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CONTENTS

PA	AGE
Papers of Gabriel Manigault, 1771-1784	1
The Rebel (Columbia), January 28, 1863	13
Correspondence between Alexander Garden, M. D., and the Royal Society of Arts	
The Great Fire of 1778 Seen through Contemporary Letters	23
Honest and Just at the Court of Charles II	27
Middleton Correspondence, 1861-1865	28
The Sams Family of South Carolina	39
Marriage Licenses Issued by the Court of Ordinary, Marion County, 1800-1829	
Notes and Reviews	56

MIDDLETON CORRESPONDENCE, 1861-1865

Edited by Isabella Middleton Leland (Continued from October)

Susan to Harriott, Flat Rock

Columbia—Saturday [Jan. 3, 1863]

... Emma ... says they had a very pleasant time going down [to Charleston]. Miss Celly Huger, who had asked to join their party, was very talkative and agreeable, and they had a further addition in Alex. Chisolm, who gave them a Coosa orange he was carrying for "the General," and *promised* to give them a party at Headquarters, if Beauregard would consent! Mrs. Bunch is to entertain "the Partington Marquis" 63 when he arrives, and the Frenchmen design giving a ball on board the "Milan." On the whole Emma thinks their prospects very brilliant. . . .

Harriott to Susan, Columbia

Flat Rock Sunday Jan. 4th

. . . Beauregard seems to anticipate an attack on us in Carolina soon. Do you hear any thing of it? Did you notice that Gregg's brigade led the charge at Fredericksburg, and that our Carolina men stood by their guns, whilst Latham's battery was entirely deserted in the thickest of the fire, and captain Ferguson left alone, walked up and down wrapped in the battle flag. And yet how little do the Virginia papers tell of our exploits. Some one from Virginia mentioned that there was more dash in Carolina fighting than in the fighting from any other state, and that they therefore were always given the lead in taking fortifications and all forlorn hope expeditions. . . .

Alice writes us such amusing letters. She gives a spirited account of Willy Smith's party, which was delightful.⁶⁴ He did the honours ad-

⁶³ The Courier of Jan. 21, 1863, notes "The Marquis of Hartington . . . is a member of the British Commons from North Lancashire. He is a son of the Duke of Devonshire." The Marquis of Hartingdon [sic] is mentioned also in Chestnut, A Diary from Dixie, 413. The similarity of names, despite the different initial letter, leads us to believe this might be the person to whom Susan alludes.

64 "I gave a grand party Xmas night at Grandmamma Smith's house, on 'cold water' . . . We danced until 2 o'clock." Mason Smith Family Letters, 1860-1868

(Columbia, S. C., 1950), 28.

HONEST AND JUST AT THE COURT OF CHARLES II

By St. Julien R. Childs *

When the first English colonists arrived on the coast of South Carolina in March of 1670, they received an enthusiastic welcome from the chief of the Kiawah Indians and soon decided to settle on the Ashley River near his village. Some five months later, in September, "Two Cassiques sonnes" sailed from Ashley River for Barbados on the Carolina, the ship that had brought the colonists. The probabilities are that the father of the two youths was the Kiawah chief who had visited Barbados himself as the guest of an earlier explorer. Their names, Honest and Just, may have been bestowed by that pious old Independent, Governor William Sayle, but Colonel Joseph West, second in command of the colony, would probably have made a similar choice.

In Barbados, the young men were "clothed and civilly treated" by Thomas Colleton, a brother of one of the most interested Lords Proprietors of Carolina.¹ It is not known how long they remained on the island, but eventually someone must have realized that it would be marvellous publicity for the new settlement to forward them to England. We are told that in London, "they were kindly received by his Majty [Charles II] and received many rich presents from the K[ing] and court." ²

In January 1672 they embarked on the William and Ralph to return home. At Falmouth they were detained by an embargo laid on all vessels in anticipation of the Second Anglo-Dutch War. Possibly because of his distinguished passengers, the master presently obtained permission to proceed. On March 22, when haled near Bermuda, he took occasion to report the presence aboard of the "Indian princes." After this mention, Honest and Just disappear from history. The William and Ralph, however, reached Ashley River safely on April 19.4 We may hazard a guess that it was a proud day for the Cacique of Kiawah, but, save for the three references cited in the footnotes, there is no mention in the records of his sons' memorable travels.

^o Mr. Childs is the author of *Malaria and Colonization in the Carolina Low Country*, 1526-1696 (Baltimore, 1940) and of several articles dealing with the colonial history of South Carolina.

¹ Locke's abstract of letter from Thomas Colleton in Langdon Cheves, ed., "The Shaftesbury Papers . . ." in South Carolina Historical Society, Collections, V (Charleston, 1897), 249. For sailing date of the Carolina, see *ibid.*, 251.

² Calendar of State Papers, Domestic (25 vols.; London, 1860-1934), Volume 1671-1672, 163.

³ SCHS, Collections, V, 476.

⁴ Ibid., 389-390.

mirably. Only about half a dozen of the young girls were known to her by sight, then there were 6 or 7 that she had never seen. Aunt Euretta and Bell Warley received the company. Mr. and Mrs. Whaley came with Minna and Josephine, and Mr. and Mrs. Bunch brought two french officers from the Milan, and an english Colonel of the guard, a perfect snob, and there were some navy officers. Alice danced with a french officer opposite Dolly with the englishman, and when the two officers had to advance towards one another in the Lancers they made the most frightful faces at one another! The englishman squeezed all their hands, which they discovered on comparing notes. A Navy officer from Kentucky, who danced with Alice, always put his arm round her waist when he had to turn her in the Lancers, in the most affectionate manner, to Alice's great horror! She says that "round dancing has become alarmingly prevalent. Euretta has succumbed—I as yet remain firm as a rock." I have written her the most imploring letter on the subject in case her faith fails! . . .

Saturday evening 10th

. . . Sophy Haskell is back again, and gives us her brother's accounts of things in Virginia. They say that every battle makes them more and more admire the fighting of southern men, that it is splendid! and Carolinians do fight grandly, and the people from other states are beginning to like as well as admire us more! They say also that the fighting on both sides becomes fiercer each time that they meet in conflict. The Northern troops are better drilled than our men, and come on the field of battle beautifully, but they do not go off quite so creditably. Our men do continually what the Yankees have never yet accomplished. They lie down, unable to do any thing and take the severest shelling, talking and laughing all the time. What do you think of peace now? Alice says that every one in town is expecting it in six months! . . .

Susan to Harriott, Flat Rock

Columbia Saturday

... All the news we hear comes from the girls in town, and I take it for granted that Alice tells you all that they tell us. What a gay pleasant time they all seem to be having down there. It is delightful to think of those poor young girls again being within reach of some of the enjoyment belonging to their time of life. But it is *not* delightful to think of their giving in, as I hear they are doing, and waltzing with all these underbred foreigners. Mrs. Waties tells me Miss Hannah Harleston was the only unmarried woman she observed who declined round-dancing! I am very proud that Alicia "stands firm as a rock," and regret that I

cannot say as much for all the Miss Middletons! Livy, in her letter yesterday, begs that Papa will consent to Emma's dancing, as "she is dying to do it." She expresses no desire to "do it" herself, and, as I have often heard her express what seemed a very sincere and hearty disgust at the idea, I trust she will not be led astray by pernicious example. That Emma should wish to set aside propriety and delicacy in this way mortifies me deeply, but I have no doubt she will do it, for she is at least as self-willed as I am, and Papa says: "Tell her I think it very indecent, but she is of age, and if she chooses to make a fool of herself, contrary to my wish and advice, I shall no longer oppose her doing so." The Beauregard Ball is to be a very splendid affair. Mr. Read is one of the Managers, and brought home such a brilliant description of the preparations, that the girls thought the first ball dresses they had sent up for would not be fine enough for the occasion, so we yesterday despatched a second "three-decker" with the very prettiest they own. . . .

... Mr. William Miles ... made himself very entertaining, telling us a great deal about Richmond and the notabilities there, particularly Mrs. Davis, whom he seems to hold in extreme averson. He says she is fine looking, but neither clever, as we have often been told, nor goodhearted, and she is dreadfully vulgar in mind as well as in manners. He was delighted to hear that two splendid cashmer shawls, and several "magnificant silk dresses embroidered in gold," which she had sent for, were all lost in the Steamer "Kate." It certainly was more like Lincoln's wife than Jefferson Davis's to desire finery at such a time as this. She dislikes all South Carolinians and says they are always "stuck-up" and "fancy themselves so much better than everybody else," and she has managed to indoctrinate the President with her absurd notions about us. Her want of tact, & common politeness has alienated nearly all her own friends, and many of her husband's. The "best people" in Richmond "have very little to do with her, and her intimates are a few "fast women." Mrs. Waties says Gen. Anderson's wife, who has been a great deal in Richmond gave her exactly the same account not long ago at Stateburg. Is it not a pity it should be so? I had hoped our President was in all things a contrast to Lincoln, but we have to allow, it seems that they both have vulgar wives. . . .

Jan. 16th

... We have only heard once from Oliver, but I don't think his impressions of camp-life were by any means complete, as he had not yet been "on picket." I feel inclined to smile (as we so wickedly do, often, at the lesser misfortunes of others) whenever I hear the word "picket." All the men we see from camp give such piteous accounts of what has to be

undergone in that trying duty, all agree that "nothing is so hard as picket." Oliver is in a tent with Frank and Lewis Van der Horst, and messes with them, and the two Manigaults, Mr. Kirkland, and Ed. Nowell, also young Julius, and, I suppose, Poinsett Pringle, as he, too, is said to have joined the Troop. He swam the Potomac on horseback and made his way with some difficulty to Richmond. His father said the risks were too great and preferred staying behind to running them. . . .

The girls continue to write in the highest spirits, greatly enjoying the parties that have been and are to be. Both dance round dances, which I can't help feeling annoyed and mortified about. Does Alice still hold out in her resolution? I hear she has ample occupation for the intervals between the Lancers and Quadrilles! "Bouquets and two visits a day," that certainly looks serious, on *one* side at least! . . .

Friday aftn. [Jan. 23, 1863]

... Hal tells me neither she [Sally Rutledge] nor Lise say anything yet of returning. Both went to the Staff Ball, and Sally was one of the two young ladies whom Beauregard distinguished by his attentions! . . . The girls say the ball was the gayest and handsomest they ever saw in Charleston. To be very "Yankee" I will add, that it cost nearly two thousand dollars! Mme. St. Andre was the best-dressed woman in the room, white silk, with point lace flounces, and splendid diamonds. Sally thought that Miss Sally Hampton was by far the handsomest girl present. But of course Alice will have told you a great deal of the ball and the people, too. I doubt if she went off on Friday. If she did, she left several parties behind her. On Monday, the girls say, they went to the Review at Fort Sumter, and since that there was a delightful evening at the Mills House, 65 a dance and supper given by Cols. Rice, Toutant, Alex. Chisolm, and some others—"the German" lasted until two o'clock! They now have a party at Louise's in prospect—Is Alice to go back for it? "The Partington Marquis" seems to have made a pleasing impression, excepting as regards his pocket handkerchief, which Emma says was not only of silk! but looked as if he had been using it a month! Col. Leslie and Frank Vizitelly 66 they say, are very fine-looking men. The last ought to be entertaining, he has seen so much. They have letters to Mr. Preston, and are to return here soon on a visit to him. Columbia is won already. The Marquis expressed himself in terms of high admiration in speaking of the New State House. The whole party were much

⁶⁵ Now the St. John's Hotel, 115 Meeting Street, Charleston.

⁶⁶ An artist and correspondent representing the Illustrated London News.

struck by the huge blocks of beautiful Carolina granite lying near it! If ever you come to Columbia, we will drive together to see the quarry from which it is taken. I went not long ago with Hal and Kate Ravenel, and it is really quite a pretty and interesting place.

Harriott to Susan, Columbia

Flat Rock Saturday 24th

... Think of our having heard from Annie again. Cousin Rose sent us two letters from her, dated the 14th and 21st Dec. She says that she has repeatedly written to us, and twice sent on photographs of the children by "sure hands," and she cannot understand our not hearing. She too never hears from us. She says that she is perfectly strong and well, and seems cheerful and busy. The Morrises were just going to spend the winter in New York, so she expected to see no one until the Spring. She speaks of money as scarce, and mentions what seems to me a significant circumstance, that a Union soldier went round with the tax gathererapropos to which she tells us an anecedote of little Arthur. The soldier said to him seeing him strutting about "Youngster come and enlist and we'll take you to fight Jeff Davis." To which Arthur replied, "Look here, Black Republican, I'll never fight against Jeff Davis, and I'll never fight for old Abe Lincoln." He then strutted into the house and told his Mama. Annie said "Did you tell him that you intended to fight for Jeff Davis?" No, said Lang Read (I quote Annie) "If I had said so he would have put me in prison and then I could not have fought at all." Mr. Tracy, Ruth Brishman's husband, had just been released after a solitary confinement of six weeks without a charge preferred against him or having the least idea of the cause of his arrest. Annie says "such is our government." . . .

I suppose the girls have told you that Alice has given in to round dancing, only at one party, and before another comes I hope she will hear from Mama, telling her not to do so again. It is very natural that the girls should be giving in to these practices for I hear there are no elderly people in society, and unrestrained liberty always falls rapidly into license. They are not to be harshly judged, but I think it a pity that under the circumstances girls should go out. The accounts I hear show a great want of dignity and propriety. I hear of more than one young girl who have completely lost their heads and are in an excited agitated state with all their ideas of right and wrong getting very much confounded. We hope to have Alice at home again soon after a visit to the Parkers. . . .

Susan to Harriott, Flat Rock

Columbia—Friday [Jan. 30, 1863]

.... The girls . . . tell of another gay party at the Mills House, given by Beauregard's Staff. Fancy Mr. Rice having "become expert in the round dances!" when I last heard of him he was hobbling about Union on crutches, but he seems to have vanquished the rheumatism, and is being rejuvenated by the light of "the General's" countenance. In the intervals he devotes himself to Mary, who was invited to do the propriety on this occasion. The only other married lady was Mrs. Choppin, the wife of the Staff Surgeon, who was a pretty little Miss Metcalf, of Natchez, whom we knew years ago at Newport, perhaps you did, too. The condition of society in Charleston strikes me also as very shocking.

Harriott to Susan, Columbia

Flat Rock Feb. 1, 1863

... Alice tells us of her having gone to Middleton place with your girls, and how much she enjoyed it. I must give you her answer to Mamma on the subject of round dancing. After saying that of course she will not if Mamma objects "by the by, my dear Mamma, I have put away very carefully your very severe and imperative letter. I intend preserving it, in order to show to future generations the stern and unbending character (where duty is concerned) of the southern matrons of the present day. Let me humbly suggest that the preservation of this letter will also tend to illustrate the humility of their offspring!"

Susan to Harriott, Flat Rock

Columbia—Friday [Feb. 6, 1863]

... These are strange times—such curious things happen. When the Preston girls unpacked their dresses the day of the great Ball, it was discovered to their dismay that an indispensable white silk petticoat had been left behind. King street shops were ransacked in vain to supply the deficiency—no where could white silk be found, until some one suggested the undertaker's! and there the missing garment was finally obtained! Could you have danced in a dress designed for the dead? But, throughout all these gaities, it seems to me, I should constantly be haunted by the "pale faces" Mr. Timrod introduces so pathetically.⁶⁷ I daresay that

⁶⁷ "Would not some pallid face/Look in upon the banquet, calling up/Dread shapes of battles in the wassail cup . . . " "Christmas," *Timrod*, 161.

it is well, however, that the young people feel differently, and do not at all mean to find fault with their doing so.

Columbia—Thursday [Feb. 12, 1863]

... [Mr. Rutledge] has detailed Oliver to act as his private Secretary. Of course this does not lessen his danger on the field. On the contrary, Mr. Rutledge says, he will probably have a better opportunity of distinction in case of fight than if he were in the ranks, and we all know what chances of distinction mean—but he is spared picket duty, and that is a great deal to be thankful for. Several of the men in the company went to Mr. Rutledge and told him it was a pity so young and delicate a boy should be exposed to such hardships—it was only after this that he decided to detail him—he had feared to show anything like partiality, and had been unwilling that Oliver should seem to wish to shirk his duty. . . .

Harriott to Susan, Columbia

Flat Rock-Feby. 15th

... Whilst you are hearing all kinds of news in Columbia, people here are taken up with the difficulty of getting any thing to eat and to wear. No beef to be killed, and no bacon or poultry to be bought! We have indeed a spinning wheel, and weaving machine, and intend to manufacture cloth!

Susan to Harriott, Flat Rock

Columbia—Wednesday

... Oliver writes, on the 15th, that at least 10,000 troops from N. Carolina had passed Pocotaligo on their way to Savannah—within easy call of Charleston, you see, should that place be first attacked, and a gentleman, from town yesterday, tells Papa he saw Jenkins there himself, and that his Brigade was on its way thither from Va.—so we are to have some tried men, and are not to be left altogether to reserves and conscripts. The girls say that Beauregard and Ripley, who ought to know the danger and our means of meeting it, are more confident than the people, and go on to tell us that any vessel, attempting to come in, must run for four miles in a channel under the fire of ninety guns, and, even should that be passed, she then reaches a basin, in which she is commanded by a still greater number. Some time ago I heard there were 250 guns in the harbor. Still, Frank Blake thinks if they come with six or seven ironclads, some will manage to slip by, and then, he says, the alternative will be

presented to our generals of the surrender of Fort Sumter or the bombardment of the town! But Frank, I hear, is never hopeful, but always sees the darkest side of everything in life. . . .

... I heard an anecdote of Gen. Beauregard the other day which pleased me. Ripley, not long ago, it seems shipped some cotton through the blockade. It went safely, and he cleared \$30,000 by the transaction. When Beauregard was urged to do likewise, he at once declined, saying he did not think it would be becoming in a man holding his position to engage in speculation. At the Staff Ball, when some one asked him if he did not dance, he said, "Yes, but this does not seem to me a time for dancing."

Columbia—Friday [Feb. 27, 1863]

... You would be quite brave about Charleston if you could hear the people who come from there talk of the almost certainty of our successful defence—all seem confident that we shall hold our own both there and at Savannah. Gen. Beauregard has 40,000 men already, and more are coming all the time . . . and for the ironclads, they, it is true, have to be experimented upon, but, it seems, the worse they can do will be to pass the forts. It will be a blunder, military men say, to leave them untaken in their rear, and when they shall have run by successfully, which is scarcely possible, their labor will but just have begun. . . .

Mr. Rutledge and Oliver both write in good spirits about the chance of holding the railroad line. They have at Pocotaligo 800 cavalry, 3,000 infantry, and 26 pieces of artillery—nearly all movable, and the earthworks are being strengthened with heavy guns.

... Gen. Huger was telegraphed for to Richmond but Ella saw him here again yesterday. I should think they would scarcely venture to put him again in command—unless it might be of an army of Hugers—their valour might render good generalship a matter of indifference. But ordinary Carolinians from what I hear would scarcely be induced to fight under him.

Harriott to Susan, Columbia

Flat Rock March 1st

... Cousin Izard thinks it dreadful to write to any northern person! Cousin Matty Singleton on receiving as a present two p[ai]rs of yankee boots from Mrs. Van Buren has put them aside refusing to wear them!

Susan to Harriott, Flat Rock

Columbia—Friday [Mar. 6/7, 1863]

- ... Apropos of the Battery, Ripley has offered Mr. Wm. Ravenel 25,000 dollars for the Roper House and been refused, so two people at least feel confident of the safety of that row of residences! I suppose you have heard of Mr. Petigru's illness. Mary says he was prayed for in church on Sunday, but from all accounts he will soon be past praying for. He is at Judge King's with his daughter to take care of him. . . .
- ... Another piece of very small talk is the French consul's quarrel with his cook! Some French officers were dining with him not long ago when some dish being brought in badly prepared, he jumped up from table, rushed into the kitchen, and gave the cook a tremendous beating. The cook was Irish and the result an action against Mr. de St. Andre for assault and battery! I had heard before almost fabulous stories of the violence of his temper, yet his wife, after recounting all her troubles to a lady not long since, wound up with a "Nevertheless, J'aime mon maril"

Friday [March 13, 1863]

- ... I hear of an "infernal machine" of Ripley's contrivance which ought to do mischief to the monitors even. He has filled an old boiler with powder, 10.000 lbs. and is to sink it in the channel—a wire cable, which has been a year on its way from New York, leads from this sunken boiler to Fort Sumter, and, at the right moment, it is to be fired by an electric spark blowing whatever is passing above to atoms. One lady thinks the safety of the Fort will be endangered by such an explosion—and would not be surprised if half of old Charleston is knocked down by the shockl Mrs. Izard thinks Col. Chestnut's arrival in town quite ominous, as he has always said he would certainly not miss the attack, and as he is the President's Aide, and supposed to be a good deal in his confidence, and has been for months quietly in Richmond, her idea is that the Government have advices of the enemy's movements which he has been sent on to communicate to Beauregard! Miss Lucas R. who has just been here, says she is awaiting Mr. Miles's advent as he assured her he would not fail to be present on the great occasion.
- . . . Apropos of "propriety," Sally has hit the round dances so popular now below quite happily I think—she calls them *revolutionary* dances—they certainly seem to have entirely revolutionized poor proper old Charleston. Some of the performances must be wonderful to behold from

what I am told. I think Alicia would have been consoled a little if she had heard Mrs. Holbrook who grew quite eloquent as she enlarged upon the superior dignity of Alice's position, which Louise had been describing to me as "the most conspicuous really in the room," off in a corner, the only lady not dancing, and with six men at a time around her! this last feature of her condition Louise seemed to think might be very demoralizing!

Friday [March 20/21, 1863]

... I hear that Alfred Rhett has printed a pamphlet in his own defence, and Gen. Jordan tells Mrs. Ripley that, altho' he had been much prejudiced against him and had felt unwilling to listen to anything that could be said in his favour, and had read his statement very reluctantly, and only at Gen. Beauregard's request, he is forced to confess after reading it that "he comes out of that affair with clean hands." It is only fair to repeat this after all I may have said to you before on this subject, and it seems to me a pity that both this statement of Rhett's and poor Calhoun's letter to his friends should not be laid before the public. We had heard a great deal of Rhett's unpopularity, yet, they say now, that when he was reinstated in command at Fort Sumter, the men received him with shouts of joy. Beauregard, whose report is supposed to have had some influence with the court by which he was honourably acquitted, says that he, however, wholly disapproves of Rhett's conduct, and that the next offence of the kind shall certainly be severely punished according to law, but he did not think it would be just to make an example of Maj. Rhett in a community where duelling had always been sanctioned by public opinion.

Saturday [March 21/22, 1863]

... Frank is under arrest in Ft. Sumter. He, with another officer, was ordered by Rhett to tie up two soldiers by the thumbs, after letting the men stay six minutes in torture, Frank declared he would stand it no longer, and cut his man down. The other officer did likewise, when both were put under arrest for not carrying out the commands of their "superior." However, they say they cannot be punished, for the thumb punishment is not allowable by law and should not have been resorted to. The girls have had another dance at Fort Sumter, and plenty of parties are in prospect after Lent. They evidently have no idea of returning to Columbia immediately, and Papa said they seemed to be enjoying themselves so much in town he had not the heart to insist on their coming to Columbia.

Thursday [March 26]

... From below we hear of nothing but buying and selling. All the real estate seems to be changing hands, and the Yankees are forgotten in the

excitement of gambling! People say the rage for speculation can only be so called. Some of the "old families" are in lively indignation at the idea of so many fine houses passing into the possession of the tradespeople. I suppose you may have heard of Mr. Kerrison's having bought Mr. Jas. R. Pringle's and Mr. W. H. Heyward's in your neighbourhood.⁶³ The last brought \$35,000, nearly double what Mr. Heyward gave for it, but the most surprising sale is Dr. North's lot in Meeting Street, which brought \$24,000 with nothing on it.⁶⁹ We were so glad to hear of his getting so large a price, he was such a terrible loser by the fire. Mr. Trenholm sells his invoices now at twelve hundred per cent! no wonder he confesses that he does not know what to do with his money. . . .

... Of course the letters must go through the Trenholms to Adderley, but I sent mine sealed. I believe, however they are sometimes examined at Headquarters. You probably heard of the Yankee in the "Marions" who wrote to his friends at the North that he was in the service by compulsion but that as he had joined a company composed of "the flower of the State," he would certainly come through the war all safe and sound, for the generals knew what they were about too well to put that body of men in any but a safe position! This letter was stopped at Headquarters, and returned to Capt. Parker. You may imagine the state of feeling into which it threw "the flower of the State." I have not heard whether "Private Salt" was allowed to remain among them; if so, I should doubt his position continuing to be quite as "safe" as he fancied it. . . .

⁶⁸ The James R. Pringle house, on the north-west corner of Gibbes and Legare, was sold for \$20,000. It was afterwards bought by W. B. Smith and altered by his daughter, Mrs. Heyward. William Henry Heyward's home, "the Pineapple Gate House," at 14 Legare, was sold on April 1, 1862, for the sum here stated.

69 Dr. North's house was one door north of Queen Street on the west side of Meeting. It was burned in the fire of '61.

(To be continued)