



# Glimpses

Items of recent and historical interest  
from members of The Heritage Library

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## Why Come to Carolina?

*A 17th Century pamphlet published in England extolled the merits of Carolina for potential settlers*

[The settlers] brought with them most sorts of seeds and roots of the Barbadoes which thrive very well, and they have Potatoes, and the other Roots and Herbs of Barbadoes growing and thriving with them; as also from Virginia, Bermudas, and New England, what they could afford: They have Indigo, Tobacco very good, and Cotton-wool; Lime-trees, Orange, Lemon, and other Fruit-Trees they brought, thrive exceedingly:

They have two Crops of Indian-Corn in one year, and great increase every Crop; Apples, Pears, and other English fruit, grow there out of the planted Kernels: The Marshes and Meadows are very large from 1500 to 3000 Acres, and upwards, and are excellent food for Cattle, and will bear any Grain being prepared; some Cattle both great and small, which live well all the Winter, and keep their fat without Fodder; Hogs find so much Mast and other Food in the Woods, that they want no other care than a Swine-herd to keep them from running wild. The Meadows are very proper for Rice, Rape-seed, Lin-seed, etc., and may many of them be made to overflow at pleasure with a small charge.

ROBERT HORNE, *A Brief Description of the Province of Carolina*. (LONDON, 1666)

## Hilton Head's Economy in the 18th and 19th Centuries

*by Lyman Wooster*



Hilton Head's economy in the colonial and antebellum eras relied largely on agricultural products such as indigo in the 18th century and cotton in the 19th. Rice was a major product in South Carolina, having been introduced into the region late in

the 17th century, but Hilton Head's oceanic climate kept rice from being a major contributor to the economy.

Indigo, on the other hand, prospered as did those islanders who produced it. Indigo entered South Carolina in the latter part of the 17th Century and by the middle of the next century it had become a major source of income for the state and for Hilton Head, thanks in large part to the efforts of a young woman whose military father had put her at age 16 in charge of a plantation near Charleston. Eliza Lucas, well-schooled in art and music and the other subjects that well-brought up and well-to-do teenagers of the 18th Century learned, was also interested in biology, and upon receiving some West Indies indigo seeds from her father, she planted them and conducted experiments with a view to making high-quality blue dye. She eventually perfected a method of making blocks of indigo cakes that could be turned into dye.

This remarkable young lady's success was almost immediately apparent for in 1748 South Carolina shipped 134,118 pounds of indigo cakes to England.<sup>1</sup> On the eve of the American Revolution indigo exports from Charleston peaked at more than a million pounds and amounted to 35 percent of South Carolina's total exports. The profit-

1. *Legacy of Leadership, Eliza Lucas Pinckney*, 2/6/01

*Hilton Head Economy, Cont'd from Page 1*

ability of indigo for those who produced the dye was enhanced by a bounty Great Britain paid on indigo, a bounty that Great Britain withdrew with the outbreak of the Revolutionary War.



*An indigo plant in bloom*

The financial hardship imposed on South Carolinians by the British action was short-lived. Within a few years following the treaty that formally ended the War for Independence, the Lowcountry was producing long-staple cotton, the famous Sea Island cotton that quickly became the favored product of Hilton Head planters.

William Elliott of Hilton Head's Myrtle Bank Plantation is credited with being one of the men who developed Sea Island cotton; he produced the first commercial crop of it in South Carolina, the crop selling for 10.5 cents per pound. By 1806 Elliott's cotton was selling for 30 cents per pound, a good deal more than the price of short staple cotton.

The seeds for what became Sea Island cotton had come from the West Indies but the product probably originated in Ecuador and Peru on the western coast of South America. A combination of four factors is believed to have resulted in South Carolina's Sea Island cotton having the best fiber ever grown. Those factors are: (1) an ideal environment of the Sea Islands, (2) an advanced seed selection

process, (3) the isolation of upland cotton fields (meaning the upland cotton couldn't contaminate the long-staple plants), and (4) the cultivation methods used by the Sea Island planters. Nowhere else in the cotton region of the pre-war South did this combination of factors exist.

Sea Island cotton staples are two inches long and upwards, although the bulk of the crop was probably one and one-half to one and three-quarters inches, contrasted with 5/8 to one inch for upland short-staple cotton. The success of Sea Island cotton was rapid. Exports in 1790 amounted to 9,840 pounds; ten years later they exceeded eight million pounds.

The growing and then the marketing of long-staple cotton were arduous processes that required a large labor force. The timing of the planting was critical and generally occurred in early spring so that the plants flowered and fruited before the first frost. Proper seed selection was critical and plants were often cultivated with a hoe during the growing period. The Sea Island cotton plant was tall, about eight feet, and the plants bloomed and fruited through the autumn, making a three- to four-month picking season.

Once the cotton was picked, always by hand, there followed a multi-step process of preparation for market. There was first a period of drying, followed by the sorting or "nubbing" (removing dead leaves and stems) and then "whipping" the cotton to shake off any remaining broken leaves, sand, or short fibers. After these processes were completed, the cotton was ready for ginning, which removed the fiber from the seed, and then the cotton was "moted"; that is, all particles of broken seed and remaining unclean specks were removed by hand. After the moting, the cotton was packed manually in bales or bags made of hemp and measuring about 7 ½ feet by 2 ½ feet, which when filled weighed anywhere from 300 to 400 pounds.

This account of the processing—almost entirely by hand—is clear evidence that a large staff of workers was required by the plantations that produced Sea Island cotton (short staple cotton as well) and it helps to explain why South Carolina was a leader in the mid-19th-century



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*Hilton Head Economy, Cont'd from Page 2*

secessionist movement. The state's economic well-being seemed to depend on slave labor.

[The source of much of the above factual information on Sea Island cotton is from *The Story of Sea Island Cotton* by Richard Dwight Porcher and Sarah Fick, a large volume published by Wyrick & Company, Charleston, 2005; it is an excellent and detailed account of the subject and recommended to those eager to have more information. Lyman Wooster]



**GANG OF 25 SEA ISLAND COTTON AND RICE NEGROES,**  
By LOUIS D. DE SAUSSURE.

On THURSDAY the 25th Sept., 1852, at 11 o'clock, A.M., will be sold at RYAN'S MART, in Chalmers Street, in the City of Charleston,

*A prime gang of 25 Negroes, accustomed to the culture of Sea Island Cotton and Rice.*

CONDITIONS.—One-half Cash, balance by Bond, bearing interest from day of sale, payable in one and two years, to be secured by a mortgage of the negroes and approved personal security. Purchasers to pay for papers.

No.	Age.	Capacity.	No.	Age.	Capacity.
1 Aleck,	33	Carpenter.	16 Hannah,	60	Cook.
2 Mary Ann,	31	Field hand, prime.	17 Cudjoe,	22	Prime field hand.
3-3 Louisa,	10		3-18 Nancy,	20	Prime field hand, sister of Cudjoe.
4 Abram,	25	Prime field hand.	19 Hannah,	34	Prime field hand.
5 Judy,	24	Prime field hand.	20 James,	13	Slight defect in knee from a broken leg.
6 Carolina,	5		21 Richard,	9	
7 Simon,	1½		22 Thomas,	6	
5-8 Daphne, infant.			5-23 John,	3	
9 Daniel,	45	Field hand, not prime.	1-24 Squash,	40	Prime field hand.
10 Phillis,	32	Field hand.	1-25 Thomas,	28	Prime field hand.
11 Will,	9				
12 Daniel,	6				
13 Margaret,	4				
14 Delia,	2				
7-15 Hannah,	2 months.				

SLAVES WERE ESSENTIAL in the antebellum economy. Those experienced in the growing of cotton and rice were especially prized. This “gang,” offered at auction in Charleston, South Carolina, in September of 1852 included a cook, a carpenter, 10 field hands (4 of them women), 8 children and 3 infants. Notably, the buyer did not have to come up with the complete sum at once, but could pay in 1-2 years, in which case he would have to give back a mortgage on the Negroes.

*Editor*

**The New Ironsides**

*Ed. Note: One of our readers recently turned up the 1865 cover shown below. We thought you'd be interested in the story of the USS New Ironsides.*



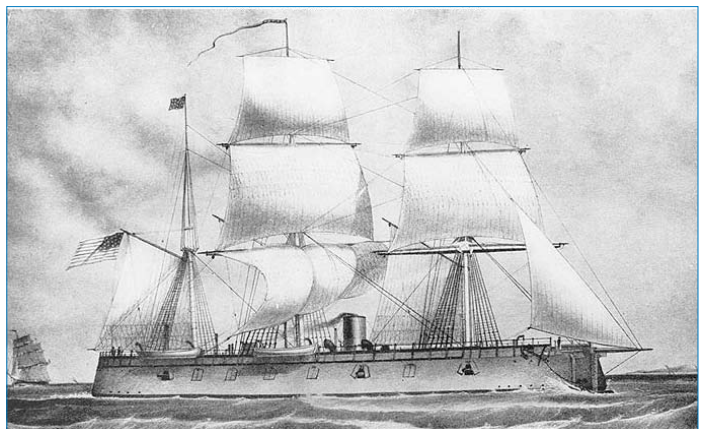
This letter was mailed on July 16, 1863, from Cape Vincent, Vermont, to Henry A. Bartlett, then serving on the U.S. S. New Ironsides. (He went on to become captain of the U.S.S. Trenton years later; see photo on Page 8.)

At the time the letter was mailed, New Ironsides was stationed at “Port Royal,” as the facility on Hilton Head Island was called.

Commissioned in August 1862, she was wooden-hulled with 4.5 inches of wrought iron protecting her sides. The deck was three inches of yellow pine, covered with one inch of wrought iron.

She was barque-rigged with three masts, and also had two steam engines. The propeller could be decoupled to reduce drag when she was under sail alone. The sails were used only on long voyages, removed when

*Cont'd on Page 8*



*The U.S.S. New Ironsides under steam and sail. Her maximum speed with both steam and sail was approximately 7 knots.*

## The President's House

Pierre L'Enfant, as you know, laid out the plans for the "Federal city" that would later be called Washington. In the process, L'Enfant selected sites for several buildings, including Congress' House (now known as Capitol Hill) and the President's House. The two bore a symbolic relation to each other and were to be a mile apart, connected by an imposing tree-lined boulevard.

But before any work had begun, L'Enfant was dismissed by George Washington for insubordination. L'Enfant first aroused Washington's ire when he had his employees raze to the ground a house being built by Daniel Carroll, a wealthy landowner, right in the middle of where L'Enfant intended New Jersey Avenue to be located. L'Enfant had acted



*French-born Pierre (Peter) Charles L'Enfant, American architect and civil engineer.*



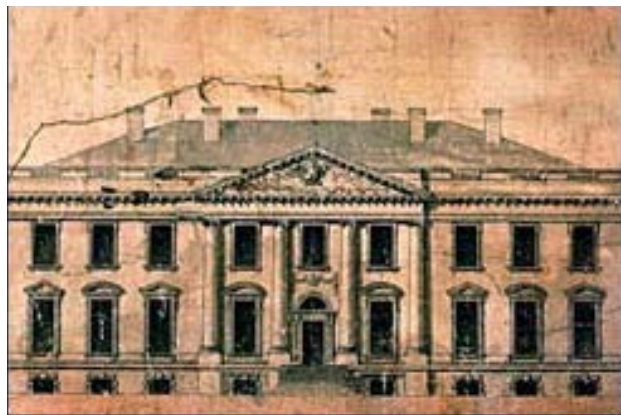
*James Hoban, architect of the White House. Wax bas relief on glass, attributed to John Christian Rauschner.*

on his own and, some felt, arrogantly; the president wrote L'Enfant a warning letter. Later, when L'Enfant refused to share his plans so that lots could be sold, it was too much for Washington, and he permitted L'Enfant to be fired.

For the President's House, L'Enfant had envisioned a palace of immense grandiosity; according to historians, it was a building

five times five times larger than the one actually built

With L'Enfant's dismissal, the idea of the President's House was thrown open, and a competition fol-



*Hoban's design for the President's House.*

lowed. The winning design was submitted by a leading architect of Charleston, South Carolina, James Hoban. Hoban had designed the State House for South Carolina and other important buildings. (His William Seabrook House on Edisto Island, South Carolina, is now on the National Register of Historic Places.)

So it was that 218 years ago this month, the cornerstone for the President's House was laid by George Washington. Free and slave worked together to complete the building. On November 1, 1800, president John Adams and first lady Abigail Adams moved into the unfinished President's House. It was built of brick with a stone facing. To protect the stone, workers whitewashed it, and it was known informally as "the white house."



*Abigail Adams, first First Lady to live in the President's House.*

In August 1814, during the war of 1812, the British moved into the President's House, sat down to the dinner which had been prepared for the president, and after eating their fill, torched the building. It was completely gutted.

We often hear how Dolley Madison saved some of the silver from the President's House. She is also credited with saving the Stuart portrait of George Washington.. She wrote in a letter to her sister: "Mr. Carroll has come to hasten



*South Carolina State House, designed by James Hoban and built 1790-1792. It was burned in 1865.*



*The famous portrait of George Washington by Gilbert Stuart, 1797*

*"The president stands in the classical pose of an orator... [he] wears the black velvet suit he used for formal occasions. On the table, volumes of the Federalist and the Journal of Congress refer to the foundations of government and Washington's role as head of state. The medallion emblazoned with the Stars and Stripes on the back of the chair is part of the Great Seal of the United States." (from Arthistoryabout.com)*

my departure, and in a very bad humor with me, because I insist on waiting until the large picture of General Washington is secured, and it requires to be unscrewed from the wall. This process was found too tedious for these perilous moments; I have ordered the frame to be broken, and the canvas taken out. It is done! and the precious portrait placed in the hands of two gentlemen of New York, for safe keeping."

One "J.B.R." collected "in almost his own words," the reminiscences of Paul Jennings, a slave born in 1799 on the Madison plantation, who was a body servant to Madison for the latter's lifetime. Jennings said of the Stuart portrait:

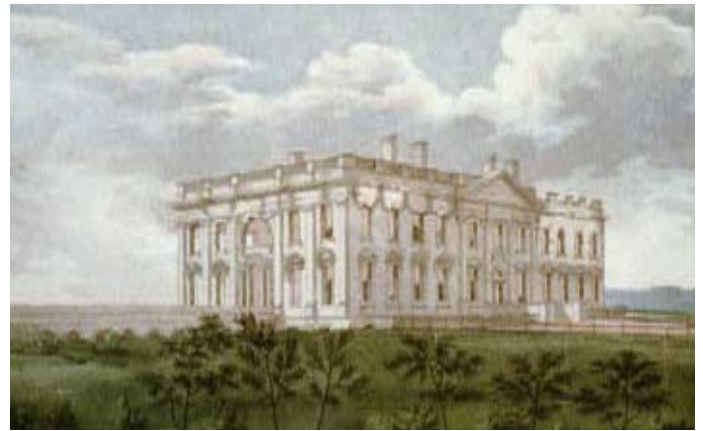
"John Susé (a Frenchman, then door-keeper...) and Magraw, the President's gardener, took it down and sent it off on a wagon, with some large silver urns and such other valuables as could be hastily got hold of."<sup>1</sup>

In 2009 there was a White House ceremony to honor the efforts of Paul Jennings in rescuing the painting of George Washington. "A dozen descendants of Jennings came to Washington, to visit the White House. For a few precious minutes, they were able to look at the painting their relative helped save."<sup>2</sup>

Congress decided that, rather than move to another city, they would rebuild the public buildings of Wash-

ington. James Hoban returned to the city, and supervised the reconstruction of the President's House. The weakened walls were dismantled to the basement level on the east and west sides and on the north except for the central section. Most of the carved ornamentation, bearing the scorch marks of the fire, was re-used. President James Monroe moved into a new house in the autumn of 1817.

In the newly restored President's House, new furniture was of course necessary. Among the furniture



*The title of this engraving is "A view of the President's House in the City of Washington after the Conflagration of the 24th August 1814." By William Strickland after a watercolor by George Munger.*

ordered by Monroe were some rather spectacular chairs ordered from Paris. Sold during the Buchanan administration, some of them were later retrieved by Jacqueline Kennedy and reupholstered.

In 1833, during the Jackson administration, running water was installed; in 1840, Van Buren installed a huge new furnace; in 1848 James Polk replaced the candles in the chandeliers and wall fixtures with gaslights.

The President's House, so known for years though sometimes referred to as the Executive Mansion, was given the official name of the White House by Theodore Roosevelt as one of his first orders.



*Armchairs by the French designer Bellange, now in the White House Blue Room.*

BARBARA MULLER

1. *A Colored Man's Reminiscences of James Madison*, by Paul Jennings. Introduction J.B.R. Reprinted 1865. Accessed through Google Books

2. Gura, Davie. "Descendants Of A Slave See The Painting He Saved". The Two-Way. NPR. [http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2009/08/descendants\\_of\\_the\\_slave\\_who\\_s.html](http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2009/08/descendants_of_the_slave_who_s.html). Retrieved 2010-08-24.

## The Greatness and End of the Library of Alexandria

The glory that was to be the library of Alexandria began with Ptolemy Soter (c. 367-283 BCE), one of the generals of Alexander the Great. Ptolemy succeeded Alexander in Egypt. He intended that the city that would bear Alexander's name would be the center of trade, and there he would build a library that would contain all the world's knowledge. Thus the library became, as well as a collector of books, a research institution, and is credited with developing the scientific method.

It was during this era that Euclid, befriended by Ptolemy, wrote his *Elements*, a book of mathematics; its geometry is still taught today. A story often quoted (and possibly apocryphal) is that Ptolemy, complaining that the math was too difficult to learn, asked for an easier way to study it. Euclid responded, "Sire, there is no royal road to geometry."



*One of the oldest surviving fragments of Euclid's Elements, found at Oxyrhynchus and dated to circa 100 CE.*

It is also of interest that about this time in Alexandria, Herophilus (335-280 BCE) was studying the human circulatory system and determining that the seat of intelligence was in the brain, not the heart as previously believed. He is considered one of the founders of the scientific method.

Then there was Callimachus (305-240 BCE), who is considered the Father of Library Science. His great contribution was the *Pinakes* (Lists), a bibliography of the books held by the Library. He divided the works into classifications within which the authors were listed alphabetically. His classifications were used by libraries for centuries until the advent of the Dewey

Decimal System.

Scrolls were stored in bins, with a tablet above each bin with bibliographical information for every scroll: the title, the author's name, birthplace, his father's name, any teachers he trained under, and his educational background, a brief biography and a list of the author's works. The entry had the first line of the work, a summary of its contents, and the provenance of the scroll.

Callimachus was considered a major poet in his own right, his works imitated for centuries.

About this time another brilliant mathematician was studying at Alexandria: Aristarchus of Samos (c. 310-230 BCE). He is called the father of astronomy. He proposed that the earth revolved around the sun, rather than the reverse. (Philolaus, a century earlier, had proposed that the earth was not the center of the universe, but that the sun, moon and planets, all revolved around a central fire.) It was Aristarchus who put the sun in the center; for this a contemporary said he should be charged with impiety. His vision of the universe was fated, like many great insights, to be silenced by the power of myth.



*Aristarchus of Samos was the first academic to propose a heliocentric system, 2200 years ago.*

Zenodotus, (fl. c. 280 BCE) was the first head librarian. Two of his librarian colleagues were Alexander of Aetolia and Lycophron of Chalcis, to whom were allotted the tragic and comic writers respectively. Homer and other epic poets were assigned to Zenodotus, who is credited with inventing textual criticism in his gathering, collating, and correcting various versions of Homer's work. He is credited with the division of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* into 24 books.

Eratosthenes (c. 275-195 BCE), one of the head librarians, knew the earth was round and measured its

circumference fairly accurately.<sup>1</sup> He also estimated the distance of the earth from the sun and the moon. He is also known for the “Sieve of Eratosthenes,” a method for finding all the prime numbers up to a given number.

Eratosthenes was the first to use the word “geography,” and is considered the Father of Geography.



*The armillary spheres is one of the most ancient of observational instruments. Versions of it were used until the 17th century .*

He invented the armillary sphere, used to demonstrate the apparent motion of the stars around the Earth. Before the advent of the European telescope in the 17th century, the armillary sphere was the prime instrument of all astronomers in determining celestial positions.

He also refined the work of Eudoxus, a century earlier, in measuring the angle of the earth’s axis to the ecliptic.

After 246 BCE, the head librarian was Apollonius of Rhodes. He is best known for his work *Argonautica*, the story of Jason and the Golden Fleece. He was a student of Callimachus and some ancient stories reported a feud between the two men, with Appolonius calling his mentor “wood-for-brain.” Today’s scholars mostly discount these stories.

Aristophanes (c. 257-185) followed. He had studied under Callimachus and Zenodotus.

During this period Greek was becoming the *lingua franca* of the Eastern Mediterranean, replacing Semitic languages, and Aristophanes developed a system of punctuation: accent marks to indicate pronunciation, and dots between verses. He also gave us marks that

were to become the comma and the semicolon, but they were not used as they are today, for purposes of grammar. Rather, they indicated the amount of breath needed in the upcoming phrase for reading aloud: a short passage was a *komma*, a longer passage a *colon*.

Aristarchus of Samothrace (c. 220-143 BCE), reputedly one of the greatest scholars of Homer, followed Aristophanes. He is said to have written over 800 treatises on various subjects, none of which survive.

At one time, the library at Alexandria may have contained as many as 700,000 scrolls. What happened to them?

Accounts differ. When Julius Ceasar burned his fleet in the Alexandrian harbor in 47 BCE, the flames were said to have spread, burning part of the city including, perhaps, part of the library. However, some of the scrolls had been moved to a daughter library in another part of the city. Some of the volumes were looted and sent to Rome.

There is evidence that the library continued for many years thereafter. But several waves of armed conflict and mob violence over the centuries contributed to the eventual demise of the Library. There was another great fire in 273 CE, when the Roman emperor Aurelian invaded Egypt. Possibly what remained of the Great Library was preserved for a while at the Serapeum, the temple to Serapis and the location of the daughter library.

This, too, eventually perished. The story is told that in 391 CE, Theophilus, the patriarch of Alexandria, urged a mob to destroy the temple at Serapis, presumably at the same time destroying whatever books were left in the daughter library.

Another story has the caliph Omar ordering the destruction of the books in 645 CE, saying “If the books agree with the Koran, they are not necessary. If they disagree, they are not desired. Therefore, destroy them.” This story is probably apocryphal, having apparently been invented in the twelfth century.

Matthew Battles suggests that the destruction of the great library was not due to a single event but to “moldering slowly through the centuries as people grew indifferent and even hostile to their contents.”<sup>2</sup>

1. If we assume the unit of measurement he used was the Egyptian stadia, his figure was only off about 1 percent. (Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eratosthenes>)

2. Matthew Battles, *Library, An Unquiet History*. W.W.Norton Co., 2003

*Con't from Page 3.*

the ship was in port.

She arrived at Port Royal in January 1863. When she first arrived, the ship exchanged her masts and rigging for poles suitable for signaling. Rear Admiral Du Pont ordered that the ship's funnel be cut down to improve the visibility from the conning tower, but the fumes from the funnel nearly asphyxiated the men in the conning tower and on the gun deck, and the funnel had to be restored.

Shortly after arrival *New Ironsides* was ordered to patrol off Charleston Harbor. She participated in the First Battle of Charleston Harbor on 7 April 1863, when nine Union ironclads entered Charleston harbor and conducted a prolonged, but inconclusive, bombardment of Fort Sumter. *New Ironsides* served as the flagship of Rear Admiral Du Pont during the battle.

The ship remained at Charleston for the rest of the year except for brief intervals at Port Royal.

In June 1864, she visited Port Royal for the last



*Officers of the U.S.S. Trenton in 1876. Capt. Henry At. Bartlett is in the front row, second from right.*

time. Following an overhaul in Philadelphia, she returned to battle at, among others, Fort Fisher and the James River. She was decommissioned in April 1864. In December of the following year, she caught fire, probably from an untended stove, and was destroyed. Her boilers were later salvaged and offered for sale.

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