



AN INTERESTED OBSERVER as key figures in the "House in the Horseshoe" restoration project met at Carthage was Adlai E. Stevenson, 1952 Democratic Presidential candidate who appears second from left. Others in the photo are, left to right: J. A. Stenhouse of Charlotte, chairman of the State Historic Sites Commission; Glenn Hancock, Jr.; Glen Hancock, Sr., of Bonlee, owner of the property who is presenting it to the State; and Mrs. Ernest L. Ives of Southern

Pines, sister of Stevenson, president of the Moore County Historical Association and a member of the Historic Sites Commission. Mr. Stevenson met with the group the night he was welcomed by more than 2,000 persons at Carthage. Prominently displayed at the gathering in the Carthage school gymnasium was a sign, "Deep River Township, home of the House in the Horseshoe, Welcomes Stevenson."

(Photo by V. Nicholson)

To Start Restoration Work

Fund Appeal For Old House Begins

Folder Tells History Of Moore County Site Presented To State

The Alston House Fund Committee of the Moore County Historical Association is mailing to residents of this area and interested persons throughout the state a folder summarizing the history of the Alston house, or "The House in the Horseshoe," in Deep River township.

This house, which is nearly 200 years old and one of the few pre-Revolutionary dwellings in this area, is to be restored with private and state funds and will be taken over as an historic landmark by the State Historic Sites Commission.

The folders relate the story of the Revolutionary skirmish at the house, point out that it was also at one time the residence of Gov. Benjamin Williams who died in 1814 and appeal for funds with which to begin immediate restoration work.

Glenn Hancock, Sr., Bonlee lumberman, is presenting the house and 10 acres to the State. Surveying at the site began last week.

The restoration work is to be undertaken with private funds, in addition to anticipated public funds not yet appropriated. The North Carolina Society for the Preservation of Antiquities is advancing \$2,500 and additional funds are sought in the private appeal made by the folders.

Joint Project

The Alston House Fund is a joint project of the Moore County Historical Association, the Alfred Moore Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, and the N. C. Society for the Preservation of Antiquities.

The DAR fund committee is composed of Mrs. W. Gilliam Brown, Mrs. J. Talbot Johnson, Mrs. Joel Layton, Mrs. M. J. McPhail, Mrs. P. P. Pelton and Mrs. R. P. Rosser.

The Historical Association's committee is: N. L. Hodgkins, Jr., chairman; Mrs. Ernest Ives, Mrs. Katherine N. McColl, Julian Bishop, W. D. Campbell, W. W. Hoffman, Lawrence Johnson, George Maurice, Albert Tufts and H. M. Vale, Jr.

Contributions to the fund are tax-deductible, the folder states, and requests that checks be made payable to the Moore County Historical Association, Inc., and marked "Alston House Fund." Checks should be sent to Mr. Hodgkins at the Citizens Bank and Trust Co., Southern Pines.

History Recalled
Here is the story of the House in the Horseshoe as related in the folder:

"The House in the Horseshoe," built about 1760, was a fine home in its time. Though badly run down, it retains very much the same aspect it did almost 200 years ago. Its location overlooking a sweeping meadow on a bend of Deep River known as "The Horseshoe" adds to its impressiveness.

It was the scene of a dramatic

incident of Whig and Tory warfare during the Revolution.

The walls of the house show plainly today the battle scars sustained on a summer day of 1781. Contemporary accounts differ as to the date... July 29 or August 7. There are other discrepancies, but with agreement on the main facts, which are as follows:

Col. Philip Alston, a Whig, then owner of the plantation, had incurred the wrath of the infamous young Tory officer, Col. David Fanning, who had headquarters at Cox's Mill, several miles north. On learning that Alston had assembled a body of men at his home, Fanning and his company attacked the house early on a Sunday morning. Those within defended themselves staunchly, and the battle of bullets continued for several hours... one account says all day. Men on both sides were killed and injured.

Fanning, infuriated at the stubborn resistance, decided to set fire to the house. A Negro man he sent to apply the torch was shot dead by Alston. The Tory officer then had his men load a cart with hay and, keeping the cart between them and the house, start moving it toward the house. There they planned to set it afire.

The men within saw the strategy and despaired. Alston knew the time for surrender had come, if the house or any of his men or family were to be saved. Yet, knowing Fanning's vindictiveness, none dared go outside, even with a truce flag.

It was then that a woman proved her mettle... Mrs. Alston, who had set her children on stools in her bedroom fireplace, their bodies thrust up within the chimney, and herself lain in bed with bullets whistling not two feet above her.

With her home now gravely threatened, she persuaded her husband that she should seek the truce, feeling that even as savage an enemy as Fanning would respect a woman. She was right. She stepped outside, gave a signal and the firing ceased. Fanning called to her to meet him halfway. There she told him, with calm dignity, "We will surrender, sir, on condition that no one shall be injured; otherwise we will make the best defense we can, and if need be, sell our lives as dearly as possible." Fanning agreed to her terms, and kept his word. The men surrendered and were paroled.

The war's end came within a few months. Alston later served a term in the State Senate (1785-86). Later the house became the home of one of the State's early governors, who lies buried near by.

Benjamin Williams, first large planter of Moore County, was first elected governor in 1799, returned to Raleigh in 1807 as a State Senator and was again elected by the General Assembly to the governorship. On expiration of his term he was returned to the Senate (1809). He spent his last years at The House in the Horseshoe, which he called "Retreat," and died there in 1814.

Historians rate Governor Williams "a man of fine intelligence, who stood among the first of the progressive agriculturists of the State." In times particularly difficult for Southern planters, his farm was a model of its day.

"The House in the Horseshoe" has been a home, the heart of a busy farm life, during all these

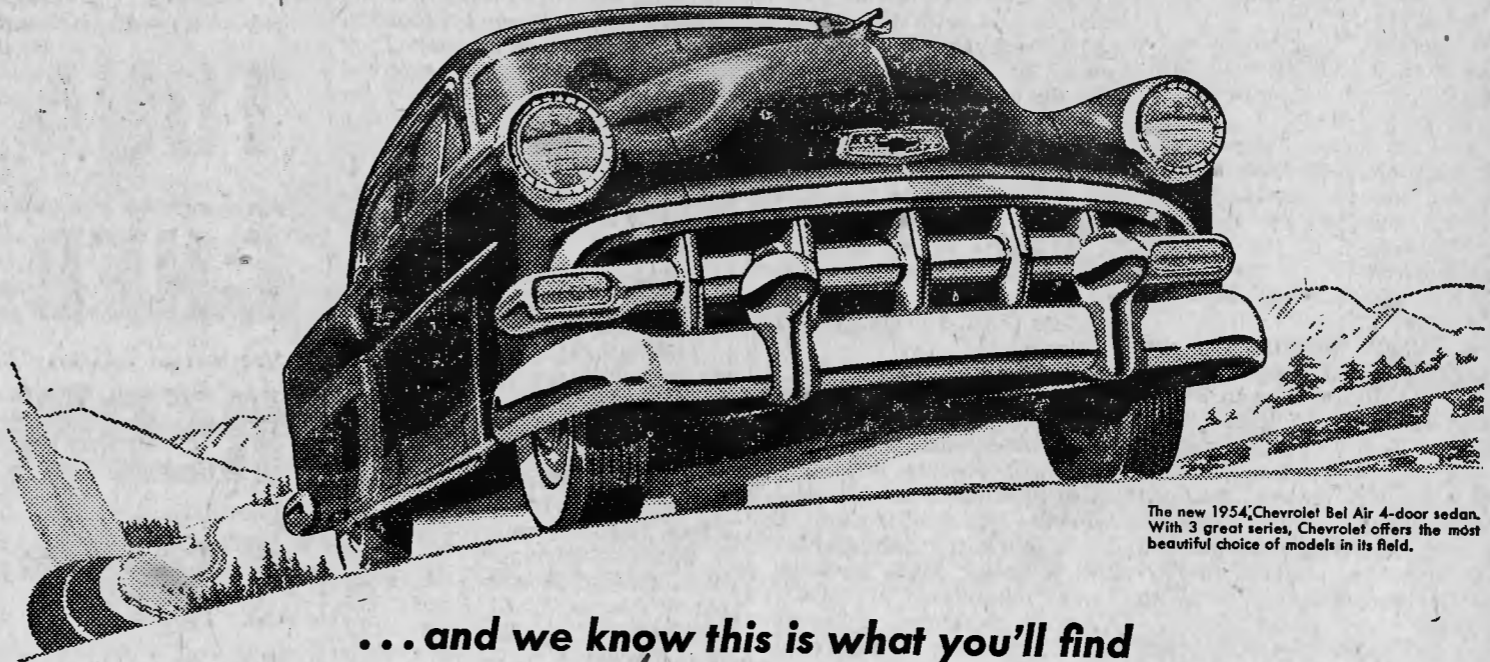
years. Some of the original rooms have been torn down, but the ancient chimneys stand, the carved doorways and mantels, hand-forged ironware and other details of

colonial days mark it with distinction. To reach it, turn right from NC 27 onto the Glendon road at the western limit of Carthage, county

seat of Moore. At a fork 6 3-4 miles away, leave the hardsurfaced road, bearing right on a sandclay road. Another 2 1-2 miles and you cross a tall and narrow

steel bridge over Deep River. Once over the bridge you can see the house far off at the left, still gazing serenely over the battleground which is now a pasture.

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