

HISTORIC STRUCTURE DATA SHEET



DATE COMPILED: 10/14/2019

COMPILER: Kimberly Steiner

SITE NAME Carney Bynum House

CH # CH0324

LISTED ON STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE GIS MAP YES X NO ___

LOCATION

DESCRIPTION: Off Durham-Eubanks Road between Charlie Fields and Dixon Road

STREET ADDRESS: 169 Durham-Eubanks Road, Pittsboro

GIS COORDINATES: 35.775379, 79.142377

TOWN/VICINITY Baldwin Township > Pittsboro > Bynum

COUNTY Chatham

OWNER

NAME: Robert and Marguerite Considine

ADDRESS: 169 Durham-Eubanks Road, Pittsboro

USE

ORIGINAL: Residence

CURRENT: Residence

CONDITION EXCELLENT ___ GOOD X FAIR ___ DETERIORATED ___ RUINS ___

ARCHITECTURAL DATA

STYLE: Italianate

EXTERIOR MATERIAL(S): wood siding

HEIGHT: two and a half story

ROOF: shingle

PORCH: hip roof front porch; side, screened in porch

CHIMNEY: two brick chimneys

OTHER: there is a car park/garage off the side, screened in porch

HISTORICAL DATA

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: c.1880 (according to *Architectural Heritage* survey)

BUILDER (IF KNOWN):

ORIGINAL OWNER: *Carney Bynum*

FORMER OWNERS (IF KNOWN): *John Manley Durham; Franklin Durham*

WAS IT BUILT AT PRESENT LOCATION OR MOVED TO PRESENT LOCATION? BUILT MOVED

IF MOVED, DESCRIBE:

WAS IT BUILT IN SECTIONS/ARE THERE ADDITIONS? YES NO UNKNOWN

IF YES, DESCRIBE: *one story ell with hip roof porch is later addition; also see notes below*

HAVE THERE BEEN MAJOR ALTERATIONS? YES NO UNKNOWN

IF YES, DESCRIBE: *see notes below*

NOTES (from the current owner)

I am happy to support an update on this house, especially since there are some inaccuracies in the last historic survey. As near as I can tell, after more than 30 years living in and renovating the house, it started as a one room house, perhaps with a loft in 1779, after Luke Bynum left Virginia in 1778 after having his house burned down twice in the beginning of the Revolutionary War. He was definitely in the 1790 census for Chatham and each following census through 1810 when he died.

Luke started a grist mill down by the river, but I do not know the dates.

The original room of the house is the NW corner of the structure that I might call Country Federalist Greek Revival. That room has joists that are trees with the branches cut off, and the bark still on. It grew through 3-4 renovations (based on lumber choices) until it was a narrow two-story, with a sleeping loft, that was as wide as the house is now, but half as deep.

Last fall, I finally peaked under the cover of the old well in the yard. The well supported four houses until the town got Pittsboro water following the cancer scare on the Mill Hill. I had expected something rather mundane. Instead I found this [see photograph of the well interior provided by the current owner].

Almost 60 feet of dry-laid stone nearly vertical sides, to standing water. I have thought of inviting the Archeology Department at UNC to take a look, but have not wanted it disturbed. Judging by construction the well is almost as old as the house.

Luke's grandchildren by way of William Bynum and Margaret Clegg Bynum included Carney and Luther. It must have been a packed house - their siblings included Mary M Bynum [Watson], Julia Nancy Bynum [Atwater], and Margaret Ann Bynum [Atwater]. Carney, for whom this house is usually named, is sometimes referred to as Carney William Bynum Jr, which makes me wonder if his father went by his middle name, less common in the 19th century.

In any case, Carney and Luther started a cotton mill after the war, raising funds from the local farmers. By 1870, the mill, and the brothers, were making money. Luther, who seems to have been a numbers-oriented sort, built the house across the valley close to the mill. Carney, who was the sales half of the team, renovated and expanded the house that they grew up in—this is the handsome three-gabled structure you see today. The old front door was cut out and became an entrance to the back porch (where it still is).

In 1867, Carney married Mary Catherine Atwater—the Bynum's seemed to get along well with that family. Their daughter married a doctor who used to practice in the house. The front porch was the waiting room, and the SW room downstairs was the examination room. There was a spiral staircase between that room and the SW bedroom upstairs, which doubled as the doctor's lab. Later on, Carney built the house next door [The Taylor-Durham House], some say as a wedding present to his daughter.

An account in the Raleigh Times, which I can no longer find, describes the house. A Mr. Brooks, the nephew of the Brooks Brothers of New York clothing fame, was hunting with Carney and put both barrels of a shotgun through his abdomen when crossing a fence. The story in the Times describes the "best surgeon in New York" coming down to Raleigh in a

chartered train "travelling faster than a mile a minute". It took another day after he arrived to charter a coach to Bynum. In the meantime, Brooks was treated by the doctor next door, who must have been pretty good. Even today, the first 24 hours after a gut-shot determines survival more than anything done three days later.

In 1910 or so, Carney moved to the "other" Carney Bynum house [Jim Atwater House], almost a Queen Anne on one level up the street. Until the recent renovations, one could enter that house from the back, that is, the mill side, without going up a step. Seems that was Carney's old age house.

The Durham's had a large family and needed room. The back half of the house is another house, dragged up the hill with mules, c. 1911. I bought the house from his grandson Robert. Robert was one of four brothers who left to fight in WWII, and none came back afterwards. Their parents ran the house as a rooming house through the 60's, and added indoor plumbing, including a toilet on the back porch, sometime after 1964. At that time, one could not get a mill house until ones first child arrived; everyone rented in this house when first married. I was perplexed that everyone one in town would say "my uncle was born in that house" until I pieced the history together.

In the late 1960's, Robert and LeAnne Durham moved back from Chicago to take care of his parents in their old age. At the same time, he bought out the interests of his siblings in the house for \$1,000 each. This may or may not have been when indoor plumbing was added.

We bought the house in 1988. When the old back porch gave away, we built a 4th gable on the house, somewhat down-sized to build bathrooms up and downstairs. After that renovation the house is approximately 4,000 sf. It has heartwood pine floors throughout the main house. Last fall and winter, I stabilized many things. A house this old uses larger lumber than today, but they do tend to over-span things. I added 29 new masonry piers under the main of the house last Fall and Winter, freeing up many jacks that had kept things in place.

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS



