

MY BRITISH HERITAGE | 16TH, 17TH, AND 18TH CENTURIES

This map shows the place of origin of some of my British ancestors for whom we have records. The dates are the earliest documented ones. Names in blue are on my maternal side, and names in red are on the paternal side.



WHERE WE CAME FROM: AN INTRODUCTION

Like most European-descended Southerners of my time, my heritage is rather homogeneous. It appears that I am almost totally a descendant of immigrants who came to America from England, Scotland, and Ireland in the 17th and 18th centuries. The major known exceptions to my British ancestry are an emigrant fifth great-grandfather who was a German Palatine' and a seventh great-grandmother born in the Germanic-speaking Rhineland. Thus, my heritage is about one percent German. My colonial forebearers, who came from Ireland, were Scotch-Irish.²

Bryan is a surname that probably originated in Ireland. My paternal great-great-grandparents' surnames, Parker, Ward, and Daniel, are likely names of English origin. The Armisteads and Thorntons were from Yorkshire, England. The Burnetts were from Scotland.

On my maternal side, the recent surnames Wilkerson, Adams, Morton, and Mosby are most probably English. The Montgomerys were Scotch-Irish (originally from Scotland), as perhaps were the Burks. The Camerons were pure Scottish. My earliest known British ancestors were pioneer families for whom we have ancestral records dateable from the 14th to the 18th centuries in the United Kingdom (see map on page 10).

My 32 great-great-great-grandparents (called third great) were Virginians and Carolinians, with the exception of one Pennsylvanian and his Irish-born wife. Also, except for a Scotsman who migrated to America after the American Revolutionary War (1775–83), all my third great-grandparents lived in colonial America (see map on page 12).

All of my 16 great-great-grandparents, born between 1799 and 1830, migrated (mostly with their parents) westward to the mid-South territories or states of Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee between 1800 and 1851. They all married between 1831 and 1851 (see map on page 13).

My four paternal great-grandparents and their parents lived in six rural counties in a corridor along the Mississippi/Alabama state line (see map on page 14). They were farmers, laborers, and businessmen.

My four maternal great-grandparents lived on plantations near Greenville, Mississippi (see map on page 15). They and their antecedents owned and operated cotton plantations along the Mississippi River.

MY SOUTHERN COLONIAL AMERICAN HERITAGE | 17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES

This map shows some of the earliest of my ancestors who are recorded as living in colonial America (before 1776). I am sure that most all of my ancestral line came through these three colonies.

- MATERNAL

PATERNAL
- 1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

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12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22
- Wm. Farrar (1594–1637)
Henrico Co., VA
arr. 1618

Wm. Armistead (1610–c. 1660)
Richmond Co., VA
arr. 1635

Richard Anderson II (1618–1662)
James City Co., VA
arr. 1634

Wm. Thornton (1615–1708)
Richmond Co., VA
arr. c. 1650

John Burnett (1610–1686)
Essex Co., VA
arr. bef. 1664

Wm. Overton (1638–1697)
New Kent Co., VA
arr. bef. 1670

Nicholas Mills Sr. (1644–1709)
New Kent Co., VA
arr. c. 1670

Wm. Clopton (1655–1733)
New Kent Co., VA
arr. bef. 1677

George Kornegay (1700–1773)
Craven Co., NC
arr. 1710

Wm. Bryan (1747–1801)
Wayne Co., NC
b. NC

Dr. John Woodson (1586–1644)
James City Co., VA
arr. 1619

Richard Cocke Sr. (1602–1665)
Henrico Co., VA
arr. 1627

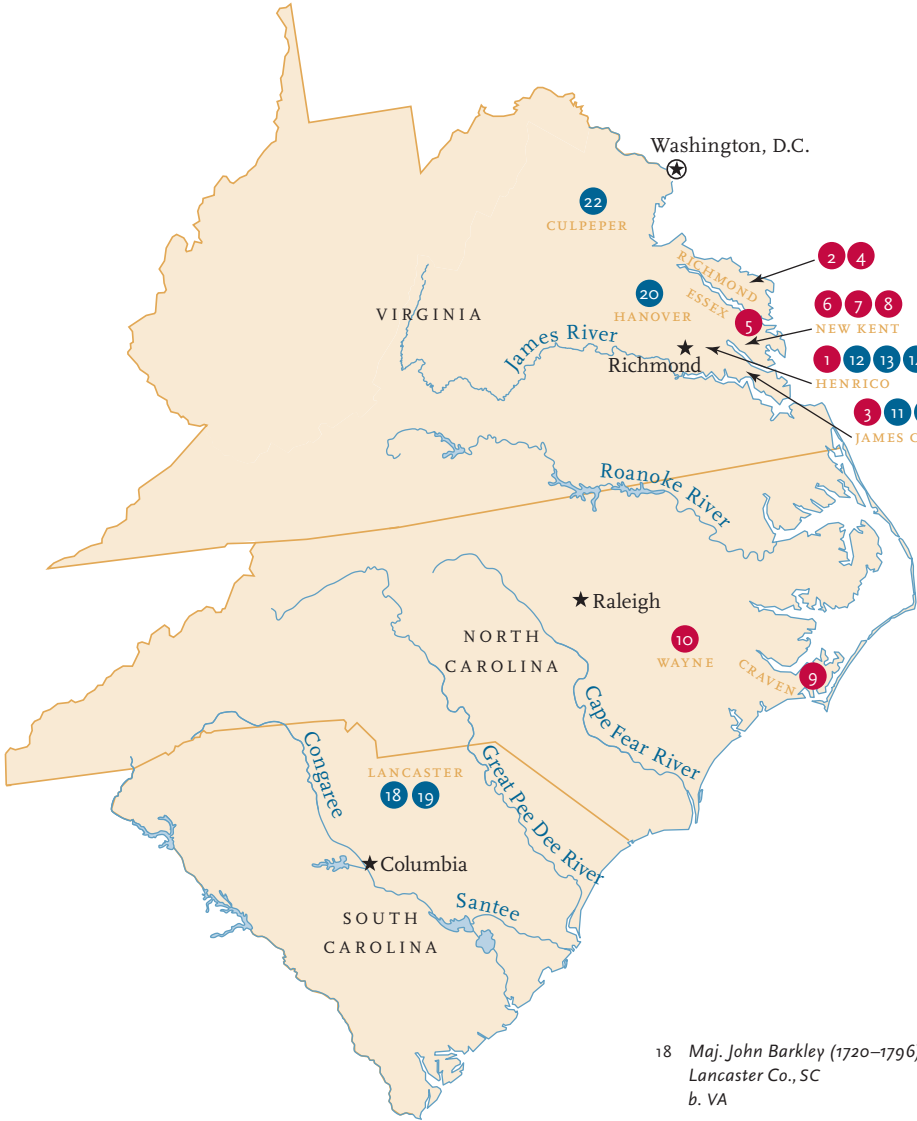
Capt. Henry Isham (1626–1678)
Henrico Co., VA
arr. 1656

John Pleasants III (1644–1698)
Henrico Co., VA
arr. 1665

William Montgomery (1650–____)
James City Co., VA
arr. 1666

Col. Wm. Randolph (1650–1711)
Henrico Co., VA
arr. 1672

Edward Mosby (1660–1742)
Henrico Co., VA
b. VA



- 18

19

20

21

22
- Maj. John Barkley (1720–1796)
Lancaster Co., SC
b. VA

Hugh Montgomery (1727–1785)
Lancaster Co., SC
b. VA

A. B. Truehart (1699–1767)
Hanover Co., VA
arr. 1730

Joshua Storrs (1737–1779)
Henrico Co., VA
arr. c. 1760

Francis Miller (1748–1838)
Culpeper Co., VA
b. VA

MY MIDDLE SOUTH HERITAGE | 1802–1851

During the first half of the 19th century, all of my 16 great-great-grandparents (eight married couples) lived in just three states of the mid-South of the United States. They had all migrated (in some cases with their parents) during the period 1802–1851 from Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia to Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee.



- WILKERSON/CORNELIUS
(m. 1850)

MOSBY/BURKS
(m. 1851)

MONTGOMERY/CAMERON
(m. 1831)

BRYAN/KORNEGAY
(m. 1831)

DANIEL/ARMISTEAD
(m. 1826)

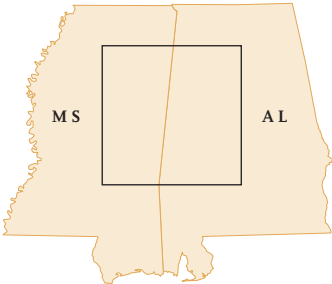
BURNETT/THORNTON
(m. 1837)

PARKER/WARD
(m. 1837)

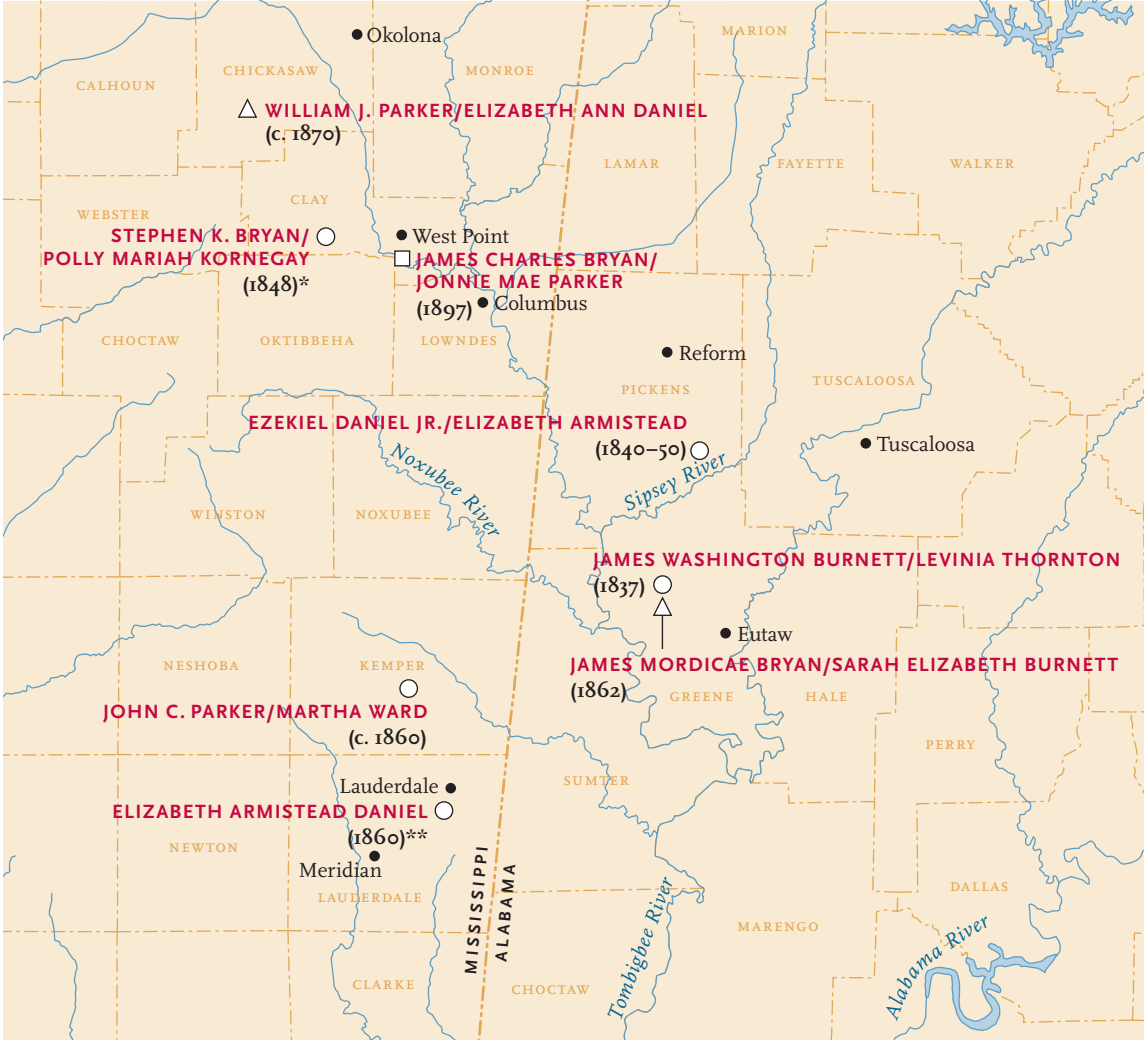
ADAMS/MORTON
(m. 1839)

MY PATERNAL ALABAMA/MISSISSIPPI CORRIDOR HERITAGE | 1821–PRESENT

This map shows where all my paternal grandparents, great-grandparents, and great-great-grandparents lived and the approximate date at which time they came to reside there. During the past 200 years, these paternal ancestors lived in six rural counties in a corridor along the Mississippi/Alabama state line. They or their antecedents came to that area from the Southern American states of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.



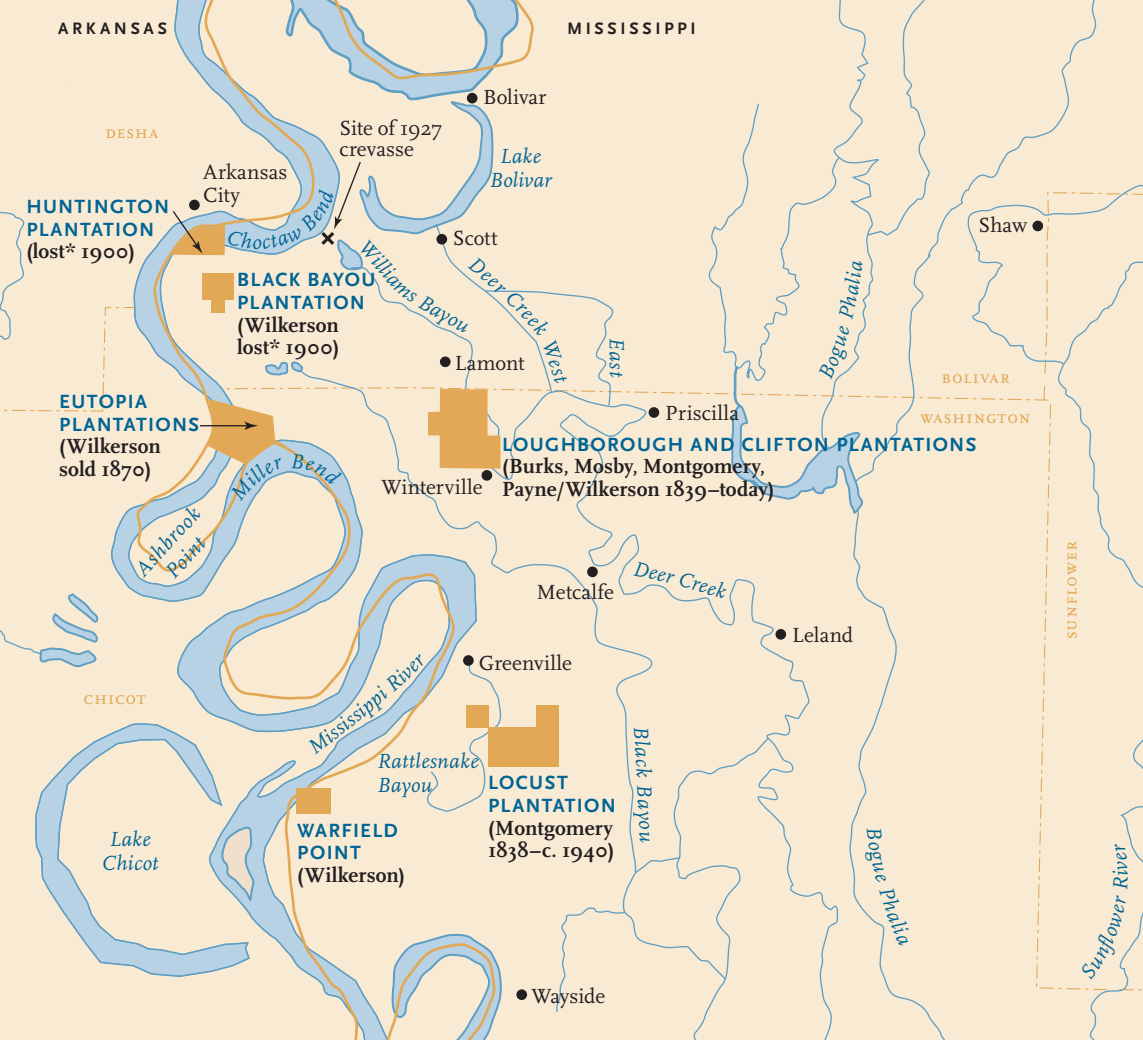
○ Great-great-grandparents △ Great-grandparents □ Grandparents



*In 1848 the place they settled was a part of Oktibbeha County.
**Elizabeth Armistead was living in Lauderdale County in 1860. Her husband died in either Alabama or Mississippi.

MY MATERNAL MISSISSIPPI DELTA PLANTATION HERITAGE | 1825–PRESENT

This map shows Mississippi cotton plantations owned by my mother's ancestors along the Mississippi River in Washington and Bolivar counties. The dates indicate the period of ownership by her family. For most of the past 200 years, my maternal ancestors lived in this area. Loughborough and Clifton plantations are still owned and farmed by my cousins.



*These plantations were lost when the Mississippi River levee was moved to the east.

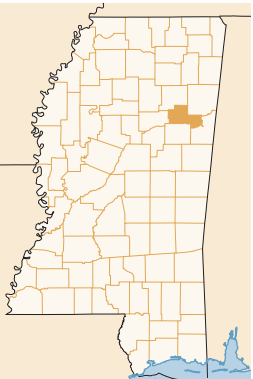
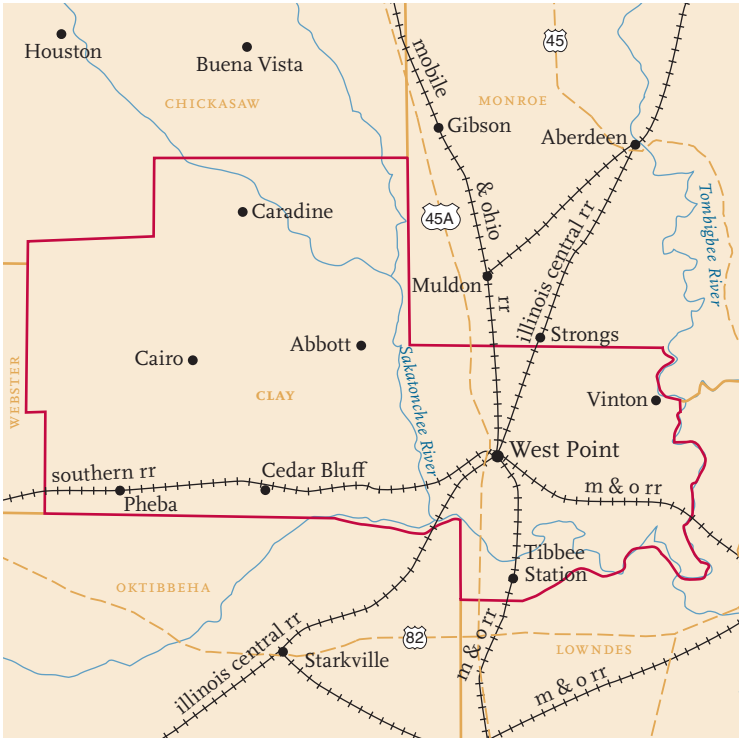
My paternal grandparents, **James Charles Bryan (1866–1930)** and **Jonnie Mae Parker (1871–1946)**, lived in the state of Mississippi³ in the town of West Point in Clay County⁴ (see chart on page 17). In 1909, more than 100 years ago, James Charles Bryan opened a meat market there. It was the beginning of what was to become a sizeable family business.

My maternal grandparents, **Jefferson Pinckney Wilkerson Sr. (1878–1945)** and **Caroline Mosby Montgomery (1884–1957)**, lived on Clifton Plantation in Washington County, Mississippi, north of Greenville,⁵ in the small town of Winterville. Clifton, originally a part of Loughborough in the 19th century, was bought by Jefferson Pinckney Wilkerson Sr. in 1912, several years after he married Caroline Mosby Montgomery.

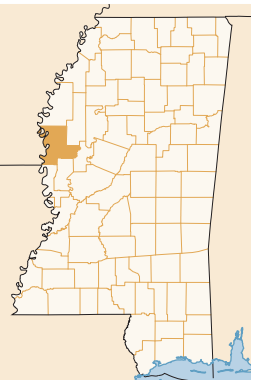
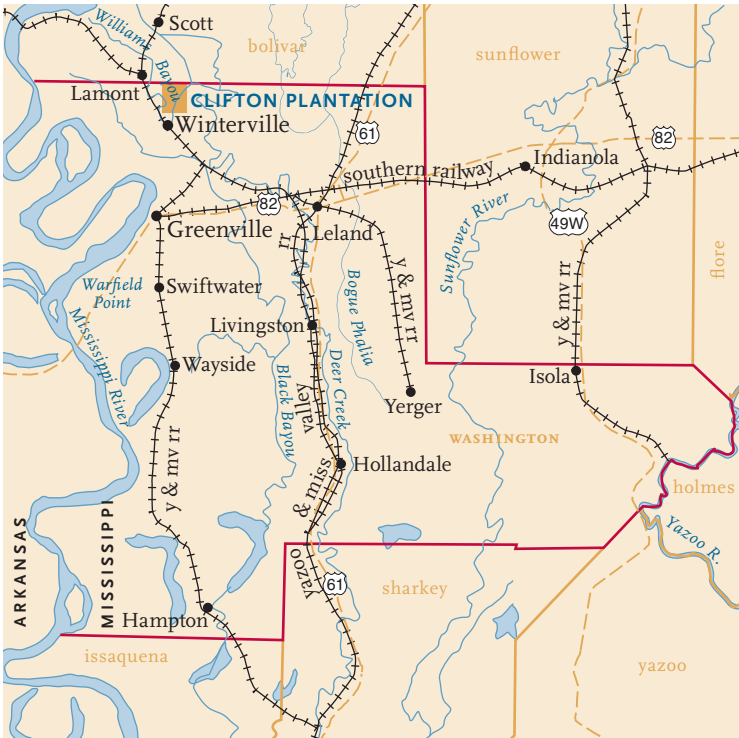
I knew three of my grandparents, but not James Charles Bryan, who died six years before I was born. I was eight and nine years old when two of my grandparents died in 1945 and 1946, so I have only a few recollections of them. I was a 20-year-old college student when Caroline Mosby Montgomery Wilkerson, my maternal grandmother, died. I knew her quite well.

My four grandparents belonged to quite small families. Thus, I have relatively few great-aunts and great-uncles.⁶ I recall having met three of my great-aunts, but I have not really known my 23 second cousins.⁷

CLAY COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI



WASHINGTON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI



Note: These maps are based on c. 1900 topography. The highways came later.

My parents, **John Henry Bryan (1908–1989)** and **Catherine Cameron Wilkerson (1909–2002)**, both had deep Mississippi roots. My father grew up in West Point and my mother in Greenville and Winterville, Mississippi. They lived their entire 54 years of marriage in the town of West Point. It was near to that town that my great-great-grandfather **Stephen K. Bryan (1807–1855)** moved with his family over 160 years ago. It was from that town that I, a sixth-generation Mississippian with virtually no American heritage outside of the South, moved with my family to Chicago, Illinois, now 37 years ago.

Both my mother and my father belonged to quite large families. My father was the youngest of five boys and my mother was the eldest of five children. Thus, I have three aunts and five uncles.⁸ As a result, I have 25 first cousins⁹ with whom I share grandparents. At some time in my life, I have known all of my first cousins.

Incidentally, in the exercise of preparing this book, I learned how to define cousins.¹⁰

I certainly felt quite close to my parents for all of their lives. Between 1960 and 1974, I worked on a daily basis with my father. He died after several years of illness in 1989, when I was 52. I was very close to Mother throughout her life. She lived until I was 65 years old.



My paternal grandparents' house in West Point on Brame Avenue. The house, built in 1903, was purchased in 1905 for \$1,325. My father spent his childhood in this house. The photo dates from c. 1909.



My parents' home from 1935 to 1949. It was their first house in West Point and my childhood home. My father bought this house, which was on 80 acres, in 1935 for \$5,000. It was razed in the early 1960s because of the expansion of the adjacent meat plant.



My maternal grandparents' home on Clifton Plantation shortly after it was constructed in 1931 at a cost of \$2,700. The original house on this site burned the previous year. The house pictured above has since been considerably enlarged and can be seen on page 65.



My parents' house in West Point from 1949 to 2002 is on Calhoun Street. The house cost \$36,000 in 1949 and was appraised for \$175,000 in 2002, when it was sold to my nephew Bryan Harrell. A snow fall in West Point is quite rare (about every five years). Thus, we have many photographs in the snow.