CHATHAM COUNTY

1771-1971

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CHURCHES

The introduction to the chapter on churches was written by a native of Pittsboro, Dr. George Griffin, professor of religion at Wake Forest University.

Introduction

The earliest settlers in North Carolina came from Virginia around 1653 and located in the Albemarle Sound area. S. B. Weeks, North Carolina historian, insists that these settlers did not come to North Carolina for religious reasons, but largely for economic purposes. Nevertheless, the Christian religion played a prominent part in the early development of the state. Soon after Charles II granted Carolina to the Eight Lord Proprietors, the Fundamental Constitutions of 1669 decreed among other things that, "No man shall be permitted to be a freeman of Carolina, or to have any estate or habitation within, that doth not acknowledge a God, and that God is publicly and solemnly to be worshipped." And in another article it was stated that, "No persons whatsoever shall disturb, molest, or persecute another, for his speculative opinions in religion, or his way of worship.

It was assumed that the Church of England represented the "official" religion of early Carolina, but it was not until 1701 that this church was legally declared the Established religion, after Daniel Britt had been sent in 1700 to Albemarle as the first Church of England minister in North Carolina. But many years before this, the first known Christian minister to preach in North Carolina came from England. He was a Quaker, named William Edmundson, who reached the state in 1672. Shortly after this first visit, the recognized leader of the Quakers, George Fox, also came to North Carolina. So that the period between 1675 and 1700 has been declared the "Golden Age" of Quakerism in North Carolina. Between 1700 and 1729, 17 Quaker missionaries visited North Carolina, much to the annoyance of the Anglican clergymen, but after 1730 the Quaker influence declined in the Albemarle region, while more settlements were made in the central part of the state. By 1750, many Quakers came from Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey and even Eastern North Carolina and settled

in what is now Guilford, Randolph, Alamance, and Chatham counties. The Cane Creek Monthly Meeting of Friends, which had begun by 1751 in what was then Orange County, became the leader in establishing subordinate meetings. Some of these were located in what is now Chatham County, and because of this, it is possible to say that Quakers were the first to organize churches in Chatham.

In addition to the Quakers, there was widespread growth of other dissenting sects in colonial North Carolina. Chief among these were the Baptists, the Presbyterians, the Lutherans, the Moravians, the German Reformed, and the Methodists. Before 1700 there were a few individual Presybterians and Baptists in the state, but no organized churches until 1727, when Paul Palmer began what must have been the first Baptist Church in eastern North Carolina.

The Presbyterians did not become very numerous until after 1739 when large groups of Scottish Highlanders settled along the Cape Fear River. The Moravians came to Bethabara, with a congregation and minister in 1753. The Lutherans and Reformed groups came to the Rowan region between 1750 and 1760, and the last of the dissenting sects to appear in colonial North Carolina were the Methodists, even though George Whitefield came to the state several times during the middle of the century. It was not until 1776 that the first Methodist circuit was organized in the state.

Of all the denominations the Baptists had become the most numerous by 1775, with one church in every county and about forty churches in the whole state. However, until the time of the Revolution the official church in the state remained the Anglican, and although the nearest Church of England Chapel to Chatham County was located near Chapel Hill, the county had been designated as St. Bartholomew's parish even before 1771. But on this date an act establishing Chatham was ratified which ruled that there would not only be a district county but that it should also be designated St. Bartholomew's Parish.

As the American Revolution approached, the Established Church in North Carolina grew weaker and by 1774 it was for all intents finished. A convention at Halifax in 1776 declared, "That there shall be no Establishment of any one religious Church or

Denomination in this State in preference to any other." Even with the fall of Anglicanism in North Carolina it is appropriate that the Episcopal Church in Pittsboro should bear the old parish name of St. Bartholomew's.

After the Revolutionary War, religion in North Carolina according to Joseph Caldwell was "little in vogue." But with the opening of the nineteenth century the picture began to change. The first camp meeting in the state took place in Orange County about 1801 and with this the revival spirit had begun. Most all denominations were stimulated by this revival and this was particularly true of the Methodists. Francis Asbury, who had come from England and had had close association with John Wesley, became one of the first leaders in American Methodism. In all his travels, up and down the seaboard, it is revealing to read from his Journal of 1800: "We had no small race through Chatham County; we were lost three times before we came to Charles' ferry on Haw River; and had to send a boy a mile for the ferryman."

The Quakers

The first Quaker settlement in central North Carolina was at Cane Creek, Alamance County, where a monthly meeting was established in 1751 at which time there were some "thirty families and upwards of Friends" in the area. Simon Dixon had led this group south from Pennsylvania to settle on land he had purchased from the Lord Proprietors. These families were scattered over a wide area to the south as far as Bear Creek and to the west as far as Deep River.

A group representing the Cane Creek Friends appeared at the Quarterly Meeting of Perquimans County and Little River in the 6th month, 1751 requesting the establishment of a monthly meeting. Permission was granted and the first minutes record that Women's Friends held a monthly meeting October 7, 1751, and the Men's meeting the same day.

According to George Washington Paschal, the Baptist historian, by the year 1757 the Quakers had "built five meeting-houses, and then wanted one or two more." Paschal describes Oakley, three miles west of the present town of Ore Hill as one of these "places of worship." In a letter written in 1951 to the late Dr. C. C.

Crittenden, then director of the North Carolina Department of Archives and History, advocating that an historical marker be placed at the site of the Oakley Quaker Church, Paschal wrote that he thought the church was built around 1751 and stood until 1885. He says: "This old church, probably the first church ever built in the limits of the present Chatham County, was one of the five built in the Quaker development at Cane Creek now Alamance County, which dates from about 1750. It was less than a mile from my mother's home and my school path to Mount Vernon Springs Academy ran in full sight of it. Old deeply rutted roads, long disused, lead to the site. The old meeting house was haunted and frightful even in daytime. A score or more old Quaker homes, each with a fine well-walled spring and spring house, were in the surrounding country. These Quaker families moved to Indiana and other 'free states' as soon as they were opened for settlers. These springs and sometimes the spring houses, the better ones, still exist. Herman Husband was probably a member of this church."

No other source can be found to establish the fact that this meeting was ever in that area.

However it can be established that one of the churches "laid down" by the Cane Creek Friends was the Rocky River Church which in 1754 asked permission to conduct their own meeting. This permission was granted. The Rocky River Meeting is unique in that it was an organized congregation for 155 years before it became a self-governing monthly meeting. In 1908 with 60 charter members, mostly descendants of the original Quaker settlers at Cane Creek, Rocky River became a monthly meeting.

Francis Anscombe, Quaker historian, thinks that the explanation for the tardiness of this group of Friends in becoming a monthly meeting was that there was a close bond between the members and those at Cane Creek. From 1820 the quarterly meeting assembled once a year at Rocky River, and from 1821 on the monthly meeting alternated between Cane Creek and Rocky River.

The present meeting house is the fourth. The first two were of logs; the third a long frame structure; and the fourth was built in 1926. Four Friends began their ministry at Rocky River: Manly Holladay, Virgil Pike, Victor Murchison, and Harrison Hinshaw.

Other Friends Churches in the county are:

SOUTH FORK: Organized 1800 in a log school house situated on Little Cane Creek, the South prong of Big Cane Creek, hence the name South Fork. Log building erected later to contain meeting and school. In 1888 a modern meeting house was erected that contained a partition to divide men's and women's business meetings. Remarkable feature is three generations, direct descendants in one family, have produced ministers: Alfred H. Harris, Edward B. Harris (son), and Isaac Harris, (grandson). Another minister from this meeting, Rodema Wright.

PLAINFIELD: Permission requested and granted to establish Monthly Meeting on April 7, 1897. Monthly meeting held one month at Plainfield, the next at South Fork. On December 29, 1913 Plainfield became separate monthly meeting. First Quarterly meeting held at Plainfield in 1915.

EDWARD HILL: Established as a result of meetings held by Isham Cox at Hope and Willett School Houses. Named Edward Hill in memory of Edward Skull. Remained a part of the Cane Creek meeting until 1908. New building used first time April 25, 1948 replacing the original structure.

The Baptists

According to Dr. George Griffin, "Almost all of the Baptist churches in Chatham County belong to the historic Sandy Creek Association. This Association, the first in North Carolina and the second in the South, was formed in 1758, largely through the efforts of Shubal Stearns. He had come from Boston and begun a Baptist Church in what is now eastern Randolph County in 1755. From this church, Sandy Creek, "missionaries" went forth to organize churches in the surrounding areas. It is likely that this was the occasion for the beginning of the first Baptist churches in Chatham."

Following the formation of the Sandy Creek Church in 1755, a church was instituted at Abbott's Creek, in what is now Davidson County; and shortly thereafter the Deep River Church in Chatham County was established. According to Paschal in his "History of the North Carolina Baptists," the exact location of this church is not known. "It was, of course, near the stream from which it takes its name and probably near the ford of that river on the 'Yadkin

1889. First church building, a wooden structure, completed in 1900. Sunday School organized same year. In 1911 church secured parsonage. In 1930 new church constructed. In 1963 church undertook third major building program completing the task in 1965. Present membership, 626; present minister, Rev. C. R. Smith.

TYSON'S CREEK: Organized at Tyson's Creek School November 18, 1881. Rev. T. N. Baldwin, first pastor. First house of worship dedicated August, 1885. Building later moved some distance from original site and remodeled and Sunday School School rooms added. Considerable renovation to interior of church house. Present membership, 184; present minister, Rev. John A. Mann.

Methodists

Although there undoubtedly were individuals who professed Methodist beliefs in North Carolina and even in Chatham County, the earliest record of organized Methodism in this area was in 1776. According to W. L. Grissom in his "History of Methodism in North Carolina," at a conference held in Baltimore on May 21, 1776, four new circuits were added: Fairfax, Hanover, Pittsylvania and Carolina. The latter lay in North Carolina and had for its preachers Edward Dromgoole, Francis Poythress and Isham Tatum. By 1800 there were 20 districts including the South Carolina Conference into which the entire Cape Fear Valley fell. Other sections of North Carolina including the northern section of Chatham were part of the Virginia Conference as early as 1776.

Later four circuits: Roanoke, Tar River, New Hope and Yadkin were formed within the boundaries of the state.

In 1793 parts of Chatham were in the Haw River Circuit.

In 1833 minutes of the Virginia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church show the establishment of the Pittsborough Circuit. John W. White rode the Circuit and there were 79 white and 57 colored members.

At the same time records show that the northern part of the county was in the Chatham Circuit. This circuit was served by John B. Corn and had 252 white and 75 colored members. A new circuit named Buckhorn was placed in the Greensborough District along with Chatham Circuit.

As early as 1780 Francis Asbury made a visit to North Carolina

and in July of that year visited "Brother Merritt's," which was in eastern Chatham County. Francis Poythress was the pastor of the New Hope Circuit at that time.

While the earliest reference to a specific church in the eastern section of the county recorded in Asbury's Journal was made on January 19, 1790 when he kept an appointment at Merritt's Chapel on New Hope Creek in Chatham County, Rocky River Church in western Chatham is believed to have been organized even earlier by Asbury on July 22, 1780 and Mt. Pleasant is said to have been organized in 1779.

A brief description of the 28 white Methodist churches in the county now in existence follows:

Bonlee Circuit

MERONIES: Founded in 1808 when William Meroney and Boling Hines made a deed for the land conveying one and a half acres and recorded February, 1814. Trustees were Thomas Ragland, Micagah McGee, James Gaines, William Ragland, Edward Rives, and Thomas Brooks. Present membership, 213; present minister, Rev. James Millard Short.

HOPE: Around 1871 Miss Artilie Cox came to the community. Her father, Isham Cox, a Quaker minister, preached several times at the school house where his daughter taught. Later Rev. W. W. Amick did likewise. In 1873 S. J. Tally asked the Rev. Mr. Amick to conduct a revival meeting in a brush arbor. At the close of the meeting the church was organized with Rev. Amick, pastor. By 1876 a church had been erected. It was remodeled in 1915 and Sunday School rooms added in 1926. Plans for the present church were started in 1944 when Mrs. A. A. Johnson, then president of the Woman's Society of Christian Service, headed a drive for funds. Building completed two years later at cost of $35,000. Present membership, 107; present minister, Rev. James Millard Short.

PROVIDENCE: The records for this church are missing and while it is believed that it was organized in the middle 1870's an article in The Chatham News in 1924 sets the date for organization as 1804. On September 11, 1887 two acres of land were purchased for eight dollars from T. W. and Fannie Andrews for the construction of a building. The land was located approximately five miles

west of Bonlee where a one-room building was constructed. R. Lonnie Edwards served as Sunday School superintendent for about 40 years. In the year 1952 the old church building was turned around and moved back from the dirt road. In 1961 a brick educational building was built. The church purchased one of the first organs in the county and Esta Edwards (Smith) served as organist for many years. One minister has come from this church: John Robert Edwards. Present membership, 50; present minister, Rev. James Millard Short.

Bynum

BYNUM: Organized 1901 as part of Haw River Circuit. Carney W. Bynum, first Sunday School superintendent. Rev. J. T. Draper, first pastor. Original building completed in 1901 with additions made to it later and further improvements in 1950. In 1965 church brick veneered and in the same year the church became a self-supporting station. Billy Gattis entered the ministry from this church. Present membership, 193; present minister, Rev. Clyde P. Pearce.

Goldston Circuit

ASBURY: Although no records exist of the early days of the church, tradition has it that as long as 200 years ago, services were held in the community. Services probably held in a brush arbor until a man named Burns agreed to hold meetings in his home. Bishop Francis Asbury is known to have visited the county and is believed that he visited this section, spending the night and holding prayer services, hence the name of the church. There have been four buildings: two log churches, followed by two frame ones. At least one of them burned. A deed between Edward Burns and Thomas Clegg, Will Stedman and Straughn, trustees, for the purchase of land in 1838 is recorded. Present membership, 208; present minister, Rev. W.E. Worley.

GOLDSTON: Jack Goldston and Loton F. Paschal organized the first Sunday School at Goldston. The present building is the second, the original having been torn down in 1910. First church called Corinth. Joe John Goldston gave lots for new church and school building and by 1892 both buildings open for use. Present

membership, 208; present minister, Rev. W. E. Worley.

Grove Chapel Circuit

CEDAR GROVE: Original church one-room log building with rock chimney and open fireplace. From 1806 to 1817 called Haw River Mountain and located across river from present church. Moved across river and called Flint Hill from 1817 to 1824. Again moved, this time to old Hillsborough road from 1824 until 1873 and this is the site of the present church. Present membership, 60; present minister, Rev. J. M. Leatherwood.

MANN'S CHAPEL: Started in log schoolhouse. First minister, Rev. John Tillett. Followed by Rev. S. P. Oldham in 1861 and Rev. Joseph Martin in 1863. Two preachers have come from church: Rev. James Strowd and Rev. William Meacham. Present membership, 60; present minister, Rev. J. M. Leatherwood.

Merritt's-Ebenezer Circuit

MERRITT'S: Exact date of founding unknown. On July 15, 1780 Francis Asbury made his first visit to North Carolina and went to "Brother Merritt's" in Chatham, then delivered a sermon at Taylor's "Preaching House" also in Chatham. This is the earliest reference to a church in the county by Bishop Asbury. Thomas Anderson was serving New Hope Circuit as pastor. In the old cemetery, one-half mile from the present church, is the grave of William Merritt, born July 10, 1785; died November 17, 1867. Deed on record to church from Merritt dated 1857. Present membership 128; present minister, Rev. Michael Potts.

EBENEZER: In 1817 Joseph Yarborough sought a pastor from Buckhorn Circuit to come to this community to preach in an old log house that stood a mile north of present church. Sunday School and church organized in 1827. About the same year a log meeting house was built and named Ebenezer, meaning a "Stone of Help Coming from the Lord." Preaching services were held twice a month at the meeting house and at the home of Mary Farrar. Later a framed building constructed, a few yards from where present church stands. Just prior to the Civil War another building was constructed which became part of the present church. Original log cabin now stands on farm of Thomas Farrar. Second structure given to Negroes of the area and is now located across the highway

and is also called Ebenezer. Old rolls show that until 1867 whites and blacks worshipped together. When Negroes withdrew, the membership was cut in half. In 1914 Sunday School rooms built and in 1948 church annex constructed. Present membership, 95; present minister, Rev. Michael Potts.

Moncure Circuit

BUCKHORN: Grill, Methodist historian says: "Some pretty exacting research has set the date of origin of Buckhorn around 1800 and if Memphis Church was the 'Mother of Methodism' on the southwestern side of the Cape Fear River, Buckhorn Church can take the same honor on the northeastern side." Seth Cotton, who was in the area before 1771, bought 3,000 acres from Benjamin Chapman and a log meeting house was built on his property. In 1822 the old place was abandoned because of lack of a spring and moved to a 10-acre site nearby. By 1855 church was on Haw River Circuit and had 161 members. In 1857 came into reorganized Buckhorn Circuit. In 1925 new church built at Corinth a mile and half away and in January, 1929 the old one-room building was torn down. Also in 1925 Buckhorn Circuit was dissolved. Present membership, 132; present minister, Rev. Parker Hager.

MONCURE: Constructed in 1890's. Church built from lumber of two other churches, old Methodist Church at Haywood and old Bryan's Chapel at Lockville. Present membership, 100; present minister, Rev. Parker Hager.

MT. ZION: Sunday School organized by Joseph Bynum April 6, 1851. Location about two miles southeast of Pittsboro at site of Moore's School. A protracted meeting held under a brush arbor in schoolhouse yard where it was decided to build a church. Bynum donated two or three acres and members of community supplied materials. For many years services held only during spring and summer because of no heat. Stove purchased in 1879. Two preachers received license to preach while members here: Rev. John A. Hornaday and Rev. Thomas Mansfield. Present membership, 64; present minister, Rev. Parker Hager.

The Presbyterians

There were some individual Presbyterians in North Carolina in the early 1700's and a few in the Cape Fear Valley as early as 1736. Orange Presbytery, to which the Chatham churches belong, was organized May, 1770 with eight congregations in North Carolina and four in South Carolina. The first meeting of the Orange Presbytery was held at Hawfield Church in present Alamance County.

The church at Pittsboro was organized some years later, in 1848. One reason Presbyterian churches were slow in organizing was the lack of ministers to serve the congregations.

PITTSBORO: At the instigation of Major Joseph Small and Mrs. Ann McBryde Womack on Sunday, August 12, 1848 a group met in the parlor of Mr. and Mrs. Green Womack (their home was located across the street from where the church now stands) for the purpose of organizing the Presbyterian Church. The meeting was moderated by Rev. Drury Lacy, pastor of the Raleigh Presbyterian Church. Also present were: Mr. and Mrs. Roderick McIntosh, Dr. John Z. Davis, Mrs. Sara A. Reid, Mrs. Celia Horne, Mrs. Clara Stedman, Miss Elizabeth Murdin, Dr. and Mrs. William A. Hayes and probably others.

Although the church was not established until 1848, staunch Presbyterians in the area held periodic prayer services and study groups in various private homes. Also in the early 1800's, especially duirng the summer months when vacationers from Wilmington and New Bern were in the area, services were conducted in the old Pittsboro Academy and the courthouse. The Rev. James McIver of Fayetteville Presbytery came once a month to hold services which were usually held in the Methodist Church. In 1836 the Rev. James Phillips, professor of philosophy at the University of Chapel Hill, started preaching once a month at the Academy.

Soon after the 1848 meeting in Mrs. Womack's parlor, the Rev. James H. McNeill, a recent graduate of Princeton Seminary, was called as pastor. Within less than a year the congregation raised $1350 for the purpose of erecting a church. On the fourth Sunday in May, 1850 services were held in the "new church." This same building stands today, probably the first brick building erected in

and the present building replaced it. Present building remodeled in April, 1963. Van Thomas, Kenny Jones, Ulys Cook, Audy Jones, Seymour Johnson, Lee Johnson, Chesley Johnson, Casey Johnson, Mrs. R. G. Buckner, Mrs. W. M. Wright, Jesse A. Crutchfield, Mr. Rudd and Henry Jones got together and decided to promote work on the church. Present membership, two; present minister, Elder Kenneth Key of Greensboro.

GAINES GROVE: The present Gaines Grove Church is located five miles west of Goldston and was built on land given by Thomas Gaines. The building was started in 1908 and completed in 1909. Prior to that time the congregation met in the old Bear Creek Church. The present membership is 15; present ministers Elder Kelvin Harward, and Elder Sam Atkinson.

United Church of Christ

James O'Kelly was a pioneer of Methodism in North Carolina. He began his ministry in the Methodist church in Virginia in 1777 and served for 15 years. He laid the foundation for the New Hope Circuit and in 1779 extended his work down into the Cape Fear section which afterwards became the Bladen Circuit. He was ordained an elder in 1784 at the Christmas Conference in Baltimore and served as District Superintendent under Francis Asbury until he with 35 other ministers withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1792. This group of ministers disagreed with Asbury over the administration of the church and came to be known as Republican Methodists, which name was later changed to Christian.

O'Kelly moved to Chatham County about 1797, purchased a farm and lived to be 92 years old. He is buried on what was his farm near the Orange, Durham and Chatham County lines.

On coming to North Carolina he established O'Kelly's Chapel in Chatham County in 1794, the first Christian Church in North Carolina. This building is still standing although services are no longer held there.

The father of the Christian Church and its first home belong to Chatham County.

MARTHA'S CHAPEL: Following the organization of O'Kelly's Chapel, James O'Kelly began his missionary work in Chatham and purchased one acre of land from John Scott in the eastern part of

the county where Martha's Chapel now stands. In 1803 the congregation built a church. O'Kelly undoubtedly served as the first minister.

Besides the churches begun by O'Kelly, Elon College and Elon Home for Children, both located at Elon College, N. C. were founded and maintained by the O'Kelly Christian Church. This denomination merged with the Congregational Church in 1931 to become the Congregationl Christian Church. In 1959 the new denomination united with the Evangelical Reform Church to become the United Church of Christ.

HANKS CHAPEL: Organized in 1835 as a brush arbor congregation by Dr. John Hanks. One minister has come from this church, the Rev. Earl Farrell. Present membership, 325; present minister, the Rev. B. J. Willett.

ANTIOCH: Organized 1888. The cemetery contains graves of 12 Confederate soldiers. Present membership, 137. No minister at present.

NEW ELAM: Organized in 1863. Present membership, 148; present minister Rev. E. Woodall.

CEDAR GROVE: Organized in 1888. There are eight members and the church is now inactive.

The Roman Catholics

SAINT JULIA'S: The first service held at downtown furniture store in Siler City by Father Paul Byron around 1951. The church-store was destroyed by fire the same year.

Following destruction of the initial facilities, Siler City Catholics went to Asheboro to attend services.

The dream of a church in Siler City came to fruition at a covered dish dinner at the home of Mrs. T. A. Brown in late 1960. John J. White, Siler City industrialist, was chiefly responsible for the fund drive that resulted. Construction of church began in April, 1961 and was completed in November.

The church was temporarily named Saint Vincent DePaul in honor of the Catholic Bishop of North Carolina, Vincent S. Waters. The final selection of a name was made in August, 1961, the church becoming Saint Julia's Catholic Church.

Saint Julia's has approximately 100 parishioners and they are

Minter-Morgan-Womack

John Minter (wife Elizabeth Morgan) moved into Chatham County about the time it was organized. Their daughter, Judith (Judy), married Abraham Womack, who was living in Orange County in 1770.

August 1772 Court Records show that Anthony Minter, John's brother, bought 140 acres of land lying on the fork of Cape Fear River from James Riddle. This transaction was signed by Joseph Brantley, John Minter, Morgan Minter and Jeremiah Minter. Morgan Minter married Joanna, daughter of Col. Robert Rutherford.

In 1775 John Minter deeded 120 acres on the northeast side of Deep River to Abraham Womack, who in 1778 bought 200 acres in Chatham County from Jeremiah Minter. In the National Archives there is record of commendation to Womack for his Revolutionary service. In preparing to leave Chatham County to live in Georgia, Womack in December, 1784, sold his land on Deep River to John Ramsey.

Other prominent members of the Womack family were Judge Thomas B. Womack, of Pittsboro, and his brother, Francis, who designed the present court house.

Alston

Titular head of one of Chatham's distinguished early families was Joseph John Alston, Jr., (1767-1841), who was called "Chatham Jack."

While there are many stories to substantiate the fact that one or two of the Alstons were in Chatham County during the Revolution the record of "Chatham Jack's" entry is 1791. He came from Halifax County. Much of his father's wealth has been left to him and he came to own 40,000 acres in Chatham County and many slaves. Nearly all of the land along the present Highway 64 from Pittsboro to Siler City was Alston owned. It was on this land that he built his home and homes for his children. "Chatham Jack's" home stood near the present Ward Snarr home and he is buried in the family cemetery nearby. Three of the Alston homes still standing: Aspen Hall, home of son Gideon; the Degraffenreidt home,