

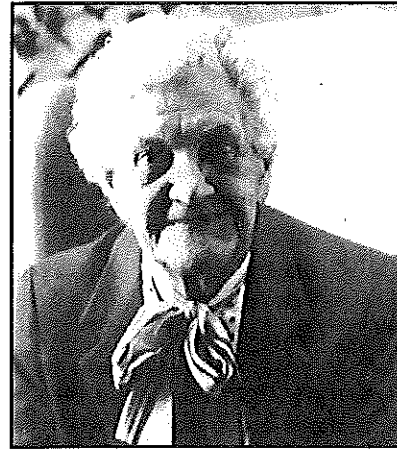
Recollections of Charlotte Yancey

Charlotte Yancey now lives at the Cedars Rest Home. Her recollections give us Charlottesville in the "roaring twenties" and a glimpse into the activities of some of the noted people who lived and visited in the Rugby Place neighborhood. She also mentions some of the notorious residents who are remembered in Charlottesville.

When I came here, my husband's family, the Yanceys, had had the same housekeeper for fifty-seven years. They kept a cow out at Gleason's pasture. Their address was 301 Ridge Street. My husband's name was Albert Yancey, Jr. Our son is Albert, III. My husband's family came to this place in 1909 from Barboursville (in a railroad car) and stayed, at first, at the Albemarle Hotel. I came here in 1927. My husband lived on Ridge Street until we were married, and then we sublet Dumas Malone's apartment for the summer school session. Daddy bought me a Buick coupe with a rumble seat, and I had a raccoon coat.

We got married the day after Christmas. Malone's apartment was in the Faculty Apartments by Beta Bridge. The building where my husband was in the car business is still on West Main. Later, we built our house on Rugby Place. Past the Unitarian Church there is a house with a natural slate roof which we own. There are two other stone houses (on the end of Rugby) which have copper gutters and slate roofs. My mother built them, and I rent those out.

We moved into our house two days after our son was born, in 1929. I had relatives visiting here at that time also! We had interesting neighbors--a writer for the *Saturday Evening Post*, a boy from Storrs, Connecticut, and Bernard Baruch's nephew and another boy from Maryland. They were cute young people. They would sometimes go to an estate in Caroline County to hunt. They would order food from Washington, D.C. restaurants and have it delivered on the trains. Then their bootleggers would come at all hours. This was during Prohibition. They were U.Va. students and the students dressed well then. Franklin Roosevelt, Jr. lived on the lower lot. At that time, he was having an affair with an Adelaide somebody. My children would climb trees to see what was going on when "Gramma" or "Mommy" would come. Franklin was married to a DuPont, and they had little Franklin. We had a collie that would cross the street to join them when Franklin and his wife would go for walks--along with an FBI man (one in a car, one walking). We



Charlotte Yancey

saw FDR off the day after FDR Jr. graduated. We've had Franklin and Coolidge here and they both made speeches here. Bobby Kennedy, Edward Kennedy, and Bobby, Jr. also were here in school. Across Rugby Road, there is a big white stucco house where FBI men stayed.

Sometimes FDR and Mrs. Roosevelt would visit. They came separately, the two women (both Mrs. Roosevelts, mother and wife) when they visited. Mrs. Mulholland lived at the end of Rugby Road. She was the one who wrote of the Kennedy days here. Five houses out on the left on Rugby Road is where William Faulkner lived. His wife and I were in the hospital, and we became good friends. In the early 1960s, Samuel Goldwin's son had a room out here on Rugby Road when he was in school. We took him to school because he didn't have a car.

FDR didn't come here too often, but as often as other fathers did who had responsible businesses. He stayed at Farmington (Country Club). Congressmen like to come here for weekends. Our club house (Farmington) was designed by Jefferson. The architecture is the same style as Monticello. Farmington was owned by the Wood family. Wendell Wood's sister, Mrs. R. O. Wade, lived over there and her brother used to live close by. The clubhouse was owned by the Wood family, when it was a home. Ridge Street was a merchant's street. Park Street consisted of bankers and doctors. Dr. Walter Reed used to live in the house next to the Methodist Church. There was rivalry in the town between the University and the townspeople.

Gleason's used to be the leading grocer here. Mr. Gleason died at the Cedars Rest Home in the late 70's. Mrs. Gleason had an apartment at the

Monticello Hotel and died recently. When Mr. Gleason was in grade school, he would jump fences and take grocery orders on the way to school. That school (Midway) was the whole school system. McGuffey was later built.

The other neighborhood on Rugby Place was called Rugby, after a huge house that faces Rosser Lane. Now it has been divided into several apartments. It was once owned by General Rosser. His daughter lives at Ivy. When we moved in, there were no houses on the left hand side. When we lived at the Rugby Faculty Apartments, most of the other residents (professors) were more mature than we were, and had two or three children. Well, they were amazed at our being able to build a house. All of a sudden ten or twelve of them were building houses up on Rugby!

The neighborhood was bordered by hillside and country. There is a house out there facing a strange way because it was built before Rugby was built (across from the church). Another house (Professor Balz's) was built of rock from Rugby Road (the first house across from Burnley Road). The neighbors were doctors, professors, and some who were on the Board of Supervisors. They bought two houses (due to bankruptcy) for less than \$10,000 at auction. The biggest house (929 Rugby) was built by my husband's uncle Albert. It has two driveways and a small cottage. Next door to that is Dr. Smallwood's house. Those days you didn't lock your doors. After a while we started to get prowlers and peepers and funny people. Notable people in the Rugby area included Stanford Turner's parents. We rented a house to Jake Ewald for three years.

The type of people living on Rugby has changed. People parade around in bathing suits, and they are noisy. There were problems because of zoning and there are drainage problems. There is a parking lot outside my back door. There is also a parking lot for a church on Rugby. And Route 29 North is a mess.

A Mr. Huntley built our house. There were lots of smaller contractors around also. We used to know Whitney Stone of Webster Brick.

I remember Margarita [who operated a bordello south of downtown]. She used to bring her "girls" (three or four) downtown to shop. Another of our "claims to fame" were two sisters (Longleigh) from Charlottesville who had THE house in Chicago. Margarita's house was torn down, and lots of money was found hidden there.

An event that changed the city was when they decided not to have parking after four p.m. on West Main Street. It put a Greek Restaurant out

of business. Parking became an issue when the U.Va. boys got cars. When the fraternities left, it had a negative effect on our neighborhood, but they dribbled back. When fraternities could not come further than University Circle, that was good.

I'm a charter member of Beta at the University. Dr. Sledd was one of my English professors and I used to take him out to Fry's Springs to get spring water. I remember Professor Stringfellow Barr. He had red hair and wore green suits and tried to "eliminate undesirables" from the University.

Blacks lived further out. I've never really been exposed to minorities, but I've always accepted them. We had live-in servants that were black. Later on, I had a white servant for thirty years. The Yanceys had a white servant, but there were black servants under her. We had a black boy who lived in the attic at one time. He took care of the yard and the car, and his name was Jimmy Fagin.