

## Forward

*Barbecue* (verb): Slow-roasting some type of meat (pork, roast, chicken, etc.) over a low flame or using the low-heat and smoke from wood ashes or charcoal. This process usually takes several hours, during which the meat is kept moist with some type of sauce. [This is what distinguishes this cooking process from plain old "grilling meat" (hamburger, steaks, hot dogs, etc.), in which the meat is cooked rapidly over a hot fire (usually a charcoal or gas grill) and only requires several minutes cooking time. In this case, the meat is usually allowed to cook in its own juices and the use of meat-moistening sauce is not required.]

There are many types of delicious barbecued meat served in restaurants all over America. Most of these great restaurants are located in the southern states. For example, in Texas - long known for its cowboys and their cattle - barbecued beef has come to be known as "barbecue". [Such as the delicacy served on wax paper (no plates!) at "Joe Cotten's Barbecue" near Robstown in south Texas. Sadly, the restaurant - which started as a beer joint in 1947 - was destroyed by fire on 3/2/2011 (25).]

But in North Carolina, "barbecue" means "barbecued pork" - and it is a revered food in The Old North State. [Dennis Rogers, originally from Wilson and former columnist at the *Raleigh News And Observer* (for 31 years), refers to it as "The Holy Grub"!]

But even in North Carolina, slight variations in the style have developed. In the "Western North Carolina Style" of barbecue, the meat - in this case, only pork shoulders - is flavored with a heavy sauce derived from - among other things - tomato ketchup. In the "Eastern North Carolina Style" of barbecue, the meat - in this case, the whole pig - is cooked and flavored with a sauce derived from vinegar and peppers (and sometimes other spices) - but definitely not ketchup! Another style, called the "Lexington Style" of barbecue, has developed in the area between the Eastern and Western Styles - and, of course, the sauce makes use of a combination of vinegar and ketchup. [The "Lexington Style" has largely replaced the "Western North Carolina Style" in local barbecue parlance.]

Naturally, the many variations of "barbecue" has led to much boasting about which restaurant serves the best barbecue - not only in North Carolina (26), but all over America...

Today, this battle of boasts about the "best" barbecue continues - only now it is mostly in sites and blogs on the Internet.

Most of today's writing concerns restaurants which currently serve barbecue. Very little has been written about the rich history of this style of cooking. The following is only a small part of that history.

## Barbecue in Goldsboro in the 20th Century

Carl Eugene McBride, Jr.  
September, 2011

*"In other places, all sorts of things might be called barbecue. But if you want the real thing, it's right here in Wayne County." (1)*

### **Origins of the "Eastern North Carolina Style" of pork barbecuing**

The style of cooking meat in a hole in the ground was probably imported to the Colonies from the West Indies as far back as the 17th century (2).

Due to the wide distances separating settlements at that time, this technique was perfected into many different ways of "barbecuing" meat.

In eastern North Carolina, it was developed into a technique for roasting a whole pig on an open pit of hardwood (hickory or oak) coals, and flavoring the meat with a sauce made of vinegar and various spices (mainly peppers) - but NEVER with a sauce containing ketchup!

This technique became known as the "Eastern North Carolina Style" of pork barbecuing.

A few variations (the spices used in the sauce, side-dishes served along with the barbecue, etc.) were developed, but the basic cooking technique for the pork has remained the same.

Most of this style of cooking was done on farms or plantations in the 18th and 19th centuries; but in the 20th century, several restaurants in eastern North Carolina towns developed famous reputations for serving this style of barbecued pork - most notably, restaurants in the towns of Wilson, Kinston, Rocky Mount and Goldsboro.

The four men profiled in this document passed their barbecue-cooking technique down to each other... and, in so doing, they put Goldsboro on the map.

### **Arnold Sasser (3)**

*The source of Arnold Sasser's barbecuing knowledge has not been determined... But he then passed that knowledge down to Adam Scott (6).*

Arnold Sasser was born in 1866 in North Carolina to parents James [B: ??] and Penny [B: ~1832] Sasser (who were also born in North Carolina). James Sasser and Penny (maiden name unknown, but may also have been "Sasser") were married on 8/18/1866 in Wayne County ["North Carolina Marriage Collection, 1741-2004" at ref (3)].

In the 1880 Federal Census, 14 year-old Arnold and his 7 year-old sister Emma were listed in the household of their mother Penny in Goldsboro Township (no address listed). Penny was listed as a "widow" - meaning her husband probably died between 1873 and 1880. All 3 residents of the household were listed as "mulatto" (although Arnold was listed as black in subsequent censuses). Penny's occupation was "cook".

19-year-old Arnold Sasser married 18-year-old Annie Jones [B: ~1867 D: After 1939] on 7/31/1885 in Wayne County ["North Carolina Marriage Collection, 1741-2004" at ref (3); (22)].

Arnold seems to have worked at various jobs, until he finally settled into the job of "upholsterer" around 1920...

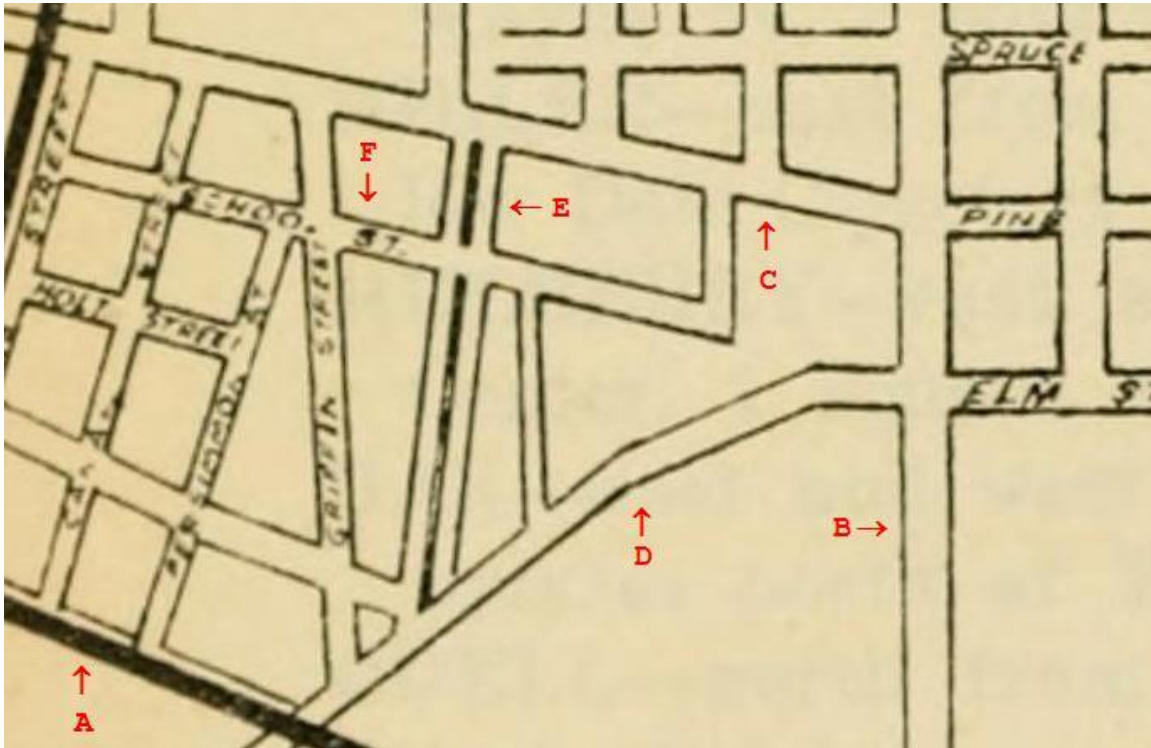
In the 1900 Federal Census of Goldsboro, Arnold and Annie Sasser were living in Goldsboro Township (no address listed). Only one child had been born to Annie, and he/she died prior to the 1900 census. Arnold's occupation was listed as "undertaker".

In 1902, Arnold was listed as a "casket manufacturer" in Goldsboro (4).

In the 1910 Federal Census of Goldsboro, the household of Arnold and Annie Sasser was again listed in Goldsboro Township. Arnold's occupation was a "hackman" (a person driving a coach or cart for hire). Annie's occupation was "laundress". This census again listed no children in their household. The census stated that Annie had had 3 children by this time - all of whom died before the 1910 Federal Census.

Although no street was listed for the household of Arnold and Annie in the 1910 census, they probably lived in "Little Washington", a village which was south of Pine Street and west of Virginia Street (extended) (23). The 1916-17 Goldsboro directory identified it as a "settlement southwest of the city limits of Goldsboro" (5a). As such, it was within Goldsboro *Township*, but not within the official

incorporated limits of the *city* of Goldsboro. Little Washington is shown in this portion of the 1916-17 directory map:



1916-17 map (5b): A - "Heavy line" around named streets in Goldsboro; B - George Street; C - Pine Street/Virginia Street intersection; D - Elm Street; E - Georgia Avenue; F: School Street

In 1916, Arnold Sasser was listed as a barber in the J. Guess Barber Shop at 122 E. Walnut Street (5d). Arnold again lived in "Little Washington", although no street or number was listed.

Nothing is known of when (or from whom) Arnold learned his barbecuing technique, but around 1916-17 he was scheduled to barbecue for a party at the exclusive Algonquin Club at the Borden Building in Goldsboro (see below), but was too sick (6).

In the 1920 Federal Census, 54 year-old Arnold Sasser and his 53 year-old wife are listed in the 400-500 block of W. School Street (see map above). His occupation was "furniture repairer"; Annie had no occupation listed.

In the 1930 Federal Census, 64 year-old Arnold Sasser and his 64 year-old wife are listed as living at 516 Georgia Avenue (see map above). His occupation was "upholsterer"; Annie had no occupation listed.

73 year-old Arnold Sasser died on 5/22/1939. He was listed as being at the State Hospital in Fork Township (immediately west of Goldsboro) at the time of his death. [At that time, the hospital served the entire black population of NC. It was

founded in 1880 as the "Asylum for Colored Insane". After going through several name changes (including losing the label "insane asylum"), its name was finally changed to Cherry Hospital in 1959. In 1965, it began serving all races from 33 counties in eastern NC. It is still a state- and federally-funded hospital for treating inpatients with psychiatric disorders - including various types of dementia.]

### "The Barbecue King" (6)

*Adam Scott learned barbecuing under Arnold Sasser. Adam then passed that knowledge down to Lloyd Griffin. (6)*



Adam William Scott was born on 5/5/1890 on Slaughter St. in Goldsboro, to Joseph James Scott [B: Oct 1862 in Ohio D: 6/25/1933] and Lucy Hobbs [B: Mar 1875]. (6)

Ed. Note: Joe J. Scott and Lucy Hobbs were not married to each other.

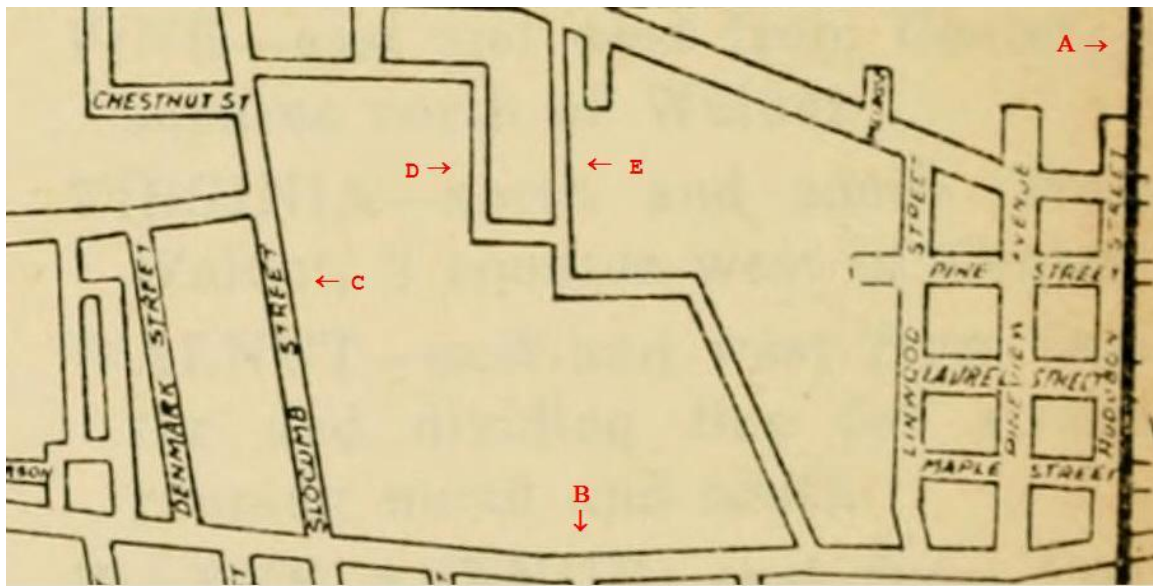
In the 1900 Federal Census of Goldsboro, Joseph J. Scott and his wife of 17 years - Annabel [B: Jan 1864 D: Aft 1930] - were listed on p. 135A. Adam was nowhere to be found in the list of Joseph and Annabel's children. On the previous page (p. 134B) was listed Lucy Hobbs. Lucy Hobbs was listed as "single", but had 2 "sons" living in her household. One of the sons was named "Adam" and was born in 1890. In that census, Adam's last name was listed as "Hobbs".

Adam quit school after the 7th grade (around 1903) and went to work at the shingle factory started by A. T. Griffin (Lloyd's father - see below) on the Neuse River, south of Goldsboro. After a year there, Adam took on odd jobs - caretaker, elevator-operator, janitor, etc.

Adam "got his first taste of barbecue" from Colonel Ashley Warrick, who had a little stand on north John Street, across from the Odd Fellows Building [115 N. John St.]. "It cost 15 cents, with a piece of cornbread". The Colonel operated a barbecue stand for 27 years, retiring in the 1920s.

Adam Scott could not be located in the 1910 Federal Census listing of Goldsboro (nor could Lucy Hobbs). Bessie Bright, the girl who was to marry Adam Scott about a year later, could also not be located in the listings. However, Bessie's parents - Thomas and Mary Bright - lived in "East James City" in Goldsboro Township. Tom's occupation was "hackman".

James City was "a settlement east of Slocumb Street and north of Elm Street" (23). The 1916-17 Goldsboro Directory defined it as "a settlement east of the city limits" of Goldsboro (5a). As such, it was within Goldsboro Township, but not within the official incorporated limits of the city of Goldsboro. Although none of the streets of James City were named in the 1916-17 directory map, two of those streets were later to be named "Bright Street" and "Brazil Street". James City is shown in this portion of the 1916-17 directory map:



1916-17 map (5b): A - "Heavy line" around named streets in Goldsboro; B - Elm Street; C - Slocumb Street; D - Brazil Street; E - Bright Street

On 9/14/1911, Adam married his childhood sweetheart, Bessie Easter Bright [B: 2/3/1894]. Bessie's mother (Mary Bright) gave Adam and Bessie a nearby property that she owned - at 306 Brazil Street (see map above).

In 1914, Adam became the first janitor (and later elevator operator) at the newly-opened Borden Building at 102 S. James Street.

On 6/15/1917, Adam's military registration card (3) listed him, his wife and their 3 children as living in James City, Goldsboro. Adam's occupation was listed as "janitor of the Algonquin Club". [The exclusive Algonquin Club occupied the entire top (6th) floor of the Borden Building at 102 S. James Street.]

Around 1916-17, while serving as a janitor at the Algonquin Club, Adam dug a pit behind the Borden Building and prepared barbecue for the 200 guests at a party at the club. [Adam had learned to cook barbecue from Arnold Sasser (see above), who was supposed to cook for the party, but was too sick.]

On 7/2/1917, Adam cooked barbecue for a reception following the wedding of Mildred Borden and Winston-Salem banker Robert M. Hanes in Goldsboro. Robert Hanes was so impressed with the food that he later hired Adam Scott to go to Winston-Salem to cook barbecue for the Hanes family. This was the beginning of a long association with the wealthy Hanes and R. J. Reynolds families.

Adam Scott's mother Lucy Hobbs married Cornelius F. Freeman [B: ~1875] on 11/24/1917 in Wayne County. In the 1920 Federal Census, Cornelius, Lucy and their 9 year-old son Hiram were living on Kornegay St. (no number listed). Cornelius was a carpenter and Lucy was a "washer woman".

In the 1920 Federal Census of Goldsboro, Adam Scott, his wife Bessie and their 4 children were living on a James City street (no street name or address listed). Adam was employed by a "tailor shop", and Bessie was a "dressmaker". They were listed right next to Bessie's parents Tom and Mary Bright. Tom Bright's occupation was a "grocery store merchant", and Mary was not employed.

In the 1920s, Adam was still working at odd jobs, although he was also cooking his barbecue at social functions.

Adam had always been a religious man, and in 1929 he became an ordained minister [possibly at the Pentecostal Church on Elm Street, where Bessie served as organist]. He preached until 1972.

In the 1930 Federal Census, Adam and Bessie - along with 6 of their 7 children - were living at 306 Bright St. in Goldsboro. Adam is listed as a "preacher at the Baptist Church" and Bessie was a "public school teacher". Their oldest son Martel (age 18) was living with his grandparents (Bessie's parents - Tom and Mary Bright) at 308 Bright St., next door to Adam and Bessie. [Ed. Note: Bright Street - named for Bessie's parents - is one block east of Brazil Street. Both streets are located between Herman and Leslie Streets.]

In the early 1930s, Adam dug a pit behind his new house at 306 Brazil Street, began barbecuing pork on the weekends and delivering it to Goldsboro's residents. Finally, he gave up his other jobs and began barbecuing full time,

servicing it on the back porch of his house [which he enclosed and had to enlarge 3 times - eventually accommodating 150 people]. Many people (including 4 NC Governors, actress Ava Gardner and other famous personalities) came from near and far to feast on barbecue on Adam Scott's back porch. His block of Brazil Street became known as "Barbecue Alley".



Adam Scott's house at 306 Brazil St. (6)

In March, 1933, Adam catered barbecue at The Rose Garden for the inauguration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and was introduced to the President and his wife Eleanor (7).

Adam Scott's mother Lucy (Hobbs) Freeman died on 1/4/1938. The widow was living at 606 Crawford St. (just south of Elm St.) at the time of her death. Her death was reported by Rev. A. W. Scott, who was living at 306 Brazil St. at the time. (3)

Bessie Scott died on 12/19/1944 and is interred in Elmwood cemetery. Adam then married Adele Henry on 6/2/1945. (This was a May-December marriage: Mary was only 20 years-old when she married 55-year-old Adam.)

In both the 1945 and 1948 editions of *Hill's Directory of Goldsboro, NC* (3), Adam was listed as a pastor and living at 306 Brazil Street. [Ed. Note: No mention is made of any association with the "Scott's Bar-B-Q" restaurant, located about a block south of his home (but see below).]

With Adele's help, Adam continued to operate his barbecue business from 306 Brazil street until the house was damaged by fire around 1946. He then opened a barbecue business in a building beside the Little River, west of Goldsboro. Adam operated that business for about two years.

In 1948, Adam bought a 3-story building (which included a gas station) at Berkeville, VA. He lived in the upper stories of that house and started a barbecue



business on the ground floor. He had been at this new location only a short while when the building was completely destroyed by fire.

Adam then moved to Winston-Salem, where he continued preaching and catering barbecue. He catered to numerous commercial interests, but two of his best customers were Bob Hanes (president of Wachovia Bank) and R. J. Reynolds, Jr. (former mayor of Winston-Salem and son of the founder of the tobacco company). [Twice a year, Adam catered barbecue at the mansion of R. J. Reynolds, Jr., on his 16,000-acre estate on the private island of Sapelo, off the coast of Brunswick, GA (6).]

Adam continued to live in Winston-Salem through July of 1976, when he returned to Goldsboro to renew old acquaintances and work on his life story.

The 93 year-old Adam Scott died on 12/8/1983 in Goldsboro. He is interred in the Elmwood Cemetery [west of US Interstate 795, between Grantham St. and Elm St.]. (22)

Ed. Note: No date has been established for the opening of Scott's Barbecue Restaurant at 1201 N. William Street:



"Scott's Famous Barbecue", 1201 N. William St. (Google Earth)

Although Adam Scott is listed as the "founder" of the restaurant (8), it appears that this title was honorary and that Adam never really operated this restaurant. Rather, the restaurant appears to have been operated by the first of Adam's five sons (from his first marriage) - Alvin Martel Scott, who "took over the barbecue business" (6). 33 year-old Martel had obtained a patent on the Scott barbecue sauce in 1946. The 1945, 1948 and 1950-51 editions of *Hill's Directory of Goldsboro, NC* (3) listed a "Scott's Bar-B-Q" restaurant at 404 Gully Street. This

address was also the home of the Martel Scott family and was 1 block south of 306 Brazil Street (between Brazil and Bright streets). In all 3 directories, only Martel's name was listed with the restaurant. Martel probably moved his restaurant to 1201 N. William St. many years later (in the 1960s??). Although the sign ("Scott's Famous Barbecue") is still at the location on N. William St., the restaurant has not been open on a regular basis for many years. [Martel died on July 26, 1992.] A September, 2009, reference (9) states that Martel's son - Martel Scott, Jr. - serves barbecue at the restaurant on Thursdays and Fridays. The restaurant's address also serves as the ordering address for "Scott's Famous Barbecue Sauce", and the property is probably still owned by the Scott family.

## Griffin's Barbecue

*Lloyd Griffin learned the barbecuing business from Adam Scott (6). He then passed that knowledge down to Wilber Shirley (12).*



Lloyd Bennett Griffin was born on 12/8/1902 to Asa Thomas ("A. T.") and Susan Griffin, who had moved to Goldsboro from Lenoir County in 1898. Asa was born in Martin County, NC, longtime-home of the Griffin family (10). [In the 1880 Federal Census, Asa was living with his parents Joseph and Louisa Griffin in Griffin's Township, Martin County, NC. Joseph was a farmer.]

In the 1910 Federal Census, 7 year-old Lloyd lived with his parents, A. T. and "Mrs. A. T." Griffin (and their 3 other children), at 112 E. Elm Street in Goldsboro.

Ed. Note: The home of the A. T. Griffin family appeared to be the only house on the south side of the 100 block of east Elm Street in 1910. This block was apparently on the dividing line between the races at that time... White families lived on streets to the north and west (towards downtown), while Black families lived to the northeast (in the James City settlement), to the southeast (in an area later to become known as "Webtown") and to the southwest (in the village of Little Washington).

In the 1920 Federal Census, 17 year-old Lloyd still lived with his parents, A. T. and Susie Griffin (and their 4 other children), at 112 E. Elm Street in Goldsboro. Lloyd was listed as a "college student".

Ed. Note: In 1920, there were several other houses listed in the 100 block of east Elm Street - besides that of the A. T. Griffin family - and all were occupied by white families. However, in the 100 block of west Elm Street (just across Center Street), all houses were occupied by black families.

On 9/24/1924, Lloyd married Irene Thornton [B: 1/25/1905 in Newton Grove, Sampson Co., NC] (11).

In 1930, Lloyd, Irene and daughter Susan Lee [B: 9/20/1926] lived at 1109 E. Evergreen Avenue, Goldsboro, NC. Lloyd's occupation was "salesman - lumber mill". [Ed. Note: The "lumber mill" was most-likely owned by the A. T. Griffin Manufacturing Company, which was formed by Lloyd's father in 1905 and became one of the larger firms in Goldsboro (10).] In 1930, the A. T. Griffin family lived right around the corner, at 105 S. Pineview Avenue.

When Lloyd Griffin learned how to cook barbecue has not been determined, but the source of that knowledge has been: "He learned the business from me," Adam Scott was quoted as saying [p. 26 of ref. (6)]. In the 1930s, Lloyd Griffin's house on Evergreen Avenue was located between Linwood and Pineview Avenues (see map above), and was only about 3 blocks east of Adam Scott's house on Brazil Street (which was termed "Barbecue Alley").

The 1945 edition of *Hill's Directory of Goldsboro, NC* (3) listed Lloyd as a "wood dealer " at 500 S. George Street. Lloyd and Irene are listed as living at 1204 E. Ash St. (They continued living there at least through the early 1950s.)

Lloyd, along with wife Irene, opened Griffin's Barbecue Restaurant in Goldsboro a few years after World War II (12). In the 1948 edition of *Hill's Directory of Goldsboro, NC* (3), Griffin's Barbecue Restaurant was listed at 804 S. George Street. (Later renumbering listed the location as 804-806 and then 706 S. George Street.) The restaurant was located across George St. from Dewey Brothers foundry. [Dewey Brothers - founded 1885 - had moved from its original location at 119-123 N. Center St. to 801 (later renumbered to 705) S. George St. in 1920. It closed its doors in 1996.]



The restaurant served up barbecue (and related food) until the mid-1960s (12).

It was at this restaurant that Lloyd developed his menu of pit-cooked pork barbecue, served mostly as plates (with coleslaw and potato salad - or with french-fries substituted for either or both):



The barbecue was also served as sandwiches (topped off with coleslaw, on a steamed hamburger bun). In addition, there were other items on the menu: barbecued chicken (with "chicken gravy"), Brunswick stew, fried chicken gizzards and livers, etc. All meals came with an inexhaustible supply of thumb-sized hushpuppies served on waxed-paper in a small plastic basket, and most meals were served with a pitcher of "sweet iced tea"... They also offered a delicious cheeseburger on a steamed bun.

Billy Thornton, a relative of Lloyd Griffin's, said he used to supply pigs for the restaurant. "My daddy and I brought the pigs over in a truck from Newton Grove for him to make barbecue," Thornton said. (12)

But in the early 1960s, the winds of change were blowing for Griffin's Barbecue Restaurant.

In the 1940s and 1950s, George Street was also known as Highway 117 (13a), which was the main highway between Wilson (to the north) and Wilmington (to the south). As such, the location of Griffin's Barbecue on George St./Highway 117 generated a lot of business for the restaurant. However, in the early 1960s construction began on a Highway 117 bypass *around* the city of Goldsboro. This bypass was only a few hundred yards west of the restaurant:



A: George St./Highway 117-A; B: Griffin's; C: the bypass  
(Google Earth)

Construction of the modern bypass was completed around 1963-1964 and the alternate name for George Street became Highway 117-A at that time (**13b**). [The name of that bypass is currently called Highway 13/117 Bypass. The southern terminus of US Interstate 795 system now runs into Highway 13/117 just southwest of Goldsboro.]

The prospect of the impending loss of business (because of the bypass) most likely played a part in the 62-year-old Lloyd Griffin's plans to sell his restaurant. In 1964, both Lloyd Griffin's and Dukes Purnell's names were listed in an advertisement for the restaurant (**13b**), although neither were listed as "owner". However, in 1965, the same advertisement listed Dukes Purnell as the "owner" of Griffin's Barbecue (**13c**) - and Lloyd Griffin's name was nowhere to be found.

Frank H. "Dukes" Purnell [B: 12/23/1936 D: 5/21/2002] kept the restaurant's name, menu, food preparation and decor exactly the same as it had been when it was owned by Lloyd Griffin.

After Lloyd Griffin sold Griffin's Barbecue in the early 1960s, he operated a restaurant at the Wayne Motel [formerly located at 801 W. Grantham St., Goldsboro] for a few years. He also served as chairman of the Wayne County Board of Commissioners. (**12**)

Lloyd Griffin died on 8/25/1969. He was living at 1804 E. Walnut St. in Goldsboro at the time of his death. He is buried in Section 2 (west of the office) in Willowdale Cemetery, Goldsboro, next to the graves of his father, Asa Thomas Griffin [B: 1/15/1867 D: 8/7/1950], mother, Susan Barwick Griffin [B: 9/5/1876 D: 6/28/1948], and sister, Verna (Griffin) Kirkwood [B: 1/26/1896 D: 11/4/1978] (**15**).

Lloyd's wife Irene died at the age of 100 years on 9/8/2005 and is also interred at Willowdale Cemetery (**16**).

Lloyd and Irene's daughter, Susan (Griffin) Thompson, was residing in Lorena, TX, in 2005 (16). Her children are: Susan Orgillio, Renee Dauphin, Lloyd Thompson and Ken Thompson (16). Susan died on 12/14/2009, at the age of 83 years (17).

## **Wilber's Barbecue**

*Wilber Shirley learned how to cook barbecue from Lloyd Griffin. (12)*



Wilberdean M. Shirley was born on 6/14/1930 (3). He grew up on a farm in the Nahunta community (in northwestern Wayne County), where his father barbecued pigs for family reunions (24).

Wilber married Margie Barnes on 7/23/1949 in Wayne County (3). That same year, he also found employment at Griffin's Barbecue Restaurant, where he was to remain for the next 13 years (19).

The 1950-51 edition of *Hill's Directory of Goldsboro, NC* (3) listed Wilber (and wife Margie) as living at 415 N. John St. Wilber was a cook at Griffin's Barbecue.

Billy Thornton (a relative of Lloyd Griffin's) said that Wilber learned how to cook barbecue from Griffin. "He trained Wilber and looked after Wilber's family when he went off to war [1-2 years of combat duty in the Korean War (18)]," Thornton said. (12)

But Lloyd Griffin's plans to sell his restaurant most likely played a part in Wilber Shirley's plan to leave Griffin's Barbecue. Although, according to Wilber, "I probably would never have left Mr. Griffin's, but a friend kept after me about starting our own place. He eventually convinced me..." (19).

In 1962 Wilber Shirley and Carl Lyerly purchased Hill's Barbecue (on Highway 70, east of Adamsville) from Fred Hill. Renamed "Highway 70 Barbecue", it opened on July 24th. Within the year, Mr. Lyerly sold his share of the establishment to Wilber and, at that time, the name of the restaurant was changed to "Wilber's Barbecue". (20)



Wilber's Barbecue continued to offer the same items - prepared and served in the same manner - as they had been at Griffin's Barbecue. Although the two restaurants competed for the same customers for a few years in the 1960s, Wilber's had a location advantage... Wilber's was located right beside Highway 70 east, the principal route (at that time) from western North Carolina to towns along the coast, while Griffin's was located (in a rather-unsavory, industrial neighborhood) on a 2-lane city street, right beside railroad tracks.

Although Griffin's and Wilber's had virtually-identical menus, the location of Wilber's eventually won out, forcing Griffin's Barbecue to shut its doors. [The exact date for the closing of Griffin's Barbecue has not been determined (14).]

For at least 2 decades, Wilber and his family have lived on Middleton Road, just north of the city of Goldsboro and only a few miles west of Wilber's Barbecue.

Wilber's Barbecue has hosted many well-known personalities - including 2 NC Governors and 2 US Presidents (21) - and has won many accolades for its barbecue, not only in NC, but all over the country.

The 81 year-old Wilber currently spends virtually every day at his restaurant, talking to customers and keeping an eye on his employees (which now number over 100 people).

Wilber's Barbecue will celebrate its 49th year in business on July 24, 2011.



## References:

Unreferenced sources for Federal Census information (and birth, marriage and death information) usually were obtained from Reference (3). Sometimes that same information was available at Reference (22).

- (1) "A barbecue lesson: The true definition and the real history", Mike Rouse, in *Goldsboro News Argus*, January 26, 1997.
- (2) "North Carolina Barbecue: Flavored By Time", Bob Garner, 1996.
- (3) [www.Ancestry.com](http://www.Ancestry.com)
- (4) "Sixteenth Annual Report Of The Bureau Of Labor And Printing Of The State Of North Carolina For The Year 1902", 1903, p. 355 (from Google Books)
- (5) "Official Directory: City Of Goldsboro, North Carolina", 1916-1917:
  - (5a) <http://www.archive.org/stream/officialdirectgo00gard#page/236/mode/1up>
  - (5b) <http://www.archive.org/stream/officialdirectgo00gard#page/n139/mode/1up>
  - (5c) <http://www.archive.org/stream/officialdirectgo00gard#page/115/mode/1up>
  - (5d) <http://www.archive.org/stream/officialdirectgo00gard#page/221/mode/1up>
- (6) "Adam's Ribs: The Success Story of Adam Scott, the 'Barbecue King'", Moses Rountree, 1977.
- (7) "50 years of history, pleasure" in *Goldsboro News Argus*, February 9, 1992.
- (8) [http://www.newsargus.com/news/archives/2007/08/14/how\\_far\\_would\\_you\\_go\\_for\\_barbecue/](http://www.newsargus.com/news/archives/2007/08/14/how_far_would_you_go_for_barbecue/)
- (9) [http://www.fatguygolf.net/BBQ\\_Golf\\_Trail.html](http://www.fatguygolf.net/BBQ_Golf_Trail.html)
- (10) "The Heritage Of Wayne County, North Carolina", Wayne County Historical Association, pub., 1982, pp. 256-7.
- (11) <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=bigdocmcd&id=I129054>
- (12) [http://www.newsargus.com/news/archives/2005/01/26/barbecue\\_kings\\_widow\\_observes\\_100th\\_birthday/](http://www.newsargus.com/news/archives/2005/01/26/barbecue_kings_widow_observes_100th_birthday/)
- (13) The annual yearbook for Goldsboro High School, Goldsboro, NC:
  - (13a) "1963 Gohisca", p. 171
  - (13b) "1964 Gohisca", p. 202
  - (13c) "1965 Gohisca", p. 202
- (14) As often happens when buildings are sold by successful owners, they may fall into disrepair - or suffer a worse fate... Many years later, the building which used to house Griffin's Barbecue became "Lamar's Mexican Restaurant". This

restaurant was raided around 3 AM on a Sunday morning (2/20/2011), and the law-enforcement officers apparently walked into a wide-open cocaine party. They found 80 people inside (including gang members) consuming after-hours alcohol, and using several types of illegal drugs.

([http://www.newsargus.com/news/archives/2011/03/02/state\\_ale\\_raids\\_city\\_restaurant/index.php](http://www.newsargus.com/news/archives/2011/03/02/state_ale_raids_city_restaurant/index.php))

(15) <http://files.usgwarchives.net/nc/wayne/cemeteries/sec09.txt>

(16) [http://www.newsargus.com/obituaries/archives/2005/09/11/irene\\_t\\_griffin/](http://www.newsargus.com/obituaries/archives/2005/09/11/irene_t_griffin/)

(17) <http://www.tributes.com/show/Susan-Thompson-87566795>

(18) "Barbecue Road Trip: Recipes, Restaurants & Pitmasters from America's Great Barbecue Regions", Michael Karl Witzel, p. 141-142 (from Google Books): [http://books.google.com/books?id=DsS\\_UwrmweQC&pg=PA141&dq=wilbur+shirley&hl=en&ei=NPYFTsecNrHXiALeosGrDQ&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CDMQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=wilbur%20shirley&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=DsS_UwrmweQC&pg=PA141&dq=wilbur+shirley&hl=en&ei=NPYFTsecNrHXiALeosGrDQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CDMQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=wilbur%20shirley&f=false)

(19) "BBQ Joints: Stories and Secret Recipes from the Barbeque [sic] Belt", David Geling, Pp. 112-114. (From Google Books: [http://books.google.com/books?id=\\_flV6QL4BZ0C&pg=PA112&lpg=PA112&dq=%22mr.+griffin%22+%22wilber+shirley%22&source=bl&ots=&sig=V6OukGJ2k6fGUye232YJBIZLVGI&hl=en&ei=xAcGTztTII\\_YiAKsh-HEDQ&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CBkQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=%22mr.%20griffin%22%20%22wilber%20shirley%22&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=_flV6QL4BZ0C&pg=PA112&lpg=PA112&dq=%22mr.+griffin%22+%22wilber+shirley%22&source=bl&ots=&sig=V6OukGJ2k6fGUye232YJBIZLVGI&hl=en&ei=xAcGTztTII_YiAKsh-HEDQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CBkQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=%22mr.%20griffin%22%20%22wilber%20shirley%22&f=false))

(20) <http://www.wilbersbarbecue.com/aboutus.html>

(21) [http://www.newsargus.com/news/archives/2008/04/13/former\\_president\\_clinton\\_campaigns\\_in\\_goldsboro/](http://www.newsargus.com/news/archives/2008/04/13/former_president_clinton_campaigns_in_goldsboro/)

(22) <https://www.familysearch.org/>

(23) "Goldsboro, N. C. Directory: 1911-1912" at <http://www.wcpl.org/genealogy/cog/ctdr30.asp>

(24) "The Right Stuff" in *The State*, July, 1996, p. 25.

(25) <http://www.caller.com/news/2011/mar/02/joe-cottens-bbq/>

(26) Even serving the same "style" of North Carolina barbecue has not stopped the boasting about who has the best barbecue, as evidenced by the early 1950s newspaper editorials printed by Henry Belk (editor of the *Goldsboro News-Argus*) and Vernon Sechriest (editor of the *Rocky Mount Telegram*). Upon sampling a package of Rocky Mount barbecue presented by Sechriest, Belk famously delivered his verdict: "H-m! Tastes like 'possum meat." [This did not stop the

*Winston-Salem Journal* from then putting in its own two cents with an editorial about the "barbecue war" between Belk and Sechriest... The editorial then derides the entire "Eastern North Carolina Style"!]

(6)