

THE
SOUTH CAROLINA
HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 1973

VOLUME 74

NUMBER 4



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SOUTH CAROLINA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
CHARLESTON, S. C.

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THE ANTE-BELLUM RICE PLANTER AS REVEALED IN THE
LETTERBOOK OF CHARLES MANIGAULT, 1846-1848

JAMES M. CLIFTON *

(Continued from July)

[To] Mr. James Coward (Silk Hope)

Dear Sir

Paris 1st March 1847

Your letter of the 10th January I received a few days ago—and it gave me great satisfaction to see in how successful a manner you carry on all my planting Concerns at Silk Hope—which plantation for upwards of 40 years has never been put up to what it could do in various ways until you got hold of it. My Father inherited it from his father & grandfather, & sold it to Mr. Heyward in 1805, because Mrs. H[eyward] had a great attachment to it—She having been partly raised there—so that I think it has been in my family about 100 years & more, for my Father was born in 1758.⁹ During *his time* he attended very minutely to the management of it, & made it yield all sort[s] of supplies, not only for the family, but for market, he used to sell a great deal of Wood, & all the Negroes' & House Servants' shoes, as well as my own when I was a boy, used to be made at Silk Hope. He kept a sloop constantly running, & Rina's father was Captain of it, & when I first took possession Rina came up & said "Massa, days only one ting wanting at Silk Hope, & dats a Boat to fetch ting for de place" but Rina & I did not agree, *on that head*—for she was thinking of her own private trade.

* Mr. Clifton is a member of the Department of Social Sciences, Southeastern Community College, Whiteville, N. C. 28472. Mr. Clifton is engaged in preparing for publication all the papers of Charles Manigault and Louis (Charles' son) concerning rice planting on the Cooper and Savannah rivers. The papers include the years 1833-1889.

⁹ Silk Hope was one of South Carolina's most distinguished plantations. Initially the home of Sir Nathaniel Johnson, colonial governor at the beginning of the eighteenth century, it was purchased in the 1750's by Gabriel Manigault, the colony's wealthiest merchant and great-grandfather of Charles. Peter Manigault, Gabriel's only son and Speaker of the Assembly from 1765 to 1772, passed the plantation on to his oldest son, Gabriel II, who chose to sell it to his brother-in-law, Nathaniel Heyward, in 1805 and move to Philadelphia. Heyward, ultimately to become the greatest of all antebellum rice planters with 14 rice plantations and over 2,000 slaves, presented Silk Hope, along with 126 slaves, as a wedding gift to Charles Manigault, Gabriel II's son, and his daughter Elizabeth upon their marriage in 1825. Silk Hope was quite large, comprising 3,000 acres of woodland, with 300 acres suitable for cotton and provision crops, and 130 acres of improved rice land.

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Besides a good Crop this season you have done wonders in the way of provisions; wood, staves, etc., etc. I was about writing to Mr. T. Middleton that you would draw on him for \$450 for your last year's services besides some trifle still due you for the previous year. But *now* with your good management you have not only made enough out of the extra things to pay yourself, but you will have a surplus from that resource, so that you may perhaps buy a Negro man for the plantation. And I wish you *would do this* out of any money you may have in hand of mine from wood or any such thing, should you meet with a good purchase. A man with his wife are always better, as there is *then* no cause, or excuse, to call them away on distant visits.

The last purchase I made of 5 Negroes from Mr. O. E. Ball's Estate, by your recommendation, was not a good purchase; as two of them are old—one ruptured—& the other two no way remarkable, at \$400 round. With all the work you have done at Silk Hope I am glad to find in what good order you have the mules—& the ox carts you have constantly renewed & kept up without any expense to me. Jane & Malsey had better accustom themselves to field work, for they will never see town again. And some of the others too, are much better at Silk Hope than in the City.

To Mr. Haynes (Savannah River)

Paris 1st March 1847

Dear Sir

I have received yours of the 6th & 23rd January by way of England, & was certainly somewhat surprised to learn the difficulties which had occurred between Mrs. Barclay¹⁰ & yourself, but feel confident that the contrary disposition of their Negroes is the cause of your being discharged from their service. Altho for various reasons I have been led to the conclusion that it was better for me to have a neighbouring Overseer to manage my little planting Concerns, in preference to having *one solely* in my employ, & residing *on* my plantation, still as things have turned up, I am satisfied, & we must now both see if under the present arrangement my planting interests cannot go on quietly & prosperously.

And I feel myself now Called upon to state to you some of my previous annoyances arising from having an Overseer with his family residing on my place, viz., I have never heard of a single complaint (as far as I remember) against Mrs. Haynes but must say, that, an Overseer's wife, if kind to the sick, & to the Children, and considerate in all other respects, she can do much good. But if not as she ought to be, she will soon set everything wrong. I had for years past to deny Overseers keeping poultry—because *this* is the *only thing* my people can raise for them-

¹⁰ Anthony Barclay, British Consul in New York and Charles' cousin, owned Ricedale Plantation on the Savannah adjoining Gowrie, where James Haynes lived while serving as overseer of both plantations.

selves (they having no spot to plant) except the trifle near their houses & near my dwelling, which enable[s] them to procure some little extra Comforts for themselves, & which tends to attach them to their homes. And I found on former occasions that there used to be disputes between the Overseer's family, & themselves respecting the ownership of poultry.

A source of hard thoughts has arisen too, with myself, as well as with several planters of our neighbourhood respecting the provisions sent from the plantation to the Overseer's family in Savannah during summer, & the Boat Hands backwards & forwards had always given me anxiety & anoyance. And having mentioned *this* I must state that I always go upon the plan of trying to make *the best* of things which may happen to turn up, and with your judgment & experience I don't put any restrictions, & leave it to your good sense to put all your domestic arrangements upon such a footing as will in no way clash with the welfare & comfort of my people, or my own interests, remembering that in *all such things* your reputation is also at stake. While on the other hand, tho your income is now reduced, I feel confident that you are now *saved* a vast deal of anxiety and irritation. While under present circumstances in your being devoted *solely* to my plantation & interests, you can make things go on entirely to your own satisfaction & to mine under your own eye & direction.

I am not aware whether you mentioned to Mr. Habersham your intention to remove to my Plantation, as he has full powers over all my Concerns on Savannah River, even to changing an Overseer, or anything else which he may deem conducive to my interest there. I am glad to think that my people Continue orderly & industrious, but *they* are up to the same thing which has occurred recently with you at Mr. Barclay's, for ten years ago from a *Real Cause* of complaint almost every grown Negro (male & female, principally *the latter*) pushed off in a body & went to Savannah with serious Charges against a Mr. Gibbons, who was *then* overseer at Gowrie while I was in Europe. With regard to Jacob (whom you say is the only disorderly one) you had best think carefully respecting *him*, and always keep in mind the important old plantation maxim—viz., "Never to *threaten* a Negro" or he will do as you & I would under such circumstances when at school *he will run*.

But with *such a one* whenever things get too bad, you should take a *certain* opportunity, when for instance *he* is with the Driver in the provision room, and you at the door, with a string in your own pocket—then pull it out & order him tied—for if in such a case a Negro succeeds in dodging & running from you, the anoyance *is great*. But having got him, if you wish to make an example of him take him with you down to the Savannah Jail, & give him prison discipline & by all means solitary Confinement for 3 weeks, when he will be glad to get home again—but previous to his coming out let them jog his memory again. Mind then & tell him that you & he are quits—that you will never dwell on old quarrels with him—that he has now a clear track before him —& all depends on

himself, for he now sees how easy it is to fix "a bad disposed nigger." Then give my Compliments to him & tell him that you wrote to me of his conduct, & I say if he don't change for the better, I'll sell him to a slave trader who will send him to New Orleans, where I have already sent several of the gang for their misconduct, or their running away for no cause.

Mr. Habersham writes me that some of my Rice this season is very dark & inferior. Is it the bad wet harvest which injured it? I hope you have good seed for next crop. I fear too the Rolling Screen was neglected by Stephen as usual. It is surprising how quickly the wires get choked up with grains of rice—when all the broken rice, & black particles have to move forward & go into the Whole Rice Barrels. I found at last that the only plan for keeping the Rolling Screen clean was to have a Boy there *all the time* & with a piece of Band Leather with a wooden handle to it he should be gently slapping the wires while the screen is in motion, so that I found it not all necessary to stop the screen to clean it. Mr. Daniel Heyward got the idea of *this* leather slapper from me, & he fixed a piece of Band leather close to his rolling screen, so that when *revolving* each angle of it caused this leather to flap against the wire, & clean it. And *this* he called "a perpetual flapper" as it operated all the time the rolling screen was in motion. But I did not *hear of it* lately, & presume like many other things where Negroes are concerned, that manual labour is better than any out of the way attempt at machinery.

I am anxious to know what conclusions you have come to respecting the improvements, etc., to the present thresher. There are also many things I wish to be more particularly informed of. For instance, you never told me how the Bridge answers, & how you manage to carry the rice along it into the mill—whether the people create any confusion in passing to & from—or if any rice is scattered, or lost. How does the fence stand around the Barn Yard, for the Cypress Posts you put there I thought too small. How many hands are required to feed, & attend the thresher? What does the gang do when the thresher stops after the 4 or 5 hours day tide? Does the thresher cause much dust in the mill? What Negroes have you to attend on your family? Do you keep up the garden which has always been so productive? You will soon have to see how the House for the children in the highland during summer stands. . . .

[To] Mr. Haynes (Savannah River)

Dear Sir

Paris 1st April 1847

. . . Your arrangements & views respecting the thresher are highly satisfactory, & I coincide with you fully in deciding that we should not add *another* Beater while the one now in operation promises to answer all my purposes. My anxiety on the subject arose from the strong desire I always feel of carrying on every branch of my planting interest on Sa-

vannah River in the most triumphant & successful manner. . . . With regard to another Beater, it *might* confuse things. "Let us leave good alone for the present." But you must stick to Mr. Butts, & get him to remedy the present defects in the feeding Roller.

I remark your acknowledgment of my error in giving you a check for \$300 instead of \$200. But as you now attend *solely* to my place Mr. H[abersham] will still hand it to you, & if things go on to my future satisfaction *as thus far*, you will earn this additional 100 from me.

To Alfred Huger Esquire (Post Master at Charleston)

Paris 1st April 1847

Dear Sir

. . . Fourteen years ago I purchased a Plantation on Savannah River for \$25,000 & 50 Negroes at 300 round \$15,000, in all \$40,000. I paid half cash by selling (nearly this last amount viz. the \$15,000) United States Bank Stock. . . . I now turned to, & made use of all my mercantile knowledge to make the place pay the *other half* of the purchase money as soon as possible. The *first year* I did not make quite 200 Barrels. The *next year* I lost 20 Negroes by Cholera. But I stuck to it, & did not despair—and eventually cleared & planted the whole of it (now 270 Acres).

Having a 40 Acre Island adjoining still in trees, for future fire wood. . . . I had the means of living . . . without *this* . . . plantation—the income from which I never touched. The first two or three years were very discouraging & embarrassing, & I spent the income in improvements, & in the purchase of Negroes—having now Eighty on the place—*one purchase* of 16 Negroes in 1837¹¹ having cost me \$640 round . . . making \$10,240 *for them*. But the increase of my Negroes of late years by *births* exceeding *Deaths*, by my own peculiar care & management was last year 4 per cent. But I never made 80, or 100 bushels to the acre as *some are said* to have made. I never made 60 Bushels round (owing to the progressive state of things on my place—having some of the fields *still* in trees & stumps). But since the 1st year never less than 50—2½ Barrels per acre *only* is *my average* for 14 years. Three years ago I made *upwards* of 700 Barrels—but 600 is my usual mark. The last 3 years my Crop has Netted after paying all expenses about \$12,000. But owing to my expensatives *on the place* the average annual Net Income spread over 14 years is but \$7,200 per an[num], which sum multiplied by 14 is \$100,800—a considerable part of which I have invested *elsewhere*. So that, *this Plantation* has in 14 years paid for itself *twice*, and now going on to pay for itself a *third* time. My labours in that Quarter are over, & I am now enjoying its fruits. . . . By placing only \$20,000 down I have made *that sum* at the end of 14 Years establish an annual income of—say \$12,000—besides \$3,000 income from investments made *elsewhere*—derived from the same

¹¹ This should be 1839.

plantation—Having thus by a little industry made a moderate sum produce a steady income which it would require more than \$200,000—placed at Legal Interest to yield.

And having effected *this* on my native soil, in a devotion to *our own* agriculture interests—I must add that I have witnessed the sale of 40 or 50 plantations during this period (not on Cooper River—nor at Cooper River prices)¹² with which I, or almost any other ordinary practical man, could in 14 years have worked out the same results. There is, I think, ample field *with us* for prosperity—if it be entered upon, with prudence & industry—*provided* one has only a Moderate Sum to lay down upon the stump on entering the swamp—after which a few years only must be devoted to self-denial & economy. How many families (for *the want of this* prudence) do we daily see going to ruin amongst us, while Overseers & aliens to our climate, & to our society take possession of the soil. . . .

To Anthony Barclay, Esquire British Consul New York

Paris 15th April 1847

Dear Sir

. . . I received recently a letter from our friend Mr. Habersham (who writes to me occasionally); his last gave an account of the difficulty at your place between Mrs. Barclay & Mr. Haynes (the overseer). Mr. H[abersham] described the causes of discontent, & of his discharge instanter by Mrs. B[arclay]. Mr. Haynes also wrote me concerning these things but not so fully as Mr. Habersham. I deemed them quite sufficient for a discharge—the only palliative I know of is that I believe your gang has some in it fond of absenting themselves, & he accuses them also of insolence to him. With regard to myself he has certainly exerted himself on my place, & has given me thus far much satisfaction. His removal *to it* however, was a source of much surprise to me, for I always preferred being without a resident overseer & having a neighbour's Overseer to manage for me, who at harvest & while the mill is at work always hires an assistant to live on the plantation, & attend to these things for 3 or 4 months. And *this* has been my plan for many years.

I hope that his overlooking my little place for the last two years was not deemed a cause of his neglecting your interest in any way—for you know how small & compact my plantation is—requiring in general merely a walk through it once a day by the manager, who sees that all is right, & gives orders for the morrow—the driver going *to him* in the evening to make his report. Whereas Mr. Bagshaw who previously managed in this way 6 years for me¹³ (& whom Mr. Haynes has succeeded) had four

¹² Because of the high mortality, especially from cholera, among slaves on the plantations of the Savannah, land was comparatively cheap there as compared to that on the Cooper.

¹³ Bagshaw was overseer at Gowrie from 1837 to 1839 and from 1841 to 1844, really 7 years, as a later letter will indicate.

places to attend to . . . Mr. Haynes could not have had any excuse for neglecting your business on account of mine.

I must say that my gang has never given *him* any trouble. They have the reputation of being very orderly, & of giving little trouble. I always made it a rule to sell every runaway—and they are fully aware of *this*, Several having been sent to New Orleans. But they are up to the same thing that has just occurred at your place, for when I was last in Europe they went off in a body to Savannah to complain to Mr. H[abersham] of my overseer (a Mr. Gibbons). And as I have had *my turn*, I hope we will both be exempt in future from further annoyance of *this kind*. Next to making a crop we both want peace & good conduct all round. Mr. Haynes it seems sent *some* bad Rice to market for both you & myself this winter—so Mr. Habersham writes me.

To Mr. Haynes (overseer Savannah River)

Paris 16th August 1847

Dear Sir

. . . I wish you to count *noses* among the Negroes & see how many Jackets & trousers you want for the men at Gowrie—how many of the first large size, & how many of the second. And then write to Messrs. Mathiessen & Co. of Charleston to send them to you, together with the same quantity of *twilled* Red flanel Shirts, & a large woolen Scotch Cap for each man & youth on the place. Mind and mention the Caps to be *large* as they have more than once tried to put off uselessly small ones on me. And send back anything which is not *first-rate*.

You will get from Messrs. Habersham & Son the twilled mixture of Wool & Cotton (called by some "Hazzard's Cloth") for all the women & children, and get 2 or 3 dozen Handkerchiefs so as to give each woman, & girl, one each. If you think the Driver ought to have a Pea Jacket instead of the shorter ones which the gang receive you must order it accordingly. The shoes you will procure as usual from Mr. Habersham by sending down the measures in time. Your account of all your proceedings impart always great interest to me, & are particularly satisfactory. You are now about commencing the harvest. It is to be hoped the weather will favor you. Next in consideration will be *the mill*, & *thresher*. I hope there will be no complaints *this* season of inferior Rice & negligence in *milling*, etc.

To Mr. Coward (Silk Hope)

Paris 1st September 1847

Dear Sir

Last season I wrote to Messrs. Ravenel to send you 400 yards of Planes, for the Negroes at Silk Hope, and *it appears to me* that for the ensuing season a *portion* of the usual supply for *the women & children* had better be of the strong mixture of wool & cotton known by the name of "Hazzard's Cloth" which is much more durable than the Welsh Planes.

I therefore think it best that *you* should decide upon this subject & then write to Messrs. Ravenel & order what you think most suitable & what will give most satisfaction—for if you think the women still prefer what they have hitherto had (Planes) why then continue it. But the Children I am sure would be better off with the other. So that you will write to Messrs. R[avenel] informing them that I desired you to do so. You had best order 6 yards of Blue Cloth for the Driver. And perhaps you had best get a woolen Cap for each man & youth. You will also, write to Messrs. Bristol & Co. at the “Big Boot” in King Street, sending them the shoe measures, & telling them to what *boat*, & *wharf* they must send the Box of shoes. . . .

[To] Messrs. Mathiessen & Co. (Charleston)

Paris 1st September 1847

Gentlemen

I have written to Mr. Haynes my Overseer on Savannah River to ascertain how many Jackets & Trousers I will want from you this season & he will write you accordingly. My Negroes are very knowing by this time, & will only value what is first Rate in the way of Cloth. I therefore beg your usual care & attention in selecting what you know will give *me* & *them* perfect satisfaction. Let the flanel shirts be twilled, & of the best quality also, and the woolen Caps must all be of the largest size—or they will have to send them back to you—as occurred once before.

To Mr. J. T. Cooper Gowrie¹⁴

Dear Sir

Naples 10th January 1848

I received a Letter from “Mr. Habersham” informing me of his having engaged you to attend to my planting affairs & interests. Your residence being on Mr. Barclay’s plantation (near mine) and I now write you a few lines to give you some of my *rules & regulations* in relation to my Concerns now under your Charge which have been always strictly attended to. My Negroes have the reputation of being *orderly & well disposed*—but like *all Negroes*, they are up to anything, if not watched & attended to. I expect the *kindest treatment of them* from you—for this has always been a principal *thing with me*. I never suffer them to work *off* the place—or to *exchange work* with any plantation. I never lend my flat, or anything from my plantation nor do I wish to borrow. I have suffered enough already from this *lending* to my neighbours.

Anything you think my Place is in want of, just send to Mr. Habersham, & he will furnish you with it for my account. It has always been my plan to give out allowance to the Negroes on Sunday in preference to

¹⁴ Jesse T. Cooper was overseer at Gowrie from 1848 to 1850.

any other day, because *this* has much influence in keeping them at home that day whereas, if they received allowance on *Saturday* for instance, Some of them would be off with it *that same evening* to the shops to trade & perhaps would not get back until Monday morning. I allow no strange Negro to take a wife on my place, & none of mine to keep a *boat* & should there be one belonging to me at the landing I request you to have it *locked*, & keep *the Key yourself*. Cut up, or lock up in the mill *any Negro Canoe* found anywhere on my place, & particularly *near the Mill*—whether it be on my land or on “Mr. Potter’s” as that gentleman requested me, to do so, if I found any near my Mill on his land.

I allow no one to cut wood on my Island opposite “Mr. Legare’s” place, & I request you to attend *to this* as far as lays in your power. You will get Cotton Oznaburgs in May, & give 5½ yards to the women, & 6 to the men, & proportionally to the Children, with a Handkerchief to each female, who works. I wish you to engage as soon as possible 20,000 Staves, to be put away in the Coopers’ Shop early in the summer, by which they will be *well seasoned* for making Barrels when you set the Coopers at work in midsummer. Put *nothing* under my dwelling House, you can help, & don’t have a plank across the ditch anywhere near it. Make all pass thro the settlement, for I dislike a public way so near my dwelling & as there is *no white person* now residing *on the place*, I beg you to nail up *the necessary door*—it is not intended for Negroes.

The garden is very productive, & if you have anyone who has nothing else to do (such as “Old Ned”) who would attend to it it would add much to their health & comfort, & I wish you to keep up *the fences* around the garden, the Barn Yard, & my house, and have everything of the kind looking *snug* & in good repair, just as if I was living on the place. “Mr. Barclay” gives more meat than I do but my people besides being *the best clothed in the Country* have other advantages—for instance, I keep all the small Rice *for them*, unless on one or two occasions when they have done anything wrong, when I have sold the whole of it. The *Dirty Rice* amounting usually to 10 or 12 Barrels, is always kept *for them at harvest* when *hard work* don’t give them time to grind Corn. But you will give them *meat*, now & then, when you think proper.

The *House* in the High Land you will look to now & then, when convenient, & have it in repair for the little Children in May. You will sell the Rice Flour for me to the best advantage, or if you find it accumulating, & no demand for it, you will inform “Mr. Habersham,” who will probably be able to sell it by the quantity to someone, who will send a boat for it. If you Keep it *to March*, or April, it will get heated, & turn sour. You take charge of *my interests* under high recommendations. I am therefore prepossessed *in your favor*.

“Mr. Bagshaw”, a distinguished Rice Planter, while living on an adjoining place, managed all my affairs for 7 years. I began *with him* at a salery [sic] of \$150 per an[num]. But I am quite satisfied to pay you

what Mr. H[abersham] writes me, viz., \$250 per an[num] for your services. If things go on well, it can be increased a little for another year. I request you to write me once a month. Just put my name on the letter. Mr. H[abersham] will add my address in Europe. I shall be home in October next.

To Mr. J. T. Cooper Gowrie

Paris 12th July 1848

Dear Sir

. . . With regard to your Letter of 18th June, which I have just received, your accounts of the present Crop are highly satisfactory. For altho I have some other descriptions of property, most of it is quite unproductive, & I have to look mainly to "Gowrie" to support my family—which is a large & expensive one. The *freshets* you allude to, are really *awful*, & the first one I saw, really scared me pretty well; as I began to think that I had got myself into a *pretty bad purchase*, for when I had but *just bought it* down came one of the highest freshets covering nearly every floor then on the place, & even putting out the fire in the little room of the overseer's house, which I then inhabited, when "Mr. Potter" sent his boat, & took me to his place. But fortunately *these unwelcomed* visitors, come but rarely, & soon run off.

The field No. 12 is sure to suffer on *all these occasions*, as the rush of waters making for the Carolina backswamps, go directly across *that narrow field*, and the river always falling first, & the field being full up to the top of the banks, *away goes the bank* to let it out, carrying away *outside margin & all*. When the new bank has to be *thrown further in*, and *this process* (even during *my time*) has reduced *that field* to such a narrow neck of land (less than 150 feet wide in one place) that it is but too evident that the river in the course of some years, will force its way through, instead of making the long circuit around my new cleared land. But it shall be *my endeavor* that *this* shall not happen during *my time*.

You have indeed had much sickness to contend with, & I am glad to think your experience enables you to contend with it, without calling in the Doctor *for every Case* which does not *actually* require *his presence*. Your reasons for keeping the little Negroes on the plantation this summer (owing to the epidemic) instead of sending them as usual to reside in the pine land—are quite satisfactory. I am glad to hear of your Keeping the Carpenters well employed, as I wish everything on the place maintained in the best possible order. The next job will be the new Wincrowing House, (which has been long wanted) the old one as you say was badly placed, the mill during one of the most prevalent winds keeping the breeze from it. You will select the best spot for the new one, which I presume will be in front of the Barn Yard gate. I wish it (like everything else you do for me) to be made in the best and most substantial manner, & of 6 or 8 sides, & 6 or 8 Posts if you think that best.

Your Negro garden is a great thing for the place, & with regard to your changing the Driver I long ago thought "*Renty*" was the proper person—but *then gave up my opinion to the choice* of "Charles," who you *now have had to break*. And now I am happy that *my opinion is realised at last*. "*Renty*" is a remarkable Negro. And with regard to what you say respecting a Sub-Overseer I must now state that all I wrote you respecting one was merely to shew you that anything you thought beneficial to my place I was ready to agree to, and I am now happy indeed to find that your opinion & experience completely coincides with *mine*—for I have had many young men as Sub-Overseers on the place, & *never* yet found *one* who gave entire satisfaction, for all of them shewed a jealous disposition, being always anxious to put a wrong meaning to their instructions—or following them *in so lo[o]se a manner* as shewed too clearly that they were *secretly* in opposition to *the manager*. And if I should ever have another on my place I have made it a rule to avoid *everyone* who comes from the Carolina, or Georgia shore, or whose family resides *anywhere on or near* the Savannah River—for in *this case* while *on the place* their friends & acquaintances are constantly coming to see them—or they take my Negroes & slip off in a boat to visit their friends.

I could say much more on *this subject*, but you seem to know it as well as I do—& will only add that if one of *these people* happens to be turned away he goes home & *then* we are *sure* to have *an enemy* in our *neighbourhood*. I had the wharf constructed in front of my house at great expense, about 5 years ago, & in the most substantial manner, to keep the river from making further encroachments. I suppose the channel has *continued to approach*, & has undermined *it*, as you inform me a part of it has been carried away. The old wharf adjoining fell in long ago, & I had 8 or 10 Piles driven outside, to support it, *as it was*. I hope it *still* remains. I wish you would attend to it. If the earth on top is not kept up a fresh is sure to destroy it. When you *laid by the crop* (in August, when all labour on it *ceased*) I trust you did some important work in Banks, etc. My Thresher & Mill you have attended to no doubt, so as to be all in Complete order before harvest, etc., etc., etc.