



# ***Greenwood County Historical Society***

P.O. Box 49653, Greenwood, SC 29649

March, 2016

## **President's Message - March 2016**

***Spring!*** A time of renewal, rejuvenation, and rebirth! We hope you are in anticipation for our local history during this time as well! Come join us at one of our meetings!

We hope you enjoyed our last meeting at the Greenwood Library in January as we honored two local homeowners for their efforts in restorative efforts in two local historical properties! If you were not in attendance, you missed a great event. Please see our website for information on all the properties that we have recognized over the past seven years. Thanks to those that make nominations for their efforts as well.

This month's meeting will be a remembrance of our areas rich architectural history as we look to learn on local architect John C. Hemphill. Many older homes and many historical homes were designed by this local architect and we look forward to hearing from his grand-nephew Tom Howie, from Abbeville. We look forward to seeing you on Sunday, March 20th to hear this great architectural topic. Please bring friends and family that may be interested. This meeting will also be held at the Greenwood Library!

We look forward to our fourth annual antiques fair on April 30th at Historic Cokesbury College. For those that would like to take part of our undertaking either as a participant or worker, we appreciate your help. Neither the early rain nor shine will take away from our endeavors. See Carol Scales for more information on our annual craft fair!

Thank you for your continued support of the GCHS! Financially, we appreciate the renewals, and in attendance of our meetings in support of our mission. Please join and bring a friend if you have not done so.

Please stay informed on the local penny sales tax discussion and possible referendum. There are several historic preservation proposals that may be included for vote. Please read and inform your local county council representative of your desires.

If you have nominations for our 2017 Architectural Restoration and Preservation Awards please send those in!

Remaining dates for 2016: Our series looks toward the local historical themes in Greenwood County.

June 26 - **3:00 The History of Medicine: Medical History in Greenwood**

September 25 - **3:00 The History of Our Schools: Education in Greenwood**

November 20 - **3:00 Cokesbury College: Local Treasure**

We appreciate your continued support! We look forward to seeing you at our remaining meetings this year!

*Yours in History!*

Chip      <http://greenwoodcountyhistoricalsociety.com/>

# GREENWOOD HISTORY: OUR OLD ROADS

By Harry Legare Watson

These sketches about the early travel routes in the area that is now Greenwood County and early families who lived along the old roads were written by the editor of *The Index-Journal* of Greenwood, and were published weekly in this newspaper from August 18, 1940 (with an occasional break) until February 1950, numbered 1-428. They include considerable family history information as well as local and area history. They will be reprinted here in following issues with the permission of the editor of *The Index-Journal*.

No. 79

Saturday, February 21, 1942

As the first, and for a number of years the only, court house town north of Columbia, the Ninety Six, or Cambridge, bar naturally included a number of lawyers, some of whom became distinguished in the profession. Three members became judges, Ephraim Ramsay, C. F. Colcock and J. N. Whittner. A fourth, Judge T. J. Gantt, did not make his home in Cambridge but he was associated there with William Nibbs, whose eccentricities have already been mentioned.

Very little is known about Ephraim Ramsay. Chief Justice O'Neill, in his "Bench and Bar", says that all his efforts to secure information on Judge Ramsay had been in vain. Judge Ramsay died in 1801, less than two years after his election as a judge of the Courts of Law. Judge O'Neill says: "Judge Ramsay was an eloquent and distinguished lawyer residing at Cambridge and was elected to the bench on December 19, 1799." Inasmuch as Chief Justice O'Neill's book was written over fifty years after the death of Judge Ramsay his difficulty in securing information may be understood. Judge Ramsay had as his law partner at Cambridge Major Charles C. Goodwyn. As previously mentioned, they were also brothers-in-law, having married sisters, daughters of General Andrew Williamson of the Revolution. Somewhere about the year 1800 Messrs. Ramsay and Goodwyn purchased the celebrated Silver Bluff property on the South Carolina side of the Savannah River just below Augusta. The brothers-in-law bought this Silver Bluff property from Thomas Galphin, the son of George Galphin and the grandfather of the late Major Henry P. Galphin of Ninety Six. George Galphin, the celebrated Indian trader, established his great trading station at Silver Bluff - he lived and died there. George Galphin built the Silver Bluff, the first brick house built in the back country. It was a fort during the Revolution, alternately in the hands of both parties and so late as 1850 was still standing and its gables showed the holes of a cannon ball shot clear through. Governor James H. Hammond afterwards acquired the place and he wrote Judge O'Neill that he had the partition plank of the attic through which the cannon ball went carefully preserved; but while he was absent from home in Washington as Senator for South Carolina someone stole, or burnt this plank. Governor Hammond continued: "Judge Ramsay lived and died in that house and was buried in the graveyard near the house, as was George Galphin. When I first came to Silver Bluff, Mrs. Ramsay was still living on a part of the property reserved for her, but in a year or so she moved away. I do not remember that

I ever visited the graveyard with Mrs. Ramsay, but many years ago I cleared and fenced it. After I buried a son there (since another) I conceived the idea of erecting monuments to Judge Ramsay and George Galphin. I applied to Mrs. Biggs, a daughter of Major Goodwyn who died only this year (about 1850) and had lived near there for fifty years and was present at the death and burial of Judge Ramsay; but on going to the graveyard several times she could not designate the spot. Nor could Dr. Galphin, who lived at this place, 'Redcliffe', make out where his grandfather was buried." Nothing whatever about the ancestry of Judge Ephraim Ramsay is, so far as known, available.

Judge Ramsay's wife was first married to John Walker, a merchant in Charleston, who died soon after marriage, leaving her a young widow with one daughter, Eliza Walker. As already mentioned Mrs. Walker was a daughter of General Andrew Williamson, who had removed from "White Hall" to Charleston. "First Book of Marriages" by A. S. Salley has the following: "On Thursday evening last, Mr. John Walker, of this city (Charleston) was married to Miss Mary Williamson, daughter of Andrew Williamson Esq. Dec. 20, 1784."

Records at Edgefield show that John Walker died July 27, 1788. Mrs. Walker did not marry Judge Ramsay until after 1788. Her daughter, Eliza Walker, married Lud Harris. If Chief Justice O'Neill is correct, and he usually was, Judge Ramsay lived only a year or so after his marriage. If he left descendants, it is not now known.

Of Charles Goodwyn, a law partner of Judge Ephraim Ramsay at Cambridge, Judge O'Neill says: "Charles Goodwyn had a great reputation as a lawyer in the early administration of justice in South Carolina; was a native of England and was admitted to the bar in Charleston on 28th May, 1784." After his admission to the bar Mr. Goodwyn settled at Ninety Six and had an extensive practice there and in the County Courts. It is said, that, on one occasion he was making a speech to the jury before their worships, the county court judges at Laurens; the president of the county judges who had taken a drop too much, was very drowsy, and dropped off into a comfortable nap. Mr. Goodwyn elevated his voice as he became excited so as to awaken his worship, whereupon the latter exclaimed, "Have a care, Goodwyn, don't do that again!" And the president judge dropped off to another unconscious state. While Goodwyn's case grew more and more interesting as his argument and his speech grew

louder and louder, so much so as to arouse the Justice, who arose in great wrath threatening to trounce Lawyer Goodwyn for disturbing his rest. Charles Goodwyn married a daughter of General Andrew Williamson and Judge Ramsay the other daughter. They unwisely bought Silver Bluff plantation, contracting a large debt, which caused financial ruin to both.

Judge O'Neall says that he did not remember hearing Charles Goodwyn make more than one speech and that was in the Court of Appeals in one of the Jewry land cases (Jew's Land Cases – or the Salvador lands) when he was for the defendant. Patrick Duncan, the plaintiff, was present with his land papers in a tin box. Mr. Goodwyn, in an allusion to it said: "Patrick Duncan's tin box is worse than Pandora's box – in the bottom of that there was hope, but in Patrick Duncan's box there is no hope." This, said in his indescribable language and manner, was irresistibly ludicrous. Judge O'Neall says that he first knew Mr. Goodwyn, then an old gentleman, in the spring of 1815 at Edgefield, and that Goodwyn still had a number of cases at that term of court, but he uniformly moved for a continuance and generally succeeded. He concludes by saying: "Mr. Goodwyn died many years ago leaving descendants in Edgefield County. Mr. Goodwyn's style of speaking had more of the English accent, as would be natural in a native born Englishman, than suited American hearers. However, he was a fluent speaker, and in his early days must have been entitled to the great reputation which he had as a lawyer."

The second Judge, who was a member of the Cambridge Bar at the time of his election, was Charles Jones Colcock, a native of Charleston, born August 11, 1771 and died in Charleston January 26, 1839. Judge Colcock was the son of John Colcock, also a lawyer and Revolutionary patriot. John Colcock was the counsel of Col. Isaac Hayne, and his opinion on the unlawfulness of the proceedings and sentence of death in the case of that illustrious martyr may be found in Gibb's Documentary History of the American Revolution in 1781-1782. John Colcock died when his son was about twelve years of age. Judge Colcock was sent by his mother to Princeton and was graduated in 1788. Upon his return from Princeton he began the study of law under Chancellor DeSaussure and was admitted to the bar in 1792. After his admission to the Bar he removed to Cambridge (Old Ninety Six) and practiced law there and had a great reputation and success. His interest and activity in organizing the famous Cambridge troop of cavalry has been mentioned. In December 1798, he was elected a solicitor of the southern circuit. He was married in the year 1794 to Miss Hutson of Beaufort, and removed from Cambridge to Beaufort where he soon enjoyed an extensive practice and was a leading member of the Bar at Beaufort and at Coosawhatchie. On the 9th December 1811, he was elected an associate judge to the place of Judge Waites who was transferred to the Equity Bench. Judge Colcott had

one daughter and five sons. After being elected Judge, he removed from Beaufort to the upper part of Prince William Parish where he made his home until he was elected president of the Bank (which bank not stated by Judge O'Neall) when he then removed to Charleston. He was highly esteemed by all. In the language of Judge O'Neall, "He wore unstained by passion or prejudice the ermine of South Carolina, and is entitled to that highest praise, he was a just judge."

Judge Colcock, when he lived at Cambridge, owned a plantation on Ninety Six Creek, afterwards owned by Horace W. Leland, (Elmwood) and since then divided into tracts owned by several different individuals.

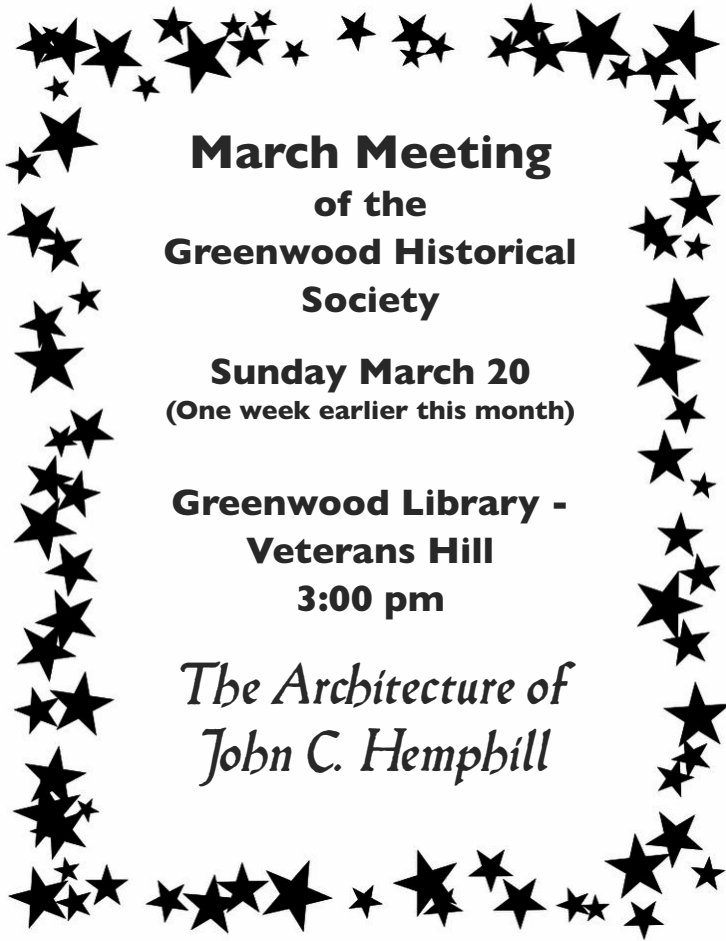
The third judge elected from the Cambridge Bar was Joseph N. Whitner. Judge Whitner was one of the later members of the bar at Cambridge, having been admitted so late as 1820. He was born on George's Creek in Pickens County about seven miles from Greenville Court House. He was a son of Benjamin F. Whitner and Miss Spann. Benjamin F. Whitner had four children and he himself was a son of Joseph Whitner and Elizabeth Shackelford. Joseph Whitner, in the sketch of the Whitner family by Col. R. W. Simpson in his History of Old Pendleton District, came from Germany alone when he was about thirteen years old. Tradition was that he had no relatives in this country and that he was an orphan in Germany and entitled to a large property there; but he was shipped to this country by some of his relatives who planned to get possession of his property in Germany. He landed in Charleston and when he was about twenty years old came to Pendleton. He had learned surveying and through the practice of this profession and good business sense he acquired considerable property.

*(to be continued. . .)*



#### **HELP Historical Society members!**

Have any "white elephant", old, or unused items you would consider donating to the Greenwood County Historical Society? Pictures, pottery, furniture, linens...really anything that we can have at our sale table at the 2016 Antique and Artisan Fair on Saturday, April 30th would be most appreciated. This event is our only fundraiser and your participation and support are valued. Call Carol Scales 227-0687 in early April to make arrangements for drop-off or pick up of your items. As a 501c (3) non-profit organization your donation is tax deductible and we will be glad to give you a receipt.

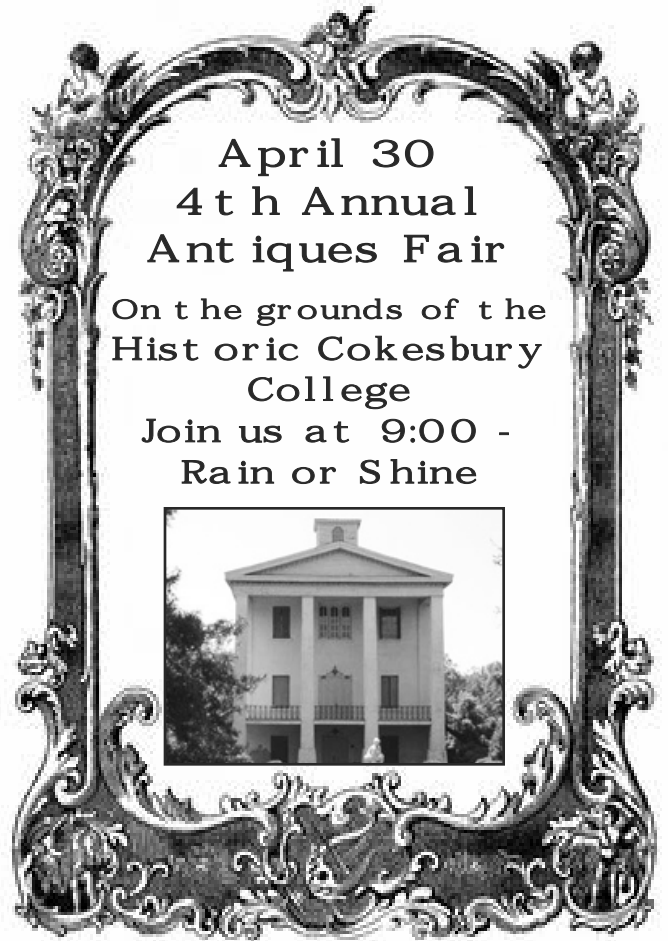


**March Meeting  
of the  
Greenwood Historical  
Society**

**Sunday March 20**  
(One week earlier this month)

**Greenwood Library -  
Veterans Hill  
3:00 pm**

*The Architecture of  
John C. Hemphill*



**April 30  
4th Annual  
Antiques Fair**

On the grounds of the  
Historic Cokesbury  
College

Join us at 9:00 -  
Rain or Shine



**TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN THE GREENWOOD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Membership renewal occurs in January of each year. If there is a RED DOT sticker on this newsletter, your renewal of either \$20.00 for an individual member or \$30.00 for a family is due. Don't let your membership lapse and miss information about upcoming programs or not receive a copy of "Our old Roads". A return envelope has been provided for your convenience.



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**Return Service Requested**

