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THE ABIEL ABBOT JOURNALS  
A Yankee Preacher in Charleston Society, 1818-1827

EDITED BY JOHN HAMMOND MOORE \*

Reverend Abiel Abbot (1770-1828), the complete New Englander, possessed of a congenial personality and an insatiable curiosity, actually played an insignificant role in South Carolina history. However, he twice came to this state for his health and has left us extremely detailed accounts (although incomplete) of his experiences here. Abbot described eminent South Carolinians of the early 19th century with both candor and clarity and related, sometimes almost hour by hour, numerous events in a crowded social schedule. In fact, one cannot help but wonder how a man suffering from "ill health" managed to be so amazingly active.

Abbot was born in Andover, Massachusetts, on August 17, 1770, member of a family which had lived in that region for more than a century. At the age of fourteen, according to a posthumous memoir, he thrust his arm into a cold spring on a hot day and suffered "a severe nervous fever" from which he never fully recovered.<sup>1</sup> In 1788 he entered Harvard College where he performed well, gained renown as a speaker, and was graduated in 1792. Eight years later he returned to his alma mater and as Phi Beta Kappa orator spoke on "A Review of the 18th Century." In 1821 he was awarded an honorary degree—Doctor of Divinity.

Following graduation, Abbot became a teacher at Phillips Academy in his hometown, serving briefly as principal while pursuing theological studies. In February 1795 he became minister of the Congregational Church of Haverhill. That same year he married Eunice Wales of Dorchester. During the next eight years Abbot tutored local youths, began to raise a family, and occasionally expressed clear, forthright opinions on current issues.

In 1798 his Thanksgiving Day sermon heaped praise upon both John Adams and George Washington for saving America from the "athestic" French. On Independence Day 1799 Abbot lashed out at the Vir-

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<sup>1</sup> Stevens Everett, *Sermons of the Late Rev. Abiel Abbot, D.D., of Beverly, Mass., with a Memoir of his Life*, Boston, 1831, p. x. This book contains an excellent sixty-two page biography, twenty-three sermons, and a list of Abbot's published works.

ginia-Kentucky Resolves as symptomatic of insidious French ideas, lauding America as the land of the free in contrast to the horrors of enslavement under French rule. A few months later, in yet another Thanksgiving Day sermon, he once more attacked France. Abbot saw the hand of the Almighty in American independence and in America's preservation from "French liberty and French philosophy." It was well-known by all, he noted, that the French only aided our cause in the 1770's so as to "intrigue" against us and to "undermine" our republic. But, the good Lord protected America—"impracticed, fondly grateful, foolishly credulous."<sup>2</sup> Needless to say, Abbot was a Federalist whose views during the War of 1812 could easily be predicted. In his Thanksgiving Day sermon (1812) he denounced that "unholy" war and commented dolefully upon the troubles of the times: ". . . a season of adversity, it being a time of war; a war thought by many to be needless and unjust; a war begun in a feeble and disastrous manner; a season remarkable for cold, and for abridgement of crops."<sup>3</sup>

However, by the time Abbot was attacking "Mr. Madison's War," several important changes had occurred in his life. In 1803, unable to support a growing family on a small salary, he applied to his Haverhill church for a raise and was refused.<sup>4</sup> Subsequently he succeeded Dr. Joseph McKeen who left the Beverly (Mass.) Congregational Church to become the first president of Bowdoin College. Within a short time—and apparently with the consent of the majority of his parishioners—Abbot took his church into the Unitarian fold. Abbot would retain this post until his death in 1828.

These years in Beverly were fruitful and happy. As guest speaker he also filled pulpits in many parts of both Massachusetts and Maine, on one occasion even journeying to the frontier community of Bangor. Some twenty-five or thirty of his outstanding sermons were published during these decades. In 1812 a collection of *Sermons to Mariners* appeared. Reverend Abbot said the high death toll among sailors in 1810 and 1811 prompted him to consider publication. And, being of a practical mind, he noted that "as seamen are not men of leisure, and can take up a book only in . . . short intervals . . . some of the longer

<sup>2</sup> Abiel Abbot, *Thanksgiving Sermon*, Haverhill, 1799, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Abiel Abbot Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

<sup>4</sup> Papers at the Houghton Library reveal church leaders were eager to grant Abbot's request for more money, but they feared the reaction among other church members. The real problem was this: as a young married man Abbot had been able to tutor and board prospective Harvard students, but with a growing family this supplementary income was curtailed.

discourses have been divided into *parts*, that the reader may find frequent resting places . . . .”<sup>5</sup>

Harvard University's Houghton Library has in its collections some four hundred of Abbot's sermons in manuscript form. Each is neatly bound in a paper cover with notes relating to estimated time of delivery, where used, and on what occasions. For example, a sermon entitled "The Darkness at the Crucifixion" was delivered in 1806, 1812, and 1821 soon after solar eclipses occurred. These Harvard materials also contain random letters, occasional business accounts, and remarks concerning pastoral visits, including difficulties with a female parishioner "leaning toward the Baptist persuasion." Abbot's literary reputation rests, however, for the most part, upon two books published after his death, both of which contain biographical sketches. The first was his *Letters Written from the Interiour of Cuba . . .* (1829); and, the second was Stevens Everett's *Sermons of the Late Rev. Abiel Abbot . . .* (1831). The latter work contains considerable information relative to Abbot's visits in South Carolina.

In the fall of 1818 Reverend Abbot, suffering from a lung disorder, set out for South Carolina aboard the *Robert Fulton*. After an enjoyable visit of about eight weeks in Charleston, he was a guest for two months at the John's Island estate of James Legaré. In March he went to Savannah, returning to Charleston early in April. Then, in May 1819 Abbot began an unusual overland trip by sulkey through the Carolinas and Virginia en route to his home in Massachusetts. Apparently he believed that the air of the mountains would be beneficial, but on May 3 he complained bitterly of the absence of churches. "No pleasant sound of church-going bells is echoed from their heights and through the valleys. I inquire in vain for a place of worship within my reach. No heaven-directed spire has greeted my eye since I left Columbia, except the Moravian in a range of more than three hundred miles, and but a few churches of any description. While those I best love and whom it is my delight to serve in the gospel are assembled in the house of their solemnities, I must wander among the mountains, to see God in his sublime works, whose goings I have delighted to see in the sanctuary."<sup>6</sup> Among these mountains Abbot visited Virginia's famed Peaks of Otter. And, near that place his landlord commented that no man who viewed the Peaks could "disbelieve a flood."

Reverend Abbot returned home invigorated and plunged into an active program of preaching and writing. In the fall of 1827 he again

<sup>5</sup> Abiel Abbot, *Sermons to Mariners*, Boston, 1812, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Everett, *op. cit.*, p. xxx.

became ill. In October he issued what was, in effect, a summary of his twenty-four years in Beverly, made his sad farewells, and headed south, promising to return, God willing, in the spring. He arrived in Charleston on November 7 and, after renewing old friendships and relaxing on John's Island, departed on February 8, 1828, for Cuba. He spent about four months there, sailing for Charleston on May 26 aboard the brig *Catharine*. While sailing northward off the coast of Florida, Abbot wrote that the captain of the *Catharine* was ill, Havana was a hot, sickly city, and he was much relieved to escape from "fever, cholera, and dingle."<sup>7</sup> His health much improved, he preached in Charleston on June 1 and left the next day aboard the *Othello* bound for New York and home.

Shortly before sailing, he wrote joyfully to his wife, "Happy am I to touch my natal soil again, and I hope to revisit *home, sweet home*. My health on this passage has been fine, and my cough almost extinct. I think, accidents excepted between this and home, that you will think my general health quite as good as before my sickness. Blessed be God, the object of my absence has been attained to a much greater degree than my most sanguine friends could hope."<sup>8</sup> However, about twenty-four hours after leaving Charleston, Abbot became ill and died rather suddenly, apparently victim of yellow fever and not of tuberculosis which had prompted his travels. He was buried at the Quarantine Ground on Staten Island.

Word of Abbot's death cast a pall over the city of Charleston. Many of the city's business, religious, and social leaders felt they had lost a true friend—and, they had. Reverend Samuel Gilman wrote: "Members of all sects and denominations stop me as I pass through the streets and express the deepest concern, as if they had lost a father."<sup>9</sup>

Of course, it is ironic that Abbot, a thorough New Englander who spent at most perhaps six months in Charleston should leave us such a clear portrait of life in that city in the early nineteenth century. Yet, the visitor often sees much more than the native. These observations in both diary and letter are from the archives of the South Carolina Historical Society and are reproduced here with the Society's kind permission. These fragments are evidently part of a longer journal; for, writing in 1831, Stevens Everett made this statement which over a century later can still serve as an introduction to Reverend Abiel Abbot's remarks concerning life in this state: "A rich and copious journal,

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xlix.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. lvi.

which he prepared for the entertainment of his family and friends, and which is rendered less suited to the public eye only by the considerable period which has since elapsed, contains a mass of intelligent observations on subjects and incidents, which fell under his notice during his residence in Charleston, and his subsequent journeys through some of the most interesting sections of the southern portion of the country, conveyed in a minute detail, and with a peculiar felicity of description.<sup>10</sup>

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Nov. 9. At day break the Charleston light in view; soon, however, hidden by the smoke from the land arising from a tremendous & lamentable conflagration. We learn that it has extended 40 miles & has burnt dykes & woods & even underground, eluding the efforts to arrest its progress by ditching.

This day proved mild & the breeze was gentle tho not favorable. We fell a little to the leeward of our port; but, in good season, the wind sprung up in a contrary direction & wafted us under the conduct of a pilot over the bar into the South Bay. We coasted Sullivan's Island, the precious assylum of the city in the season of fever. It is little more than a sand bank, except that it is fortified with an ancient strong fort, imbedded in sand, & has a good number of houses, some of them handsome, indebted to misfortune alone for their tenants.

We anchored near town, about 4 o'clock P. M. At this point I desire to pause & offer my grateful acknowledgment to God my preserver. . . . On dropping anchor Mr. Crocker came off in his boat & gave me a cordial greeting.<sup>11</sup> "I rejoice," said he, "to see you in Ch[arleston] while I am truly sorry for the cause." He lent me his arm and conducted me to lodgings at Mrs. Smerdon's, spent a half hour & left me.<sup>12</sup>

My accommodations are fine in this family. A table, which might satisfy the epicure & yet excellent for a prudent invalid—a chamber to my self on the second floor—affectionate manners & a still house—& respectable boarders. Mrs. S. is a lady of energy & of kind feelings. Left

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xxvii-xxviii. NOTE: Abbot's diary has entries from October 30 to November 8 describing the voyage from Boston to Charleston and giving details concerning seasickness and his relations with both seamen and passengers. His spelling has been followed throughout these pages except that short abbreviations such as "wh" and "sd" have been written out as "which" and "said." Punctuation has occasionally been inserted for clarity. Other changes are indicated by brackets.

<sup>11</sup> This was Doddridge (or Dodridge) Crocker who lived at 11 Tradd Street. Crocker died in 1847.

<sup>12</sup> Mrs. Priscilla Smerdon, widow of Elias Smerdon, had a popular boarding house at 54 Church Street.

with three children & with little property, she has resorted to this employment in order to give the best education to her children. Her oldest dr. is 16 & remarkably mature & improved.<sup>13</sup> Her paintings adorn several rooms of the house & a specimen is to be seen at Mrs. Bridge's in B.<sup>14</sup> She plays pretty well on the piano—fails somewhat in time. The other drs., 8 & 6, attend school & are smart. In such a family I find much to remind me of my own dear home & of the general plan which I have long pursued of giving to my children the best education in my power, a property which is far more likely than any other to be permanent & insure support.

Nov. 10. Visited the ship—had our things taken to our lodgings in a *dray*. I know not how they spell the word. At 11 Miss Paget called & very cordially welcomed me to her native city. Also Mrs. Hurlburt & Mrs. Coffin called, I believe attracted by my name in the papers; Mrs. Coffin expected to find my nephew, long a boarder in her family.<sup>15</sup> In the afternoon, with Mr. Bridge and Mr. Haddock, I went to the East bay, Montague St., to see Mr. Hurlburt & deliver letters.<sup>16</sup> He has a delightful residence & a splendid establishment, yielding him something like 7000 \$ per annum. I find him very highly respected here. There is a very manifest shrewdness in the man, a keen eye & reflecting countenance. Accepted his invitation to preach half the sabbath coming at the Archdale church, Mr. Forester's.<sup>17</sup> We returned early, unwilling to be exposed to evening air. We passed the Synagogue, the most splendid building of the kind in the union & the Romish church.<sup>18</sup> I attempt no description of them at present expecting to visit them hereafter.

<sup>13</sup> Mr. Smerdon died in 1813 leaving three small daughters—Susannah, Hortense, and Mary Ann.

<sup>14</sup> This could refer to either Beverly or Boston.

<sup>15</sup> Lydia Hurlburt died in 1821. Her husband, Martin Luther Hurlburt (1780-1843), operated on academy which occupied the buildings of the College of Charleston, 1818-23. Mrs. Coffin was probably the wife of George Matthews Coffin, a local physician.

<sup>16</sup> Bridge and Haddock were fellow passengers on the voyage from Boston. See the Charleston *Courier*, November 10, 1818, for a virtually complete passenger list. Charles Brickett Haddock (1796-1861) was a Dartmouth College graduate, class of 1816. He later returned to his alma mater where he taught from 1819 to 1850. Popular, handsome, active in New Hampshire politics in the 1840's as an advocate of public education, Haddock served as *chargé d'affaires* in Portugal, 1850-1854.

<sup>17</sup> Abbot refers to the Unitarian Society which had recently withdrawn to the Archdale Meeting House from the Circular (Congregational) Church. Anthony Forester (1785-1820), a native of Brunswick, N. C., was married to a granddaughter of Joseph Priestly, the famous scientist.

<sup>18</sup> The synagogue of Beth Elohim Congregation, organized about 1750, was located at 74 Hasell Street. Abbot refers to St. Mary's Catholic Church which was on the same street.



Nov. 11. Our fellow passengers, Mrs. Gilman & Miss Boit, called & invited me to call & see them.<sup>19</sup> And Mr. Crocker called to conduct me to his house. Mrs. Hichborn looks ill; I should think her soon to enter on a new & happier scene.<sup>20</sup> Was met in the street by Mr. Motte & recognized having dined with him two years since at Professor Hedges.<sup>21</sup> Presented my letter & was introduced to the city library & invested with the privilege of lounging in the rooms 4 hours each day & of taking out books for perusal at my lodgings.<sup>22</sup> This is a splendid establishment, consisting of about 12,000 volumes of pretty well selected books, most of them in splendid English editions. In folios & quartos of small works, adorned with cuts of the first artists—they have been somewhat extravagant. The rooms also are hung with admirable prints & paintings, elegantly framed, with a few busts & curiosities; the greater part of the latter having been removed to the city museum, another establishment worthy of a stranger's attention.<sup>23</sup> In one of the Library rooms is presented the Apollo Belvidere, with very little more than nature's costume. It is a figure almost gigantic & in the attitude of drawing his bow, which presents the left hand raised I should almost dare to say somewhat awkwardly, as the bow is not there as his apology. It is, however, a noble exhibition of the human figure, as of a being well made to be the Lord of this lower world. It gives us the sublime rather than the beautiful of men. And the observer would soon withdraw his eyes to rest them on the lovelier figure of the Venus di Medicis, not found, however, in these rooms.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>19</sup> This was apparently the wife of Zadock Gilman (or Gillman), a merchant who lived at 15 Anson Street. Caroline Howard Gilman, the well-known literary figure and wife of Reverend Samuel Gilman, was not yet a Charleston resident in 1818. Although the *Courier* lists her companion as Miss Byrd, Abbot refers to her as Miss Boit throughout his diary.

<sup>20</sup> Elizabeth Hichborn, who died in 1820, was a well-to-do Boston widow. Her daughter Elizabeth married Doddridge Crocker.

<sup>21</sup> This was Abraham Motte (1764-1833) who in 1795 married Miss Washington Quince of Wilmington, N. C. Motte lived at 97 East Bay Street in 1819. Levi Hedges, a member of Abbot's Harvard class, was professor of logic and metaphysics at his alma mater from 1810 to 1827.

<sup>22</sup> The Charleston Library Society, organized in 1748, was—after being lodged in a number of private homes—on the third floor of the courthouse. In 1826 A. E. Miller of Charleston published a catalog of the Library's holdings.

<sup>23</sup> In 1815 the City Museum, long incorporated with the Library, was given to the Philosophical and Literary Society. The collection was subsequently deposited at the College of Charleston until transferred to its present location in 1907.

<sup>24</sup> The Apollo Belvidere is attributed to Leochares, a Greek sculptor of the 4th century B. C. The Charleston Library Society has no record of this piece of art.

The situation of the Apollo is too public. It arrests the eye of gentlemen & ladies the moment they reach the floor of the Library & the said parties cannot but be mutually conscious of the necessity, at least of the delicacy, of averting their faces.

The excellent Library is charmingly arranged. I should have said conveniently, for the books are not on shelves & in alcoves of any elegance, not preserved in a position erect & suited to gratify the eye or preserve the bindings—*conveniently*, as they are assorted agreeably to their class—Law, Medicine, Divinity—Philosophy—Voyages, Travels, Poetry, &c., &c. On the whole this Library is almost all that a stranger could wish, & it is rapidly increasing by a 3000 \$ assessment annually & other funds amounting to —————. All new & rare publications, all specimens of taste & ingenuity will, of course, here find a deposit & at some future day it must proudly vie with the noblest establishment of the kind in our country, collegiate & metropolitan. But the circumstance, which deserves to be recorded in letters of gold, is the liberality with which its privileges are presented to the literary stranger. If he has but character enough to be presented by any member, this constitutes him to all purposes a proprietor; and it is no small incidental advantage that during his visits to the public rooms he becomes acquainted with the most literary & scientific gentlemen of the city, with most of the public functionaries, & those venerable retired men whose names are recorded in many of the most interesting & important pages of our national history.

After spending an hour in the Library, I walked down Meeting St., one of the handsomest in the city & deriving its name probably from St. Michael's (the Bp.'s church), the Circular [Church], Dr. Palmer's, & 1st Scotch Presbyterian, lately Dr. Leland's, which stands upon it.<sup>25</sup> The 1st of these buildings is a handsome church, but most remarkable for its tower, the highest in the city, broad at its base rising out of one end of the church, which circumstance gives too little length of the building to accord with the size & altitude of the tower. The tower itself is a perfect thing of the kind, very gradually reducing its dimensions from its broad base to the vane & finished in elegant style. The church is a Gothic building—with arched windows & half windows. The interior I have not seen.

<sup>25</sup> Dr. Benjamin Palmer (1781-1847), born in Philadelphia of South Carolina parents, was pastor of the Circular (Congregational) Church from 1814 to 1835. Dr. Aaron W. Leland became pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in 1812, but was subsequently elected professor at the Theological Seminary in Columbia. He was succeeded by Reverend Arthur Buist. In a brief footnote Abbot added that "the Bp.'s church was in Queen St."

On this street is situated the building belonging to the South Carolina Society, a charity establishment of considerable funds and influence. Its object is in the first instance to provide for the relief of decayed members & for the widows and children of deceased members who may not have been left with sufficient support. No money is to be given to a member residing outside of the *United States*. The benefit of the Society, however, is not confined to members, nor to their widows & children. 72 children of persons who are not members may be educated at the expense of the Society, boys from 9 to 14 & girls from 8 to 12. In special cases boys may remain to the age of 15 & females to the age of 13. After their education is complete, they are bound out as apprentices to such trades or professions as best suit their inclinations & capacities. The Society constantly employs a respectable master at 1100 \$ a year, furnishing him a house & an assistant, usually a lady, at 800 \$. The building is neat & the hall elegant. On the first floor are two spacious schoolrooms; & the principal teacher easily circulating in both apartments.

The Hall occupies the whole extent of the 2d floor, at the head of which is the Steward's seat under a canopy & a long table to accommodate officers & members at a weekly meeting. Portraits adorn the hall of benefactors of the Society, & the memory of their beneficence is preserved by the record of the amount of their donations at the bottom of the picture. The amount of their funds is 138,000 \$; the living members are 252; the tax on members, per ann. 12 \$; 23 widows receive 200 \$ apiece per ann. The Hall is 86 f. by 32, adorned by three handsome glass chandeliers; the funds are husbanded by the financial talents of Col. Roper.<sup>26</sup>

A little below this building on the opposite side of the way stands the handsome church belonging to the 1st Scotch Presbyterian congregation. It fronts East, has a projecting piazza surmounted by two towers like Mr. [Aaron] Green's church in Malden. The interior is neat; the pulpit the most commodious I have seen & the house the easiest to be filled by the speaker.

Passed by several elegant residences on this street, two of them rather in the style of castles, as they were fortified by lofty iron railings & a horizontal bar of great strength, stuck close with sharp spikes of a foot in length. One of these military mansions belonged to General C. Pinckney, not Cotesworth.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Roper, who died in 1829, is best known as the benefactor of Roper Hospital. A devout Unitarian, he stipulated in his will that \$15,000 go to that church, it "being a Congregation of Christians who, unrestrained by Eccleastical creed, worship one Supreme Being and Him only. . . ."

<sup>27</sup> Pinckney's mansion was located at 14-16 Meeting Street.

South Bay St. is spacious & being skirted by the river & chiefly unoccupied with buildings on the South side presents the most eligible situations in the city for gentlemen's mansions. In one of these I at last found Mrs. Sturgis, her husband being abroad.<sup>28</sup> Delivered my letters & enjoyed a half hour with a dignified & accomplished lady. Her sister also appeared an amiable woman of courtesy & accomplishments.

In the evening of the same day Mr. Sturgis called by my lodgings & spent an hour, expressed his regret that business called him to the country in the morning for a few days, & requested me to spend a little time with them on their plantation to which he expected to shortly remove his family.

Nov. 12. Mrs. Gilman & Miss Boit, our fellow passengers, called & Dr. Palmer, inviting Mr. Haddock & myself to dine. The party was completely New England & clerical—Mr. Butler & lady of Connecticut, Mr. Bridge, Mr. Dagget, Doct. Hooker, N. E. & Rev. Mr. Reed & Rev. Mr. Floyd.<sup>29</sup> The party was cheerful—the entertainment somewhat luxurious, desert rich, & the style splendid for a clergyman.

13. At last I have received the long looked for token that I am not forgotten by those whom I cannot for a day or hour forget, a crown sheet from Beverly. Dined with Mr. Crocker's dear family & recd. calls from Mr. & Misses Miller.

14. Called on Rev. Mr. Gibbes & Mr. & Misses Miller.<sup>30</sup> That gent. accompanied me in search of Mr. Izard's residence below the theater—a large ungainly building in the SW corner of the city.<sup>31</sup> On my return called at the Library & was introduced to one of the most considerable men of this city, Col. Roper, of immense wealth, yet of great simplicity of manners & appearance. He is said to be a gentleman of acumen & of extensive theological research, an episcopal by education, a Unitarian by conviction, & no friend to the assumption of Bps., to splendor in the rites of religion, or an exclusive spirit among Ins[titutions]. At present he is said to be rather in a state of mental conflict between the power of education & the power of reason. And it is most probable, if things could be brought to the state which of all others he would

<sup>28</sup> Josiah Sturgis, friend and associate of Nathaniel Russell, later served as executor of that merchant's estate.

<sup>29</sup> Reed and Floyd were local clergymen. Reed was apparently an interim appointment between Leland and Buist at the First Presbyterian Church. Floyd was an Episcopal rector serving at this time in St. John's Parish, Colleton District.

<sup>30</sup> Allston Gibbes was assistant rector at St. Philip's.

<sup>31</sup> Henry Izard, who died in December 1826, was a close friend of Abbot. The theater, built in 1792, was located on Savage's Green at the corner of Broad and New Streets. It was later converted into quarters for the Medical College.

prefer, that St. Philips elegant church, the monumental covering of his ancestors' dust, would become the counterpart of the Stone chapel in the Metropolis of Massachusetts. A second character of some notoriety in the literary circle of Charleston was here introduced to me, a Mr. Bee, a bachelor of 45 yrs., a lawyer, & a gentleman of great flippancy, perhaps eloquence in conversation, educated I think at Oxford, England.<sup>32</sup> Said to be a book worm—etymologist, &c, &c. He sprung upon his favorite subject almost as soon as he took his seat. "What," said he, "is the derivation of the term *Sad-irons*?"—(by which in the Nomenclature of this city is to be understood flat-irons—smoothing irons, as they are denominated at the Eastward.) "Ah, I have it," said he, "it is a corruption from zed-irons, that is, an instrument in the form of the letter Z—all easy & natural—that is it beyond a doubt."

On leaving the public room, Col. R. followed me & invited me to partake of a haunch of venison from his plantation at 4 o'clock. At the hour Mr. Motte introduced me at his splendid mansion in Bay Street.<sup>33</sup> His halls are spacious & hung with elegant paintings & his doors & mantles adorned with several elegant equestrian small statues with Cyprian figures. Nothing, however, interested me half as much as a small picture of about 8 Inches by 6. It is a family piece, a funeral monument done in England by an ingenious artist with the hairs of his parents, brothers, wife, twelve children, & his own.

The picture is pendent from the hands of a flying angel & with this motto—or address—

"No more this cot shall with your sight be blest  
Nor with your feet its flow'ry woods be prest.  
No more the winds shall with your tresses play,  
And from your balmy breaths steal sweets away.  
Graceful these fair & peaceful plains ye trod,  
Now quit their view &, come, abide with God."

These lines are in so small a type, I could not read them myself. Now for the picture itself. The ground work is constituted of shrubbery of his *father's & mother's hair*, dark. An urn on a monument in a recess of the field is shrouded with trees of erect figure & horizontal limbs & thick foliage of his *brothers' and sisters' hair*. Ten *lambs*, some reclining

<sup>32</sup> Thomas Bee served as principal of the College of Charleston for some thirty-five years. An eccentric pedant (as Abbot indicates), in the 1820's he published a paper entitled "Omnium Gatherum." Local wags countered with a rival sheet, "Omnium Botherum."

<sup>33</sup> The Roper house was at 39 East Bay Street.

& some grazing, & two female figures walking occupy a field in the mid ground of his *children's hair* of various colors, mostly of *infantile* flaxen. A cot represents his lamented wife, constituted of *her hair*, shaded by weeping willows & embraced by a fence of *his own hair*. The hairs chopped fine & mixed, I presume, with oil & perhaps colourless paint. I hope my dear daughters will find in these hints materials for a family piece of our own. The Col. has lost 12 children, brothers, sisters, parents, wife & has left himself & one son.<sup>34</sup>

At this respectable planter's table I was introduced to another wealthy planter & his son, Mr. Riand.<sup>35</sup> He was a gentleman of handsome figure, quite well informed in gardening & agriculture & of handsome colloquial powers, now & then somewhat abused by expressions not quite pleasant to the ears of a minister or a lady. It was pleasant to observe his son on the occasions of his *faux pas*. About 16 years of age, he was not seen to smile at the witicism of them; but, if I saw distinctly across the table, *to blush*. Other guests at this table were the brother of Mrs. Paget & Miss S. Leland, who leases a store of Col. R. & is esteemed a respectable merchant of good property & better expectations—& my attentive friend Mr. Motte.<sup>36</sup> Now for the dinner.

The first dish was *bass soup*, i. e. fish soup, set before the Col. No lady at table. As he lifted the cover he said, "This is bass soup, gentlemen." The son at the same instant lifted a cover at the other end of the table & said, "This is venison." Mid way was excellent boiled beef. To close the entertainment in point of solids came *sweet potatoe pone*, a kind of pudding made of sweet potatoe, ginger, sugar & butter, delicious, yet suitable to an invalid. The drinks were cider, at 4 the dozen, porter & wine.<sup>37</sup> And this was the sum of a planter's dinner—few, but rare dishes to a New Englander, the boiled beef excepted; but they were enough for a reasonable man, were he a prince . . . .

At Col. Roper's some hints of the management of a plantation were dropped. Mr. R. gave a most interesting account of a plantation hedge formed of a vine called nondescript. He has on his plantation miles of this species of fence, thro which, in his own words, a d—l, meaning a hog, cannot make his passage. It is propagated by slips set in the ground & a slight railing is placed to sustain it at first. Two rows are set about

<sup>34</sup> Seven years before his death in 1845 Robert W. Roper, the son, erected the fine mansion which still stands at 9 East Battery.

<sup>35</sup> This may have been John Ryan, merchant, 2 Chisolm's Wharf.

<sup>36</sup> Joseph Leland was a merchant with business quarters at 89 East Bay Street. His home was at 180 Meeting Street.

<sup>37</sup> Porter is a weak stout, originally a mixture of ale and stout.

4 feet apart & pruned perpendicularly till it gets a sufficient height & then horizontally also. In this way it soon forms an impenetrable fence 4 feet thick & 6 feet high & at the proper season it puts forth a large white flower, thick as they can stand, presenting the elegant and dazzling appearance of a snow bank without the inconvenience of melting in a blazing sun. To improve the elegance of the nondescript hedge & give it the advantage also of fragrance Mr. Riand has interspersed the rose bush of different kinds, that *perpetual* flower of this favored climate. If nondescript will grow in our part of the country, I should think it must have vastly the advantage of thorn hedge on account of the rapidity of its growth & the greater ease with which it is pruned & formed & the greater elegance of the hedge in the flowering season.<sup>38</sup>

From the same planter we learn something of the extreme suffering of the interior on account of the distressing drought. There has been almost no rain since the 17th day of July, 4 months; the springs are exhausted; the brooks are dry; the very rivers become brooks. In many places they have sunk their wells deeper to reach water; & when it is found, wild & tame animals & birds rush together laying aside their wanted timidity & becoming shockingly tame "to taste the cooling beverage." With much humor the gent. related a story of a friend of his—who drew out water in his troughs that the crows might drink, which came in great flocks for the purpose. "The dog," said he, "deserves to be hanged that he did not let them choke to death." A fox this gent. found near his own buildings which he supposed had perished of thirst.

In the afternoon Mr. Hurlbut and Dr. Coffin & Messrs. Paterson & D. C. Webbe left cards & in the evening Mr. Thayer & son spent an hour with me.<sup>39</sup> Mr. Thayer offered his carriage to carry me in the morning to the Archdale church, where I preach, & to Mr. Hurlbut's where I dine. This day has been extremely exhausting—the heat great—too much conversation—tired with walking a mile—& in the evening indebted to a friend in rising out of my chair & to his arm in getting me to my chamber. My hip joints seem dissolved & I walk with a sensation

<sup>38</sup> Abbot perhaps refers here to common honeysuckle.

<sup>39</sup> Hugh Patterson, auditor of the Union Insurance Company, was a prominent Unitarian who died in 1836, aged 72. Samuel Patterson was a factor at 47 Hasell Street. Daniel Cannon Webb (1782-1850) was also active in the Unitarian Society. Some of his papers are in the Archives of the South Carolina Historical Society. Ebenezer Thayer was a merchant and bookseller, operating the Theological Book Store at 25 Broad Street. His son, Ebenezer, Jr., later became a school teacher in Charleston.

which seems to threaten dislocation. I must knit them again with Fisher's steel & cascarilla.<sup>40</sup>

Nov. 15. The Sabbath. A gown sent me to preach in. Put it on—it was rusty—and I felt as David in Saul's armor & laid it aside. Mr. Hurlbut called to wait upon me to the church, as also several other gentlemen. We went in Mr. T.'s carriage. Mrs. S. & most of her 20 boarders left their ch[amber]s to hear the stranger. Indescribable, unutterable feelings caused my bosom to throb in church. I mounted a sort of hanging pulpit, tetering at every step; a black sexton brought me notes. Mr. Hurlbut set the pulpit in violent agitation by ascending with a rash step to ask if all was as it should be. My thoughts bounded off 1000 miles—my heart melted with tenderness at the thought of a dear people, left in tears, & at that moment I doubted not, bowing as with one heart in prayer for their sick & absent pastor. It was a touching circumstance that I occupied the pulpit of a brother who had himself left his flock in wretched and almost hopeless sickness to visit the warm springs of Virginia.<sup>41</sup> From sad reverie I was roused by the Clerk who, agreeably to custom, opened the services by singing my favorite *Eaton*. This was followed by Hymn 2d & Devizes in the hymns I set, & I could not force back to their fountain the flowing tears. All seemed magical contrivance to thrill my sickly nerves. I was but a baby in every part of the service as I had been on the last sabbath of my preaching in Beverly.

At Mr. Hurlbut's felt at home, conversed little & reclined on the Sofa. Attended the Archdale church in the afternoon & was entertained with a good ser. by Mr. Henry, a Scotch educated minister, from the last v. of 13th of I Cor[inthians] and now remainith &c.<sup>42</sup> The ser. was well attended & indifferently spoken. He has not all the success which his merit deserves as a preacher. It is expected that he will be transferred to Columbia College to fill the chair of moral philosophy. In the evening Mr. & Mrs. Chadwick & Miss Chadwick called at Mrs. S.'s & invited a visit.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Cascarilla, the bitter aromatic bark of the plant *croton eleuteria*, was used as a tonic. By "steel," Abbot refers to iron utilized medically.

<sup>41</sup> Abbot refers to Reverend Anthony Forester who succumbed to tuberculosis in 1820.

<sup>42</sup> "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Robert Henry (1792-1856), a graduate of Edinburgh, later became professor of logic and moral philosophy at the South Carolina College. He was acting president following the ouster of Thomas Cooper and served as president, 1842-45. During these years Henry drifted from the Calvinist to Episcopal fold.

<sup>43</sup> This was probably the family of Samuel Chadwick, a businessman, who lived at 14 Water Street.



Nov. 16. Dr. Palmer called & invited assistance for the next Sabbath. Mr. Thayer sent his carriage for Mr. Haddock & myself to dine. This is certainly one of the most interesting families to which I have been introduced. Mr. T.'s education was in N. England, a son of a minister of Hampton. He is a bookseller & a planter & his house the residence of wealth & taste.<sup>44</sup> You enter his yard under a canopy of multiflora. There were other invited guests; and, after a sumptuous entertainment in which we tasted of fish, fowl & venison & indigenous exotic fruits, we retired to the hall & had music in the style of the Co. of Essex. Miss Claudia plays the piano with *fine* execution. She varies her stroke & demonstrates that the instrument can be *forte* as well as *piano*. A Mr. Merchant sang very well & a lady, I think Smith, with whom I joined in singing "Strike the Cymbals" with the piano in fine time and spirit.<sup>45</sup>

Nov. 17. Rainy & at home in the morning. In the afternoon called on Mr. & Mrs. Gilman at Mr. Perman's, a pleasant visit.<sup>46</sup> Also called on Mr. Crocker's very affectionate family.

Nov. 18. A. M. The horizon hung with vapors; after dinner walked with Mr. Bridge & called on the Miss Ramsays. Their establishment is in a large & ancient building, the family estate. We found them, Mr. B. tho't, in an attitude somewhat more negligent than is usual for them, unsuspecting of company immediately after the removal of the cloth. Doct. R., a brother, & lady from Philadelphia were present & three sisters.<sup>47</sup> Everything was instantly as it should be & the whole party in the attitude of conversation. It was soon evident from what pedigree their minds sprang & under whose fostering tuition they had risen from infancy to adult years. There was a very remarkable precision of thought & expression & manner in every one of the ladies, & what they said was in measured periods fit to be in type. It could not fail to be incident to manner of conversation like this that a degree of formality would at times be apparent, inspiring a caution a little chilling on the flow of mind & soul. It is easily accounted for. They are continually under the

<sup>44</sup> Thayer lived on Tradd Street. Early Charleston directories give his address variously as 48 and 91 Tradd.

<sup>45</sup> This was probably Peter Timothy Marchant, a Charleston newspaperman and artist of the early 1800's.

<sup>46</sup> This may have been George Perman, a grocer at 35-36 East Bay Street.

<sup>47</sup> These are the children of the noted historian-physician, David Ramsay (1749-1815), who was shot by a maniac on the streets of Charleston, May 6, 1815. James Ramsay, the brother mentioned here, later became professor of surgery at the South Carolina Medical College which was incorporated in 1823. The Ramsay sisters, as Abbot relates, operated a school for young ladies at their home (92 Broad Street).

impression that they are regarded as the models of the young ladies in their school—& that nothing must appear in the example but precise perfection. To this manner also the consciousness that they are the offspring of illustrious ancestors & parents whose names are embalmed in the national history & their lives & writings & piety preserved among the choicest treasures of American biography doubtless contributes not a little. On the whole, there is great merit in this distinguished family, & I hope to be indebted to its powerful & cultivated intellect for many of the richest entertainments of the winter. Their illustrious maternal grandsire was represented in the hall by a portrait indicative of the powerful mind & sterling integrity of Henry Lawrence.<sup>48</sup> The paternal grandsire hangs opposite to him of whom I am yet to learn something to say. The portrait of the historian, their father, adorned another side of the room. It is a countenance among the gravest & approaches to a look of frowning severity. I looked in vain to find those lines of benignity which should mark the President of the Carolinian Senate when giving his casting vote for the abolition of slavery—in vain to find all that vivacity & imagination & interest which so abound in the *History of the Revolution*. But the Dr.'s portrait is not the only high authority to rebuke the Lavaterism of the day.<sup>49</sup> There has not appeared in our hemisphere a brighter intellectual star than Hamilton, obscured in the portrait however by a cloudy brow & almost sleepy features. After all, the portrait of Dr. R. is a good painting & is even said to be a flattering likeness. It is painful in visiting this hospitable mansion to think by what a dreadful disaster it was deprived of its proprietor. The opinion of the medical faculty had been taken whether a certain person was sane in intellect whose conduct, it seems, had been a doubtful index. He was pronounced not sane. This the poor maniac could not indure & swore vengeance. Furnishing himself with his pistols he called at Dr. R.'s house & inquired for him. He was abroad among his patients. He found him in the streets & lodged the fatal ball in his body. The Dr. did not long survive, but persisted in his opinion that the man was insane & humanely protested against his accountability for what he had done. He was tried for life & acquitted, partly on the Dr.'s dying testimony. This, however, but inflamed the maniac the more & he swore in open court that he would not rest before he had taken the life of the attorney & the judge

<sup>48</sup> Abbot means Laurens, not "Lawrence." Their mother, Martha Laurens, who died in 1811, was Ramsay's third wife. She was a daughter of Henry Laurens (1724-1792).

<sup>49</sup> Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741-1801), Swiss poet and theologian, was a stern advocate of the "science" of physiognomy.

who had cleared him on the score of insanity. The maniac & the obnoxious persons were thus in a singular position in regard to each other. The law set the maniac at liberty & in this state gave no protection to the threatened lives. The attorney in his predicament assured the court that he would shoot the maniac the moment he was in the streets if there was no other means to protect his own life. The court, therefore, without law, delivered the absolved murderer of Dr. R. into the hands of the sheriff who on his own personal responsibility keeps him in confinement. These circumstances were stated to me by Mr. Gilman—I may learn on the spot & from the family some variation from this account. (This day weighed lb. 150.)

No. 19. Sent my mammoth sheet to Beverly. Mr. Motte having engaged us to dine at his house, sat down about 4 o'clock. His brother of the party, to whom I have engaged to make a visit at the S. end of Church St.<sup>50</sup>

Nov. 20. Mr. Thayer furnishing his servants & carriage about 12 o'clock, in company with Mr. Motte as a pilot & with my young friend Mr. H. we sallied forth to make calls & leave cards. We called on Doct. Manning & dr. on East Bay. His situation is very airy & very pleasant, now I should think made far more respectable & delightful by the presence of his discrete daughter at the head of his table.<sup>51</sup>

We next called at Mr. Paterson's &, he being out, I left my card. Next on Mr. Webbe who was very ill & whom I did not see. We then proceeded to the Jockey Club race ground, an inclosure of a mile in circumference.<sup>52</sup> To this spot there is a grand annual resort from most of the Southern States. It is one of the most noticed anniversaries to which the planters flock from a circle of several hundred miles. There is nothing remarkable to distinguish it—a level [place] it is because stone or hill there is none to be found, except it be imported. It is, however, incumbered with weeds & low brush wood, which I learn will be swept smooth away before the race week. We passed beyond the limits of the city into the western liberties. A large church here stands on a sandy scite with an extensive promenade in front, sand ankle deep, set out with the "pride of India," vulgarly so called (real name by Catesby I believe to be Cataulpa). Many of the streets of this city are set with this tree. It is still not stripped of its foliage by autumnal frost. The flower resembles the lilac, the berry is green now & the size of a cran-

<sup>50</sup> The brother was Francis Motte.

<sup>51</sup> Dr. Joseph Manning lived at the corner of Society and East Bay Streets. His daughter was among Abbot's fellow passengers en route from Boston to Charleston.

<sup>52</sup> This race track was located at what is now Hampton Park.

berry. We passed on at an easy 4 mile an hour pace, the Carolina [folk] jog in their carriages for so heavy is the sand that the poor animals have a load of it—especially as no coach moves without a negro behind & a negro before, besides the contents of the carriage. Even a sulkey is not seen, if it belongs to any man pretending to fashion, without a negro behind, sometimes a man & sometimes a boy. A chair intended for the accommodation of ladies, two or three, is driven by a stout Negro who sits in the bottom with his long shanks dangling at the side in no small peril from the wheels. Indeed, Negroes are so numerous & make so large a part of every domestic establishment that they are obliged to exercise their wits to devise a sufficient variety to keep them employed.

We turned off to the left of the country road & pursued our path amidst pine barrens, a soil too thin we should think to reward cultivation. Here and there was seen a *live oak*, the famous ship timber tree; here it rises about 15 feet from the ground, has a short trunk & many limbs, crooked & angular, fit for knees to vessels.<sup>53</sup> The leaf seen from the carriage had not the least resemblance to any of the family of northern oaks. In a retired spot, inclosed by an extensive picket fence, near the bank of the Ashley stands the mansion of Hon. Mr. Lowndes, M. C. from this district.<sup>54</sup> Mr. Reed requests a half day's assistance in the 1st Presbyterian meeting house next Sabbath.

Nov. 21. Mr. Hurlbut called & conducted us to the concert hall.<sup>55</sup> It is an extensive room & was hung all round with prints to be exposed at auction; among them is a considerable number executed by eminent artists.

Dined at Mr. Hurlbut's & with Doct. Coffin & Mr. Haddock walked to the Orphan House.<sup>56</sup> This is a charitable establishment, I presume not equalled in the United States. It occupies a square of several acres, is inclosed by a lofty brick wall, is furnished with a vast principal building, a most elegant, tho small church & a separate brick building, probably the residence of the Intendant. There is an area in front of great extent—over it you pass from the front gate in either of two diverging paths to either end of the building or pass up the third path to the center of the building. In the center of this area is a superb statue of the earl of Chatham of marble & executed, I think, at the expense of the

<sup>53</sup> Abbot added in a footnote, "I had not then seen them 70 feet high."

<sup>54</sup> William Lowndes (1782-1822), one of the young War Hawks, had been in Congress since 1810. His mansion, still standing, was known as "The Grove" or "Lowndes' Grove."

<sup>55</sup> The Concert Hall was located on Church Street.

<sup>56</sup> The Orphan House, founded in 1783, was located at 160 Calhoun Street.

State. It stands on a pedestal about 5 feet high & is of size unquestionably larger than life in Senatorial costume.<sup>57</sup> But I shall examine it at my next visit with more care. Some sacrilegious bachanal has mutilated this noble specimen of art & of national gratitude. An arm has been severed at the shoulder, &c., &c. The figure & countenance, however, are pretty well preserved.

We passed up a lofty flight of steps into the story above the basement, just passed thro the apartments of the East wing, spent a half hour in the cupola in gazing over this extended & compact city—descended from a West door a corresponding flight of steps into a handsome & extensive garden, on the outer skirt of which in the line of the center of the Orphan house we entered a beautiful church. In this one of the commissioners reads a discourse on the Sabbath morning & gives in some mode or other devotional exercises. In the afternoon the city clergymen of all denominations in rotation perform divine services, the Episcopalian with a liturgy, the Independent & Presbyterian with extemporaneous prayer, & give a sermon to 176 orphans & a crowded house of strangers & citizens.

This little church, perhaps 70 by 45 feet, is perfectly proportioned & neatly finished, furnished with a small organ, & adorned with two handsome paintings. The first is of the agony in the garden—the figure of the Lord about as large as life—in the most affecting attitude, suitable to those most pathetic & submissive words—“Father, not my will, but thine be done.” The angel strengthening him is a fine figure in the picture. The whole is a night piece, agreeably to historical truth, but rather excessively shaded. The second painting is appended to the gallery fronting the pulpit & is a fine picture of an appropriate subject, the presentation of children to Christ. The figures are our blessed Lord, the disciples, mothers & fathers & children of all sizes. Historical truth is well preserved & the whole is a very interesting picture, ten fold or more so, because the emblem stands directly in front of 176 living orphans, by public charity presented to X, & here in the most admirable way training up to serve their Redeemer & their fellow men. Returned to the Concert Hall & purchased a few select prints.

<sup>57</sup> This statue, authorized by the South Carolina Assembly to thank Pitt for his opposition to the Stamp Act of 1765, was originally placed at the intersection of Broad and Meeting Streets. In 1794 it was removed—either because it was an obstruction to traffic or as a result of conflicting anti-British and pro-French sentiment. In 1808 it was erected on the grounds of the Orphan House and in 1881 moved to its present location near the Fireproof Building. While Abbot blames some “sacrilegious bachanal” for mutilating the statue, tradition blames “the British.” Of course, it could have been a “sacrilegious *British* bachanal”

Nov. 22. Preached for Dr. Palmer in the Circular Church, the most extraordinary building on some accounts, I presume to say, in the United States. It has cost 60,000 \$ & *is not finished*. It was intended, it seems, to present to the eye a concave of a semi-globe, the diameter of which is 80 feet, the semi-diameter or height, of course, 40 ft. It is built of Carolina brick with a flagged pavement, the aisles broad to accommodate negro worshippers & carpetted to prevent echo—the pulpit at the East end, neat & convenient. The vast gulf of space before the speaker is filled by pews & galleries, the whole of the right hand space of the gallery being appropriated to black people. It is, beyond all comparison, the most difficult to fill with a human voice that I have ever seen & is said to be the *coldest* house in the winter in this city & the hottest in the summer. The house was well filled, above & below; the most interesting section of the whole globe to me being the dark cloud on my right. The negroes were decently & many handsomely dressed, still & attentive—appeared to sit by families—men, wives & children—and a considerable number had hymnbooks & sung quite as well, to say the least, as the fairer occupants of the singing gallery. I am informed by Dr. P. that the negroes in his congregation hold regular religious meetings where the performances are entirely by themselves & in a style perfectly astonishing as to the degree of excellence. Their music is sustained in the four parts & they perform some pieces of much taste & difficulty. The Dr. often attends these meetings to give them countenance, as a certain number of whites must be present to answer the demand of the law. It is my intention to attend one of these meetings.

Dined with Dr. P. Rev. Reed called after dinner & with him I repaired to the 1st Scotch Presbyterian church & preached in the afternoon. This is a very pleasant house of worship in M[ee]tin[g] St. with two cupolas, in the style of Mr. Green's of Malden. It is by far the easiest house for the speaker that I have seen. The pulpit is more in the northern style than is usual in this city, roomy & furnished with a hair bottomed & hair backed lolling chair, probably to accommodate its late occupant Dr. L[eland]. A wide gallery is here provided for blacks & is pretty well filled; some of the colored gentry were handsome in their manners & rather luxurious in dress. The pews were tolerably filled.

Nov. 23. Called on Mr. & Mrs. Gilman at Mr. Perman's & on Mrs. Hichborn & Mrs. Crocker; it rained a little, but the umbrella & cloak prevented injury.

Mr. Thayer's carriage carried Mr. Haddock & myself to dine with his family in Tradd Street. We passed into the house thro a yard under a canopy of multiflora. We were received in the pleasantest manner im-

aginable & introduced to Mr. Merchant, Mr. Smith,———— & several ladies, invited guests. At 4 o'clock sat down to a very handsome entertainment of fish, fowl, & venison, puddings & pies, indigenous & exotic fruits, &c., &c. The more sensual entertainment was continually relieved & improved by a lively & spirited conversation interchanged from all parts of the table.

After dinner the company repaired to the hall & were regaled with musick. Miss Claudia plays on the Piano with fine execution. Mr. Merchant & Miss Smith sang with taste. Some of our Northern pieces delighted me most, perhaps aided by the power of association.

Mr. T. has quite an interesting family—himself a gentleman respected & well informed, a bookseller & planter. Mrs. T. is a woman of benevolence & with hospitable manners; she entertains with courtesy. The two oldest children absent; Miss Claudia is a pretty well educated woman of 20, chatty without weakness or familiarity. Miss Caroline, tall & slender & modest, yet ready to converse. The son, a fine youth, preparing for Cambridge. Mr. T. recd. my congratulations & acknowledged himself a happy man.<sup>58</sup>

Nov. 26. Called at Mr. Lovell's store & delivered a letter.<sup>59</sup> Walked to the battery, a fine promenade on the margin of the Ashley river. Called at Mr. F[rancis] Motte's & saw Mrs. M. & two drs. answering in age & figure to my Adeline & Emily. I looked at them, but tho't of home. Called on Mr. Sturgis; spent a half hour.

Mr. Sturgis attended me to my lodgings; on the way introduced me to Dr. Flinn—a short, fleshy—& *minister & planter*.<sup>60</sup> The several occupations are said not to agree well with each other. At the corner of Meeting & S. Bay St. stands one of the most splendid mansions of this city belonging to Mrs. Izard.<sup>61</sup> It has three stories & piazzas above the basement & circular projections. There is more than a usual quantity of carved & ornamental work, tasteful, however, & modest. This build-

<sup>58</sup> Mrs. Thayer was the former Carolina Sinclair Heyward. She married Ebenezer Thayer in 1793. Caroline would marry Edwin Gibbes in November 1821. Ebenezer, Jr., was teaching school at 14 Chalmers Street in 1822.

<sup>59</sup> Josiah Sturgis Lovell was a partner in Lovell & Paine, ship candler at 42 East Bay Street.

<sup>60</sup> Dr. Andrew Flinn (1773-1820), a Maryland native, was pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church from 1809 to 1820.

<sup>61</sup> Mrs. Ralph Izard, the former Alice De Lancey of Westchester, N. Y., died in 1832, aged 87. Following her husband's death in 1804 she spent much of her time in Philadelphia, where she became a well-known hostess. This Charleston mansion burned in 1828. See Langdon Cheves, "Izard of South Carolina," this *Magazine*, II (July 1901), 204-240.

ing was designated by Mr. Sturgis as affording evidence of negro ingenuity, as it was chiefly executed by the blacks of the proprietor.<sup>62</sup>

At 12 Mr. Crocker called with the venerable Mr. Russel & Mr. Sturgis & Mr. Lovell. Mr. Russel was the father-in-law of Bp. Dehone, a merchant of great wealth & of greater benevolence, of high character & standing, & like the good Dr. Firman, against whom not a person in the city dares, if he could find the wish, to utter a syllable.<sup>63</sup> On the morrow, he stated to me, he should be 80 years old. Like Moses, it might also be said, that his eye is not dim nor his natural force abated.

His recollections were prompt; his utterance easy & his manners & conversation interesting. Mr. Lovell is of the Sturgis family by the maternal side; and is a gentlemen of high respectability. In the afternoon called on Mr. Grimké, Dr. Palmer, Mr. Miller, Judge Smith.<sup>64</sup> In the evening an incident served to develope, in a most affecting manner, the fine feelings & painful recollections of this family. Mr. Smerdon was an English gentleman of fine education & accomplishments, of established character in England & bro't to this country by the easiness or mismanagement of a brother, who was too benevolent to claim what was due to himself & brother.<sup>65</sup> He became important in this place as an insurance broker; & reports of his, drawn up with legal ability & precision, it has been thought desirable to give to the public. Surrounded with a young family, in whose education he was employing his own leisure moments with the finest effect, instructing his eldest dr. in English

<sup>62</sup> Abbot added in a subsequent footnote: "I learn from H[enry] I[zard], Esq. that an Eng. carp'r of genius was employed in the design and execu'n of the edifice. Negroes were also & are ingenious workmen—no designers."

<sup>63</sup> Nathaniel Russell (1738-1820) moved to Charleston from Bristol, R. I., sometime prior to 1770. He became a successful, wealthy merchant and by 1809 completed the mansion at 51 Meeting Street which is the headquarters of the Historic Charleston Foundation. Theodore Dehon (1776-1817), born in Boston, was the second Episcopal bishop of South Carolina, 1812-1817. Richard Furman (1775-1825), noted Baptist leader for whom Furman University is named, was born in New York state, but spent most of his life in South Carolina.

<sup>64</sup> This was probably Thomas Smith Grimké (1786-1834), Yale graduate and brother of the reforming Grimké sisters. A law partner of Robert Y. Hayne, he was a pioneer in temperance reform, the world peace movement, and educational reform. Judge William Smith (1762-1840), born near the North Carolina-South Carolina line, migrated to Bullock's Creek in York District when young. A circuit judge from 1808 to 1816, he later served briefly in the U. S. Senate. When the nullification controversy erupted, Smith, although pro-states rights, was critical of the extreme stand of Calhoun and in the early 1830's left the state to live in Alabama.

<sup>65</sup> In his will Elias Smerdon stated that he was formerly a merchant of Copthall Building, Throgmorton Street, London.



& French, & his family by a devout example morning & evening, exceedingly beloved and respected by all, he was called to another world at the age of 59. The energy of the surviving parent in a wonderful degree supplies to the children the loss of the best of fathers. It will be my pleasure to aid the elder dr. in completing the solid parts of her education, & thus to qualify her to act an important part in the education of her sisters.

*(To be Continued)*

## THE FIRST EARL OF SHAFTESBURY

GEORGE C. ROGERS, JR.\*

In 1883 Charleston celebrated her 100th anniversary as an incorporated community. One of the projects designed to celebrate that centennial was the transcribing of the items in the Shaftesbury Papers in the British Public Record Office relating to South Carolina. This work was suggested by the then mayor of Charleston, William Courtenay, and carried out under the direction of Noel Sainsbury. Eventually these portions of the Shaftesbury Papers were published as the 5th volume of the *Collections of the South Carolina Historical Society*.

Among the many documents there printed, which tell the early story of Carolina, is a letter of the first Lord Ashley written on December 15, 1671, to Sir John Yeamans, governor of Carolina. Lord Ashley wrote: "I desire you would doe me the particular kindnesse to take up . . . for me a Colony of 12,000 acres in some convenient healthy fruitful place upon Ashley River." It is, therefore, fitting that as we now begin the planning for the tricentennial celebration of the founding of Charleston, and of our state, that the tenth Earl of Shaftesbury, a direct descendant of that first Lord Ashley, is able to come and meet with us at the Country Club of Charleston which is located at a spot so aptly meeting the above description.

The first Earl of Shaftesbury was a great man who lived through turbulent times, his faults not unknown to his contemporaries nor to historians, his accomplishments bright jewels recognized on both sides of the Atlantic—the passing of the Habeas Corpus Act and the founding of Carolina. He was proof that good could come from less than perfect men.

The first Earl, though small of stature, was a preeminent figure on the canvas of seventeenth-century England, a century teeming with men of genius and ambition. First as Sir Anthony Ashley Cooper, then as Lord Ashley, and finally as the Earl of Shaftesbury, he maintained a place high on the slippery slopes of privilege until he lost his footing near the end of a long career, fled to Holland, and died in Amsterdam.

\* This paper is an address which was delivered at the Country Club of Charleston on January 16, 1967, on the occasion of a luncheon given by the South Carolina Tricentennial Commission in honor of the present Lord and Lady Shaftesbury.