁶ We do not know what may have caused Bird's defeat or what impact it may have had on him. Did the sale of his properties in the months before have an impact on the election?

The Methodist: In 1822 Daniel Bird had been a subscriber (contributor) to the Village Baptist Church. However, at least as early as 1827, he became a leader of the Methodist Church in the region. On September 18th of that year Bird and Benjamin Tutt, as Trustees, were conveyed the Methodist Church property at Pottersville, a mile north of Halcyon Grove, in a deed from Dr. Abner Landrum.⁹⁷ However, that church was apparently not deemed sufficient, because in 1831 another Methodist church was begun on the Cambridge Road nearer to the Village. This church was located on the northern edge of the property of the Adams-Mims House just up the street from Halcyon Grove. The precise location of that church is shown on a plat of the lands of the Estate of Eldred Simkins, by M. Coates, D. S., dated February and March of 1832.⁹⁸ In the October 22, 1831 edition of the *Carolinian*, an early Edgefield newspaper, an advertisement appeared giving notice for bids for building the new church. The notice is signed by Daniel Bird, John S. Jeter, Whit-

⁹⁴ Hunter, Jane B., "Daniel Byrd (1784-1865), A Research Report," undated. Copies are to be found in the Tompkins Memorial Library, Edgefield, S.C. and in the Daniel Bird file of Bettis C. Rainsford.

⁹⁵ Deed Book 44, page 192, Edgefield County Archives.

⁹⁶ *Edgefield Hive*, January 19, 1830, original copy in the possession of Stephen Ferrell.

⁹⁷ Deed Book 43, page 25, Edgefield County Archives.

⁹⁸ See Deed Book AAA, page 186, Edgefield County Archives.

field Brooks, William Raiford and John Bauskett.⁹⁹ Thus, Daniel Bird was still playing an active role in the Village in 1831. However, six months later, on April 14, 1832, Francis Pickens, as executor of the Estate of Eldred Simkins, executed a deed for the church property to the Trustees, Benjamin Tutt, Philip McCarty, William Erdus, Humphrey Boulware and Beaufort A. Wallace.¹⁰⁰ Daniel Bird was not among this group, perhaps indicating that he was no longer in Edgefield.

The Move to Florida: In the late 1820's Bird had begun to acquire property in Jefferson County, Florida, just east of Tallahassee. At this time, many people in the Edgefield District were beginning to move into virgin agricultural territories, including Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and even into Texas. The lure of cheap, rich land in these unsettled areas was having a significant impact on the population of Edgefield.¹⁰¹

Circa 1832, Daniel and Behethland Bird and their children moved to Jefferson County, Florida near the town of Monticello.¹⁰² Bird was apparently very successful with his planting efforts in Florida, for an observer in 1835 gave a glowing report of agricultural production on one plantation in Middle Florida, stating that "the fortunate planter is my respected neighbor, Daniel Bird, Esq. of Jefferson County."¹⁰³ He was successful in the political sphere as he was elected to the Legislative Council in Jefferson County in 1833, receiving 205 votes to 141 for his two opponents. He was also elected to the State Senate for the years 1848-1854, served as a member of the Plank Road Company and was a member of Jefferson Lodge No. 3 of the Independent Order of Oddfellows.¹⁰⁴

One tragedy for the Bird family in Florida certainly marred the experience of moving there. Bird's eldest daughter by Lucinda Brooks, Louisa Ann, married the Reverend Tilman Peurifoy, a Methodist minister, in 1833 and had two children. On April 1, 1838, while living in Jefferson County, she and her family were attacked by Seminole Indians. She was shot, stabbed, cut, beaten and left for dead. Her two children were killed and their home burned. She escaped, ultimately recovered from

⁹⁹ *The Carolinian*, October 22, 1831.

¹⁰⁰ Deed Book 20, page 19, Edgefield County Archives.

¹⁰¹ Robert Mills described this movement in the following terms: "[The population in Edgefield is] on the decrease, owing to emigrations to Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, and Florida; principally to the first. This disposition to emigrate originated from three causes; first from the wearing out of the lands; second, from the increase of families, (requiring more land,) third, from inclination to wander, arising from exaggerated descriptions of new and better countries, which operate like a talisman upon the minds of many, particularly the more idle part of mankind." Mills, Robert, *Statistics of South Carolina*, Columbia, 1826, page 527.

¹⁰² Hunter, quoting from a *History of Jefferson County*, published under the auspices of the Kiwanas Club, Monticello, Florida, 1935, states that the Bird family came to Jefferson County in 1832.

¹⁰³ Hunter, quoting from the Florida Historical Quarterly, vol. 33, page 44.

¹⁰⁴ Shofner, Dr. Jerrell H., *History of Jefferson County, Florida*, Sentry Press, Tallahassee, 1976, pages 184, 169 & 191.

her wounds and later moved back to the Edgefield District where she lived near Butler Church (now Saluda County).¹⁰⁵

Return to Edgefield and Oakley Park:

Bird must have regretted his move to Florida to some extent, because he returned to Edgefield at the end of 1834, and purchased the property at the eastern end of Main Street.¹⁰⁶ Here, during 1835, he built a substantial mansion which is, in many ways, reminis-



Daniel Bird's 1835 House, Oakley Park

cent of Halcyon Grove. This house, which became known as "Oakley Park," has many architectural similarities to Halcyon Grove, particularly with respect to the arch in the hallway and the stairs to the second floor. Bird maintained his plantation in Florida during this period, as we know from the observer quoted above, that it was highly productive in 1835. However, the Bird family spent much time in Edgefield and continued to live at Oakley Park until 1841.

Shooting of Tom: In the fall of 1840, Bird's oldest son, Thomas Butler Bird,¹⁰⁷ became involved in a tragic shooting. An altercation had arisen between his uncle, Whitfield Brooks, and a hot-headed young lawyer in town, Louis T. Wigfall. Wigfall was apparently extremely jealous of the position and power of the Brooks family in Edgefield and challenged the much older Whitfield Brooks to a duel. When Brooks declined to participate, Wigfall stated that he was going to post a notice on the Courthouse that he [Brooks] was "a coward and a scoundrel." James Parsons Carroll, Brooks' brother-in-law who was a lawyer in town, and the young Bird, rushed to the Court House to keep Wigfall from posting the notice. When they arrived, Wigfall already had the notice posted and was guarding it. As they tried to take the notice down, shooting broke out, with Bird shooting at Wigfall. Wigfall returned

¹⁰⁵ Shofner, page 77. For the detailed account of this tragic event, see Chapman, pages 198-200. Chapman gives the year as 1836, but Shofner's account, with documentation by a diary and newspaper accounts, puts it at 1838.

¹⁰⁶ Deed from William J. Simkins, Eldred Simkins and John M. Simkins to Daniel Bird, dated October 22, 1834, Deed Book 47, page 114, Edgefield County Archives.

¹⁰⁷ Thomas Butler Bird had served in the militia in the Seminole War. See the *Edgefield Advertiser*, February 11, 1836, "Troops for Florida" where he is shown as a private in the Seventh Regiment. He would have been 17 years old at the time. This was several years prior to the attack on his sister near Monticello.

the fire and killed the young Bird. This tragic shooting occurred on November 1, 1840, right in front of the Courthouse.¹⁰⁸ This premature death of his oldest son caused the father unspeakable sorrow. On Tom's tombstone in Willowbrook Cemetery, is inscribed "A bereaved father makes this offering to the memory of a much loved son." It is likely that this tragic incident is what caused the Bird family to sell Oakley Park¹⁰⁹ and move back to Florida, largely cutting their ties with Edgefield.

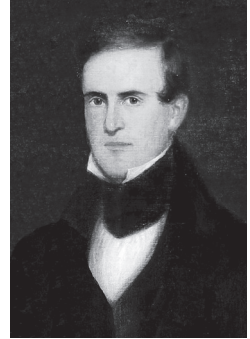
Yet another tragedy was to visit the Bird family in 1850. Daniel and Behethland's daughter, Sara Oliver Bird, who was born in Edgefield on April 19, 1831, and who had been a student at the Wesleyan Female College in Macon, Georgia, was sitting before the fire in Monticello when her clothes ignited, causing her terrible and fatal burns. She died on June 18, 1850.¹¹⁰

Most of the surviving Bird and Simkins children remained in Florida where they have many descendants. Behethland Brooks Simkins Bird died in 1864 and Daniel Bird, the next year, in 1865. They are both buried in Roseland Cemetery in Monticello, Florida.¹¹¹

The Pickens Era

Francis Wilkinson Pickens

Background and Early Life: Francis Pickens (1805-1869) came from a long line of distinguished South Carolinians. He was the son of Governor Andrew Pickens (1779-1838) and grandson of Revolutionary General Andrew Pickens (1735-1817). His grandmother was Rebecca Calhoun Pickens, sister of Patrick Calhoun (1727-1796) who was the father of John C. Calhoun (1782-1850). Thus he was a first cousin once removed of "the great Carolinian." On his mother's side, he was a descendant of Joseph Morton (c.1630-1688), who was a "Landgrave" (a title of nobility in Proprietary South Carolina) and Governor of South Carolina.¹¹²



¹⁰⁸ King, Alvy, *Louis T. Wigfall, Southern Fire-eater*, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, 1970, pages 32-33. For another perspective in which Col. Joseph H. Martin alleges that Tom Bird was unarmed, see the QUILL Sep-Oct 1998, Volume XIV, Number 5, page 83.

¹⁰⁹ No deed is recorded showing the sale of Oakley Park from the Bird family. However, Daniel Bird did deed the property to Behethland Brooks Bird and their children in October of 1841 (See Deed Book CCC, page 22, Edgefield County Archives.) Under the deed from Daniel, Behethland had the power to sell the property and must have done so, for we know that John R. Wever owned this property and lived there until 1846 when he sold it to Marshall Frazier. (See Deed Book DDD, page 510, Edgefield County Archives.)

¹¹⁰ *Edgefield Advertiser*, July 10, 1850.

¹¹¹ Hunter, page 17.

¹¹² See the Pickens genealogy by Sarah Lipscomb Haltiwanger, a copy in the Francis Pickens

He was educated at Franklin College (now the University of Georgia) before transferring to the South Carolina College in 1826. After withdrawing in 1827 in his senior year before graduation, he came to Edgefield to read law with Eldred Simkins who had been a friend of long-standing with the Pickens and Calhoun families. He was admitted to the bar in December of 1828.¹¹³

On October 18, 1827, he married Eldred Simkins' eldest daughter, Margaret Eliza in a ceremony in the Simkins home in Edgefield Village.¹¹⁴ It is not known where Francis and Eliza lived during the first two years of their marriage, but they could have lived at Cedarfields, the home of Arthur Simkins, Sr. (1742-1826), Margaret Eliza's grandfather, who had died the year before they were married.¹¹⁵ Cedarfields was located about three miles north of Edgefield Courthouse Village on Log Creek.

Halcyon Grove: In October of 1829 Francis Pickens purchased Halcyon Grove, then consisting of two acres on the east side of the road and three acres on the west side, paying \$3,000 for it.¹¹⁶ Several months later on January 7, 1830, Eldred Simkins deeded to Francis and Margaret Eliza a tract of land consisting of some of the remaining portions of the William Simkins grant that he still owned.¹¹⁷ From this point the Halcyon Grove property consisted on all of the land bounded by the Road to Cambridge (now Buncombe Street), Brooks Street, Church Street and Academy Branch, totaling approximately fifteen acres.

The record is not clear how long the Francis Pickens family lived there. Francis and Margaret Eliza had seven children: Susan (b. 1830), Andrew (b.1831, d. 1832), Eliza Simkins (b. 1833), Maria Simkins (b. 1833), Rebecca (b. 1836), Francis (b. 1837, d. 1838) and Eldred (b. 1839, d. 1842). Very possibly Susan, Andrew, Eliza and Maria were all born in the house. Susan married James Nathan Lipscomb (son of a successor owner of Halcyon Grove); Andrew died as an infant; the twins, Eliza and Maria, married J. Stricter Coles of Virginia and Matthew Calbraith Butler of Edgefield, respectively. At some point in the 1830's Francis's

file of Bettis C. Rainsford. Sources differ on the date of birth of Francis Pickens. We have used here the date 1805 which, in our opinion, is the most likely. However other sources use the date 1807.

¹¹³ Bailey, N. Louise, Mary L. Morgan and Carolyn R. Taylor, Editors, *Biographical Directory of the South Carolina State Senate, Vol. II*, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, 1985, page 1272.

¹¹⁴ Bailey, page 1272.

¹¹⁵ Tradition holds that the mansion at Cedarfields was dismantled about this time with part of the materials being used for the construction of the Tompkins House (now Turkey Creek Hall) and part used for the construction of Edgewood. From the plat of the Estate of Eldred Simkins, dated February and March of 1832, we know that the house at Cedarfields was still there in 1832 (see Deed Book AAA, page 186).

¹¹⁶ Deed to Francis W. Pickens from Daniel Bird, dated October 20, 1829, Deed Book 44, page 192, Edgefield County Archives.

¹¹⁷ Deed Book 45, page 322, Edgefield County Archives.

father and stepmother moved to Edgefield and lived at Halcyon Grove as is discussed below. In the mid-1830's, Francis and Margaret Eliza moved to their new plantation home, Edgewood, just north of Edgefield Courthouse Village.¹¹⁸

Political Career: Beginning while he was still at the South Carolina College where he was strongly influenced by its president Thomas Cooper, Pickens wrote a number of articles supporting state sovereignty and nullification. He served in the South Carolina House of Representatives from 1832 to 1834 and then was elected to the United States House of Representatives, succeeding Congressman George McDuffie who had resigned to become Governor. He remained in the Congress from 1834 to 1843 where he became one of the most recognized leaders of the South. Margaret Eliza died in 1842, leaving him a widower. Frustrated by his inability to be elected to the United States Senate, he resigned from Congress and was elected to the South Carolina Senate where he served from 1844 to 1845. He remarried in 1845 to Antoinette Dearing of Georgia and had another daughter, but sadly his second wife died in 1847.¹¹⁹

Active in national Democratic circles, Pickens was offered ambassadorships to England and France, but chose not to accept them. However, after marrying the beautiful Lucy Holcombe of Texas in 1858, he accepted President Buchanan's offer to become Ambassador to Russia. While in Russia, he and Lucy had a daughter who was afterwards known as "Douschka," Russian for "my darling." In 1860 he resigned his post in St. Petersburg, returned to South Carolina, and was elected Governor where he faced the daunting challenges of managing the state through Secession and the Civil War. Pickens died at Edgewood in 1869 and was buried in Willowbrook Cemetery.¹²⁰

Andrew Pickens

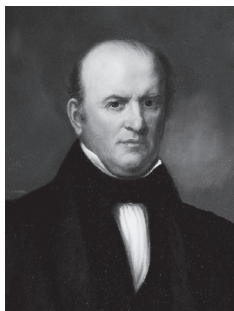
Early Life: Francis Pickens must have given or sold the house to his father, Gov. Andrew Pickens, (1779-1838) who lived here until 1836.¹²¹ Born in Abbeville

¹¹⁸ The cornerstone of his new home, Edgewood, which Pickens built some two miles north of Edgefield, is on exhibit at the Joanne T. Rainsford Discovery Center, in Edgefield. While many sources have dated the construction of that house in 1829, this cornerstone has the date 1836, suggesting that it was not completed until then.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. One might wonder why he would come back to the State Senate after serving in Congress, an apparent demotion, but the fact was that United States Senators were elected by the legislature, not by the people directly. Pickens apparently believed that being there in the State Senate was the best way to insure his election to the United States Senate.

¹²⁰ *The South Carolina Encyclopedia*, edited by Walter Edgar, A project of the South Carolina Humanities Council, University of South Carolina Press, 2006, page 722. Also, John B. Edmunds, Jr., *Francis W. Pickens and the Politics of Destruction*, University of North Carolina Press, 1986, *passim*.

¹²¹ The deed from Francis Pickens to his father, Andrew Pickens, is not recorded and apparently has been lost, but the deed of Andrew Pickens to John Lipscomb, dated November 24, 1836, Deed Book 48, page 132, Edgefield County Archives, establishes that Andrew Pickens owned the property in 1836 and that it was formerly owned by F.W. Pickens.



where his father was one of the first settlers, and raised a strict Presbyterian under his father, “the fighting Elder,” Andrew Pickens was educated at Rhode Island College (now Brown University) from which he was graduated Phi Beta Kappa in 1801. He settled in the village of Pendleton near the home to which his father had moved. He was married to Susan Smith Wilkinson of St. Paul’s Parish near Charleston on April 7, 1804. Soon after their marriage, General Pickens deeded him the upper half of Hopewell Plantation where he moved and became a planter and lawyer. He and Susan had two children, Francis Wilkinson Pickens (b. 1805) and Susan Wilkinson Pickens (b. 1808). On January 28, 1810, Susan died, leaving him with the two small children. In the meantime, he had been elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives where he served between 1810 and 1812.¹²²

When the War of 1812 broke out with Great Britain, Andrew Pickens was named Lieutenant Colonel, serving first on the Canadian border and then in Charleston. After the war he returned to Hopewell until, in December of 1816, he was elected governor of South Carolina. As governor, Pickens oversaw the construction of many of the internal improvements, including roads and canals, which were then being made in the state. This was also a time of great prosperity in South Carolina as cotton reached its all-time high price of thirty-five cents a pound.¹²³

Alabama: After completing his term in office at the end of 1818, he moved to Alabama where he was appointed a commissioner to negotiate a land cession with the Creek Indians, but he declined to serve. He acquired a number of tracts of land in Alabama during this period. He named his principal plantation “Susanville,” perhaps in memory of his deceased wife whom he had lost a decade earlier, or in honor of his daughter of the same name. He was also president of the Alabama State Bank.¹²⁴

Edgefield, Oatlands and Halcyon Grove: By 1829 he had come back east, purchasing property in Augusta where he may have lived for some period. In December of 1831, he purchased a plantation in Edgefield District, formerly the plantation of Jesse Blocker, containing approximately 1,200 acres on Log and Turkey Creeks seven miles north of Edgefield Village.¹²⁵ This is the plantation which he subsequently named “Oatlands.” It is likely that this is when he moved into Hal-

¹²² Bailey, N. Louise, *Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives, Vol. IV, 1791-1815*, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, 1984, page 441-442. See also Nix, Lois K. & Mary Kay Snell, *Thomas Boone Pickens, His Ancestors*, Dallas, Texas, 1989, pages 103, 107.

¹²³ *The South Carolina Encyclopedia*, edited by Walter Edgar, A project of the South Carolina Humanities Council, University of South Carolina Press, 2006, page 721.

¹²⁴ Nix, page 104.

¹²⁵ Deed Book 45, pages 352 and 379, Edgefield County Archives.

cyon Grove. Francis's father-in-law, Eldred Simkins, had died the month before on November 17, 1831. Perhaps Francis and Margaret Eliza had moved into the Simkins home to assist Margaret Eliza's mother, leaving Halcyon Grove vacant. With Andrew living nearby in Augusta, it would have been natural for him to move to Edgefield to occupy his son's vacant home, and then purchasing a plantation at a foreclosure sale shortly after he arrived.

The Second Wife: At some point, Andrew Pickens was married a second time.¹²⁶ This wife was Mary Willing Nelson (1789-18??) of the prominent Nelson and Page families of Yorktown, Virginia. She was the daughter of Judge William Nelson (1754-1813) of Yorktown and his wife Abby Byrd, daughter of Col. William Byrd, III of Westover Plantation on the James River.¹²⁷ Her sister, Lucy Nelson was married to Benjamin Harrison VII (1787-1842), owner of Berkeley Plantation on the James River.¹²⁸ Benjamin Harrison VII was the nephew of President William Henry Harrison (1773-1841) and the first cousin once removed of President Benjamin Harrison (1833-1901). Thus, she clearly had a well-connected and aristocratic background. It is not known how or where Pickens met her.

This marriage was apparently not a happy one. More than seventy years later, this match was still being discussed. In 1906, James T. Bacon, Editor of the Edgefield Chronicle, wrote an article entitled "An Old Fashioned Edgefield Mince Pie" in which he recorded the memories of his "ancient grandmother," Mrs. Eliza Fox Bacon:

[Halcyon Grove] was said to be a lonely and gloomy [house during Andrew Pickens' time]. It was even said that the old man was unkind to the second wife. This is unusual, for the second wife generally has a white silk parasol lined with pink silk, and with deep white fringe, when the poor first wife, who bore the heat and burden of the day, had scarcely a blue cotton umbrella. It is so – to the shame of man be it said. As regards the old man being unkind to his second wife, our ancient grandmother always said: "And I believe it, for she was ever a poor, nervous, sorrowful, scared-looking creature."¹²⁹

¹²⁶ We have not been able to find the date of this marriage, but we have letters in which both Francis and his sister refer to Mary Willing Nelson Pickens as "Mother," suggesting at least that she may have been married during some of the time that the children were growing up. With Francis born in 1805 and Susan in 1808 and their natural mother dying in 1810, this might suggest a marriage sometimes before 1825. If the children were grown when their father married their stepmother, would they have referred to her as "Mother"? Also, would Andrew Pickens have named his Alabama plantation "Susanville" for his first wife after marrying a new wife; or could this perhaps have been his way of insulting his new wife who did not come up to his standards?

¹²⁷ Page, Richard Channing Moore, *Genealogy of the Page Family in Virginia*, 1883, page 162. Tonya Browder of the Tompkins Memorial Library contributed significantly to unwinding the genealogy of Mary Willing Nelson Pickens.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ The *Anderson Intelligencer*, June 27, 1906. Governor Andrew Pickens apparently had

Pickens' Last Will and Testament, dated September 9, 1834, gives some suggestion that the marriage may not have been a happy one.¹³⁰ In that document Pickens appears to want to meet his legal obligation to his wife, but does not give any indication of fondness for her. The will provides as follows:

To my wife, I give & bequeath four hundred dollars to be paid immediately after my decease & an annuity of three hundred dollars which must be paid her regularly by my Executor in the month of January in each & every year during her life, which shall be a lien upon my estate, real & personal, herein bequeathed to my children; two hundred of which shall be paid by my son F. W. Pickens & one hundred by my daughter Susan Calhoun or her representatives. It is further my will & intention that if my wife shall after my death, desire to continue to live in South Carolina, she shall have the life estate in the Negro man Moses & his wife Betsey & their children, during her natural life, provided she does continue to live in South Carolina & after her death, they shall belong to my son Francis W. Pickens as shall be hereafter directed. And it is further my will and intention that the specific legacies & the annuity bequeathed to my wife shall be considered & taken by her in lieu of & in full [satisfaction] for Dower & for all other claims which she would otherwise have against my Estate. This I think a fair provision for her when it is considered that this is fully equal to her income before marriage, arising from money at interest & that at her request, after marriage, I gave to her two nieces, the daughters of Ben Harrison, Esq. of Berkeley in Virginia, all the property which she had when I married her, except the negro girl Betsey.

On November 24, 1836 Andrew Pickens sold Halcyon Grove to John Lipscomb for \$5,000, stating in the deed that the property is "the dwelling house in which I now reside." This deed also makes reference to "F. W. Pickens who formerly [owned] this lot." After selling the house, Andrew Pickens apparently moved to Mississippi, but his wife Mary did not accompany him, going instead back to Virginia. He located near Pontotoc, Mississippi where he died of a stroke on June 24, 1838. In the Virginia Historical Society's library we have found letters written by Francis, Margaret Eliza and Francis's sister, Susan, to "Mother." Several of these letters describe for "Mother" the last hours of her husband, and make it clear that Mary Willing Nelson Pickens had returned to Virginia, never to return to South Carolina. Andrew Pickens's body was brought back to South Carolina where he was buried beside his father at the Old Stone Church near Clemson.

a reputation of being a stern man. He was described as "sternly virtuous, and upright . . . a man of abilities – but his mien is rather authoritative – and he is so independent of opinion as to appear somewhat dogmatic." See Hooker, Edward, "Excerpts from the Diary of Edward Hooker," J. Franklin Jameson, editor, *Annual Report of the American History Association, 1896, Vol. I*, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1916, quoted in Edmunds, page 153.

¹³⁰ See Estate File 44, Package 1830, Edgefield County Archives.

The Lipscomb Era

John Lipscomb¹³¹



Background and Early Life: The man who purchased Halcyon Grove from Governor Andrew Pickens, John Lipscomb (1789-1856), was a native of the Abbeville District. His father Nathan Lipscomb (1762-1826) had come down from Virginia and settled near the village of Ninety Six. He had served in the South Carolina House of Representatives and Senate. John Lipscomb was not inclined to politics but instead became a planter and merchant and tavern owner at Whitehall, General Andrew Williamson's plantation on Hard Labor Creek in the Abbeville District. Here he was apparently very successful as he became an extremely wealthy man.

In 1811 he married Sarah Grigsby Mays, daughter of General Samuel Mays and his wife, Nancy Grigsby. She was a great niece of Captain James Butler. Sadly, Sarah Grigsby Mays died shortly after her marriage without bearing children.

Sarah Marcy Bonham Lipscomb: In 1814 John Lipscomb married Sarah Marcy "Sallie" Bonham (1799-1839) by whom he had twelve children. The first four children died as infants but were followed by (1) Sarah S. Lipscomb (1823-1867) who married Dr. Benjamin Waldo, (2) Mary Elizabeth Lipscomb (1825-1856) who was an invalid, (3) James Nathan Lipscomb (1827-1891) who married Susan W. Pickens, daughter of Francis W. Pickens, (4) Julia Bonham Lipscomb (1829-1872) who married Vans Randell, (5) John B. Lipscomb (1830-1885) who married the Ardis sisters, (6) Thomas Jefferson Lipscomb (1833-1908) who married a Harrington, (7) Milledge Bonham Lipscomb (1836-1904), who married a Bunting, and (8) Sophia Smith Lipscomb (1839-1906) who married the Rev. Luther Rice Gwaltney.¹³²

At the time they purchased Halcyon Grove in November of 1836, the Lipscomb's had seven children from thirteen years to a one month old infant. Undoubtedly they came to Edgefield to take advantage of the good schools here. Not only was there the Edgefield Village Academy, or Edgefield Male Academy as it was sometimes known, but there was also a good Female Academy here operated by the Baptist minister, Dr. William Bullein Johnson.¹³³

¹³¹ An excellent job has been done by Charles Andrews in researching the John Lipscomb family. The work recently published, *Where our Paths Crossed, The Old Edgefield District Settlement of Mount Willing*, by Bela Padgette Herlong, Carol Hardy Bryan and Charles Reneau Andrews, Mount Willing Press, Cumming, Georgia, 2011, pages 210-217, provides an excellent overview of the John Lipscomb family. (Cited hereafter as "Andrews.")

¹³² *Ibid.*, pages 213-215.

¹³³ For the Edgefield Female Academy, see Woodson, Hortense, *Giant in the Land, A*

The Alamo: It is also interesting to note that the purchase of Halcyon Grove by the Lipscomb's came less than a year after Mrs. Lipscomb's brother, James Butler Bonham, died while fighting at the Alamo in Texas. Jim Bonham was the young hero who was sent out by Colonel William Barrett Travis to get reinforcements for the garrison. After failing to find anyone who could come to their aid, Bonham returned to the Alamo where he died with the other heroes of that engagement.

Sadly, after only living at Halcyon Grove for two years, Sarah Marcy Bonham Lipscomb died in childbirth at the age of forty on January 18, 1839, leaving her husband with eight children to raise.¹³⁴

Mary Eliza Cary Lipscomb: In 1843, John Lipscomb married for the third time to Mary Eliza Cary (1803-1847), widow of Isaac Redfield, and sister of Martha Cary Lamar, wife of Thomas Gresham Lamar. The daughter of Thomas Gresham and Martha Cary Lamar, Ann Gresham Lamar (1812-1863), was married to Edgefield lawyer, Francis Hugh Wardlaw (1800-1861) who lived, at that time, next door to Halcyon Grove in the house which had belonged to Behethland Brooks Simkins prior to her marriage with Daniel Bird.¹³⁵ Thus, it is likely that the young wife of Wardlaw introduced her recently-widowed aunt to her next door neighbor, John Lipscomb, from which a match ensued. Mary Eliza and John Lipscomb had two children even though Mary Eliza was more than forty years old: Floride Lipscomb (b. 1844) and William Cary Lipscomb (b. 1846). After only a year following the birth of her youngest child, Mary Eliza Cary Lipscomb died on October 30, 1847, making John Lipscomb a widower for the third time and leaving him with ten children.¹³⁶

On January 15, 1848, John Lipscomb's son, James N. Lipscomb (1827-1891) married the daughter of Francis and Margaret Eliza Pickens, Susan Wilkinson Pickens (1830-1866). They were married at Edgewood, the Pickens plantation north of Edgefield, by the Episcopal minister.¹³⁷ Thus, these two young people who had chosen to share their lives together had each spent some of their years growing up at Halcyon Grove.

In 1849 John Lipscomb sold his Whitehall plantation and invested in land in Madison County, Florida. At his death he owned 6,180 acres there. There is no evidence

Biography of William Bullein Johnson, First President of the Southern Baptist Convention, Broadman Press, Nashville, Tennessee, 1950, page 66.

¹³⁴ Andrews, page 216

¹³⁵ Brooks, U. R., *South Carolina Bench and Bar*, Vol. 1, State Company, Columbia, 1908, pages 96-97. For evidence that the residence of Wardlaw was next to Halcyon Grove see the *Edgefield Advertiser*, December 3, 1845, which announced that the Wardlaw house had burned to the ground. Just over a year later, in January 4, 1847, Wardlaw sold this two acre property to William W. Adams (Deed Book EEE, page 203, Edgefield County Archives) about the time he bought Holmewood.

¹³⁶ Andrews, page 216.

¹³⁷ Records of Trinity Episcopal Church, Edgefield, South Carolina, Tompkins Memorial Library.

that he ever lived there, but he was included in the 1850 census for Madison County.¹³⁸

The Porch: In 1851, *Edgefield Advertiser* editor Arthur Simkins (1819-1863) did a feature article entitled “A Walk with a Stranger” in which he and an imaginary stranger walk around the village commenting on what they see. The following brief exchange in this article gives us some interesting details:

Editor: “But here is the dwelling of Capt. L-----, one of our wealthiest citizens. What think you of it?”

Stranger: “A handsome establishment, and a large and comfortable one. The only improvement I would suggest is that he should take down that narrow Portico with the diminutive pillars, and raise in its stead a broad one with massive columns. He’s a rich man – and in a few weeks a job of this sort could be done, making a vast difference in the appearance of his already handsome house.”¹³⁹

John Lipscomb must have taken Simkins’s advice to heart because the porch was rebuilt. Although he did not use Simkins’s “massive columns,” opting instead for the lattice columns which are there today, the result of his reconstruction was a great improvement.

On September 23, 1856, apparently after “a long and distressing illness,” John Lipscomb died at Halcyon Grove.¹⁴⁰ He was sixty-eight years old and was survived by ten children.

The Sullivan Era

James B. Sullivan

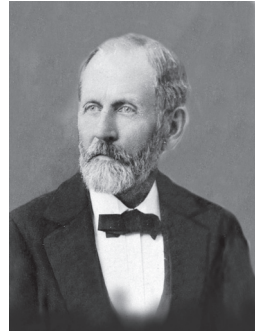
Background and Early Life: In 1857 following the death of John Lipscomb, his executors, Dr. Benjamin Waldo (husband of John Lipscomb’s eldest daughter, Sarah) and James N. Lipscomb (John Lipscomb’s eldest son), sold Halcyon Grove to James Bolling Sullivan (1825-1911) for \$3,500. Mr. Sullivan’s father, Tully Sullivan had

¹³⁸ Andrews, pages 210-217.

¹³⁹ *Edgefield Advertiser*, August 7, 1851.

¹⁴⁰ *Edgefield Advertiser*, September 24, 1856. The Advertiser ran the following editorial: “Another Old Citizen Gone. It grieves us to state that Captain John Lipscombe [sic] expired at his residence in this place, early yesterday morning, after a long and distressing illness. For a number of years, the deceased had been living in our community, and had won the highest esteem of his fellow-citizens. He had been in his more youthful days one of the really active, energetic and practically gifted men of his generation; but had for some time retired into the quiet domestic comforts, having amassed one of the largest fortunes in the up-country of South Carolina. He was courteous, affable and kind to everyone – upright in his whole intercourse with men and zealous in the discharge of his religious obligations. In his death our community suffers a serious deprivation, and his family and friends a bereavement truly afflicting. Mr. Lipscombe was in his 68th year. He descended peacefully into the grave, having well filled the measure of a long and useful life.”

been a prosperous merchant from the Greenville District who had come to the Edgefield District in 1826 to buy a lot in Hamburg on which to build a store.¹⁴¹ James Sullivan also became a merchant, locating in Edgefield Courthouse Village in a store at the site of today's Citizen News Building on the corner of the Public Square and Main Street.¹⁴² He was married to Elizabeth Griffin Sullivan (1832-1910), John Lipscomb's great niece. Elizabeth Sullivan was also the sister of Ann Patience Griffin, the wife of Milledge Luke Bonham who was Sarah Marcy Bonham Lipscomb's brother.¹⁴³ Thus, the Lipscomb and Sullivan families were cousins by blood and marriage.



James & Elizabeth Sullivan

The Bonham Connection: By the time the Sullivan's had purchased Halcyon Grove, Elizabeth's brother-in-law, Milledge Luke Bonham, had been elected to Congress, filling the seat recently vacated by the death of Congressman Preston Brooks. Milledge Bonham would go on to become a general in the Confederate army and Governor of South Carolina from 1862 to 1864. Certainly this relationship must have provided for interesting dinner conversation at Halcyon Grove during the Sullivan Era.

Governor Bonham's son, Milledge Lipscomb Bonham (1854-1943), who went on to become Chief Justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court, wrote an article for the *Edgefield Advertiser* in 1936 reminiscing about his childhood in Edgefield in which he mentioned his uncle, James B. Sullivan. He described his uncle's store as "the long wooden building which was located on the north side of the street which led into the public square from the east." He then recounted how, when he was living at Darby Plantation, halfway between Edgefield Village and the Pine House, he and his siblings would drive to school in Edgefield in a "rockaway," a light four-wheeled carriage with open sides, dropping his sister off at the Edgefield Female Academy near the Baptist Church before leaving the horse and rockaway at Halcyon Grove with his uncle. The older brothers would then go to the Edgefield Male Academy and he went to a school which Mrs. McClintock kept for small children at her house on the southwest corner of Brooks and Buncombe Streets. He then went on to recount that the Bonham family moved into

¹⁴¹ Deed Book 41, page 458, Edgefield County Archives.

¹⁴² *Edgefield Advertiser*, February 12, 1936.

¹⁴³ Elizabeth was the daughter of Edgefield lawyer and political leader, Nathan Lipscomb Griffin (1803-1853), and Ann Patience Butler Griffin (1805-1879). Ann Patience Butler Griffin was the daughter of Ann Patience Youngblood Butler (1787-1861) and Stanmore Butler (1766-1830). Ann Patience Youngblood was the daughter of Nancy Simkins (1769-c.1843) and the granddaughter of Arthur Simkins (1742-1826). Stanmore Butler was the son of Captain James Butler (1735-1781).

Edgefield Village, living at Holmewood, the home of the recently-deceased Francis Hugh Wardlaw on the Road to Cambridge, and he listed each of the residents of the houses on the street, including Halcyon Grove, where his uncle and aunt lived.¹⁴⁴

While they lived at Halcyon Grove James and Elizabeth Sullivan had three children, Arthur Richard Sullivan (b. 1852), Ann E. Sullivan (b. 1854) and R. Walter Sullivan (b. 1856). James Sullivan was a deacon of the Village Baptist Church. He was instrumental in getting the church to purchase the property next door to Halcyon Grove, where Behethland Simkins Bird had once lived, for a parsonage.¹⁴⁵

The War Years: The Sullivan family lived at Halcyon Grove during the Civil War. Needless to say, this was an extremely difficult period. When the war broke out, James B. Sullivan entered the service as a private in the Nineteenth regiment South Carolina infantry, commanded by Col. A.J. Lithgoe. He was promoted to the rank of captain and quartermaster of the Nineteenth regiment. Soon after the battle of Shiloh, the Tenth and Nineteenth regiments were sent from South Carolina to Corinth to reinforce General Beauregard, and a brigade was formed. Captain Sullivan was made quartermaster of this brigade and in this duty he continued throughout the war.¹⁴⁶ John A. Chapman, author of the *History of Edgefield County* (1897) provides the following personal insight into Sullivan during his military service: "So one pleasant afternoon about the middle of May I spoke to Captain Sullivan, of Edgefield, Quarter-Master, and told him that I wanted to go back to my company. 'Well,' he said in that quiet, easy way habitual with him, 'you may as well go.'"¹⁴⁷

On the home front, the years of the war were extraordinarily difficult as there were shortages of about everything one needed for everyday life: food, clothing and other necessities. Mrs. Sullivan, like all the other women in the Village, was un-

¹⁴⁴ *Edgefield Advertiser*, February 12, 1936.

¹⁴⁵ Deed of Charles A. Raymond in which he conveyed to "E. J. Mims and James B. Sullivan, their heirs and successors in office and assigns" the parsonage and lot across Brooks Street from Halcyon Grove for the Edgefield Village Baptist Church, deed dated July 16, 1859, Deed Book KKK, page 47, Edgefield County Archives. It is interesting to note that nearly forty years later, long after Mims had died and Sullivan had left Edgefield, the church voted to sell the parsonage and Sullivan was called upon to execute a deed carrying out his duties. See deed of James B. Sullivan to O. Sheppard, dated October 1, 1890, Deed Book 14, page 548, Edgefield County Archives.

¹⁴⁶ Confederate Military History, Vol. VI, page 992. Sullivan's record of four years embraces service on the South Carolina coast and in the trenches at Corinth; the memorable march through Tennessee into the heart of Kentucky, and the battle of Perryville; the battle of Murfreesboro and the middle Tennessee campaign of 1863; the Chattanooga campaign, including the battles of Chickamauga and Missionary Ridge; the campaign from Dalton to Atlanta and Jonesboro, and its many battles; Hood's Campaign in north Georgia and Tennessee made memorable by the costly fights at Franklin and Nashville; and the suffering of the winter march back to Mississippi and the last operations of the army in the Carolinas, ending with the battle of Bentonville. Captain Sullivan, with the rank of acting major, surrendered with General Johnston at Greensboro, N.C.

¹⁴⁷ Chapman, page 222.

doubtedly in constant dread that she would receive bad news from the battle front. The difficulties of life and the constant dread were eloquently expressed by a later resident of Halcyon Grove, Lucy Jane Nicholson Bates, in her private diary. Some of her intimate musings are as follows:

Jan 4, 1864: My sweet little baby [Ella Lydia "Ettie" Bates (1863-1939)] is just a month old today. My life was then flowing as sweetly as I would wish. Now all is dark and dreary. My poor darling husband [John Pearson Bates (1829-1864)] is no more and my troubles are endless. Oh, my Father, help me, I pray.¹⁴⁸

No date: My hopes of happiness are all gone. My heart was with my husband and he is gone. Country and all has lost all attractions for me. My precious husband. . . .

No date: This horrid, cruel, cruel war. Oh that it was, should have been thought of. I perhaps would be now happy with my husband.

Feb 25, 1865: Oh, what a dull, dull rainy day. I feel as if I almost hunger for variety of some kind. This hopeless never-ending sameness seems as if I could not much longer endure it. Oh, my Father, help me to bear this great trial as well as possible. On this I could fix my mind upon heavenly things.

Fri, Mar 11, 1865: With what a sinking despondent heart I pen these lines this morning now but my God doth know. Oh my Father, I know that I am undeserving, that I am too weak and sinful to deserve thy mercies and blessings that thou hast lavished on me so long. Oh, that I could bear my trials which it appears to me almost equal yours with the patience & cheerful ways that I should. But poor human nature is so weak and erring that without your help I can do nothing but murmur.¹⁴⁹

Reconstruction: The period of Reconstruction following the surrender was also an extraordinarily difficult one in Edgefield. Almost every Edgefield male between the ages of 15 and 60 had been involved in some way in the war effort. They had endured four of the bloodiest years of war in human history in which nearly one-third of the fighting age white males had become casualties. Almost every family had lost a member or were caring for a veteran, wounded in body or spirit. All Confederate currency and bonds were worthless. The emancipation of slaves had

¹⁴⁸ She would have been holding Ella who was born on December 4, 1863. John Pearson Bates did not die until November 5, 1864, but she must have just received word that he was deathly ill.

¹⁴⁹ Original plantation ledger/diary of Lucy Jane Nicholson Bates in the possession of Beth Shealy Worth, Halcyon Grove, Edgefield.

wiped out a huge portion of the wealth of the village and had thrust most people – black and white – into dire economic straits. These changes had necessitated an almost total reorganization of the political, economic and social systems.

The end of the war also meant that Federal troops – those “blue bellies” against whom our boys fought for four years – were now occupying their village, intimidating local citizens with their bayonets. The Federal troops were camped in the grove on Academy Branch just below Halcyon Grove.¹⁵⁰ This must have frightened the Sullivan family and their neighbors as they tried to sleep at night.

When James B. Sullivan returned to Edgefield after the war, he once again tried to engage in his business as a merchant in the Village. A notice in the *Edgefield Advertiser* from 1866 gives an interesting insight into his abilities as a merchant:

Mr. J. B. Sullivan has just returned from New York with one of the best stocks of goods ever brought to this place. His dress goods are perfectly enchanting, whilst his domestics and articles for the household are of the very best. His prices too appear reasonable. Mr. Sullivan is an excellent merchant – knows exactly what we Edgefield people want – and is prepared to give good trades and entice satisfaction to all who may favor him with their patronage.¹⁵¹

Unfortunately given the extremely difficult economic conditions in this period, our local merchants found that few of their customers had the money to purchase the goods they offered for sale. It would be several more years before economic conditions improved sufficiently to allow these merchants to prosper.

The Move to Rome: In this environment, in 1868, James and Elizabeth Sullivan and their children moved from Edgefield to Rome, Georgia. While there is no direct evidence as to why they made this move, it is possible that they were influenced to do so by the Baptist pastor, the Rev. Luther Rice Gwaltney, who was married to John and Sallie Lipscomb’s youngest daughter, Sophia. Rev. Gwaltney had been closely associated with Sullivan as a deacon of the church and a next door neighbor. In 1867 Rev. and Mrs. Gwaltney left Edgefield, going to Rome, Georgia where he became the first president of Shorter College.¹⁵² It is likely that the James Sullivan’s went to Rome in some capacity associated with Rev. Gwaltney.

¹⁵⁰ The author has been unable to find documentation of this fact. However, there has been a long tradition which he had heard over many years from a number of different sources that the encampment was here along Academy Branch. Contemporary newspaper accounts from the years immediately after the War refer to the encampment at the Fairground. We cannot say for sure that this is referring to the grove on Academy Branch.

¹⁵¹ *Edgefield Advertiser*, March 28, 1866.

¹⁵² Andrews, page 217.

The Nicholson/Bates/Hartley/Feltham Era

The Nicholson/Bates Purchase: On December 6, 1869, James B. Sullivan, then living in Floyd County, Georgia, sold Halcyon Grove to S. W. Nicholson of Edgefield County for \$2,750. Shemuel Wright Nicholson (1815-1885), the son of Shemuel Nicholson (1772-1847) and Lydia Oliphant (1779-1846), was a wealthy planter who lived at Elmwood, the home built by his father some eleven miles north of Edgefield Village between the Meeting Street Road and the Greenwood Highway. Nicholson's plantation constituted about 2,500 acres, making him one of the largest and wealthiest planters in the County. A memoir, written by the late Curran Hartley Feltham (1881-1957), sets forth the family tradition of how the purchase of Halcyon Grove came about:

My grandfather [John Pearson Bates], like many Southern gentlemen, left his most trusted servant in charge of this beautiful young wife, five small children and his large estate "the Grove" when he enlisted for service in the War Between the States. My grandfather made the supreme sacrifice. "Uncle Joe" drove in a wagon to bring his beloved master home for burial. From then on for his remaining years, Uncle Joe led a dedicated life. The family annals center on his efforts to discharge his duties. When Uncle Joe decided my aunt [Ella Lydia "Ettie" Bates] and mother [Mary Eloise Bates] needed more than the education the governess was giving them, he brought them into Edgefield, enrolling them in [the Edgefield Female Academy] located here. Several days, he drove his young ladies [into town] in the old carriage. He was too needed on the plantation to continue this, so the young girls made the five mile trip every day on horseback. They would be in tears when they got home late in the afternoons. Uncle Joe was desperate. He went up to my great grandfather's [Shemuel Wright Nicholson's] plantation "Elmwood," to discuss the situation. "Old Massa," he said, "we have to buy a town house so I can get our 'chillen' educated." Much talk ensued, but Uncle Joe carried his point and the family moved to historic Halcyon Grove in Edgefield.¹⁵³

Interestingly, Shemuel Wright Nicholson's father, Shemuel (1772-1846), had purchased the lot in the rear of Behethland Simkins Bird's home in 1831, very likely so that members of his family would have a home near the Academy.¹⁵⁴

Lucy Jane Nicholson Bates: The mother of Mrs. Feltham's mother and aunt mentioned above, Lucy Jane Nicholson Bates (1838-1892), was the second child of Shemuel Wright Nicholson and Susan Glover Adams. She was born at Elmwood, her grandfather's home north of Edgefield in 1838. In 1854, at the age of sixteen,

¹⁵³ Original letter in the possession of Marshall and Mary Feltham, San Antonio, Texas.

¹⁵⁴ Deed Book 48, page 59, Edgefield County Archives.

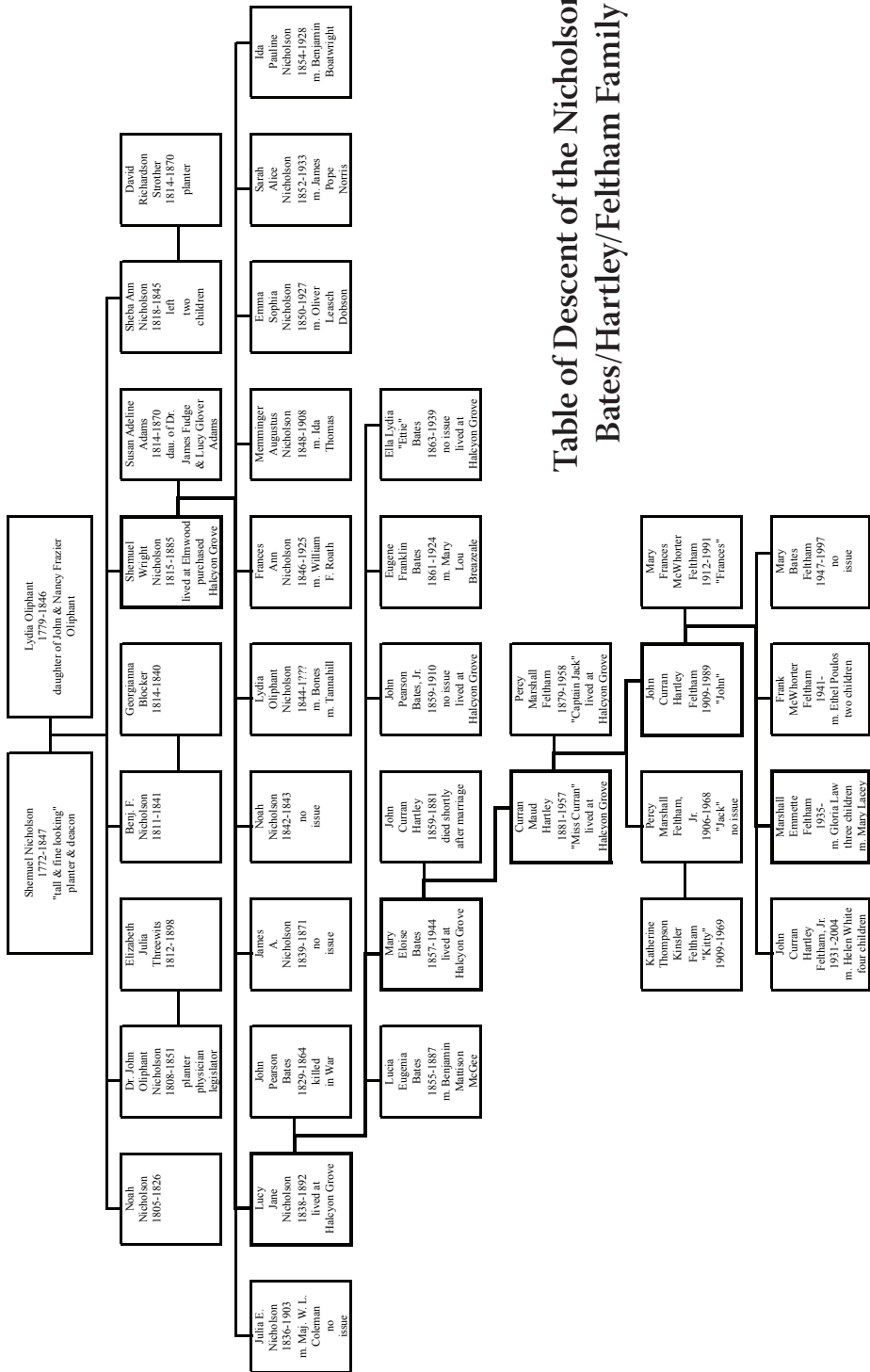


Table of Descent of the Nicholson/ Bates/Hartley/Feltham Family

she married John Pearson Bates of an area of the Ridge which would soon become known as Batesburg. He was twenty-five. In October of 1857 he purchased from John T. Nicholson a 411 acre plantation known as “the Grove” three miles north of Edgefield Village on the Road to Cambridge and on Log and Turkey Creeks.¹⁵⁵ Here the family settled and were well-positioned for a long and happy life together. They had five children born between 1854 and 1863.



Lucy Jane Nicholson Bates

Unfortunately the War intervened, and John Pearson Bates went off to serve. He was a Brigadier General in the 2nd Brigade, 1st Division South Carolina Militia, and served in the Virginia Campaign and on the Potomac with Lipscomb’s Cavalry, Hampton’s Legion. On November 5, 1864 at Green Pond, South Carolina, he died of disease, resulting from a bout with typhoid fever.

Left as a twenty-six year old widow with five children to raise, Lucy Jane Bates had her troubles. She continued to live at the Grove three miles north of the village for several years, and then, as related by her granddaughter, her father purchased Halcyon Grove so that the children could go to school in the village. Five years later, on July 15, 1874, Shemuel Nicholson deeded Halcyon Grove to Lucy, but, interestingly, he did not give it to her, but rather made her pay \$2,750 for it, the same price he had given Sullivan.¹⁵⁶

Lucy continued to live at Halcyon Grove for the rest of her life and never remarried. Her eldest daughter, Lucia Eugenia Bates married Benjamin Mattison McGee and moved to Greenville. Her youngest son, Eugene Franklin Bates, also moved to Greenville where he was quite successful in business. Her eldest son, John Pearson Bates, Jr., and her youngest daughter, Ella Lydia “Ettie” Bates, never married and continued to live at Halcyon Grove with her. Her second daughter, Mary Eloise Bates married



Ettie, Jack, Curran, and Mary on the porch with a servant standing on the ground by the steps, circa 1915

¹⁵⁵ Deed Book JJJ, Page 166, Edgefield County Archives.

¹⁵⁶ Deed Book 6, Page 600, Edgefield County Archives.

John Curran Hartley of Batesburg in November of 1880, but he died suddenly five months later on April 27, 1881. Mrs. Hartley was pregnant at the time and returned to Halcyon Grove to live with Lucy, John Pearson, and Ettie. Her daughter, Curran Maud Hartley, was born at Halcyon Grove on October 18, 1881. Lucy died rather unexpectedly at Halcyon Grove on December 5, 1892 at the age of fifty-four and was buried beside her husband in the Village cemetery. For nearly the next thirty years, the siblings, Mary Eloise, John Pearson and Ettie, continued to live at Halcyon Grove. John Pearson died in 1910, Ettie in 1939 and Mary Eloise in 1944.

“Miss Curran” and “Captain Jack”: “Miss Curran” grew up at Halcyon Grove with her adoring mother, uncle and aunt, occasionally visiting her other aunt and uncle in Greenville. While in Greenville, she met a young civil engineer, Percy Marshall “Jack” Feltham, who was working at the J. E. Sistine Company. Curran and Jack were married on October 10, 1905 at Halcyon Grove, in “a very lovely, loving, heartfelt home wedding in the historical old Bates house, in the lordly grove on the high hill. It was a wedding full of happiness and high hospitality – full of grace and elegance and taste and fashion.”¹⁵⁷

Over the years Miss Curran and Jack lived in Greenville, Massachusetts, Oklahoma, Washington, Atlanta and California as Jack pursued his career. However, they were never long away from Halcyon Grove. After the United States entered World War I, in the early part of 1918, Jack was commissioned as a Captain of the Engineer Corps of the U. S. Army. On September 17, 1918 while in training, he was seriously injured by a defective hand grenade and remained in Walter Reed Hospital and un-



*The 50th Wedding Anniversary of Jack & Curran:
Jack, Jr., Miss Curran, Captain Jack & John*

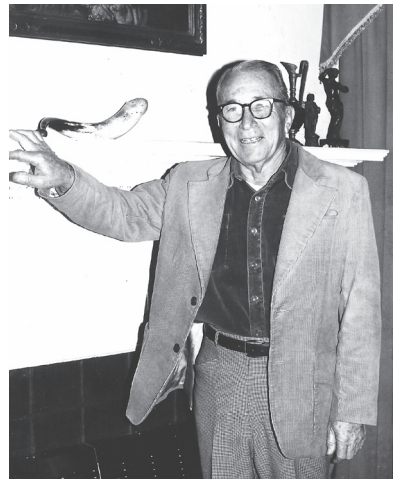
¹⁵⁷ *Edgefield Chronicle*, October 12, 1905. *Edgefield Advertiser*, October 11, 1905.

able to work until July, 1921. After his service in the war, Jack was universally known as "Captain Jack." He went on to become the head of construction and maintenance for the Southern division of what became the Veteran's Administration.

When Captain Jack retired, he and Miss Curran came back to Edgefield and resumed their life at Halcyon Grove, immersing themselves in a broad range of community activities. Showing a sincere commitment for Edgefield, Captain Jack made a major effort in the late 1940's, using his contacts and knowledge, to get the Veterans Administration to assume ownership of the County's Reynolds Memorial Home and convert it into a Veterans Home and Infirmary for African American veterans. Although the effort was ultimately unsuccessful, he made a made a strong case, demonstrating his abilities and commitment to his adopted home.¹⁵⁸ For her part, Miss Curran wrote and designed for the Edgefield Civic League an excellent brochure about Edgefield for visitors.¹⁵⁹ As an indication of her abilities and the respect in which she was held in Edgefield, Miss Curran was made Chairman of the Edgefield County Courthouse Centennial Celebration in 1939, a major event in the history of the county.¹⁶⁰ Although Miss Curran's family had always been devout members of the Village Baptist Church, when she married Captain Jack the Feltham's became staunch members of Trinity Episcopal Church and contributed much to that institution over the many decades since. In 1957 Miss Curran died at the age of seventy-six, and the next year Captain Jack followed her. They were buried at Eastview Cemetery.

Jack, Jr. and John: Captain Jack and Miss Curran had two sons: Percy Marshall "Jack" Feltham, Jr. (1906-1968) and John Curran Hartley Feltham (1910-1989). Both sons served in World War II. Jack, Jr. was a Major, serving as Commanding Officer of Company A 743rd Military Police Battalion North Africa and Italy, and received the Bronze Star Medal. John was a Lieutenant D(L) USNR, serving as Commanding Officer Armed Guard unit aboard various vessels in American, European, African and Asiatic Theatres.

Jack, Jr. was a textile engineer and had an interesting career, working in foreign



John in the Library, circa 1985

¹⁵⁸ Original letters and attachments in the possession of Beth Worth, Halcyon Grove, Edgefield.

¹⁵⁹ Copy of the brochure in the P.M. Feltham file of Bettis C. Rainsford. *Edgefield Advertiser*, September 11, 1957.

¹⁶⁰ Copy of the Centennial Celebration booklet in the P.M. Feltham file of Bettis C. Rainsford. *Edgefield Advertiser*, September 11, 1957.

countries, including Nicaragua and Portugal where he built and started up textile mills. He first married Dorothy Wood, but that marriage ended in divorce. He then married a widowed childhood friend, Katherine Thompson Kinsler (1909-1969), whose first husband was one of the first men killed in the war in the Pacific. Jack had no children. While living in Porto, Portugal, he was diagnosed with cancer and died in the hospital after coming back to Augusta. He left his interest in Halcyon Grove to his brother John.

John studied civil engineering at Georgia Tech, specializing in water and sewer systems. After working in Atlanta, and serving in World War II, he returned to Edgefield to work with a company selling water treatment equipment. In 1951 he was offered an opportunity to go to Gainesville, Florida with an engineering company that specialized in water and sewer systems. He remained there for twenty-three years before retiring to Edgefield and Halcyon Grove in 1974. In retirement, John became the Chairman of the Edgefield County Water and Sewer Authority where he rendered great service to the County.

Emma, Mamie & Ruth: During the long period after Miss Curran and Captain Jack died, while Jack, Jr. was in Portugal and John was in Gainesville, Halcyon Grove was maintained by a longtime servant of the family, Lilly Mae “Mamie” Johnson East (1917-1991). Mamie was the granddaughter of Emma Johnson who had also lived on the Halcyon Grove property all of her life.¹⁶¹ Both Emma and Mamie lived in the little red cottage which faced the corner of Brooks and Church Street. Mamie was extremely intelligent, highly responsible and a great cook. She was constantly available when any of the family or their guests came to Halcyon Grove. After John and Frances came back to Edgefield in 1974, Mamie retired and her niece, Ruth Kemp, took over the role of housekeeper and cook. Ruth had also been born in the red cottage and had lived there with her daughter, Mary Elizabeth.



Mamie, circa 1970

¹⁶¹ Emma Johnson (known as Ma) was born circa 1884. She had five daughters, Elberta (mother of Mamie and Elizabeth who was Ruth's mother), Maggie (mother of Wiley who was born about 1916), Effie and two others. This information is from the 1930 census and from a conversation which Frank Feltham had with Ruth Kemp on October 10, 2011.



The Halcyon Grove Cottage, circa 1830

The Cottage: After a fire damaged the red cottage in 1981, John sold that corner of the property¹⁶² and the cottage was restored with an addition being added for a kitchen, bath and laundry room. In the restoration, two historic mantelpieces were added to the front rooms: one from Evergreen, the house which has been known as the Gantt-Cantelou house on Main Street and which was dismantled in 1968, and the other from the Dr. D. C. Tompkins house on Meeting Street which has since been moved to Highway 378. The cottage was sold in 1991 to Congressman Butler Derrick who lived here for several years.¹⁶³ It is now owned by Ashley Hatcher, daughter of the current owners of Halcyon Grove, who is making a substantial addition to it.¹⁶⁴



Beth & Tim's daughter Ashley with her daughters, Grace & Elizabeth

John's Family: While at Georgia Tech John met and married Miss Mary Frances McWhorter of Greensboro, Georgia. They had four children, John Curran

¹⁶² Deed of John C. Feltham to Bettis C. Rainsford, dated December 31, 1981, Deed Book 86, page 203, Office of the Edgefield County Clerk of Court.

¹⁶³ Deed of Bettis C. Rainsford to Butler C. Derrick, Jr., dated January 15, 1991, Deed Book 130, page 218, Office of the Edgefield County Clerk of Court.

¹⁶⁴ Deed of Lydia Derrick Wherry to Ashley R. Viseth, dated Record Book 1204, page 42, dated October 1, 2008, Office of the Edgefield County Clerk of Court.

Hartley Feltham, Jr., Marshall Emmette Feltham, Frank McWhorter Feltham and Mary Bates Feltham. John died of cancer in 1989 and Frances died two years later in 1991. Daughter Mary Bates died in 1997 and son John, Jr. died in 2004. In 1981 son Frank built a home on the northwest corner of the Halcyon Grove property and continues to live there with his wife Ethel.¹⁶⁵

Marshall inherited Halcyon Grove. He and his wife Mary Alice Lacey lived both here and in their other home in San Antonio, Texas until 2008 when they sold Halcyon Grove. By that time the Nicholson/Bates/Hartley/Feltham family had resided at Halcyon Grove for nearly 140 years.

The Name “Halcyon Grove”



John & Frances on the porch, circa 1985

Some of the questions which we have asked are when, why and by whom was the name “Halcyon Grove” first given to the property. While it has been said that Andrew Pickens named it, there is no evidence of this. Strangely, none of the deeds to the property, from 1824 to 2008, use the name. The only time a name was used in a deed was in 1911 when Eugene Bates and the children of Lucia Bates McGee deeded their interests in the property to Mary Eloise Bates Hartley. In that deed the property is referred to as “the Bates Homestead Place.”¹⁶⁶

The first use which we have been able to find of the name Halcyon Grove is in an obituary notice, posted in the *Edgefield Advertiser* on January 2, 1873, in which Ella Ozene, only child of

¹⁶⁵ Deed Book 84, page 625, Office of the Edgefield County Clerk of Court.

¹⁶⁶ Deed of Eugene F. Bates, Mr. Mary McGee Bull, Benj. M. McGee, Jr., Mary McGee Bull, and Aileen McGee to Mrs. Mary Hartley and Miss Ella Bates, dated February 16, 1911, Deed Book 21, page 625, Edgefield County Archives.

Mr. Jasper and Mrs. Mary A. Clark, died near Sister Springs. The beautifully-written obituary notice is signed “Halcyon Grove.”¹⁶⁷ Initially we could not find any information about Jasper and Mary Clark which would connect them to Edgefield or to Halcyon Grove. However, Beth Worth was able to find a notation in the square grand piano in the parlor that Jasper G. Clark tuned the piano on Feb. 19th 1883, thus making it clear that the signer of the obituary notice “Halcyon Grove” was indeed the family of Lucy Jane Nicholson Bates..

It is also significant that the plantation home of John Pearson and Lucy Jane Bates three miles north of Edgefield from 1857 until 1869 was named “the Grove.” Perhaps in moving to the Village where she felt safer and calmer amidst the turmoil of Reconstruction, this widow with five young children decided to name her home “Halcyon Grove” in hopes that their lives here would indeed be halcyon.¹⁶⁸

Epilogue and Preface



Tim & Beth at Home, 2011

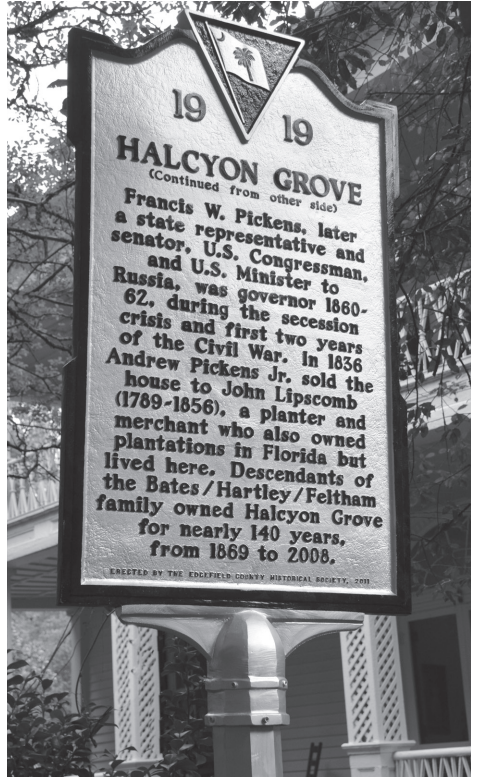
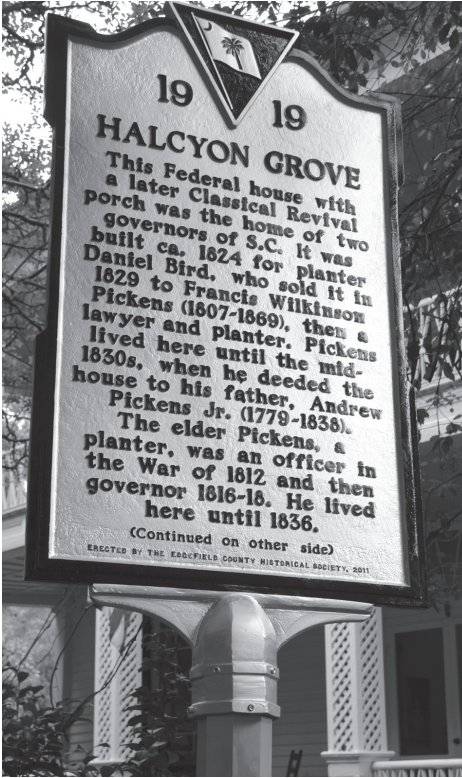
Tim and Beth Shealy Worth were the lucky purchasers of this historic mansion in Edgefield on June 23, 2008.¹⁶⁹ Beth is a native of Batesburg and Tim is from Maine and Connecticut. They have three children, Ashley, Allan and Jake, and two grandchildren, Grace and Elizabeth. The Worth’s have done a remarkable job in restoring the old home, preserving the historical and architectural integrity of the house and the many furnishing and documents which were left

there by the former owners. There is no better future for an historic property like Halcyon Grove than to be the home of a family that loves it and the community in which it is located. The Edgefield County Historical Society is immensely pleased to participate in erecting and dedicating the South Carolina Historical Marker for Halcyon Grove and we hope that the Worth family will continue to inhabit Halcyon Grove for another 140 years.

¹⁶⁷ *Edgefield Advertiser*, January 2, 1873.

¹⁶⁸ There is also a place in Newberry known as Halcyon Grove. See Pope, Thomas H., *The History of Newberry County*, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, 1973, pages 216,217 & 281.

¹⁶⁹ Deed of The Marshall and Mary Feltham Living Trust to Timothy E. Worth and Elizabeth S. Worth, dated June 23, 2008, Record Book 1204, page 42, Office of the Edgefield County Clerk of Court.



The two sides of the South Carolina Historical Marker being erected on October 16, 2011



The magnificent hallway of Halcyon Grove



The stairway of Halcyon Grove which features images of prior owners

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