

## BARROW HOUSE

*land letter of 1827*  
The original deed to the Barrow House property is ~~from the Indians~~ to Mr. Seborn Smith. The Reverend James Barrow moved to the area around 1840 and purchased the lot which included about 2 acres from Smith for \$5.00 per acre. Reverend James built a cabin on the lot where the current Dr. Smith's brick house stands. There was also a cabin built on the lot where the Barrow House now stands and later Rev. Barrow evidently lived here. The property was sold by Rev. James to his son James R. Barrow, a Civil War veteran, who in turn left the property, which had been greatly expanded, to his son, John William ("J. W.") Barrow.

In 1887 John William married Miss Martha Ellen Lovvorn, daughter of Colonel W. D. Lovvorn the owner of Lovvorn Mills. They lived in the cottage where the Dr. Smith house stands for their first 14 years of marriage then, in 1901, they tore down the cabin on the Barrow House site and built the current Barrow House which stands today. A picture of the "new" house is enclosed. Note the large size of the oak trees in the 1901 picture.

The house was a two-story Victorian of the Steam Boat Gothic style having upper and lower porches with decorative railings and originally had a gable on the front and also on the east side which contained a captain's wheel. The front gable was destroyed by the 1934 tornado but the east-side one remains today.

The property had all the usual out-buildings including a smoke house, cooling cellar, wash shed, two barns one for the horses and mules and one for Miss Ellen's cows and carriage or buggy, two good wells, one on the back porch and one in the cow lot and two servant houses. A carbide gas generating unit was installed in a little brick house built for safety reasons away from the big house and gas lights were used in the early days. Electricity was added as soon as it was available in Bowdon as were indoor bath rooms.

J. W. and Ellen raised their family in the Barrow House and lived there until their deaths, J. W. in 1951. The house was out of necessity modified numerous times as "Miss Ellen" had to make ends meet by running a boarding and rooming house after J. W.'s businesses failed during the depression. She boarded students from Bowdon College until the college closed then took in traveling salesmen and others and the "Barrow House" became widely known for a great place to eat and a clean place to stay. The house was later broken up into several different apartments.

After J. W.'s death, the property was sold and for a few years no Barrows lived in the house. Soon, J. W.'s grandson David (Buddy) and wife Jo purchase the property back and it became a "Barrow House" again. The house was modernized somewhat but still kept the great features of heart pine floors and ceilings and beautiful fire places and mantles, even the original pearl button light switches which came with the electric lights remain.

A couple of the old oak trees remain, one which is reported to be one of the two largest in Georgia. Jo Barrow, as sturdy as the oak, lives in the Barrow House today.

Hugh W. Barrow    September 29, 2004