

THE *Shields-Ethridge* HERITAGE FARM



WELCOME!

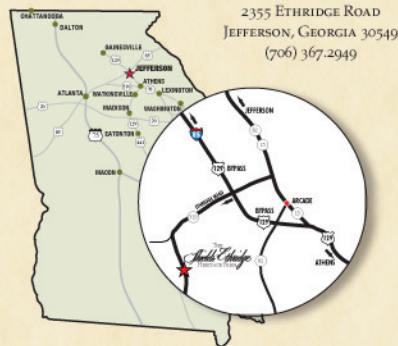
Welcome to the Shields-Ethridge Heritage Farm. Since 1799, this farm has remained agriculturally productive. Over the course of the two centuries, the Shields and Ethridge families adapted to larger trends in upcountry Georgia agriculture, from the first crops of tobacco to the planting of cotton and grains, and then cattle grazing.

The story of the farm begins when our nation was new at the end of the 18th century and continues today as we celebrate the history and heritage of agriculture in northeast Georgia. Two hundred years of working the land, family growth, and technological progress shape what you see before you. From about 1899 to 1909 Ira Washington Ethridge constructed these buildings, transforming the farm into a bustling center of social and economic activity in Jackson County, Georgia. Today the farm complex is quiet and open for your exploration but take a moment to stop and imagine wagons rolling by, the smell of freshly plowed soil, and hum of farm activity.



GRANTS, PROJECTS AND AWARDS

- 1992: Listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
- 1993: Listed as a Centennial Heritage Farm by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.
- 1995: Historic Preservation Division awards a Georgia Heritage grant to restore Bachelors' Academy.
- 1997: Joyce Ethridge receives Stewardship Award from the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation.
- 1997: The National Trust awards a Preservation Services Fund (PSF) grant for developing a Landscape Master Plan.
- 2004: Historic Preservation Division awards a second Georgia Heritage grant to restore Preacher Riley's.
- 2005: The Farm is included in the ARC/National Geographic Geotourism Mappguide of Appalachia.
- 2007: Awarded a Save Our History grant by The History Channel.
- 2008: The Watson Brown Foundation Junior Board awards a grant to digitize family papers.
- 2008: The National Film Preservation Foundation awards funding to restore and archive home movies.
- 2009: The Appalachian Regional Commission provides a grant for a visitor-interpretation program.



To learn more about the history of the Shields-Ethridge Heritage Farm, our ongoing projects and events, and to schedule a tour, visit www.ShieldsEthridgeFarmInc.com



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© Shields-Ethridge Heritage Farm.



MISSION

The mission of the Shields Ethridge Heritage Farm is to provide and operate an educational and interpretive outdoor museum that uses historic preservation and the natural environment to increase an awareness and understanding of Georgia's agricultural history.

SPECIAL EVENTS

On the third Saturday in May the Shields-Ethridge Heritage Farm celebrates its agricultural heritage. Visitors can see displays of traditional farm equipment and animals as well as demonstrations of period crafts by local artisans. Live bluegrass music and BBQ complete a day of old-fashioned fun for the entire family. Please visit the website for announcements on special events.



VISIT THE FARM

The Shields-Ethridge Heritage Farm is open to the public and guided tours are available by appointment. We welcome groups of all sizes from schools, churches and civic organizations.



ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

The Shields and Ethridge families seldom threw things away; what could not be used was set aside... just in case... Not only is the farm remarkable for its well-preserved buildings and their contents, but also for the rich collection of papers that the family created and kept, including letters, ledgers, photographs, tax records, catalogues, scrapbooks, memorabilia and home movies. The Shields Ethridge Heritage Farm website features a digital library of documents and photographs from the 18th and 19th centuries that visitors can read first hand.



THE FARM BUILDINGS



PREACHER RILEY'S HOUSE



SEED HOUSE



COTTON GIN



COTTON GIN OFFICE



TRACTOR SHED



BACHELORS' ACADEMY



LOG CORN CRIB



MULE BARN



CONCRETE CORN CRIB



MILKING BARN



TEACHER'S HOUSE



WAREHOUSE



WATER TOWER



BLACKSMITH SHOP



COMMISSARY



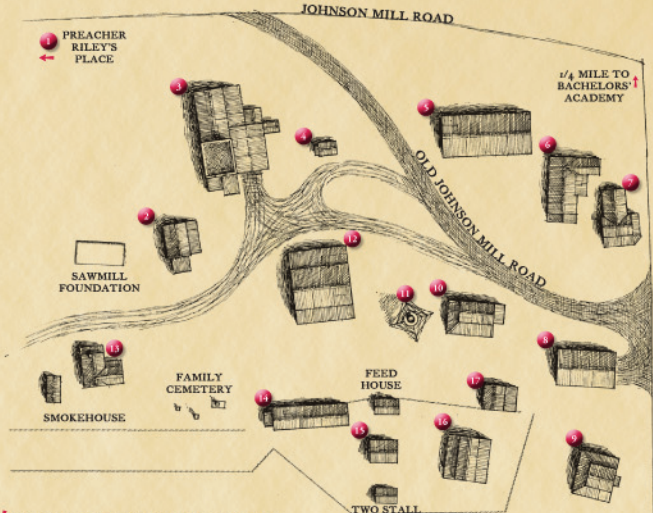
GARAGE



WHEAT HOUSE



GRIST MILL



*Please Note: The Shields-Ethridge House is still a family home and is not open to the public.

1. PREACHER RILEY'S PLACE

The ruins of this sharecropper's home, destroyed by vandals in 2010, are a reminder of the vital role of tenants on the farm. In the 1940s there were 13 or 14 tenant houses, most of the residents being African American who farmed between 15 and 30 acres each.

2. SEED HOUSE

Farmers who brought their cotton to the Ethridge gin would pay for the service by leaving a portion of their cottonseed, which was stored in this seed house and sold to local mills producing oil.

3. COTTON GIN

Wagons were weighed before their load was vacuumed into the gin. They would circle back on Johnson Mill Road to collect cottonseed and pick up their baled cotton.

4. GIN OFFICE

Ira Ethridge oversaw ginning and farm operations from this building. The diversity of farm activity enabled Mr. Ira's business to weather the setbacks that came in the 1920s and 1930s in the form of the boll weevil and the Great Depression.

5. TRACTOR SHED

This shed was added to the complex in the 1950s when Lanis Ethridge replaced the old ways of working the land with new mechanized methods. The McCormick-Deering F 30 Farmall tractor in the shed was purchased around 1936 and was known as "Big Bertha."

6. BLACKSMITH AND CARPENTER'S SHOP

The blacksmith's shop was where many tools used on the farm were made and was the center for maintenance and repair of farm equipment. A carpenter's shop attached to the east side of the building was the center of a furniture-making business started by Mr. Ira.

7. COMMISSARY

Tenants from this and neighboring farms came here to buy a wide range of household supplies and the front porch was a gathering place

for families on the farm after working hours. An old kerosene pump still stands on the front porch and the clapboard siding still retains traces of whitewash.

8. GARAGE

The garage reflects Mr. Ira's enthusiasm for automobiles. As the front faced the main house, extra emphasis was placed on the exterior decoration, particularly in the elaborate shingle pattern on the gable. The large front doors are hung from a patented mechanism that allows them to swing inwards.

9. WHEAT HOUSE

As with the garage, the wheat house's proximity to the main house called for extra decoration. The balcony above the front door is more than a handsome addition, it served as a place where sacks of grain could be hoisted into the loft from mule drawn wagons below.

10. GRISTMILL

Inside the grist mill, shelled corn, or grist, and threshed grain were lifted by conveyer belt from a bin into the hopper above the grindstones then fed by a funnel down an 'eye' into the center of the grindstones. The rotations ground the grist into meal or grits and the grain into flour.

11. WAREHOUSE AND WATER TOWER

The warehouse served as a storage space for bales of cotton produced at the gin before they were shipped. One of the last bales produced on the farm remains inside. Apart from ginning season, farm equipment was stored there.

Around 1913 Mr. Ira erected a water tower in the center of the complex after the gin house was badly damaged by fire. Water was pumped from Martin Creek into the tank through a pipe that can still be seen in front of the grist mill.

12. TEACHER'S HOUSE

This house was built around 1912 as a two-room home for share-

croppers with multiple outbuildings, including a chicken house, a small barn, a well house and a privy. In 1938 Bachelors Academy became an African American school and the teacher lived in this building. As a result, a third room was added and became the bedroom.

13. MILKING BARN

Susan Ella Ethridge kept a small herd of milk cows and sold butter in Jefferson and at the commissary. The family still has wooden butter molds that imprinted butter with the name 'Ella.'

14. CONCRETE CORN CRIB

Around the edges of the barnyard stand a number of smaller buildings: the twostall barn, a feed house, and two corncribs. One of these cribs is made with concrete blocks, some of which have an ornamental character, and above the door an inscription on the lintel reads "Ethridge 1916."

15. MULE BARN, YARD, AND CRIBS

In the 1940s there were 26 mules on the farm that were used to till the fields and pull wagons and other farm equipment. The wooden loft above the central bay was filled with hay that could be forked down into the manger suspended above the feeding troughs.

16. LOG CORN CRIB

The log corn crib is a much older structure made of massive logs with half-dovetail joints. This structure is raised on stone piers, and beside it there was a small hog pen; the hogs were able to crawl under the crib and thus prevent rats from infesting that space.

17. BACHELORS' ACADEMY

Harvey R. Carruth built this school in 1909 at a cost of \$361.00 on two acres that Alex and Emory Shields, grandsons of James Shields, donated. The school year was divided into two terms – one lasting 16 weeks and the other lasting 8. From 1909 until 1938, white children attended the school; from 1938 until the 1950s African American children attended.

