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**Article by Harvey Dinkins (Staff  
Writer)**

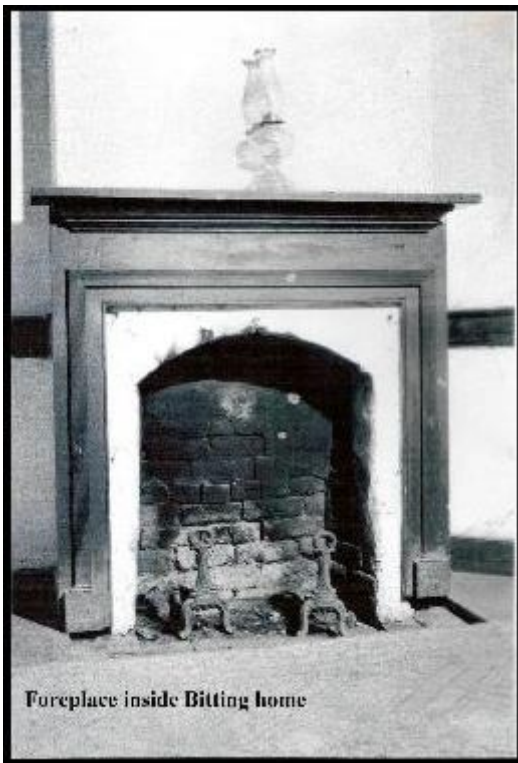
**Transcribed by Miranda Griffith  
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Cardwell**

**Landmarks Bring Back Aura of  
Colonial Times  
107 Years of Comfortable Living at Bitting Place**

**OLDEST RURAL HALL RESIDENCE---** This residence, unpretentious when viewed through the eyes of Modern construction methods, was far from a modest structure when it was erected in the center of the Anthony Bitting Plantation 107 years ago. That plantation once embraced hundreds of acres, covering the while of what is now the site of the town of Rural Hall. Although it is now fallen into disrepair, it still shows it was, well built from the choicest of lumber. Lightning once wreaked havoc in the attic, but failed to start a fire. It still defies the elements and an air of modest dignity hovers over it.

**By Harvey Dinkins (Staff Writer)**



When the second Anthony Bitting Jr. [*Anthony Bitting Jr. (1788-1870) is the son of Anthony Bitting Sr. (1738-1804) and Martha Poe Bitting (1746-1788. Anthony Bitting Jr. married to Mary Wilkerson (1787-1845)*] built the house, which was, in Rural Hall, he had an eye for comfort, he furnished each of the eight rooms in the rambling house with a big, roomy fireplace.

The house and the fireplaces are still giving service after the lapse of more that 107 years. Every one knows the place as “the Old Bitting place” and Bittings still live there

The first Anthony Bitting Sr. was born in Alsace – Lorraine. [*The first Anthony Bitting, Anthony Bitting Sr., was born in Germantown, Pa. after his father arrived in Pa. from Germany. The sibilings of Anthony Bitting Sr. were Ludwig Jr. b. 1729, Henry b. 1732, Elizabeth b. 1734, Anna Maria b. 1735, Phillip b. 1737, Christina b. 1748, Mary Catherine b. 1750 and Peter b. 1756.*] The times “were out of joint.” Religious and political persecutions were the order of the day. Anthony [Sr.] and his brother, Yost Bitting [*Anthony Bitting Sr. did not come from Germany. His father Ludwig Bitting Sr. (1702-1775) along with Ludwig’s brother, Yost Bitting, came to America from Germany. Ludwig Bitting married Johanna Sabina Boehm*

*(1709-1759)]*

Yost Bitting [*Note: Yost Bitting is the brother of Ludwig Bitting, who is the father of Anthony Bitting Sr.*] found Pennsylvania to his liking, as did many “Dutch-men,” [*German men*] and

stayed there. Anthony Bitting Sr. came south eventually and selected for his home a spot a few rods northeast of where the present old residence stands in Rural Hall

### **In Continental Army**

But the seeker after religious and political freedom did not find those comforts until he had first fought for them. He distinguished himself in the continental army to the extent that when the British left the field shortly after Yorktown, he held the rank of lieutenant colonel. *Anthony Bitting Sr. did NOT serve in Penn. during the American Revolution. His cousin, also Anthony Bitting served in the American Revolution in Penn. and was a Lieut. Colonel. Bitting researchers in Penn. have proved this to be true. During the American Revolution, Anthony Sr. lived in Henry Co., Va. and is a patriot, having given the army beef.*

Having helped to thresh out the troubles of his country and set up a modicum of stability, Bitting turned to the task ahead of him. He carved a farm and home out of the wilderness, which then covered the ridges north of Wachovia and founded an honored and respected family name in this part of the state. All Bittings in this part of the South are descended from that Revolutionary War Hero. *[Anthony Bitting Sr. did give beef to the Continental Army and qualifies as a Patriot according to DAR records.]*

What became of the first Bitting home at Rural Hall is not definitely know. It may have been destroyed by fire, may have been razed when it was outmoded. In any event, the second Anthony Bitting Jr. was the one who build the residence, which still stands as the oldest structure in Rural Hall.

### **Operated a Store**

The second generation to own the Bitting residence was Benjamin Lewis Bitting. He operated a store at Rural Hall and did a modest hostelry business with the old house.

Chang and Eng *[Bunker]*, the original Siamese Twins, who lived near Mount Airy in the closing years of their lives, came and went through Rural Hall



frequently and put up with the Bitting's. Miss Minnie Bitting, now 83 years of age, the present occupant of the old home, recalls seeing the Siamese Twins many times. The Siamese Twins were born in 1811 and died at their Surry County home in 1874. Miss Bitting was 15 years of age at the time of the death of the internationally famous twins.

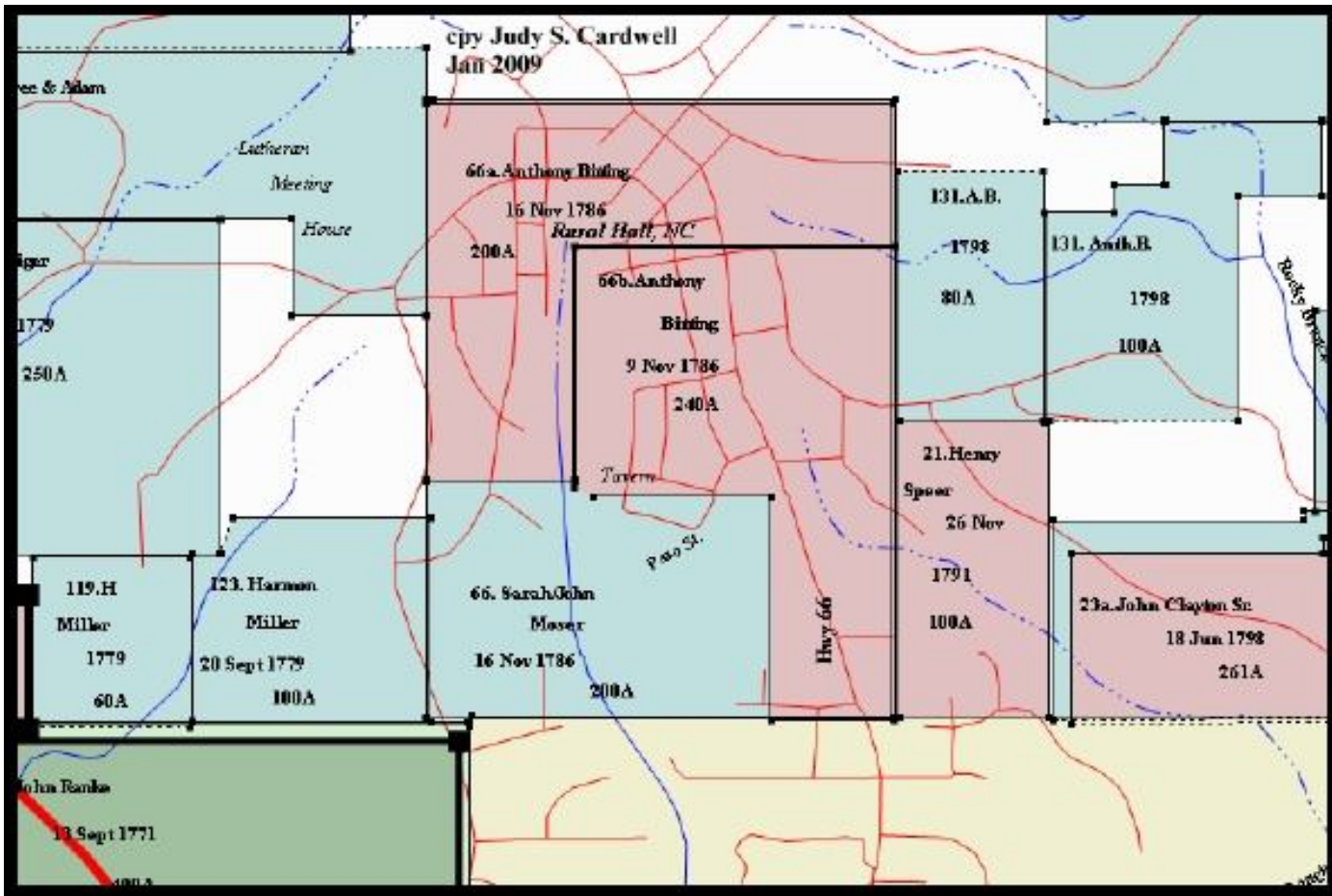
The old Bitting home belongs to Dr. Numa Bitting, of Durham, and L.W. Bitting, of Chase City, Va., brothers of the present occupant, Miss Minnie Bitting. One other sister, Mrs. W.G. Hailey, resides in Rural Hall.

Only 18 acres of the original tract of many hundreds of acres *[620 acres]* remain a part of the estate.

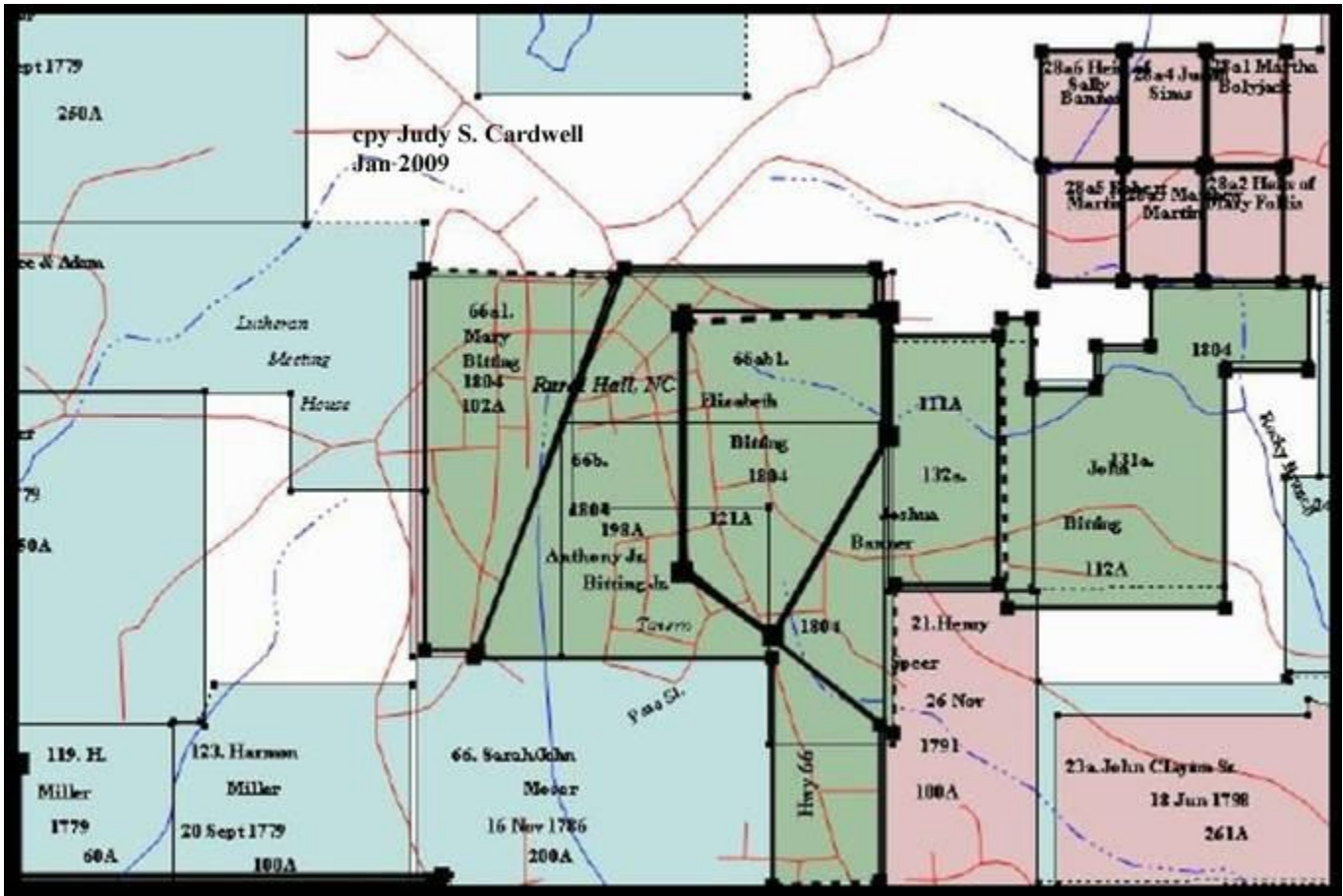
### **Modern Developments**

The old residence has been crowded a bit by modern developments. When the present day highway was put through the town, it crept quite close to the front stoop of the house and, in event it ever is widened, it doubtless will encroach even more.

Time also has dealt harshly with the old building. Lacking paint, it has weathered a good deal. But most of the material throughout the structure is still in good condition and it remains for the owners to decide whether they will undertake a substantial renovation and restoration program, or allow the building to go out with the next state or community improvement program which calls for "elbow room."



Anthony Bitting Sr.'s Land in Rural Hall, NC = 620 acres



**Division of Anthony Bitting Sr.'s Land.**

**Daughter Mary Bitting, 102 acres; Son Anthony Bitting Jr., 198 acres; Daughter Elizabeth Bitting, 121 acres, Son in Law, Joshua Banner married Daughter, Martha Bitting, 132 acres; and son John L. Bitting, 131 acres.**