

BLYTHEWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

Blythewood's Oldest Buildings

Online Exhibit Panel Project

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There are a handful of buildings in Blythewood that were actually built before the Civil War. Two of these antebellum structures tell us a little about the popular architectural style during the 1850s, which was Greek Revival. This style sometimes emphasized a large triangle, or pediment, style porch roof with solid square columns. Another important feature was symmetry. As you look at the buildings, the left and right sides of the front wall, or façade, are identical. The way this is achieved is often through central door on houses.

These central doors almost always opened into a hallway. Since there was no window in the hallways and residents relied on candles or oils and gases for lighting, the hallway would have been somewhat dark. A way to fix that problem was the addition of glass around the door in the form of vertical "sidelights" on either side of the door, and a horizontal "transom" along the top of the door. You can see this on two of the building below.

The three surviving buildings in Blythewood from the 1850s are pictured here and are featured in the museum. Born in the period of slavery, these buildings are a physical tie to the area's antebellum population. In Sandy Level Baptist Church, the slave gallery is still inside the building, as are the side doorways that these parishioners entered. Survivors of the Civil War, although the Hoffman House was ransacked, the buildings witnessed emancipation, Reconstruction, the growth of Blythewood's population and the new train depot in 1903.

These buildings are not far from the Blythewood Historical Society and Museum if you'd like to drive by to see the outside in person, and the Hoffman House is now Town Hall. Ask us for directions during your next visit. *Thank you to Jim McLean for the use of the images. Thank you to SC Humanities for funding.*



S.C. Dept. of Archives and History collection, provided by Jim McLean

e.1855

George Hoffman House - 171 Langford Road

Likely built in 1855 for George P. Hoffman, this is the oldest surviving building in Blythewood. The original portion is the central section, in a Greek Revival style. There are several later additions, but the oldest section remains largely intact. A native of North Carolina, George Hoffman farmed 34 acres with six enslaved people in 1860. By 1870 he operated a sawmill with about twelve employees.



Early photo of church, courtesy of Jim McLean

1856

Sandy Level Baptist Church 408 Blythewood Road

An antebellum church, built in 1856, the Sandy Level Baptist Church features an unusual recessed porch with colossal columns. Slaves were members of the church here and worshipped from the balcony level above the main floor. As the congregation grew, they added on to the rear of the building.



Photo by Jim McLean

e.1859

Boney-Hykil House 162 Langford Road

One of the few remaining pre-Civil War houses in Blythewood, the Boney-Hykil House was likely built in 1859. Its front door has sidelights and transom, and the front of the house is symmetrical, with a pair of windows on either side of the central entry.