

GREETINGS FROM GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA THE GOLDEN AGE OF POST CARDS, 1900-1930

*Richard D. Sawyer**

Card 1: GREETINGS FROM GREENVILLE, S. C.

Card 2: VIEWS OF GREENVILLE, S. C.

Old Furman, the Ottaray Hotel, the Woodside Building, the Camperdown Mill No. 2, the Southern Railway Depot, most of us can remember some of these Greenville landmarks. How about the Record Building, the third Court House in Greenville, the 1817 and 1829 Vardry McBee mills at the Reedy River Falls? Very few, if any, can remember these landmarks in Greenville. This afternoon, with the help of old Greenville post cards, we will explore Greenville in the first quarter of the 20th century and take a look at these and many more historic landmarks that were a part of Greenville's past.

The history of post cards dates back to 1869, when the Austrian government issued the first postal cards. It was not until 1873 that the United States issued its first postal cards. In 1894 the first picture post cards were printed in England. In 1898, the United States government allowed private printers to print post cards. This opened the way for private mailing, souvenir, and greetings post cards. The earliest post card with a post mark I have of Greenville in my collection is 1904.

Card 3: PENDLETON STREET IN 1915

We will begin on Pendleton Street in 1915. The house on the left, with the white columns, is former Governor Martin F. Ansel's home. Martin Ansel was governor of South Carolina from 1907-1911. Before Governor Ansel moved into this house it was the

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home of Absolom Blythe, the grandfather of Lauriston Blythe. In the background we can see the Pendleton Street Methodist Church.

**Card 4: THE CORBETT HOME
FOR NERVOUS DISEASES AND ADDICTIONS, 1909**

Located on Memminger Street, the Corbett Home was a hospital for nervous diseases and addictions. Sold in February 1911, for \$22,000, the home became the nucleus of what was to become the Greenville General Hospital. The new city hospital opened on January 10, 1912.

**Card 5: PENDLETON STREET METHODIST CHURCH
ST. PAUL'S METHODIST CHURCH, 1915**

On this 1915 post card we can see St. Paul's Methodist Church, looking down Pendleton Street toward Main Street. The triangle at Pendleton, Vardry and Anderson Streets was purchased by the Methodists on October 11, 1899 for a new location of the church which was then located on Greene Avenue. On February 4, 1909, a building committee was formed and St. Paul's was constructed on this site. On September 3, 1911, the new church building was dedicated.

Card 6: SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 1915

This is a 1915 card of the Second Presbyterian Church located at the corner of River Street and Rhett Street. The first brick on this new church was laid on May 27, 1909. On January 19, 1913, the new church was dedicated.

Card 7: THE FALLS, 1907

This is the Reedy River Falls between 1889 and 1892. The two Vardry McBee mills along their water sluice can be seen on the left. In the center we see the 1889 steel bridge that replaced the 1871 Gower Wooden Bridge that crossed the Reedy River on Main Street. Behind the bridge we see the Gower, Cox and Markley Carriage Factory and the First Baptist Church. Note the 1892 Federal Post Office has not been constructed.



Card 8: REEDY RIVER FALLS, 1905

This is how the Reedy River looked around 1905. We can see the two Vardry McBee mills, the Falls and the Camperdown Mill No. 2. The building above the Falls is the office building for Camperdown Mill No. 2.

Card 9: THE REEDY RIVER FALLS, 1900

This is how the Reedy River Falls looked in 1900.

Card 10: REEDY RIVER FALLS, (FLOOD) 1910

The Reedy River at flood stage in 1909, after five inches of rain fell on June 4, 1909.

Card 11: REEDY RIVER FALLS IN WINTER, 1910

The photograph for this 1910 post card of the Reedy River was probably taken during the winter of 1896. As reported in the *Greenville Daily News* on January 30, 1897, "ice on the Reedy River was frozen over completely from bank to bank thick enough to sustain a boy's weight for some distance."

Card 12: THE OLD MILL AND THE NEW GREENVILLE, 1910

On this 1910 post card we can see the two old Vardry McBee mills along with the Camperdown Mill No. 2. Note the large

amount of water that is formed because of the dam on the lower Reedy River Falls.

Card 13: MILL SCENE SHOWING THE OLD AND THE NEW, 1914

This is the Camperdown Mill No. 1 built in 1873. It was also known as the Vardry McBee Mill. The homes on the hill are the mill village for the Camperdown Mill No. 1. Note the ruins of the old Vardry McBee Mill on the right. This mill was probably built on the site of the first mill built on the Reedy River Falls around 1768 by Richard Pearis.

Card 14: REEDY RIVER FROM MAIN STREET VIADUCT, 1911

Taken from the new Main Street Bridge in 1911, this is how the Reedy River looked in its heyday. We can see Camperdown No. 1 on the lower falls and Camperdown No. 2 on the upper falls.

Card 15: MILL DAM, 1913

On this 1913 post card we are below the Camperdown Mill No. 1 looking west. On the left we can see water flowing from the water sluice which carried the water from the nine foot dam, located above the lower falls, to the water wheel of the Camperdown Mill No. 1. From left to right above the dam we can see the Coca Cola Warehouse, Falls Cottage, Chicora College, the 1829 Vardry McBee mill and the cotton warehouse for the Camperdown Mill No. 2.

Card 16: LOOKING UP THE REEDY RIVER, 1909

On this 1909 post card we can see the 1889 bridge that crossed the Reedy River on Main Street. On the right we can see the Markley Hardware Company and the 1892 Federal Post Office. A note of interest is that in 1905 it was a five dollar fine if you did not walk your horse across the Reedy River Bridge.

**Card 17: LOOKING UP THE REEDY RIVER
FROM THE MAIN STREET BRIDGE, 1909**

Taken from the 1889 bridge these were some of the buildings of the Gower, Cox and Markley Carriage Factory. Note the

Sauer Building.

Card 18: MILL AND DAM, 1913

The Reedy River in 1913. Note the new bridge (1911) has been constructed. The cotton warehouse for the Camperdown Mill No. 2 is under construction.



Card 19: FURMAN UNIVERSITY, 1909

Located on University Ridge, where the County Square is now located (1992), the Furman Academy moved to Greenville in 1851 from Winnsboro, S. C.

Card 20: JOHN W. GEER HALL, FURMAN UNIVERSITY

The land for the Furman campus was purchased from Vardry McBee for \$3750.

Card 21: GYMNASIUM, FURMAN UNIVERSITY

In 1866, the name of Furman Academy was changed to Furman University.

Card 22: THE REFECTORY, FURMAN UNIVERSITY

Furman remained on this site until it relocated on the Poinsett Highway in 1958.

Card 23: CHICORA COLLEGE, 1910

Chicora College was a Presbyterian College for women. Built in 1895 on McBee Terrace, the site of the home of Alexander McBee. Alexander McBee was the son of Vardry McBee.

**Card 24: CHICORA COLLEGE
(FROM CAMPERDOWN WAY), 1910**

In 1915, Chicora College moved to Columbia. The old campus site was bought by C. C. Good and operated as the Colonial Apartments. On the morning of April 26, 1919, a fire was discovered in the dome. In what was called the largest fire in the history of Greenville until that time, Old Chicora burned.

**Card 26**

Card 25: CHICORA COLLEGE, 1910

The fire was so intense that the Coca Cola Warehouse across Main Street caught fire and burned. A house as far away as Falls Street had its roof set on fire.

Card 26: MAIN STREET VIADUCT, 1915

This is how Main Street looked in 1915. We can see the new (1911) bridge that crosses the Reedy River. On the left is the Greenville Carriage Factory. We can see all the way up Main Street to the Confederate Monument and the Ottaray Hotel. This card was published by the Carpenter Brothers' Drug Store.

Card 27: MAIN STREET BRIDGE, 1915

On this 1915 post card we can see the cotton warehouse on the left. On the right we can see Chicora College.

Card 28: NEWS BUILDING, 1915

Located at the corner of Main Street and East Broad Street was the *Greenville News* Building. A sign above the door reads: Peace Printing Co. In the building on the corner was a lunch room known as the "Greasy Corner."

Card 29: SOUTHEASTERN LIFE BUILDING, 1915

Across from The *News* Building was the Southeastern Life Insurance Company. In 1910 this lot was purchased for \$250 a front foot. On the 26th of March 1910, Southeastern Life moved from Spartanburg into its new building in Greenville. In 1931, Southeastern Life was acquired by the Liberty Life Insurance Company.

Card 30: POST OFFICE AND CUSTOMS HOUSE, 1909

Built in 1892, this is the old Federal Post Office, which was located on the north corner of Main Street and West Broad Street.

**Card 31: UNITED STATES COURT HOUSE
AND POST OFFICE, 1912**

In 1972, the old Post Office was torn down to make way for

the new City Hall. When anyone speaks of the history of Greenville, there are three landmarks which come to mind. They are the old Post Office, the Record Building and the Ottaray Hotel. Just past the Post Office we can see Greenville's third Courthouse.

Card 32: MASONIC TEMPLE, 1915

Adjacent to the old Court House, the Masonic Temple was built in 1910. In 1911, the fourth and fifth floors were leased to the Parker Cotton Mills Company.



Card 33: TWO SOUTH CAROLINA PRODUCTS: A COUNTY DISPENSARY AND YOKED OXEN AS A MOTIVE POWER, 1903

Located across the street from the Federal Post Office and the Masonic Temple was the County Dispensary. In the same building was an armory for Co. A, 1st SCVI. By 1906 all dispensaries in the county closed.

Card 34: THE RECORD BUILDING, 1910

Built in 1824, the Record Building is the most notable landmark in Greenville's history. Serving as Greenville's second courthouse, the building may have been designed by Robert Mills.

**Card 35: CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUILDING, HOME
OFFICE OF THE LIBERTY LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY, 1930**

In 1924, the Record Building was torn down and the Chamber of Commerce built a new eleven-story building on this site.

Card 36: CIGAR FACTORY, 1911

Located on Court Street, behind the Liberty Life Building, was the Cigar Factory. It was built in 1903 on land purchased for \$2000. By 1906, according to the *Greenville Daily News*, the Cigar Factory was employing 400 girls at an average wage of \$60.00 per month. By November 1907, the Cigar Factory was turning out one million cigars a month.

**Card 37: MAIN STREET LOOKING NORTH (3RD
COURTHOUSE), 1908**

This is Main Street at Court Street looking north in 1908. On the left we can see Greenville's third Courthouse, built in 1855, and the Mansion House Hotel built in 1824.

Card 38: EXCEPTIONAL SCENE, 1909

On this 1909 post card we see the 1824 Mansion House. On the right, where Carpenter Brothers' Drug Store is now located, is the Greenville Undertakers operated by MacAfee and Ramseur.

Card 39: THE POINSETT HOTEL, 1930

In 1924, the Mansion House was torn down and the Poinsett Hotel was built.

Card 40: MAIN STREET, 1930

Another view looking north up Main Street in 1908. On the left is Carpenter Brothers' Drug Store located next to the Mansion House. This was the first location of Carpenter Brothers'. It remained at this location from 1889 until it moved across the street in 1925. At one time the Carpenter Brothers ran five drug stores in Greenville with locations on Main Street, one at Woodside Mill, one at Brandon Mill, one across from the Southern Railway Depot, and one on North Main Street called the Ottaray Drug Store.

Card 41: FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 1915

At McBee Avenue we will take a left. Our first stop will be the First Baptist Church, which was built in 1857 on land given by Vardry McBee. This is how the First Baptist Church looked in 1915.

**Card 42: PROSPECT HILL, 1915**

Located at the head of McBee Ave. was the Lemuel James Alston Home, built about 1797. In 1815, Alston sold the house and 11,028 acres to Vardry McBee of Lincolnton, North Carolina. In 1835, McBee moved into the home and remained until his death in 1864. The house was torn down in 1920.

Card 43: CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, 1910

This is the old Central School which was built in 1888. It was also known as the East End School; around 1916 it became the second Greenville High School. The first Greenville High School, according to the City Directory of 1876, was located on Pendleton Street.

Card 44: GREENVILLE HIGH SCHOOL, 1930

After the Alston/McBee Home was torn down in 1920, a new Greenville High School was constructed on the site. This

building served as Greenville High School until 1938, when a new school was built on Augusta Road.

Card 45: WOODSIDE BUILDING, 1923

Built in 1923, the Woodside Building was at the time of its construction the tallest building in the state of South Carolina. Built by the Woodside brothers Edward, David, Robert and John T. Woodside, this seventeen-story building was used as a bank and office building. It was located on Main Street between McBee Avenue and Washington Street.

Card 46: MAIN STREET, LOOKING SOUTH, 1910

This is Main Street at the corner of Main and Washington looking south. On the left we can see the Goodlet Building. The Peoples' Bank was on the bottom floor; on the second and third floors was the Wilson Hotel.

Card 47: IMPERIAL HOTEL, 1930

Located at the corner of West Washington and Richardson Streets, the Imperial Hotel was built in 1912. The right section is the original hotel. The other two sections were added on. Later the Imperial became the Hotel Greenville.

Card 48: FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 1915

Across from the Imperial Hotel is the First Presbyterian Church, which was built on land given by Vardry McBee and has been at this location since 1851. This building was built in 1883, and the second tower was added in 1912.

Card 49: PIEDMONT AND NORTHERN TERMINAL, 1915

This is the Piedmont and Northern Railway Terminal and Warehouse in 1915. It was located at the corner of Academy and West Washington Streets. On November 2, 1915, the first Textile Exposition was held in Greenville in the P & N Warehouse.

Card 50: TEXTILE HALL, 1923

Across the street from the P & N Warehouse was Textile Hall,

Mr. C. A. David's house about a mile from town. I bought it at his store. He said he turned the hose on the tree when it was freezing weather."

Card 59: UNUSUAL SCENE IN THE SUNNY SOUTH, 1908

Taken from 107 James Street looking toward the Poinsett Highway. We see how the view looked from behind the frozen tree, looking toward the Margaret Home which was operated as an orphanage.

Card 60: MAIN STREET LOOKING NORTH, 1905

The next three cards show how the block between Washington and College Streets looked between 1905 and 1920. The photograph for this card appears to have been taken about 1905.

Card 61: MAIN STREET, 1910

The same block in 1910. Some of the businesses located in this block according to the 1910 City Directory were Smith & Bristoe Clothing, Traxler Real Estate Company, the American Shoe Company, William Hale Jewelers, J. A. Cureton & Company (bankers), Reynolds & Earl (druggist), and the Bruce and Doster Drug Company.

Card 62: MAIN STREET FROM WASHINGTON, 1920

This is how Main Street from Washington looked in 1920. We now see S. H. Kress & Company has located at 113-115 on the left side of the street.

Card 63: MAIN STREET LOOKING SOUTH, 1905

This is the same block looking south from Coffee Street about 1905.

Card 64: AT REST, GREENVILLE, 1902

In the background we can see J. A. Bull & Company. This was one of four grocery store's owned by Mr. Bull. Next door is the Carolina Hardware Company.



Card 65: UPPER MAIN STREET, 1908

This post card shows Main Street and West North Street in 1908. On the corner is the office of Earle and Earle (physicians). On this block were the residences of Eugene Bates, J. R. Smith, W. E. Scott, Hyman Endel, Alexander MacBeth and D. W. Ebaugh.

Card 66: BUNCOMBE STREET METHODIST CHURCH, 1909

This is Buncombe Street Methodist Church located at the corner of Buncombe and Richardson Streets. This church building was constructed in 1873.

Card 67: CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1915

This is Christ Church, located on Church Street, in 1915. One of four churches built on land donated by Vardry McBee, this is the only church with a cemetery. Vardry McBee is interned in the cemetery. This building was constructed in 1851-1854.

Card 68: THE CONFEDERATE MONUMENT, 1904

This is the Confederate Monument which once stood in the middle of Main Street at the top end. This is the earliest post-marked card I have seen of Greenville (1904). I have found one reference to the Confederate Monument being located at the Courthouse. It may be possible that this is the second location of

which was built in 1917 at the cost of \$85,000. On December 10, 1917, the second Textile Exposition opened in the new Textile Hall building. There were over 185 exhibitors.

Card 51: ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH, 1912

This is the second location for St. Mary's Catholic Church. The old wooden church was moved to this location on West Washington and Lloyd Street. In 1905, this new brick church was built.

Card 52: WEST WASHINGTON STREET LOOKING EAST, 1913

On this 1913 post card of West Washington Street we can see St. Mary's Catholic Church on the left. In the background we can see the Imperial Hotel before additions were made. Note the street car tracks going to and from the Southern Railway Depot.

Card 53: SACRED HEART ACADEMY, 1908

The Ursuline Academy of the Sacred Heart was founded in 1900 and was run by the Ursuline Sisters. The school was located at 207 Hampton Avenue behind St. Mary's Catholic Church. The girl students were boarded at the Academy. In addition to the regular curriculum, each student was required to read a certain number of books per year. The Academy closed in 1931.

Card 54: SOUTHERN RAILWAY DEPOT, 1910

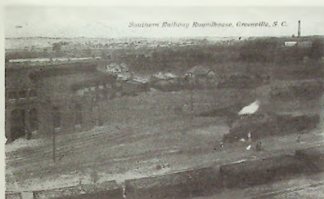
At the end of West Washington was the Southern Railway Depot, which opened in December 1905.

Card 55: SOUTHERN RAILWAY PASSENGER STATION, 1910

Around 1912, the tower was removed.

**Card 56: SOUTHERN RAILWAY YARDS
AND COAL CHUTE, 1910**

Taken from the Hampton Avenue bridge, this 1910 post card shows the Southern Railway Yards and coal chute. This is another Carpenter Brothers' card.



Card 57: SOUTHERN RAILWAY ROUNDHOUSE

In 1906 a round house was added to the Southern Railway Depot. It operated until 1954.



Card 58: WINTER IN THE LAP OF SPRING, 107 JAMES STREET, 1908

Before we return to Main Street, we will take a look at 107 James Street. This photograph for this 1908 post card was taken in the winter of 1898. On the back of the card is written: "This is

Mr. C. A. David's house about a mile from town. I bought it at his store. He said he turned the hose on the tree when it was freezing weather."

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the monument.

Card 69: THE CONFEDERATE MONUMENT, 1908

Erected by the Daughters of the Confederacy in 1892, the Confederate Monument was dedicated in honor of the Greenville men who served the Confederate cause. To the left is the home of D. W. Ebaugh.

Card 70: MAIN STREET LOOKING SOUTH, 1910

From the top of main Street we can see the Confederate Monument in the center of the street. It had to be removed in 1924, because it became a traffic hazard. It is now located on Main Street in front of Springwood Cemetery.

Card 71: OTTARAY HOTEL, 1910

On June 16, 1909, a new hotel opened at the top of Main Street. This was the Ottaray Hotel.

Card 72: THE COXE RESIDENCE, NORTH MAIN STREET, 1905

This is the old Waddy Thompson home. Built in the 1820's, it was also known as the Coxe home.

Card 73: POINSETT CLUB, 1915

From 1913 to 1929, the Coxe house was operated as the Poinsett Club.

Card 74: COLLEGE STREET FROM THE OTTARAY HOTEL, 1910

As we look down College Street in 1910, we see the Ebaugh home on the left corner. On the right side of College, in the background, the Greenville Female College can be seen.

Card 75: GREENVILLE FEMALE COLLEGE, 1905

The Greenville Female College was organized in 1854. In 1857 the main building was constructed. There were two additions to the main building, one in 1887 and the other in 1901. In 1914, the name was changed to the Greenville Woman's College.



Card 76: GREENVILLE FEMALE COLLEGE, 1908

In the 1930's, the Woman's College became a part of Furman University. It has been said that at the turn of the century and up until the late teens, it was not uncommon to find sheep and horses on the lawn of the College.

Card 77: GREENVILLE FEMALE COLLEGE, 1908

In a 1905 advertisement for the College, I found the following: "Although this college has been established since 1854 there has never been a death among the students in any scholastic year, a fact which argues well not only for the superior climatic and health conditions of Greenville, but also for the hygienic conditions that prevail in the college, and the supervision that is exercised over the pupils."