

# Around KENNESAW

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OCTOBER 2022

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# Gaspar T. Carrie:

## *After the War*

BY ANDREW J. BRAMLETT



*This 1890s image shows the Kennesaw Depot. The white building between the depot and the water tower was used as the depot from the 1870s to 1893, when it was moved by Carrie. Image courtesy of Georgia State University.*

Last month, I shared the early life of Gaspar T. “G.T.” Carrie, an early resident of Big Shanty (now Kennesaw) with a connection to Mark Twain. At the end of that article, the Civil War had ended, and Big Shanty had been burned to the ground. Carrie likely played a big part in rebuilding the community. From 1865 to 1868, he served as postmaster, and, in 1868, he was a delegate to the Democratic State Convention in Atlanta.

An 1867 plat map for Lemuel Kendrick, who owned much of what is now downtown Kennesaw, shows Carrie owned land on the east side of the railroad tracks near today’s Depot Park. Around 1870, he built a house on that property and would live there the rest of his life. The house now is the home of Frozen Cow Creamery. As Carrie’s sons became prominent community members, they, too, built houses near the depot. John T. Carrie built his house, now the site of Lazy Labrador Coffee House, next door to his father’s home around 1883, and Benjamin H. “B.H.” Carrie’s house, now part of Depot Park, was built in 1890.

In 1870, a hotel was constructed in Big Shanty to replace the one destroyed during the Civil War. According to A.L. Harris, who provided testimony on the hotel to a joint committee of the state legislature in 1872, the building was a “two-story house of wood containing 10 rooms, plastered, and painted inside and out, with necessary outbuildings.” Gaspar Carrie was the proprietor for the first two years of operation, when it was referred to by the Atlanta Constitution as “a No. 1 eating establishment.” In 1876, the



*The Gaspard T. Carrie house today is home of Frozen Cow Creamery. Image courtesy of the Vanishing Georgia Collection, Georgia Archives.*



*In the background of this photo is the Big Shanty Eating House, operated by Carrie (supposedly the man in the black suit on the left). Image courtesy of Gayle Croft.*

Marietta Journal called Carrie the “Dom Pedro” of Kennesaw. By this time, he had become a justice of the peace and would be known as Judge Carrie for the rest of his life. By 1879, he was operating the hotel again. That year, a Marietta Journal reporter wrote, “When you come to Big Shanty and want something to eat, call on Judge Carrie at his hotel, and you will not be disappointed.” Two years later, the North Georgia Citizen called it “the best railroad eating house in all the land.” The Jan. 8, 1881, edition of *The Sunny South* cited the hotel as proof that Southerners do not fry all their food.

At least one of Carrie’s sons also entered the world of commerce. B.H. had his own business by 1883 and, like his father, became a judge and officiated many Kennesaw weddings.

Residents of Big Shanty’s Black community purchased land from Gaspard Carrie in 1880 for a church. Still on the same site 140 years later, the church today is known as Sardis Missionary Baptist Church. In 1881,

he donated land on Cherokee Street for Kennesaw Methodist Church, now home of Apotheos Roastery.

The 1880s brought great change to our community, as the town was incorporated as Kennesaw in 1887. Around that time, it cost \$7 to stay at Carrie’s hotel for a week and \$25 for a month. Despite the establishment’s success, it was torn down in 1893. At the same time, the current Kennesaw Depot was built, and the building it replaced was purchased by Carrie and moved away from the railroad tracks.

In 1891, a group of residents, including Carrie, decided to open a new school in Kennesaw. Originally called the Kennesaw Home School, it later would become Kennesaw Elementary School.

Carrie celebrated his 82nd birthday on Jan. 1, 1902. Eight days later, the Marietta Journal mentioned he was “still in the enjoyment of good health, with mental faculties unimpaired ... he is one of nature’s noblemen and enjoys the confidence and esteem of the people.” He also was believed to

be one of the oldest former printers in the state, having worked for the Temperance Banner before he moved to Kennesaw. Sadly, the judge passed away unexpectedly on Feb. 5, 1902. The Atlanta Journal said, “He was always generous towards all charities, and every [sic] ready to encourage and aid movements to public benefit to the little village of Kennesaw, where so many years of his life were spent.” He was laid to rest in the Kennesaw City Cemetery.

The son of an immigrant, Judge Gaspard Theodore Carrie had moved to our community when it was just a small railroad stop. Over the next half-century, he played an important role in building the foundation for the city we know and love today.



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