



**GREENVILLE COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
SO MANY STORIES TO TELL

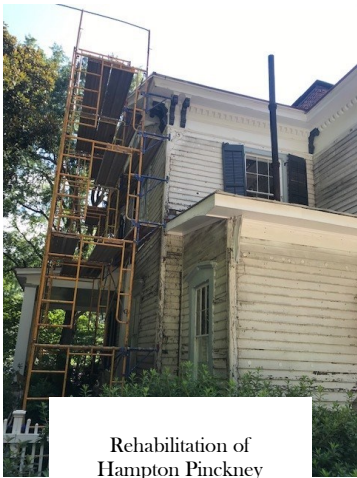
THE NEW GREENVILLE MOUNTAINEER

The Newsletter of the Greenville County Historical Society

Vol. XLI No. 3, September 2022

Workshop on Researching and Preserving Historic Properties October 13th

Sponsored by the Greenville County Historical Society



Rehabilitation of
Hampton Pinckney
House

If you are researching the history of your historic home, if you own a historic property, or if you simply love history, this workshop is for you. Featuring a panel of experts to guide you and answer your questions, the speakers are:

- ◆ Brad Sauls, S.C. Department of Archives and History
- ◆ Dr. Yasha Rodriguez, Historic Property Specialist
- ◆ John Nolan, noted author and owner of Greenville History Tours

In addition to hearing about research techniques, appropriate alterations and historic tax incentives, there will be handouts providing resources to help you with your research and projects.

The event will be from 6 - 8 p.m., October 13th at the Upcountry History Museum. It is free for mem-

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bers and \$15 for non-members until October 12 and \$20 at the door. If you join the Society (Memberships start at \$45), the fee is waived.

- By Robert Benedict, Chair of the Board of Directors

Director's Message

Are we doing everything we can do to preserve our past to ensure the historic character of our community will be retained for future generations?

We all know how much we have lost in Greenville to development, whether it is in the present or in the past. Who is minding the store? Who is that person or people who get up every morning and think only about preserving our past to ensure our future? We have so many talented individuals employed in our City and County who have important roles to play. There are certainly many local citizens who are the grass roots watchdogs. But when it comes right down to it, don't we need an individual whose job it is? Monday through Friday, to be the person who oversees the preservation of what is left of our past so we can ensure it is here for our future citizens? That person should be someone who has the support of the City and County with the ability to effect protection when it is needed.

Every day at the GCHS we receive calls and emails asking us questions such as what used to be located in a certain block, street, lot, before something else was built there? Or, how about the people who call regularly and begin their inquiry with "My great-grandfather, grandfather, was the owner of that building/business and it housed a very

important part of our past and it is going to be torn down". We have few resources to suggest to them that may help with the best possible outcome.

In 2017, the City of Greenville hired WLA Associates from Gainesville, Georgia to conduct a historic resources survey. In addition to identifying historic resources, WLA also made recommendations that the City designate additional local historic districts and landmarks to protect endangered and vulnerable historic properties. Although the City has engaged with the public regarding one such recommendation, the Village of West Greenville, other resources have been lost or adversely altered. We encourage the City to follow WLA's full recommendations with an increased pace.

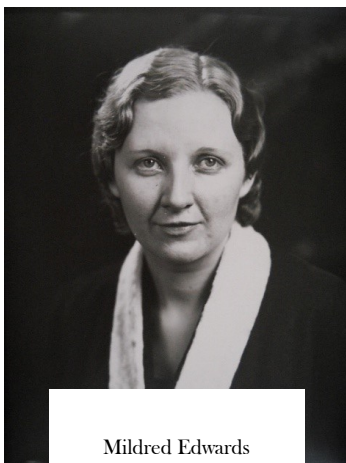
Another important, and perhaps most important, recommendation by WLA was that a non-profit preservation advocacy group be enlisted and "should be a top priority for the city". It recommended the City to encourage and help foster this advocacy group, support it, provide networking, promote it and provide locations for it to meet. The GCHS is currently playing this role and could help to foster such a group.

The City of Greenville should make historic preservation a priority if we are to retain our historic character. It needs to happen before we lose any more of our existing local historic and architectural resources. Our heritage and culture are what make Greenville distinctive.

- By Darlene Parker Executive Director

Archives and Collections

The Society recently received two significant collections: the Mildred Edwards Whitmire Collection and the Papers of W.B. and Annie Mills Moore and Family.



Mildred Edwards
Whitmire

Mildred Edwards Whitmire Collection

The Mildred Edwards Whitmire Collection is significant for its books and files collected and compiled by Mildred Edwards Whitmire in the course of her research, for its original primary documents, and for its materials associated with Vardry McBee and the

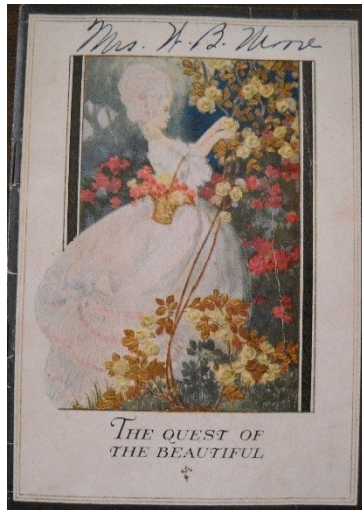
McBee family.

Mildred Edwards Whitmire was a charter member of the Greenville County Historical Society. Her research focused on early settlement and settlers in the Upcountry environs, and their antecedents in Virginia, North Carolina, and adjacent states prior to settlement in South Carolina. Mildred Whitmire is known particularly for her co-compiled publication *The Presence of the Past*, which documents many early cemeteries in Greenville County and their grave marker inscriptions. She also edited the publication *Noland's Cherokee Diary*, and authored an article "The Presence of the Past" for the Society's journal *Proceedings and Papers*. Her article "A Man and His Land: The Story of Jacob and Frances Madison Hite and the Cherokees" was published in the *Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society*. Her research files and books include as topics the Revolutionary War, the Hite Family, the Civil War, the Cherokee, Greenville County and the Upcountry, and numerous county and family histories from several states. These materials can offer context and data for a wide variety of historical stories and inquiries.

The collection's primary documents include deeds, plats, leases, receipts, notes, letters, and more dating from the 1780s to the late 1800s. Many of these documents are relevant to early settlers and settlement of Greenville County, others to little-known aspects of Greenville's history. The latter is illustrated by records and letters of Abram Isaacs, a Jewish businessman from at least 1857. The collection's suite of documents will support research that affords a deeper understanding of Greenville's oft-told and lesser-known histories.

Of special interest are the many primary documents associated with Vardry McBee and family. Vardry McBee is commonly called the "Father of Greenville" and is the subject of Roy McBee Smith's biography *Vardry McBee: Man of Reason in an Age of Extremes*. McBee was a prominent landowner who owned and operated various mills on the Reedy River, and donated land for churches and educational institutions. He encouraged agriculture and business, and pushed hard to bring the first railroad, the Greenville & Columbia, to Greenville. He also operated stores in several towns, and gold mines in northern Greenville County. Among the collection is a transcription of Vardry McBee's Diary for 1851, and digital images of the original diary's pages. In recording a year of Vardry McBee's life, the Diary affords insight into his many pursuits and the building of the railroad to Greenville.

The Whitmire Collection was donated by Beverly McBee Whitmire, the daughter of Mildred Edwards Whitmire. It comprises the Society's Record Groups 103 and 104. Initial sorting and cataloging of the collection is underway.



Papers of W.B. and Annie Mills Moore and Family

Papers of W.B. and Annie Mills Moore and Family

The Papers of W.B. and Annie Mills Moore and Family are significant for their association with several generations of prominent Greenville individuals and businesses; for their potential to speak to women's history and the life of the well-to-do; and as representative of Greenville's connection to the larger world.

Anne Marshall Mills was the daughter of Otis Prentiss Mills, founder and President of The Mills Manufacturing Co., and Susan Cordelia Gower, the daughter of businessman T.C. Gower and Jane Williams. Anne married Walter Bruce Moore, who managed Mills Mill for his father-in-law. Of particular interest to textile industry research, the Papers hold a 1916 panorama of the Cotton Manufacturers Association of South Carolina, and stock certificates and a bank book from The Mills Manufacturing Co. A collage of materials illustrates W.B. Moore's business affiliations with other companies. The Papers also hold materials related to O.P. Mills's business interests prior to his textile career.

Representing daily and family life are a copy of W.B. Moore's letter to O.P. Mills asking permission to marry Anne; correspondence and condolences surrounding W.B.'s death in 1918; letters and accounts from Greenville and New York businesses that are relevant to the maintenance of the Moore household. An absolute treasure is the 1923 Elizabeth Arden booklet "The Quest of the Beautiful" in which Anne Moore has handwritten her daily beauty regimen. Also among the Papers are letters and records of the Piedmont Corporation, a Moore Family real estate enterprise. These latter materials serve to reflect business conditions during the Great Depression.

The Papers were donated by Rose Moore Tomlin, a granddaughter of W.B. and Annie Mills Moore. They comprise the Society's Record Group 98. Items from this collection were included in the Society's recent exhibit "Otis Prentiss Mills, Entrepreneur" and are presently on display in its exhibit "A Time for Living."

- By Frances R. Knight

Fun Facts About Greenville County's History



The Cureton-Huff House

The Cureton-Huff House is located near Simpsonville, on West Georgia Road. A two-story frame farmhouse, it was built by John Moon Cureton, a prosperous local farmer in the early 1800s. Cureton bought the land in 1819, and the home itself was built in 1820. It is an excellent example of the rural farmhouses and complexes of the time and region.

It also boasts noteworthy Federal stylistic elements in its woodwork and unique stylistic features throughout, such as the sunburst motifs, reeding on the mantels of the hall and parlor, and the chevron ornamentation along the cornices (all of which are characteristic of the fashionable Neo-classic ornamentation of the Federal period). The plan of the house, originally a vernacular hall-and-parlor, was altered prior to the death of Cureton into a central hall plan. Both plans were common to the farmhouses of SC in the antebellum era. The heavy timber-braced frame with its mortise-and-tenon joints, the beaded weatherboarding, and the small-paned window sash were representative features of such houses. The machine-cut L-head brads used in the Cureton-Huff House and the original box locks were common to the houses of the state in that period.

By the time of his death in 1845, Cureton had accumulated a considerable estate, valued at about \$28,441. The inventory of his estate also revealed significant information about his farming operations; showing that he owned seven horses, five mules, forty-right hogs, eighteen sheep, two oxen & fifty-six head of cattle. His farm produced corn, cotton, wheat, peas, and rye.

After the death of Cureton's wife, a caretaker lived in the home until 1865 when Cureton's granddaughter moved into the home.

The home and several of its outbuildings-including a carriage house, blacksmith shop, several barns and animal pens, two corn cribs, and a garage-were listed in the National Register in 1983. The interior of the home had only seen minimal changes, with some additions to the rear for modernization. At the time of its listing in the National Register the home was still owned by the Cureton family, with the 4th generation thereof residing there.

-By Mary Allison Zimmerman

New Members (2022) of the Society

Rick Barbare
Missie Stone Duke
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Q. Donaldson
Nina Fort
Gina Gardella
Clifford Gray
Dale and Sandra Hamann
Edith Hardaway
Courtney Tollison-Hartness
Jessica Kilcoyne
John Moore
Cora Newcomb
Kristen Schroeder
Jill Schralla-Stephens

Contributors this issue: Robert Benedict, Darlene Parker, Frances R. Knight, and Mary Allison Zimmerman



GREENVILLE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SO MANY STORIES TO TELL

Hours of Operation

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday
11:30am-4:30pm

Call for an appointment
(864) 233-4103

Society Memberships Available

Individual Membership: \$45

Family Membership: \$75

Conestee Society: \$100

Camperdown Society: \$250

Huguenot Society: \$500

Corporate Partnerships Available
(Call for details)

Email Address :

info@greenvillehistory.org

Do we have your email address and telephone number so we can keep sending you the *Mountaineer*? We never share or sell your information.