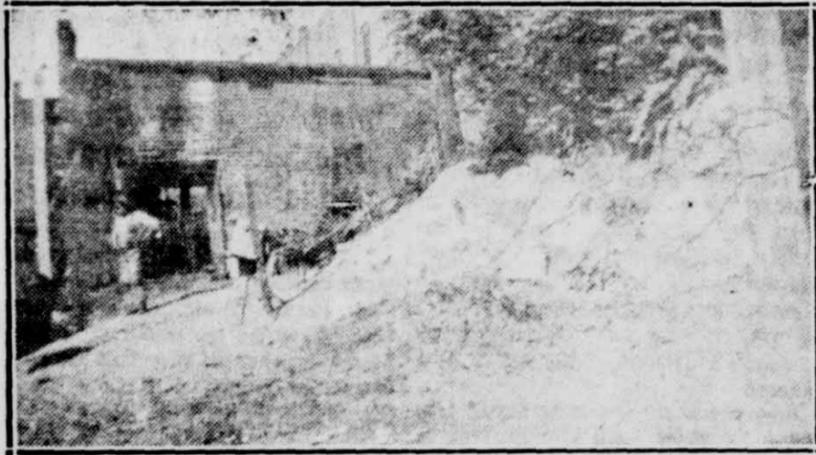


The "Rock" in Rock Hill

STATE - JUNE 27, 1937



The Remains of Flint Strata That Gave Town Its Name.

Rock Hill, June 26.—When the Charlotte, Columbia and Augusta railroad was proposed—about 90 years ago—the landowners were requested to grade the roadbed through their own plantations. The farmers of this section of York county gladly undertook this work in order to get a railroad.

The grading of its first railroad cost the community the life of one of its promising sons. It was while engaged in grading the road through his land that George P. White contracted pneumonia and died, leaving his widow, Ann Hutchison White, to rear four little children, Mary, James, Hutchison and Addie.

An old handbook of Rock Hill (1895), edited by William J. Cherry, has this to say about the name of Rock Hill:

"About the time the Charlotte and South Carolina railway had been completed through this section, in or near the year 1852, a party of gen-

tle men, residing in the vicinity of the station to be here located, had met and were discussing the matter of a name. There was at that time an immense quantity of flint rock imbedded in the hill which is the present site of John Ratterree's residence. The hint was caught from this circumstance; some of the party proposed that the station be called 'Rock Hill,' and the name was adopted. It is a name by which an enterprising corporation has become known—a name now much used on all sides—and no Rock Hillian could be induced to give it up."

The flint rock behind the Ratterree stores is all that remains of the original stratum of rock for which Rock Hill was named.

The log cabin, built by George and Ann White for their plantation home, still stands in the back yard of the home of Hiram Hutchison White (their grandson) on the corner of what is now East White street and Elizabeth lane.

* *McWinthrop*
It is understood that when the Board met yesterday morning before the awarding of the college a communication was received from the R.H. L & T Co. offering to purchase the entire issue of bonds and pay for them. This offer was accepted.
Herald: June 3, 1893 p.3:3

Naming Of Streets Closely Linked With City's History

An interesting story about how Rock Hill streets got their names was supplied today by James S. White, a 24-hour-a-day booster of Rock Hill, who is familiar with much of the town's history.

His story follows:
At your request, I shall try to tell how some of the streets of Rock Hill were named, and by whom.

Let us begin at the beginning. Our Mother, old Ebenezer, was a settled village when the Battle of Kings Mountain was fought in 1780. Ebenezer Presbyterian Church was organized just five years after the bat-

tle, in 1785 and no doubt some of the Kings Mountain heroes were buried in the Ebenezer Graveyard.

When the Charlotte, Columbia, and Augusta railroad, now a part of the Southern Railway System, was proposed, the farmers in this section had to grade the road bed and give the right-of-way through their plantations in order to have the railroad built. My grandfather, George P. White, lost his life while grading the road through his lands—now Rock Hill.

Rock Hill got its name from a stratum of flint rock which had to be blasted with black powder (no dynamite in those days) in order to make the correct grade at the Main St. crossing. Some of that flint rock can be seen today in the rear of the Ratterree building. Rock Hill outgrew Ebenezer because it was on the railroad.

Well, "Main" street named itself, like the main streets of all towns, because it led to the "Depot" and the stores started to building along that road.

The one man who had more influence than others in naming the first streets of Rock Hill was the late J. J. Hull, editor of our first newspaper, "The Rock Hill Herald."

"White" street was named for the White family, then headed by my grandmother, Mrs. Ann Hutchison White.

"Hampton" street was named for the famous governor Wade Hampton who freed us from the rule of the "Carpet Baggers" in 1876.

"Wilson" street was named for the Wilson family then headed by W. Black Wilson, father and grandfather of the men bearing the same name now.

The road along the Charlotte, Columbia and Augusta railroad was naturally called Railroad street or avenue until our late beloved fire chief, Tom Flowers, thought that didn't sound dignified enough for a street of such importance, so he persuaded the City Council to change its name to "Trade" street,

(a street name which followed him from Charlotte, N. C.)

Other Streets

The late Major A. H. White named a great many of the other streets in Rock Hill because he opened them through the White plantation lands as the city of Rock Hill grew and grew. I remember "Annafrel" street was named by him because of his admiration for the late Captain Frel Mobley, (Captain of the old "Catawba Rifles" when the members of that organization volunteered for the Spanish-American War) and his wife, who was Anna Hope, daughter of our first family physician, old Doctor Robert H. Hope, for whom "Hope" street was named. "Reid" street was named for the late James F. Reid. "Black" street was named for the Blacks who owned much of the lands adjoining the White farm lands, and there is a line now back of the stores on the north side of our Main Street known as the "Black and White Line" which divided the farms of John Black and George White.

"Johnston" street was named for the father of the late Tom Johnston, President of the Peoples National Bank.

The streets of the Oakland section of Rock Hill were named after the counties of South Carolina, such as York, Lancaster, Union, Aiken, etc. This part of town was developed by the Rock Hill Land and Town Site Co.; principal stockholders of which were J. M. Cherry, W. L. and W. J. Roddey, R. T. and Edward Fewell. Mr. Ed Fewell is the only surviving stockholder of the original company.

It was The Rock Hill Land and Town Site Co. that secured Winthrop College for Rock Hill. This company had surveyed the streets and made "Oakland Park" before Dr. D. B. Johnson brought Governor Ben Tillman and the committee from the legislature up here to inspect the sites offered for the proposed South Carolina College for Women. Five towns in the state, Columbia, Chester, Greenwood, Spartanburg and Rock Hill were asking that the college be located in one of the towns mentioned.

Columbia said: "Columbia is in the center of the state, is the capitol,—and did nothing else about it. The other towns offered free sites. Rock Hill offered two sites, one on the eastern side of town (offered by the Whites and Capt. Iredell Jones) and the other in Oakland offered by The Rock Hill Land and Town Site Company. The trees on both sites had been white-washed. The Town Site Co. offered their new

Park, just completed with graded walks, baseball grounds, beautiful shrubbery and a lake. The lake covered the ground where the Winthrop athletic field is now and extended to the railroad embankment. Everything was beautiful that bright sunny day when the committee came to inspect the sites. They went on to Spartanburg from here and held the "Meeting of Decision". After discussing all the offers until one o'clock in the morning, our senator, the late Wm. H. Stewart, said to Governor Tillman: "Well Ben it's one o'clock and you have not decided yet, Rock Hill has one card she has not played." Gov. Tillman turned to Senator Stewart and said: "What's that, Bill?" Rock Hill will give you the choice of either of the

two sites showed you this morning; AND SIXTY THOUSAND DOLLARS IN CASH. DO WE GET THE COLLEGE? Gov. Tillman looked over at D. B. Johnson and said: "Johnson I think we had better accept Rock Hill's proposition."—the meeting adjourned.

The Town Site Co. didn't have a dollar in its treasury, but it had one thing that was just as good. The officers of the company endorsed the note and the Town Site Co. borrowed sixty thousand dollars from the Carolina Savings Bank of Charleston, S. C. (That bank is still owned and operated by the Williams family, on the corner of East Bay and Broad Sts.) A certified check for sixty thousand dollars was turned over to Gov. Benjamin Ryan Tillman and Rock Hill won again. The City of Rock Hill then voted bonds to pay the note in Charleston and the vote on the bond issue was almost unanimous! That's the spirit—that's building a "Good Town". Some call it "Nerve", some call it "Faith"; whatever it is, it's the thing that enables men to build cities, rear fine families, and even WIN WORLD WARS.

Pardon me, I didn't know I was going to write so much Rock Hill history, but perhaps, some of the "younger generation" will be interested to read some of it.

Yours for making a good town better,
James S. White.

* Alexander Templeton
Black

* See item from Herald

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