

under the sun



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED
BUSINESSES already dominated the neighborhood around the Bascom Stanley home (at right) in the early 1950s, when this trio of volunteers sought donations for some worthwhile cause. Dykes Hewett is holding the bucket, while Kenneth White stands at the right of an unidentified man.

Movers Brought Stanley Home A Second Beginning

BY SUSAN USHER

The Bascom Stanley house stood for many years in the center of the Shallotte business district, anomalous, a misfit, its bay window and gingerbread trim reminiscent of an era when dignified homes lined Shallotte's Main Street.

Only a few of the houses remain, some maintained as residences, others converted for business use. Tucked between a fish market and an interior design shop, the Stanley house had been unoccupied since late 1981, apparently sentenced to a slow death.

Monday afternoon the genteel, but time-worn house won not only a reprieve, but a new start on life.

After dismantling the pitched roof, tall double brick chimneys and gingerbread-trimmed front porch, Tommy Small's House Movers of Tabor City hooked chains to trucks and house. The tow trucks tugged and pulled and groaned until the house reluctantly consented to the move. Long lines of vehicles waited with varying degrees of patience as Small worked the house south along U.S. 17 and out of town.

At its new location on N.C. 179 just south of Jennies Branch Baptist Church, owner Emily Gore Varnum of Myrtle Beach, S.C., says she plans to restore the Bascom Stanley house as nearly as possible to its former dignity, even to replacing the tin roof with wooden shingles if she can manage it.

"I'm going to try," she said. "I'm going to do it as near as I can."

"This is what I've always wanted." Mrs. Gore said she plans to take about five years for the restoration, possibly using the house as an antique shop to help defray the cost of restoring and furnishing it.

Beautiful antiques once filled the house; remaining pieces are scattered among various family members. These include a lion's head chaise lounge, a mirrored buffet and family portraits.

Appropriately enough, the move keeps the house in the family, according to Mrs. Gore and to her cousin, Mrs. Linwood (Deedy) Robinson, who grew up in and inherited the Stanley house.

The two-story frame home was built sometime before 1913 by John H. and Melissa Arnold White, Mrs. Robinson's maternal great-grandparents—most likely before the turn of the century. Before its relocation it was thought to be one of the oldest homes in Shallotte.

The White estate was divided among 13 children—Melissa Belle, Mary Alice, Annie Mae, Ulysses Grant, Martin Luther, Ollie, Virginia, Rebecca Elizabeth, Sarah, Jane McRae, George, Henry Thomas and John William White.

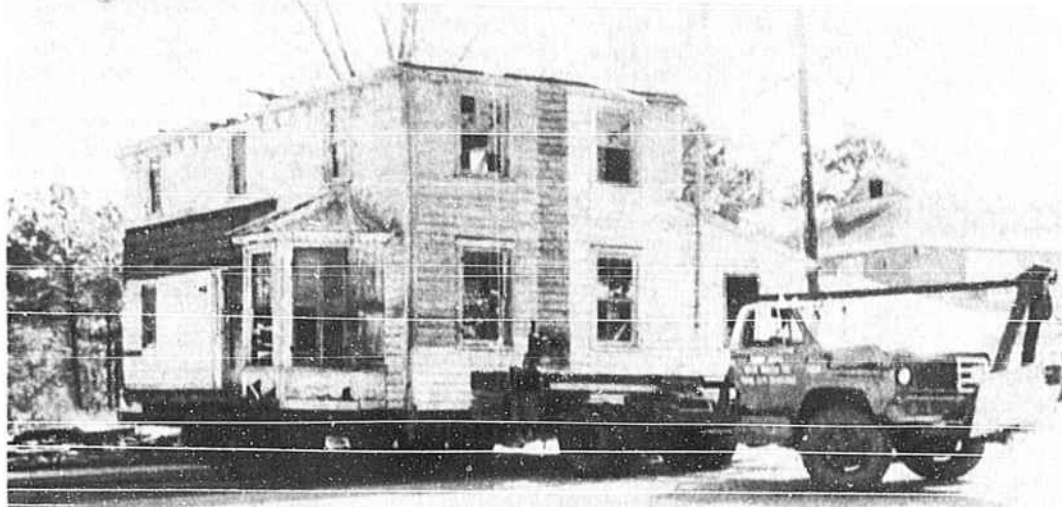
Jane, the youngest, inherited the house and the land around it, stretching back to the Shallotte River, said Mrs. Robinson. She married one Bascom Stanley, the person whose name is most frequently associated with the house. Jane's sister Ann was Emily Gore Varnum's great-grandmother.

The Bascom Stanleys' oldest child, Melissa Elma, was born in the house in 1913, helping date the residence. She married Tommy Oree Rabon and they too made the Stanley residence their home, rearing their daughter Deedy (Mrs. Linwood Robinson) and son Henry there.

When Mrs. Rabon died in 1981, her husband soon moved in with the Robinsons. His son Henry chose to live in a mobile home he located behind the old family home.

As its appearance deteriorated, the town began eyeing the Bascom Stanley home as an eyesore and possible health and safety hazard, last year threatening condemnation if steps were not taken to either secure or dispose of the house.

Monday's move wasn't the first for the house, it turns out. Mrs. Robinson recalls that, during her childhood, the house was pushed back from the edge of the street to



MONDAY was moving day for the old Bascom Stanley house, topless and stripped bare for the occasion. Its

trek down Main Street and out N.C. 179 tied up both local law officers and traffic much of the day.

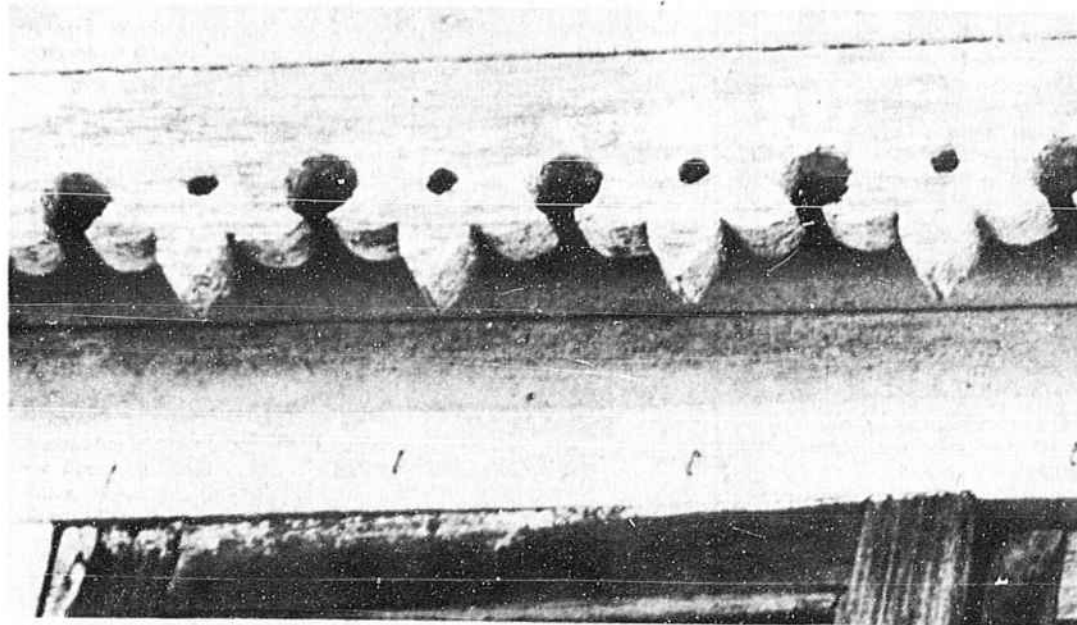
make room for U.S. 17.

The main house was rather spacious, including a front room, sitting room, wide hallway, two "shed" or bedrooms downstairs and two upstairs, center stairs and stairwell, porches and breezeway. When pushed back, the house connected with what had once been a separate

kitchen with dining room, she said.

The kitchen may be the oldest part of the home since Mrs. Varnum said it was put together with pegs.

She also has been unable to date the house precisely. "Everybody says it is over 100 years old or close to it, but no one knows how to pin it down."



FLEUR-DE-LIS trim edges the shuttered bay window and front porch.

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