

History
Robert Lee Horton House c.1897
323 E. Lane St
Raleigh, NC 27601
1/25/08

Here is the description in the “A Walking Tour of Historic Oakwood” for the Horton House and the house next door where Horton had first lived.

323 E. Lane St. Robert Lee Horton House c.1897 This Queen Anne, built by entrepreneur Horton, features turned columns and spindlework, a Chinoiserie balustrade, and scalloped siding in the gables between the first and second stories. It is topped by a steep gable-on-hip roof with projecting gables. Horton, together with A. G. Nowell, later opened Horton-Nowell Clothing and Men’s Furnishings downtown.

321 E. Lane St. Briggs-Walters House c. 1895 Thomas H. Briggs, who built Peace College’s Main Building, also built this handsome cottage with its ornate Eastlake porch for R. L. Horton in 1895. Dr. Julius Faison bought the house in 1897 as wedding gift for his daughter Laura Faison Walters. It was built on a lot where, on April 13, 1865, General Judson Kilpatrick’s Union Cavalry hanged Lt. Walsh of the 11th Texas Cavalry for firing at them after the city had surrendered.

Matthew Brown who co-authored the “Walking Tour” with Nancy Carter Moore says more about the Civil War event. “Lt. Walsh of the 11th Texas Cavalry was hanged at "Lovejoy's Grove," which was the land now occupied by 321 and 323 E. Lane St, and others as well. Anecdotal evidence is that the actual hanging tree was ... [at 321 E. Lane St] but it could have been elsewhere on Lovejoy's land. Walsh was hanged on April 13, 1865, for firing at the Union forces, "the only shots fired in defense of Raleigh." He nearly got Raleigh burned down, actually.”

In the following paragraphs, Nancy Carter Moore explains why the Walking Tour brochure cites 323 E. Lane St. as the Horton House when the plaque by the front door names it as the A. R. Love House, Ca. 1895.

323 E. Lane St: Robert Lee Horton was the first to buy land on this block when the State began selling land to finance the building of the Executive Mansion in the 1880s. Horton divided his tract into lots, selling them mostly to relatives. He and his wife Clyde Horton first lived at 321, then built this house in 1897 when they needed more room for their growing family. (Clyde also took in boarders.) They lived in it until they moved to 1408 Hillsboro St. in 1920. Horton also built the house at 319 E. Lane, which had the same Chinoiserie balustrade and spindlework porch trim until it was modified in 1914. Robert's cousin E.G. Horton, who founded Horton and Lee Grocery with his other cousin Ed Hugh Lee, bought the house at 319 E. Lane.

The 1900 census [shows L.R. Horton and wife Q.C. at 325 E. Lane, also cousin E. H. Lee] We appear to have a dyslexic (or very tired) enumerator in this census. "L.R. Horton" is Robert Lee Horton. "Q.C. Horton" is his wife Clyde. Clyde's father W. H. Holloway had a carriage business in Raleigh. City Directories support the idea that what is now 323 was 325 in 1900. Note the age of these people: we know that Laura Walters and her husband [lived in 321] were married in 1896 -- this means she was 18 and he was 20. Robert Lee Horton is age 32 and Ed Lee is 28. Point: young men built the Lane Street business district AND the houses surrounding it. Note that Ed Hugh Lee is living with his cousin Robert, as he has not yet built his own house. Robert later sold a lot to Ed Hugh Lee where he built his own Queen Anne cottage at 302 N. Bloodworth St. [Later sold to Dr. Horton].

A.R. Love did NOT build this house. I have the deeds to prove that Love bought the lot from Horton in 1893 then sold it back to him in 1897 for the same low price of \$400. [Too cheap for a lot with a house.] Furthermore, a city directory study which includes the consideration of the changing street addresses tells the whole story. R. L. Horton had Briggs build the house at 321 for him and his wife Clyde, and sold the lot where 319 now stands to his cousin Edward Graham Horton of Horton and Lee Grocery. 321 was the first house R. L. Horton built and lived in, and 323 was the second.

My conclusion that Love did not build 323 is confirmed by an article written by Olivia Maddrey McNeill. Her family rented the house in the 1930s and she did not think Love built it. Love, age 30 and living with his father E. G. Love in 1900, most certainly did not. Olivia said that Laura Walters, the woman who lived at 321 from 1896, said that she remembered the house being built when she "was a young bride" -- in 1897.