

The Victorian House: Ephraim R. Brumby House

On July 13, 1886 the “Athens Dirt” column of the *Weekly Banner-Watchman* reported that among the previous day’s sales at the courthouse, the administrator of the Blanton Hill estate had sold the vacant lot on Pulaski Street, “a beautiful building lot and well located,” to Mr. George Booth for \$1,275. The next year George N. Booth and J. M. Booth sold their half-acre lot adjoining the Blanton Hill house to Ephraim R. Brumby for \$1,500 (FF:49). The following month the newspaper reported that many citizens were improving their property and commented on the “new and stylish house of Dr. E. R. Brumby to be built on Pulaski Street.” Described as “two-story frame of the latest pattern,” it was projected to be “one of the most desirable homes in the city.” The plans were in the hands of contractors, awaiting bids.⁷⁸

Just four years previous to building this house Dr. Brumby, a brother of John Wallis Brumby of the Church-Waddel-Brumby House, had been widowed and left with two daughters and two sons. Born in Athens in 1835, he was in the drug business here for years and his store was “each evening the meeting place of a circle of loyal friends who esteemed it a privilege to be one of the charmed fraternity of his companionship. . . . His sterling nature inspired confidence and held the loyalty and devotion of those who knew him. Athens is still richer and better from having had him in the years ago as one of her citizens.”⁷⁹ Brumby’s Drug Store, 114 College Avenue, could offer evening hospitality to visitors because on December 12, 1896, it became the first Athens business to have electric lights.⁸⁰

Dr. Brumby was an Athens resident until late in life when he moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee, to be near his children. His body was brought back to Athens to be buried beside his wife, parents and siblings in Oconee Hill Cemetery. His obituary described him as “one of the most popular, lovable, genial, kindly citizens of Athens.”



Ephraim R. Brumby House, 357 Pulaski Street.

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