Biography of Reverend Charles William Rogers
(1809-1861)

Submitted
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REVEREND CHARLES WILLIAM ROGERS
(1809-1861)

"The friends of the Rev. C. W. Rogers are invited to attend his funeral at his late residence No. 2 Monterey Square, this morning May 10, at 10:00 A.M."¹

In reflection, Charles W. Rogers Jr. was born February 19, 1909, the eldest son of a well-to-do Bryan County Planter. His father, Charles William Rogers Sr., a doctor, originally came from Connecticut² and his mother Ann West Rogers from McIntosh County.³

The early life of Rev. Charles W. Rogers is very obscure.⁴ Having been born into a wealthy family and becoming a Minister, I am going to assume he was well educated. He married Caroline M. Rogers a native of Connecticut. To them four children were born; Anna, Carrie, Georgia and Charles W. Rogers. Indications are that Anna was the oldest of the four children, named for her grandmother. Already married at the time of her father's death, she was also first child mentioned in her father's will. Anna married Dr. Joseph West. Daughter Carrie married Samuel Stiles of Savannah. Two months after the death of her father Georgia Georgia married Peyton L. Wade of Screven County July 16, 1861.⁵ Georgia was later widowed and in 1865, she married Fraser H. Grant Jr., a local bookkeeper. Charles W. Rogers, son of Rev. Charles W. Rogers died in 1863, at the age of 18, two years after the death of his father.

Dr. Charles W. Rogers Sr. died in 1849.⁶ The estate left to Charles Rogers and brother William was known as Kilkenney.
Kilkenny is located on the Belfast River and running along highway 14, which runs south of highway 17 in Richmond Hill, Bryan County Georgia. Much of the land which was left to William was later sold to Rev. C. W. Rogers.

Kilkenny appeared to be a rather large plantation from which Rev. Rogers, it seems, made most of his money in that he had no other occupation outside of being a land owner and stockholder in banks and rail roads.

Property inventory of Kilkenny, the estate located in Bryan County at the time of Rev. Rogers death in 1861, was estimated to be worth $93,793.00. The plantation housed 147 slaves worth about $69,959.00. Plantation utensils and stock were worth in the neighborhood of $23,834.00. Some items that went to make up the plantation were:

102 stock cattle $8.00 per head
15 ploughs $3.00 each
12 pairs of trace chain, collard and harness $3.00 each
3 single horse carts $20.00 each
1 Toso horse wagon $35.00
2 ox carts $40.00 each
1 carriage and buggy $100.00
13 mules $130.00 each
2 plantation horses $50.00
4 head horses $350.00
1 timber carriage $25.00.

The Kilkenny plantation has had several owners since the death of Rev. Charles W. Rogers in 1861. Part of the estate has been divided into sub-divisions. Lots are being sold for between $20,000 and $23,000 dollars. The houses built on those lots begin at $60,000 dollars. A fishing camp and a trailer park with lots selling for $16,000 are located on Kilkenny property.
It may have been that the Rogers came to Savannah about 1850 or 1851. Caroline Rogers' name is listed as being a member of the Independent Presbyterian Church in 1851. Reverend Rogers was listed as a pew holder, but not a member. In July 1851, when Dr. Preston, Minister of Independent Presbyterian Church, asked for a leave of absents until October of that year, the Rev. Charles W. Rogers offered to supply the pulpit and perform the parochial duties without expense to the congregation. The trustees of the church accepted his offer. ⁸

Reverend Rogers proved to be a satisfactory substitute for Dr. Preston. The trustees and congregation wishing to show their gratitude, as he had not taken a salary, decided to procure a handsome family Bible at the cost of sixty dollars for him. He was informed of the gift and wrote a letter of thanks before the Bible had been delivered. ⁹

At the death of Dr. Preston in 1856, Rev. C. W. Rogers was asked by the trustees of the church to fill the pulpit through the summer or until another appointment could be made. It was understood that Rogers did not expect nor care to receive a salary for his services to the church. It was felt that he would be satisfied with a simple expression of gratitude from the people. The trustees authorized the chairman to procure a piece of silver plate to cost about $200.00, a silver pitcher costing $223.60 was presented to Rev. Charles W. Rogers. ¹⁰ This was the silver pitcher, Rev. Rogers willed to his daughter Anna West upon the death of his wife. ¹¹

Several pieces of property were brought and sold in Chatham
County by Rev. Togers between 1852 and 1859. Two lots which came into his possession in 1852, were used to build twin houses in 1858. These two lots were located at 423-425 Bull Street on Monterey Square.

Rev. and Mrs. Rogers lived in the southern half of the house with a household staff of about fourteen slaves. Daughter Anna and Dr. Joseph West lived in the Northern half of the house now owned by Mr. and Mrs. L. Adler and Mr. and Mrs. Denny.

At the time of his death Rev. Rogers had accumulated $52,270.00 in property and shares of stock in Chatham County. Through purchase and inheritance Rev. Rogers was worth more than $146,063.00 as shown by inventories taken of properties owned in Bryan and Chatham Counties.

Caroline Rogers died, December 8, 1886, in Ashville, North Carolina at the age of 74, some 25 years after the death of her husband. She is buried in Laurel Grove Cemetery beside her husband, son Charles, son-in-law Joseph West and daughter Anna West. Until her death in 1886, she lived with her daughter Georgia and son-in-law Fraser Grant at 107 Bull Street, Savannah, Georgia.
ABSTRACT

The biography of Rev. Charles W. Rogers was compiled after having researched documents found in both Bryan and Chatham County Court Houses, records in the Georgia Historical Society, old cemetery lots and interviews.

Rev. Charles W. Rogers Jr. was born February 19, 1809 to Ann West Rogers and Dr. Charles W. Rogers of Bryan County, Georgia. He married Caroline M. Rogers and fathered four children by her.

The Rogers family may have moved to Savannah about 1850 or 1851 as indicated by records of the Independent Presbyterian Church. Caroline Rogers was listed as a member and Rev. Rogers as a pew holder. On two occasion he served as substitute pastor for the church.

Through the inheritance of Kilkenny in Bryan County and the purchase of additional land and shares of stock, Rev. Rogers came to acquire more than $146,063.00 before his death in 1861. He was buried in Laurel Grove Cemetery along with other members of his family.
NOTES


2. Bryan Neck Presbyterian Cemetery, Neck Road, Richmond Hill, Bryan County, Georgia.


4. Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church records which may contain baptismal and marriage records of Reverend Charles Rogers are located at Montreat College, Archive Department; Montreat, North Carolina.

5. Marriage Records Abstracts, Historical Society, Chatham County, Georgia 1851-1866.


9. Ibid p. 68

10. Ibid p. 73

11. Charles W. Rogers' Will


13. Tax Digest, Chatham County, Georgia.

14. Charles W. Rogers, Property Inventory; Chatham County Court House File No. 176.

15. Laurel Grove Cemetery Records.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Bryan County Court House, Deed Book E. Pembroke, Georgia.

Bryan County Court House Deed Book G. Pembroke, Georgia.

Bryan Neck Presbyterian Cemetery, Neck Road, Richmond Hill, Georgia.

Charles Rogers Will, Chatham County Court House; File No. 176, Savannah, Georgia.

Chatham County Court House Deed Book 3-R, Savannah, Georgia.

Chatham County Court House Deed Book 3-5, Savannah, Georgia.

Daily Morning News, Friday, May 10, 1861.

Laurel Grove Cemetery Records, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

Marriage Records Abstracts Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia, 1851-1866.

Savannah City Directory, Savannah, Georgia 1867.

Savannah City Directory, Savannah, Georgia 1885.
FOLLOW UP INFORMATION

Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church Records, Montreat College, Archives Department, Montreat North Carolina.

Martin, A. A. Post Office Box 40; Richmond Hill, Georgia 31324.