

Annie Lutterloh Bynum ~ Pittsboro Artist

By Doug Berg and Bill Sharpe, April 2021

December 23, 1903 must have been the occasion of the season when twenty-year-old Annie Lutterloh married Henry Atwater Bynum. Annie was the only child of Washington and Della Lutterloh, owners of a large land-holding on Dry Creek in Hadley Township that had come down through the Lutterloh family. Henry was a son of Carney Bynum, founder and owner of the Bynum Mill on the Haw River.

Together, Annie and Henry raised four children, Henry, Carney, Mary Dell and Ann. Annie became known for her musical abilities. Piano was her instrument. She gave lessons and directed school groups in music. Her voice was said to be sweet. Much in demand at all sorts of occasions, Mrs. Henry A. Bynum's name appears again and again on the society pages of old newspapers. She sang the old familiar church songs and secular songs such as "Tenting Tonight on the Old Campground." Other old favorites included: "The Old Folks at Home," "The Old Oaken Bucket," "The Old North State."

Henry died suddenly in 1930. Annie found herself with three grown children, and a fourth in college. Could Annie have guessed that, at age forty-seven, her life was not half over? In the years to come, Annie resumed her musical and social life. She served as organist of the Pittsboro United Methodist Church for more than 50 years. Her house in Pittsboro stood beside the Presbyterian Church. Children could count on a cookie or cupcake when they went there for a piano lesson. Eventually the children learned that the lesson was not necessary if they dropped by at the right time.



Annie's life changed again in 1960, when she broke her leg one Sunday at church. During her recovery, Annie's son Carney gave her a paint set, and a new career was born. At age seventy-six could Annie have imagined her new avocation would last almost another quarter century? Today Annie's name evokes that iconic street scene of the view north from the courthouse in Pittsboro. In her paintings, the year is 1900; see the well in the middle of the street up there at the intersection of Salisbury and Hillsboro Streets? It's not

known how many times she painted that one scene, along with many others. The materials are simple art-supply fare—oil and pastel chalk, canvas on pressed board, unpretentious framing. It's said Annie would have three easels going at a time, and the paintings sold for twenty to thirty 1980s dollars apiece. Annie died February 24, 1983. She is buried at Pittsboro Methodist Church. Today there's an ongoing effort by the Chatham County Historical Association to find and assemble a digital collection of as many as possible of the images Annie left behind.

This photograph shows one of Annie's paintings of Pittsboro in 1893, as she remembered it. When the painting was purchased by Frankie and Tom Danek, they asked Mrs. Bynum to identify the buildings. They wrote down the following list along with some of her comments. When asked about the color of the buildings, she replied "Well, that might not be exactly right, but it was the way they should've looked."



PITTSBORO - 1893

Begin lower left corner...

Gray house - Mr. & Mrs. A.G. Headen (also known as the Beard House) [We know it as the Patrick St. Lawrence House/Ordinary or "Yellow House."]

Yellow building - Dr. Chapin's office

Blue-Green building – Calvert law office

Red building - old courthouse

Blue building – George Council's shop

Cream building - Farmer's Alliance

Mustard building - Poe store

Blue-Gray building - Bynum & Headen store

Gray-Cream building - law office

Small Red building - schoolhouse (teacher was Miss Kate Hanks) Yellow house behind schoolhouse - the Maggie Horne house

White house behind Horne house - Bynum house

White building at top of hill – Exline house

Center - town well

Begin upper right of street ...

Gray house - Governor Owen's house

White house - Mrs. Jerome's house

Gray building - London's store

White building - Henry London's Record office (Office of The Chatham Record)

Yellow building - Ramsey hotel, where the artist Annie Lutterloh Bynum (1883-1983) moved with her mother in 1893 when her father died. She attended the red schoolhouse. This picture represents Pittsboro as she recalls it from her childhood.

Purple building - the old Post Office - Lula Foushee Bland was postmistress for many years. Her stepdaughter was Cara Bland Moore, Frankie Danek's grandmother.

CURRENTLY ON EXHIBIT AT THE CHATHAM HISTORICAL MUSEUM ARE 12 OF ANNIE BYNUM'S PAINTINGS.

The exhibit will be open to the public during Museum hours
11-4 Wednesday through Friday
Beginning May 19, 2021.

The exhibit may also be viewed following the
CCHA annual meeting
on Sunday, May 23 2:00pm

If you are the owner of one of Annie Bynum's paintings,
please share a digital photo of it with us for our collection.

Contact us at history@chathamhistory.org