

Landmarks of Northwest North Carolina

First Home Erected at Walkertown



This residence, once the home of Dr. Walker, for whom Walkertown was named, was the first home erected in what is now the town of Walkertown. Dr. Walker resided here a short time and then departed for the West to spend the remainder of his life. - (Staff Photo).

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(Staff Writer)

The man who founded Walkertown got dissatisfied and left there was still plenty of elbow room. But he left a good house behind him. And the house is still standing.

The old Dr. Walker home -, nobody seems to remember his first name - stands on the northeast corner of the intersection, where the new Winston-Salem-Walkertown Highway crosses the link road which runs past Love's Methodist Church.

F. E. Swain, who resides at 1004 South Hawthorne Road, Winston-Salem, owns the building now. He purchased it in February of 1943 and has renovated it thoroughly, restoring it to much the same conditions it was when the celebrated Dr. Walker lived there .possibly a century ago. Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Welch now live in the house.

Dr. Walker must have been a restless soul. In the early part of the last century he owned 847 acres of land, a flour and corn mill on Lick Creek and had an excellent country practice in what is now the Dennis community.

Squire J. A. Marshall, elderly citizen of the community, recalls facts about Dr. Walker, as they were related to him when a boy. It seems that the energetic doctor became dissatisfied with the prosaic life he was leading and several times was on the verge of selling out and going West.

He was dissuaded from the venture a number of times by Col. Henry Marshall, grandfather of Squire Marshall. Finally, however, he would not be dissuaded and Colonel Marshall paid him the price he asked for his 847 acres of land - \$900 in cash for more than a square mile of what is now some of the best land in Forsyth County.

Having disposed of his huge estate, he climbed aboard his covered wagon and headed west. But he didn't go far. Coming to the crossroads at what is now the town that is named for him he decided he wouldn't go west at all! He bought land and started a residence.

Having finished the house he resided there for only a brief time and then left for the West sure enough. He lived the remainder of his life in one of the Western States, returning to Forsyth County only a time or two on a visit.

Eventually, Ed W. Linville purchased the property and he and Mrs. Linville lived there the remainder of their lives. Before so many years, Mrs. Linville took a little niece, Henrietta Jones, daughter of Bunyan Jones, to live with her. The little girl had been orphaned when quite small. She later married F. E. Swain and it is they who now own the old Walker residence.

Linville, incidentally, added to his property substantially through the years and at one time owned most of the land where Walkertown now stands. He sold off much of the property in his later years.

Much of the original landscaping about the house is still intact. The old fashioned boxwood are vigorous and thrifty and, with the care they are now getting, doubtless will live for many years to come.

The residence has all of the characteristics of ante bellum construction. The timbers are put together with dowel pins. The finished lumber is hand planed. The ceiling is of the finest forest pine. The rooms are all large.

Having been brought to a good state of repair by its present owner, the house apparently is good for a second century of use and possibly many more.