

## The Sanders-Myatt House

On March 21, 1822, two branches of one of Johnston County's most prominent families were brought together when Archibald "Baldy" Sanders, son of Colonel John and Jemima Sanders, married Delia Sanders, daughter of Reuben and Delilah Sanders.

On November 25, 1822, Colonel John Sanders deeded 1250 acres, nearly two square miles, to his son, Baldy, and it is believed that construction of the plantation home which has become known as the Sanders-Myatt House commenced that same year. While the Sanders-Myatt House is one of the oldest homes in Johnston County, amazingly, the childhood homes of both Baldy (Pleasant Grove) and Delia (White Oak Plantation) still stand within a few miles of the home they built together.

By 1860, the Sanders-Myatt House was the nexus of a plantation of more than 3100 acres. Census records indicate that the plantation produced corn, rye, sweet potatoes, honey, and beeswax and included a sizeable herd of swine. The building likely used as a plantation commissary and meat house where hams were stored still sits on the property. True to its agricultural roots, the Sanders-Myatt House continues to overlook a large tobacco farm.

After Baldy's death, the home passed to various members of the Sanders family. In 1885, David Sanders Avera sold the home to J. Walter Myatt. Myatt was prominent in Johnston County politics and served in the North Carolina House of Representatives. Myatt continued to operate the property as a farm which was featured prominently in photographs appearing in the 1909 *Illustrated Handbook of Clayton, NC and Vicinity*.

In October 1983, the North Carolina State Professional Review Committee for Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places approved for study several properties of historical or architectural significance. The Sanders-Myatt House was one of the properties identified as having great value to the architectural and historical development of Johnston County. The home was described as an "excellent and early example of the Greek Revival style in rural [Johnston County]."

A classic Greek Revival home, the Sanders-Myatt House features a large front porch supported by columns looking much as it did before the start of the Civil War. The fully renovated detached kitchen building still stands near the house as do other buildings including a large barn, which Margaret McLemore Lee of the Johnston County Historical Society confirms was built by her grandfather at the turn of the twentieth century. While no longer supporting a large plantation, the Sanders-Myatt House is still flanked by a beautiful pecan grove on one side and a large rolling lawn on the other. Brickwork and foundations from buildings long gone remain visible on the property as reminders of the plantation's long and treasured history.

As part of Johnston County's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, the Sanders-Myatt House was featured on a tour of prominent plantation homes. The Johnston county Heritage Center maintains a file on the house and includes the "Baldy Sanders Collection" of

family papers within their archives. Images of some of these records can be viewed on the Heritage Center's online archives. The house is also included in the online list of historic properties within Cleveland Township. (Go to [www.co.johnston.nc.us](http://www.co.johnston.nc.us). Click on "Visitors" then "Heritage Center").