

## THE OLD BOSTWICK MANSION.

### Occupants and Environments of a Homestead Over a Century Old.

One of the most ancient and picturesque homesteads in this section is the "Bostwick mansion," more generally and familiarly known as the "Stephen mansion," beautifully and prominently situated on the main road leading to Benning's, D. C., in the southeastern part of Bladensburg, and which is visible with the naked eye for a radius of several miles. This building was constructed in the year 1746, at a time when the surrounding country must have been a wild and uncultivated region, by Mr. Christopher Lowndes, the grandfather of Mr. Benjamin O. Lowndes, a very old and much respected citizen of Bladensburg, whose knowledge of the history of the latter place is very complete.

The original occupants of this dwelling-house were Mr. Christopher Lowndes, Judge John Stephen, and Nicholas Carroll Stephen. Judge John Stephen, the grandfather of the present owners of this place, was an eminent jurist and a man of note in his day. He was a native of St. Mary's county; his wife was Julianna Jennings Brice, daughter of Col. James Brice, of Annapolis, Md. He was chief justice of the First judicial district of Maryland, serving in that capacity with great ability from the year 1822 to the time of his death, which occurred at Annapolis, Md., June 26, 1844, where he was attending the court of appeals, of which august body he was also an associate justice. He was sixty-four years of age when he died. The judge for a long time occupied the Bostwick House, which he purchased when quite young, to which he was much attached, and upon which he caused improvements to be made suitable to the times in which he lived.

Nicholas Carroll Stephen, upon whom the inheritance descended as sole heir, was, like his father, a very prominent lawyer and much respected citizen. During his life he represented the people of this District in the legislature, and was said to have been benevolent and public-spirited. His untimely demise occurred June 10, 1883, at the old homestead, his wife, and mother of three surviving children passing away on the following morning. This happy couple occupied the old mansion almost their entire lives, making many modern improvements and beautifying the place as time went on. Their children, Benjamin D. Stephen, Julianna Jennings Brice Stephen, and John Stephen are all living and prosperous. Mr. Benjamin Stephen, the oldest of the trio, has a beautiful farm just east of Riverdale station, Md. Mrs. Jules Dieudonne, nee Stephen, married Mr. Jules Dieudonne while abroad some ten years since. Mr. Dieudonne is an artist of high repute. They have three bright and handsome children, and are the sole occupants of the old place. Mr. John Stephen, the youngest of the children, resides in Washington, D. C. About twelve years since he married Miss Emily Fuller, the charming daughter of Mr. William H. Fuller, of Hyattsville, by whom he had two very pretty little girls, Maggie and Louise. About six years after their marriage his wife died, and he subsequently married Miss Carrie Thompson, the amiable daughter of Mr. Lewis L. Thompson, of the *Army and Navy Register*, Washington, D. C.

Natural and artificial developments have for years combined to stamp upon this romantic old place our ideal of a delightful spot, and to infuse one with a spirit of peace and tranquility. In the front of the mansion is a garden of rare beauty and value, abounding in well-shaped and charming arbors, and containing exquisite fruits, plants, flowers, &c. In the rear is the kitchen garden and the outbuildings for the keeping of cattle, horses, and swine, and the storing of food for their sustenance. These buildings are alike commodiously and substantially constructed, a careful and constant surveillance of the same by competent attendants serving always to render them inviting to visitors.