

Garden Party at Baronia Mansion of Second Landgrave Smith Planned by Modern Resident of Club on Old Site

Though the original pomp and glory of the 1,070-acre tract on which Goose Creek mansion, later known as Yeamans Hall, has disappeared, the beauty of the woodslands and the rolling hills among the brackish marshlands of the Cooper river still form a fitting setting for the newer but less imperial glory of a winter colony for the wealthy.

Yeamans Hall is probably the best known seat of the fantastic American nobility, which the Lords-Proprietors sought to impose on a group of colonists struggling to wrest a living from a land covered with forests and menaced by Indians. The nobility hardly outlived two generations, though the manner of living survived for more than a century.

The second Landgrave Thomas Smith, who died May 9, 1738, built and moved into his Goose Creek mansion in 1695. Goose Creek mansion was built on the tract of 1,070 acres laid out according to a warrant issued September 5, 1674, to Lady Margaret Yeamans, wife of Sir John Yeamans.

It is unlikely that Sir John ever lived there and Lady Margaret only after his death. Subsequent to 1677, the land appears to have been transferred to Landgrave Thomas Smith, remaining in the Smith family until some time after 1900.

Landgrave Smith's house was of white brick, rough cast. It was built strongly as a defense against Indians and had a well in the basement to supply water in case of a siege. It was equipped with port holes for firing at the Indians. Between the floors in an extension to the back of the house, was a secret chamber.

The second Landgrave Thomas Smith in 1690 married Anna Cornelia Van Myddagh, a Belgian, who came to Carolina as a companion to her kinswoman, Sabina de Vignon. He became landgrave in May 1691, and governor of the province November 29, 1693. After the death of his first wife he married Mary Hyrne. He had ten children by each wife.

In 1848, the mansion was renovated by Mrs. Eliza F. Smith, widow of George Henry Smith, who sold her husband's Westoe plantation, near Summerville, and moved to Goose Creek mansion. She cut many of the port holes in the basement into windows to utilize a part of that floor as a kitchen. In 1850, she changed the name to Yeamans Hall, because she disliked the name Goose Creek mansion.

In the earthquake of 1886, the dwelling was made uninhabitable and within two years it was destroyed by fire. The house is described by Mrs. Poyas in her "Olden Time in Carolina" as the scene of a manner of life which, at the time of publication, 1855, the writer said had vanished already.

Pictures of the original building at Yeamans Hall are in existence. Mrs. George B. Hedges, of New York, a winter resident at Yeamans

Hall, has painted the garden party and trees in the foreground from descriptions of life in Charles Town during the period when Yeamans Hall was built. Today, nothing but the foundations of the original mansion, with

a few tombstones in the old family burial ground, remain of the old "baronial seat". The grounds have been laid out in winding drives and a spacious golf course, instead of being tilled in corn and cotton. The marshes, once sources of wealth from rice culture, now are merely scenery.

A New England style clubhouse and thirty-four cottages, of various types, harmonizing with the woodlands but not of the period of the original mansion, are in existence in winter colony, membership in which is limited to 200.

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