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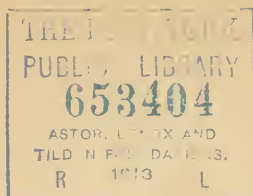






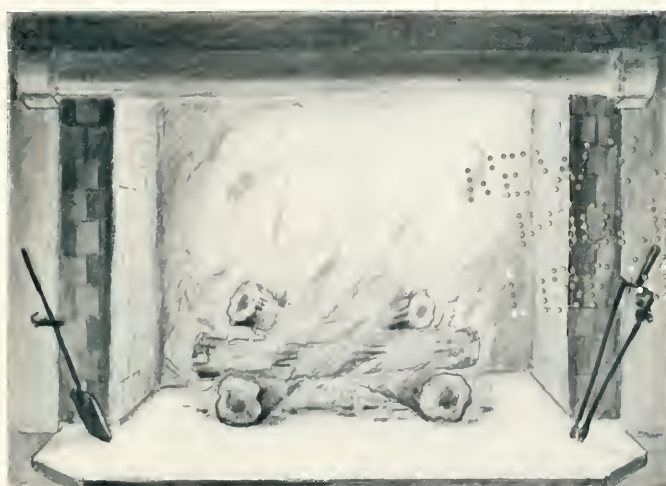
Recollections of the Ball Family  
OF  
South Carolina  
and  
The Comingtee Plantation

BY  
ANNE SIMONS DEAS



ALWYN BALL, JR.  
JAN 14 1913  
VIA RAIL

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COMINGTEE PLANTATION



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# AUTOGRAPHS.

Elias Ball Ly. Simons

(Elias of Wambaw.)

(Afterward Mrs. Bryan.)

John Ball

(John Ball of Kensington.)

E. Ball Catherine Chickens Eleanor Ball

(Second Elias.)

(Catherine Chickens.)

(Miss Nelly.)

Elias Ball Limerick

(Elias of Limerick.)

Isaac Ball

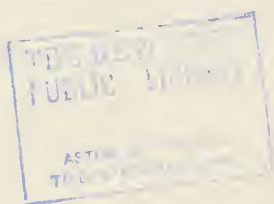
(Son of Second Elias.)

Mary Ball

(Mary Delamare.)

John Coming Ball

(John Coming Ball of Back River.)





ISAAC BALL

1844—





## FOREWORD.

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The following account of the Ball Family has been compiled from family records, letters, wills, and other old papers, supplemented by traditions, handed down from one generation to another. While I have not encumbered my narrative with references to the special sources from which each statement has been taken, I have been careful to give tradition no more credit than it deserves, and have endeavored, even at cost of repetition, to make it clear when a surmise or an inference is purely personal. Any positive statement, therefore, may be relied on as having the support of authority.

The dates of births, deaths, and marriages I owe to Mr. William J. Ball's admirable and carefully compiled family record; while to Mr. Isaac Ball I am indebted for the loan of old letters, for information as to the recent alterations to the house at Comingtee, and for many important suggestions. To Mrs. Maria Louisa Ball I am indebted for interesting family traditions and much valuable information; and to Miss Lydia Child Ball for important illustrations.

ANNE SIMONS DEAS.

SUMMERVILLE, S. C., Sept. 29th, 1904.



## I.

### COMINGTEE.

Cooper River, about thirty miles from its mouth, divides into two branches the Eastern and Western, which, with the main stem of the river, fairly well represent the letter "T." On the little peninsula thus formed, Capt. Coming settled. For a long time, the plantation was known as Coming's T, and is so marked on some old plats. Gradually, the s and the apostrophe being dropped, it became Coming T; and from that to the present spelling—Comingtee—the transition was easy.

The original grant to Capt. Coming evidently did not cover the whole of what is now Comingtee plantation; for, in 1703 and 1704, Elias Ball purchased and added two adjoining tracts of 572 and 115 acres, respectively, at one shilling per hundred acres. In 1735, he bought a third tract of 140 acres, described by his son, in 1752, as lying between the T of the river, lands of his own, a creek between Nicholas Harleston (then owner of Rice Hope) and the "Northwestern branch of Cooper River;" for this he paid more—three shillings sterling or four shillings, proclamation money, per hundred acres. The creek which bounded it on the east was prob-

ably dammed up later into a Reserve, and the rest of its course gradually lost; but the river front is there, and includes the only bit of river-bluff on the plantation, the rest of the strip along the river, being swamp or marsh.

The plantation, from days beyond the memory of any now living, has been considered as in two parts—Comingtee and Stoke. I do not think that the name Stoke occurs on the plats; but it was a very real division, nevertheless. There were the Stoke barn, the Stoke negro-houses, the Stoke gang (who had a page of their own in the plantation Record-book), the Stoke well, etc. Comingtee had its own barn and corn-house, negro-houses, and gang. The dwelling-house was on Comingtee.

Stoke comprises the part of the plantation on the Western Branch, especially the bluff where the brick mill and the wharf now are, and corresponds closely with that latest purchase in 1735. On an old English map of 1724, Stockentine Head—where the Balls lived—is spelled *Stokentin* Head; and lower down the coast are Stoke Ford and Stokenham. So it seems but natural that Elias Ball should have given a name, recalling the memories of his early home, to the one bit of bluff on the water-front.

Who established this settlement is not known; but it was there in 1805. In a record of the ages of negroes, belonging to the second Elias, we find that a boy, named "Stoak" was born in 1737. The name, however, as applied to a part of Comingtee, appears first in the will of Elias Ball of Limerick,

who leaves his "plantations of Comingtee and *Stoke*" to his nephew, John Ball, Jr. As Elias built the brick pounding-mill, it is not improbable that it was he who made this settlement at *Stoke*; but whether he originated the name, or only established the settlement on a spot, already so known, we cannot say.

High up on the Comingtee side of the creek, between Fishpond and that place, at a spot now on the edge of the large Reserve, or perhaps under its waters, a low bluff ran down to the stream. This was called "Hiddidoddy Landing," and is (I think) so marked on Purcell's plat. It was hardly more than half a mile from the house, and in a sheltered position. The creek was navigable for wood-boats as late as 1828 or 1830—perhaps later; and must have been much deeper before it had been banked in at all, or its head-waters cut off into Reserves. Indeed, it had become so much shallower, even before the present bank was made up, that it was no longer considered navigable. "Hiddidoddy" was an Indian word, signifying in the language of the tribes around Charleston something equivalent to "Very Good."

That Capt. Coming built on or near the site of the present dwelling seems certain. It is not known whether he or Elias Ball built the present brick house, and there is no clue to the date. It is said to be one of the two oldest houses in the Parish; the other being at Exeter, the Mottes' place, high up the Western Branch. Tradition makes the bricks to have been brought from England. The

late Mr. William J. Ball, who knew more of the family history than any one else, thought that the brick house was built by Elias Ball, and that the Comings lived in a wooden cottage which stood on the neighboring slope, opposite the large sycamores in the avenue. This house was standing after 1865 or 1866; it was evidently quite old; and in front of it were two beautiful live-oaks, which still mark the spot. For many years it was used as the overseer's house; but after the overseers lived at Stoke, it became "the Sick House," or plantation hospital. A short distance back, to the northwest, a small clump of trees, principally live-oak and cedar, marked a spot which rumor pointed out as the family cemetery. Some of the older negroes called it the "grave-yard"; and tradition or superstition kept it intact,—a thickly overgrown spot in the midst of cultivated fields. No trace of graves is apparent; but the tradition, and its proximity to the dwelling-house, are strong evidences of its having been a family burial-place. On most old plantations, the cemetery was within easy reach of the dwelling. In all probability, Capt. and Mrs. Coming, and the first Elias's younger children, were buried there. Its position, also, with regard to the wooden house, is in favor of the latter's having been the original dwelling.

From an old memorandum-book, kept by the first and second Eliases, we gather that there was more than one house at Comingtee in their day. In 1736 there is an entry—"To half a day's work on the old house"; and the same carpenter was at work on



COMINGTEE PLANTATION  
Present House





“the windows for the garret” from the 10th to the 14th August. After 1731 the house evidently underwent repairs and alterations from time to time. The first Elias was struggling from October in that year to the next May, with a carpenter who was perpetually “staying away” or “doing no work.” Some of this work must have been on the house, as he broke two panes of sash-glass and the sash. In 1738 something was done to the garret windows that took several days. In 1743 the house was shingled, and again in 1763; and, in 1771, it was repaired at a cost of 400 pounds, by a carpenter who had also the assistance of four of the plantation carpenters.

#### THE OLD REVOLUTIONARY HOMESTEAD AT COMINGTEE.

In 1833 or 1834, John Ball, Jr., built out, at the back, an addition, as large as the original house.

A fine live-oak stands in front of the door, so near that its branches sweep the piazza shed. A few yards beyond was the gate leading to a large garden, on the western slope of the knoll, to the right of which was an orchard of equal extent. The garden was laid out in the old-fashioned way, with a straight walk down the middle, between flower-beds bordered with jonquils. There were bunches of snow-drops, too, and delicious old-fashioned sweet-roses; some large old crape-myrtle trees faced each other across the walk; and here and there were great rounded bushes of box. Outside

of the flower-beds were the vegetable beds; and, in a sunny spot among them, an old brass dial "marked the hours which were serene." On the line of the fence, dividing the garden from the orchard, was a huge pecan, rivalling the live-oak in size. There is a memorandum about the garden, too; in 1742 the second Elias notes: "Finished the garden here at Comingtee."

To the southwest of the house, across the corn field and between it and the large body of rice-land, is a patch of woods called the Tee Pasture, or, sometimes, "The Forbidden Woods." It received the latter name because, in former years, it was strictly forbidden to cut any wood of any kind there; consequently, the growth was dense, and owls might be heard hooting in its recesses long before sunset. The Tee Pasture seems of no special use except to shield the house from the high winds that sweep up the river; otherwise, it only obstructs an extensive view, of which a glimpse may be had through the vista cut in it. The cause of its preservation may be surmised from an old tradition. There is a part of the highland which used to be known among the negroes as "Missis' Groun'"; and the story is this: Many years ago, the Ball of that time (his name has been forgotten) gave his wife permission to have some land cleared, during his absence in the city, by the plantation hands. On his return, he was so surprised and shocked at the progress made, that he issued orders that not another stick should be cut from any woods left standing. But he could not reclaim

“Missis’ Ground,”—and “Missis” doubtless enjoyed a goodly amount of pin-money from its produce.

The negro cemetery—in plantation parlance, the “Buryin’ Groun’”—is a grove of tall white-oaks and hickories, half-way between the house and the river, on the road to Stoke.

The “Stoke barn” is still standing, opposite the old brick pounding-mill. The latter was built about 1784, and the wheel was worked by water, supplied from the “Mill-pond.” But as the pond could take in a supply of water only on the flood-tide, and give it out on the ebb, the mill had to work according to the tides. This necessitated night labor; but there were relays of hands, for day and night. The mill “pounded on toll,” and was in use as late as in the early fifties.

There seems to have been always a boat belonging to the plantation, sometimes a sloop, sometimes a schooner. Before the days of steamboats and railroads, this boat made frequent trips to the city, and the family often were passengers on her. At such times, the hold was arranged like a room, as a calm or a headwind sometimes made the passage long. There used to be at Comingtee a low, brown wooden table, and a cup or two of blue china, which had belonged to the boat.

A large steam threshing-mill was put up by Col. Keating S. Ball, about fifty years ago.

The Comingtee barn and corn-house stood on each side of the road to Stoke, not very far from the end of the orchard. They have both now dis-

appeared—one since 1865,—the latter since 1870. There are two land approaches to Comingtee, One, called “The Avenue,” leads from the public road that goes up the Western Branch, passes between the Rice Hope fields, and approaches the house from the north. It was bordered for a part of the way on the western side, by some fine cedars; and, on the eastern side, just before entering the yard, one finds still a row of fine old sycamores. The other approach, called the “So’ Boy Avenue,” leads from the public road that goes along the Eastern Branch, crosses the inner Reserve on a causeway and bridge, and enters the other avenue a little north of the sycamores.

On the north side of the So’ boy Avenue, and on the edge of the Reserve, is a picturesque little hill, called Indian Spring Hill. Wandering Indians, bringing baskets and pottery for sale, used to come and camp there for a few days at a time, even as late as sixty or seventy years ago. The spring on this hill was noted throughout the neighborhood for its pure water. The story goes that, when the Big Bank was first made up, the waters of the Reserve stretched from the foot of the yard at Fish Pond to Indian Spring Hill, and that the Mrs. Harleston of that day used to send a negro boy in a canoe every morning, to bring drinking water from Indian Spring.

There was a chain of reserves at Comingtee, stretching from the head-waters of the creek and along its banks, to the line of the present Bank. First, there was one far out, on the other side of

the public road beyond the So' boy avenue; it adjoined the Rice Hope Reserves, and was generally called the Big Dam Reserve, from the huge bank on the side of the road. It has sometimes been called "Ball's Folly,"—I suppose because no labor and expense could keep it from breaking in a freshet. Buried in the woods, but nearer the settlement, was "Daniel's Dam," a very pretty spot, with its calm water and moss-hung cypresses. This led into the Bridge Reserves, crossed by the So' boy avenue; and these led through a short canal to the lovely little Reserve, called "Rainy Basin," which was separated from the creek only by a bank, and led through another little canal into "Cork Gate," the smallest and last of the chain. In the corner of this stands the big flood-gate—"Cork Gate"—that lets the water into the canal leading to the rice-fields. I am under the impression that it took its name from the carpenter who built it—Cork.

And now we come to the Creek or Big Reserve, belonging jointly to Fishpond and Comingtee,—which has cost so much money, has been so much discussed, and quarrelled over; but of which so little is really known.

There are no data by which to trace when or by whom the bank was originally built—most likely by the second Elias and his cousin, Edward Harleston, or John, son of the latter, who both lived at Fishpond in his day. It was evidently there at the time of the second Elias's death; and from expressions in letters of John Coming Ball's son "Wambaw Elias," the Tory, to Elias Ball, son of

the second Elias, we suppose that it had been broken a year or two previously. From the same source we infer that the crop at Comingtee was lost in 1784 or 1785, and again in 1787 and 1788. In 1788 Elias of Comingtee seems to have made proposals to the two young owners of Fishpond, Edward and William Harleston, about making up the dam. The terms are not given, but Wambaw Elias thought them "very fair." Pending his neighbors' decision, Elias Ball seems to have set to work to make independent dams of his own. These dams can refer only to the chain of Reserves at Comingtee. In August 1789 he writes: The Harlestons "came into my terms, by getting the Old Reservoir mended by the last of Jan. I set about it the first of Feb. and finished it about the 15th of March." Evidently, one of the terms was, that the Harlestons should build up their side *first*. (It was from these two brothers having divided the tract into "Fishpond" and "The Hut," that the latter place laid claim to a share of the water, after the last mending of the dam.)

We are dependent upon tradition for its further history. The story is, that, after the dam was mended,—how long after is not said,—there came a freshet, and the waste-way being inadequate, the water took its natural course over the slope of the Fishpond corn-fields, and washed all Mr. Harleston's corn out of the ground. In a passion, he summoned his plantation hands and cut the bank to relieve the pressure. Elias Ball was very angry at this; but he appointed a day for Mr. Harleston



and himself to meet there with their helpers, and repair the bank, each on his own side. Mr. Ball was there punctually; but the other did not come. Whereupon, after waiting a reasonable time, Mr. Ball swore that the bank should never be mended again. And it never was, until 1874.

Proposals of rebuilding it were made to Col. K. S. Ball by the owners of Fishpond, which he steadily refused to entertain. When Messrs. Heyward and Porcher rented the place, they obtained his consent, and made an agreement with the owners of Fishpond—the heirs of Mr. W. Postell Ingraham—and the bank was rebuilt, the work beginning in December, 1874. But the waste-way was still insufficient for so large a body of water, and, in the great freshet of 1877, when the Rice Hope Reserve bank broke, letting out a tremendous rush of water through the inland Reserves, the pressure was too great and the new part of the bank gave way. It was promptly repaired, however.

Comingtee, though the oldest of the Ball plantations, was not continuously the residence of its owners. Capt. and Mrs. Coming lived, and probably died, there. The first Elias lived there until 1740, when he moved to Charlestown, leaving his son Elias at Comingtee. John Coming Ball built and settled at Hyde Park,—probably about this time, as he married in 1742; and Elias, still a bachelor, found it solitary at Comingtee, and soon built and settled at Kensington, next to Hyde Park, so as to be near his brother. Comingtee House re-

mained unoccupied, except for short periods during the busy season, until probably about 1784 or 1785. I judge from certain expressions in the Tory Ball's letters—such as, "Elias of Comingtee"—that Elias, son of the second Elias, was living there before his father's death in 1786. Inheriting Limerick, at that time, he made that his abode, but retained sufficient affection for Comingtee to leave directions that he should be buried from that house. Accordingly, his remains were brought from Limerick to Comingtee; the coffin was placed in the passage-way between the two doors, and the burial-service was read there. Comingtee now passed into the possession of his nephew, John Ball, Jr., who resided there until his death in 1834; and it continued to be the home of his widow until she died, in 1840. After that, it was the residence of their son, Keating S. Ball, until he departed, in 1891.

"Comingtee was an open house to all who came," says one who was often there, "and although its occupant for many years was an old bachelor, yet, in every sleeping-room, was to be found the old four-post double bed, and a trundle-bed or a crib, ready for any emergency. The warmth of one's welcome only reflected the sincerity and courtesy of the host, whom two generations regarded as an umpire in matters of honor and courtesy."

The wooden addition, built by John Ball Jr., was, as I have said, about the size and style of the original house. I give the description of this, and of the subsequent alterations, in the words of the





THE OLD REVOLUTIONARY HOMESTEAD AT "COMING T"



one best qualified to describe them. The addition extended eastward. A covered passage on both stories connected it with the old house, but with no roof connection, as the new structure overlapped the North gable of the brick building. From the date of this addition, and possibly sooner, there were piazzas on the West, South, and East of the old building,—the eastern one connecting with that of the annex.

“But this was not so originally. The old brick house was built, as was then customary, without piazzas. This is evinced by the horizontal bands in relief on each side and gable of the building (known, I believe, in architecture as ‘Lines of Repose’) placed there for architectural effect, which lines were entirely hidden by the piazza-sheds. The old house contained originally only two rooms on each floor, with no passage-way between the two lower rooms. Into the larger of these the front door opened. The staircase also came down into this larger room. At a later day a paneled partition was erected, forming a passage-way, and cutting off the South room from the stairway. The rooms on both floors had the old-time wide fireplaces with high mantels, and heavy cornices around the room. Wooden paneling cut off deep closets on each side of the chimney on both lower and upper stories, with narrow gable windows in them for light. When the piazzas were added, the lower rooms were so much darkened that it became necessary to remove the lower closets and enlarge the gable windows to double their original

size. About 1880, when the piazzas had practically succumbed to the ravages of Time, the lessee (Mr. Porcher) renewed only the western one and removed those on the south and east. The house when built was not rough-cast, as it has been for possibly more than a hundred years, but was of plain brick-work finished with pointing mortar. Both structures had deep cellars with fire-places large enough to roast an ox; and no doubt many a turn-spit has sat (himself half-roasted) in their corners when a roast-pig or Christmas turkey was being prepared for the guests above.

“The great storm of 1893 wrecked the plantation and drove away the Lessee; Time struck heavy blows on the old house at Comingtee;—and it soon became uninhabitable. The attic story practically rotted away, and the piazza fell in. The wooden annex required costly repairs, and the large old shingled shed always threatened the whole building with the destruction common to country houses. The property, which had come down to Anne S. Deas, the niece of K. S. Ball, passed by sale into the hands of Alwyn Ball Jr. of Rutherford, N. J., and thus returned to a party bearing the family name and continues in the family line. Imbued with a deep sentiment of reverence and respect for the sacred past with its dear memories and traditions, he determined to restore the old homestead. Having no use for such ample quarters as were supplied by the two houses, and having no such strong attachment to the later annex as existed among those of previous generations, whose joys



ALWYN BALL, Jr.

1859—



and sorrows had been experienced within its walls, he decided to restore the brick building only, with a small annex in brick to add comfort and convenience. In thus restoring the original homestead, the old style has been preserved to the last degree. Even the mouldings and blocks of the heavy eave-cornices have been duplicated exactly, and the interior cornice-work conforms likewise to the original, which had disappeared except over the mantels. An elegant piazza in Colonial style, with the original stone steps, makes an attractive front. And so has been developed the stately mansion, refined in style, which adorns the spot where our forefathers lived. It is the earnest wish of the whole family that it should continue as the old Ball homestead, connected with the blood and name, for many generations yet to come."

## II.

### THE COMINGS.

The history of Comingtee is so interwoven with that of the Ball family that it seems almost impossible to distinguish them. Any account of the one must necessarily include the other, and neither would be complete without mention of Capt. and Mrs. Coming.

Comingtee, as we have seen, was settled by Capt. John Coming. He was a half-brother of William Ball, farmer, in the county of Devonshire, England; and was first mate of the Ship Carolina, Henry Brayne, Master, the largest of the three vessels which brought the first colonists to Carolina in 1669. He afterwards commanded a vessel in the Carolina trade, which he mentions in his first will—that of 1678—as “Ye good ship Edistaw.” Mrs. Coming mentions him in her will as “John Coming, Gent.”

The first settlement of the colonists was a few miles up the Ashley River, at a place now called Oldtown; but Capt. Coming and Lieut. Henry Hughes were wise enough to take out grants of land at Oyster Point, at the confluence of the two rivers. The colonists soon found that the location



on the banks of the Ashley was both inconvenient and unhealthy, so that Gov. Yeamans determined to remove the town to a new site at Oyster Point. An order was issued in 1672 for "the laying out of a town" on that spot; and Capt. Coming and Lieut. Hughes, before the Grand Council, offered to give up half their lands on Oyster Point for the town and Common of Pasture. It is said that on this occasion Capt. Coming was accompanied by his wife.

Mrs. Coming's maiden name was Affra Harleston; she was a sister of John Harleston of Mollins, Essex Co., England. From the little we know of her, we infer her to have been a woman of sincere piety and of considerable strength of mind. They had no children, and it is not impossible that she may have accompanied her husband on some, at least, of his voyages. In one letter, she writes of having been "delivered from many and great dangers; when I saw wonders in the deep."

A brother of Mrs. Coming's—Charles Harleston—was in Carolina during the early years of the colony; but he went to Barbadoes, and after a while was heard of no more. The Harlestons were royalists, and after the execution of Charles I. some of them removed to Ireland, whence Mrs. Coming's nephew and niece came to Carolina.

On one of Capt. Coming's voyages, his ship was wrecked "on Charles-Town bar," he and his crew saving themselves in the longboat. People took occasion to hint that the loss of the vessel was due to her commander's cowardice. This so roused

the Captain's wrath, that "to vindicate his character"—as his great-grand-nephew tells us— "he raised and decked his longboat, and did actually make the voyage to England in her. When hailed in the river Thames, his answer could not be credited, so miraculous did the voyage seem." The same authority informs us that, after this, he settled in Carolina.

It is likely that he had previously taken out grants of land on Cooper River; but the precise date is not known. Parchments, in existence, which were among the titles of Comingtee, may have been the original grants; but, having been buried for preservation in 1865, the writing has faded into illegibility.

Life on a plantation in those days must have been of the most strenuous sort; the whole country was a vast forest, infested by bears, wolves, and other wild animals, and inhabited by tribes of Indians, not infrequently hostile to the new settlers. There were few or no roads, and the river was bordered, not as now, by productive fields, but by dense malarial swamps of cedar, cypress, and palmetto, where the sunshine seldom penetrated, and the tides rose and fell unchecked.

The Coming grant on Cooper River included what is now Fishpond—then a mere tract of wilderness. We are not told with what aid Capt. Coming cleared and settled his new domain; at first, probably with white help of some kind; afterwards, as we learn from Mrs. Coming's will, he had African and Indian slaves. Settlers soon began to take up

and occupy lands at various points along the river; but there was in all probability no settlement nearer than Luckins—now Rice Hope—and most of such settlements must have been much further off.

So far as we know, Capt. Coming built inland, about half a mile from the river bluff, on, or more probably near, the spot now occupied by the dwelling-house. It was barely half a mile, also, from the dense swamps, then covering the Mill Pond and the Rice Hope fields; and the probable clearing of land for crops in that direction, would have allowed free passage to the malaria-laden winds of summer. The danger of the climate not then being appreciated, the new-comers, everywhere, lived summer and winter on the edge of those deadly swamps—with what fatal consequences, family and Parish records testify.

There is no record of the date of Capt. Coming's death; but from Mrs. Coming's two remaining letters, it is safe to place it in 1694. She says that his sufferings were great for the last two years, and she attributes his death to gout; but some symptoms which she describes—severe cold and shaking, followed by burning heat—indicate malarial fever, complicated with his other malady. There was evidently, in her mind, something strange about this illness, for she says of this "extreme burning," that she "never saw or heard of the like before." His sufferings were so intense that he prayed for death,—and when it came "he bade it welcome."

Mrs. Coming was evidently devotedly attached to him, and always mentions him in terms of affection and admiration. She says: "His patience and courage were wonderful in all his tribulation and anguish and sickness and pains which he endured for the last two years together." But her most eloquent tribute, after all, was the way in which she carried out his wishes.

As they had no children, Capt. Coming was desirous of dividing his property between his wife's relatives and his own. In his will, of 1678, he leaves all his property to his wife, and to any children they might have; but should she have none, then half the property was to go (after her death) to his half-nephew, William Ball, and the other half to his wife's brother, Charles Harleston, then in Carolina. But Charles, as we have seen, had gone away, and was not heard of again. Capt. Coming's next plan was to bring over William Ball and his wife's nephew, John Harleston, and leave them in charge of the property. As described by Mrs. Coming, his idea was that the young men should live in his house and have half the profits of the plantation; the other half to be sent to her in England. Whichever one came first, was to have possession of the plantation. Time passed on, however, and neither came; and, discouraged by the apparent indifference of his proposed heirs, Capt. Coming, in another will, left all his property absolutely to his wife.

With rare strength of character, his widow set about carrying out her husband's known wishes.

Nothing would have been easier for her than to sell the property and return to England. Even had it brought less than its actual value, the proceeds would have amply supported her, in comfort, among her kinsfolk and in a civilized country. But she remained where she was and kept the property together,—saying quite simply, in a letter to her sister, Mrs. Ann Harleston, that she would be “loth to leave for their sakes, until one of them come.”

That her situation, besides the natural loneliness of widowhood, was far from easy or pleasant, and that she felt this keenly, may be inferred from her letters. In one to Mrs. Ann Harleston, written some months after Capt. Coming’s death, she says: “I am as one that is forlorn; having no relations to comfort me, nor friends to assist me. \* \* \* \* By all that I can perceive at present, I appear as a sheep in the midst of wolves.” Another letter, written four years afterwards—in March, 1698—deserves, for its courage and hopefulness, to be quoted in full. It is addressed to Mrs. Elizabeth Harleston.

“Dear Sister:

I am sorry to be the messenger of so bad tidings as to desire you not to come to me till you can hear better times than is here now, for the whole country is full of trouble and sickness, ’tis the small-pox which has been mortal to all sorts of the inhabitants, and especially the Indians, ’tis said to have swept away a whole neighboring nation, all

to five or six which ran away and left their dead unburied lying upon the ground for the vultures to devour; besides the want of shipping this fall, winter, and the spring hitherto is the cause of another trouble, and has been followed by an earthquake and burning of the town, or one third part of it, which they say was of equal value with what remains, besides the great loss of cattle which I know by what has been found dead of mine, that I think is because of the hard winter that has been and being overstocked, what all these things put together makes the place look with a terrible aspect, and none knows what will be the end of them. I have lived going on four years since the death of my husband (which I think in my heart was the best in the world) as a sheep among wolves, but I have resolved now by good help from God to fear none of these things, having been by Divine Providence so miraculously preserved through so many troubles and dangers. Remember me in your retirements, with my love and service to all my cousins; and let not these things discourage you for I hope to be the messenger of better news to you the next writing, for things that are violent seldom last long, they will end one way or another as it's decreed above.

Your Sister in trouble

Affra Coming."

Coming T.

March 6: 97. (1698)





ELIAS BALL  
Emigrant about 1693  
Born about 1675      Died about 1751





(I have modernized the spelling, lest the quaintness of it should detract from a just appreciation of the sentiments.—A. S. D.)

Here, too, her unselfishness appears. She denies herself the comfort of her sister's companionship, on account of the unsettled state of the country to which she had proposed to come. And, in all these four years, the nephews for whose sake she was sacrificing herself, were comfortably at home.

Perhaps William's unwillingness "to come among the savages of America" may have been the cause of this unaccountable delay. Perhaps, too, this letter may have quickened their movements, for John Harleston and his sister Elizabeth, and very likely Elias Ball (who took his brother William's place), came out within a year,—we hope before Mrs. Coming's death. Mrs. Page, writing to Elizabeth after her marriage to Elias Ball, tells her that her sister has had no letter from her since one dated June 1st, 1699; and, as news travelled but slowly in those days, the presumption is that the party reached Carolina either in the latter part of 1698 or early in 1699. But it was too late for Mrs. Affra Coming to realize her dream of life in her old home.

The precise date of her death is unknown, but in her will, dated Dec. 28th, 1698, she says that she is "sick in body." This in all probability marks her last illness.

She left the property equally to John Harleston and Elias Ball;—the lands in joint tenancy, and

the slaves and personal property to be divided between them. No mention is made of the whereabouts of either nephew. The executors were Dr. Charles Burnham and Mr. James Child, "both of Berkeley County."

We may suppose that she was laid to rest beside the husband whom she thought "ye best in ye world," and on the plantation to which she had clung so faithfully.

In the summer of 1698, Mrs. Coming had executed a deed giving seventeen acres of land to the "English church" in Charleston. This was shared by the original parishes of St. Philip's and St. Michael's, and some of it is still in their possession. The locality is marked by the names—Coming St., Glebe St., and St. Philip St.

And so "Aunt Affra" passes beyond our ken. No mention is made of her in the family records; and, though the name of John Coming has been perpetuated to the present generation among the Balls, no child of either Ball or Harleston has ever yet borne the name of Affra.

NOTE.—The fact that Elias Ball, and not William, is named as joint heir in Mrs. Coming's will, would seem to suggest that he was in the Province at that time.

### III.

#### THE FIRST ELIAS BALL.

(RED CAP.)

Elias Ball was hardly more than a youth when he took possession of his inheritance. He was the second son of William Ball, of the Parish of Stockentine Head, Devonshire, England—situated on the Channel coast, between Exmouth Bay and Tor Bay, and near the mouth of the Ting River. John Ball, son of the second Elias, says, in his account of the family, that William Ball was a farmer, and that Elias was eighteen or twenty years of age when he came over to Carolina.

The chronology of "Red Cap's" life is vague, there being no record of his birth, death, or first marriage. This paper of his grandson's says that he was married at the age of twenty-two. We judge from Mrs. Coming's letter that he was not in this country in March, 1698; but it is probable that he came out either in that year or early in the next, for a letter of Mrs. Page's, bearing date April 4th, 1701, conveys good wishes to Mrs. Elizabeth Ball on her marriage. John Ball says that his grandfather died at the age of 75 or 76, and that his father was then forty years old. But the second

Elias was born in December, 1709, and the first Elias Ball died between February, 1751, and March, 1752—so that this reckoning would make him but 72 or 73.

By the terms of Mrs. Coming's will the land was left to John Harleston and Elias Ball "in Joynt Tenancy," and the Negroes, Indian servants, cattle and personal property of all kinds (including debts) were to be equally divided between them. In course of time the land was divided also; and Elias Ball chose Coming T.—on which was the settlement—relinquishing to John Harleston all the land on Oyster Point, except one lot in the town. Fishpond, then an uncleared tract, also passed into the hands of the Harlestons.

John Ball tells us, on his father's authority, that his grandfather "was a great sportsman in shooting and fishing. Was bold and resolute, and had frequently commanded scouting parties after Indians."

Elias Ball married Elizabeth Harleston, niece of Mrs. Coming and sister of his fellow-heir, John Harleston, and settled at Comingtee; but whether he or Capt. Coming built the present house is not known. I incline to the opinion that it was built by Elias Ball. It is also probable that the part of the plantation known as Stoke received its name from him. (See Account of Comingtee.)

He seems to have been strict and thrifty in business as well as "bold and resolute in action." Between the years 1703 and 1718 he had taken up, at

almost nominal prices, nearly 3,000 acres of land that afterward passed into the possession of his son, Elias. When we remember that he portioned off four other children, we realize how great the extent of his landed property must have been. By 1718 he had added nearly 700 acres to the Comingtee tract and some years later 140 more.

Elias and Elizabeth Ball had five children who lived beyond infancy, viz: Ann, Eleanor, Elias, Elizabeth, and John Coming. As John Ball tells us that there were many children by this marriage, yet gives the names of only four, we may conclude that the six years' gap between Ann and Eleanor was filled by other births.

All that we know of Mrs. Elizabeth Ball is found in a few family letters and consists chiefly of incidental references. There is only one letter to herself—a few graceful lines from her cousin, Mrs. Alice Page of Dublin—in which she wishes her joy of her marriage, and hopes that she “has disposed of herself to her satisfaction.” In the letters of her sister and cousin, in which she is generally mentioned as “dear Betty” or “poor Betty,” we catch glimpses of the bright young girl who came from Ireland to the wilderness in 1698. But in her brother's letter we get a hint of the ambitious mother arranging a match between her eldest daughter, a girl of fifteen, and a certain Capt. Daws of the Royal Navy—a man as rich in years as in worldly goods.

Mrs. Ball died on the 31st August, 1720. John

Harleston, writing the February after to inform her sister in Dublin of her death, says she "was taken with a Malignant Fever, and was very delirious before she died." Doubtless it was what was afterwards called "country fever."

Not quite eleven months after her death the widower married Mary Delamere, a girl about the age of his eldest daughter. We know little of her family and forbears, and there remain of her personal belongings only two books—a prayer book of the Church of England and a collection of quaint old pamphlets, bound together in one volume. But thanks to the irate aunt of the first wife's children we have more side-lights on her than on "dear Betty;" and the sister and brother, in their slow and labored correspondence, are not sparing of criticism of either party in the marriage.

Mrs. Ann Bulkeley, Elizabeth Ball's sister, writes to John Harleston in 1722—two years after Mrs. Ball's death, and a year after the second marriage. She says:

"I am very sorry to hear Brother Ball is such an unthinking man to forget so good a wife as I don't doubt she made him. I am very sorry dear Betty fell into his hands, since I see he had no greater value for her and her children than to marry one as young as his daughter. I am sure he is a man of no principles, neither honor nor gratitude, for my aunt might a chose whether she would a left him a groat. (Rather hard on our ancestor, this; but there is an illogical spite about it that takes off the



edge.) "His children and his wife's friends," she goes on to say, "is little obliged to him for his good management. If he had done his best for them children, I should have loved him as if he had been my own brother; if he had stayed unmarried, or married for their advantage, as a good father would have done, but just please himself without any regard to their welfare, I shall never have a favourable thought of him till you make me sensible that he has made a good settlement upon all his children."

\* \* \* She then goes on to inquire into the affairs of the married niece, from whom she had had two letters, and who spoke of going over to Ireland. Mrs. Bulkeley suggests that she should "bring a sister with her," adding, "if her father would give her fortune with her, else I would not have her take her off his hands to lessen his charge to enable him to make ye better provision for his new brood."

Two years later John Harleston writes of this second marriage:

"Mr. Ball's indiscret marriage will be the worse for my sister's children, I doubt. For his present wife is for encroaching all to herself, if she could. Sometimes when I have an opportunity I am for putting Mr. Ball in mind of his children, and sometimes I have hopes and sometimes out of hopes. But he has done very well by Cousin Daws (Ann Ball). But the most is to be feared for the other children that are not disposed of. I shall always do my endeavor to serve the children whilst I think it is my duty, since they have no other friend but myself in this Colony."

Seven years after Mrs. Bulkeley writes again:

"You can't but think I must have a great desire to know how you and dear Betty's children does, who I do so much pity that wants their mother." Then, after saying that she would have been glad to have had one of the girls come and live with her for company, had she been living in her own house, she winds up a postscript thus:

"Niece Daws never writes to me, though I have writ to her, nor none of them. I hope it is not from want of knowledge, since it is in your power to teach them, and your own children, I believe as well as any body you could get there. (She must have had a poor opinion of Colonial teaching, for John Harleston's spelling—as well as her own—is, in the original, *unique*.) I would be glad to know how many you have, and how dear Sister's are disposed of, and whether their father is kind to them."

How little she realized that eleven years had passed since Betty's death, and that "the children" were grown up! Elias was about twenty-two; Elizabeth was twenty, and had been married at least twice; and even little John Coming, the youngest, had reached the age of seventeen. Eleanor had passed long before into the land where life is not reckoned by years.

Thus far the "in-laws." And we must bear in mind that John Harleston was a man of strong prejudices and bitter tongue—as we may see in some of his letters on other subjects.



There are no means of knowing whether Elias Ball and his second wife were kind to the elder children or not; but at least they seem to have been sufficiently attached to the departed Eleanor to name their next daughter after her. Tradition says that he was a strict father; but strictness is by no means incompatible with justice or even kindness; and fortunately he is able to answer for himself, in some measure, through an account or memorandum book, long preserved at Comingtee. A glimmer of light falls from these pages on the life and surroundings of those far-away times—with occasional brighter flashes from some of those quaint little memoranda which the Balls had a habit of making here, there and everywhere. The entries in the book begin a few weeks after "poor Betty's" death.

Elizabeth Ball, we remember, died August 31st, 1720, leaving her husband with four children ranging from six to thirteen years of age. Let us try to enter into the problems of the eleven months following.

Four young children in a plantation home, in a sparsely settled neighborhood, surrounded by African and Indian slaves not far removed from savagery—children who were not only to be housed and fed, but clothed, educated and trained in all ways! What was a man to do? His eldest daughter, a girl of only nineteen, was living in her husband's home; and it is not likely that the rich old sailor would have cared to bring four healthy children, accustomed to the freedom of plantation life,

into the quiet of his childless house. Their uncle, John Harleston, had four or five children of his own, and might well have shrunk from doubling his responsibilities, even if their father had been willing to part with them.

How the first few months were tided over, we have no hint, but in the beginning of November it is noted in a crabbed and labored handwriting that "Mrs. Cook came." She was probably brought to look after the children—an account for sundry articles was opened with her, and was closed as paid in full by her services. We may suppose that this arrangement did not work well—possibly the boys were unmanageable—for on the 11th of November, "being of a Monday," he notes: "My two sons went to Madam Dogett to school." The Dogetts probably lived in the neighboring town of Childbury; but we know nothing of them except through the extremely matter-of-fact pages of this old book. From what is therein set down, however, we may gather that they were not altogether satisfactory people to deal with.

Whose fault it was can never be known, but something seems to have gone wrong with this arrangement also; for two months later, on the 20th of January, he "took them away from Madam Doggett." Three days later: "I sent my four children to Mr. Faur (Mr. Nicholas Faur, residing at Childbury)." Eight pounds were paid to Mr. Faur for "a year's schooling for Johny." "Betty" seems to have remained but three months, as that amount of "schooling" was paid for for her.

Was Betty, aged nine, so much needed in her father's household, or did she refuse to stay through wilfulness?—thus paving a highway for her mother's successor. It is significant that in the midst of all this maze of difficulties, the name "Mary Delamare" is scrawled across the page, right through the memoranda. The idea was evidently beginning to present itself that here was a *way out* of all perplexities.

In May it is noted: "Andrew Songster came to *my* house to live." Thereupon, an account is opened with him, prefaced by the words "and he had of me." This man seems to have been a kind of overseer, but, as there is an entry of cash paid for packing his wife's goods and of money paid to herself, it is probable that she had charge of the children. The Songsters were evidently in bad circumstances, if they were not of an inferior class; the first entry on his account is for an itemized suit of clothes for him, and he is more than once referred to merely as "Andrew." He is also charged with beds, sheets, and blankets. Very many gallons of rum and a "little sugar," testify against him, his employer jotting down the smallest item, even some that was sent to him "at the tar-kiln." Cash was paid to him and for him; and his services were valued at eighty pounds a year. The Songsters' account is a tangled one—suggestive, perhaps, of worry and love combined. The last entry charged against Songster is: "To neglect of your business, and not bringing up the rice from the wharf." The Songsters then disappear from view.

The upshot of it all is written elsewhere than in the account-book: to the effect that Mary Delamere took in hand the household reins on the 27th of July, 1721.

And I fancy that she held them to some purpose. If it were true, as her predecessor's brother states, that "she was for encroaching all things to herself," it was, perhaps, a proof that she was a good manager. It is noteworthy, that after her marriage, the pages of the memorandum-book assume a more orderly appearance; the handwriting though similar, is less crabbed, and the accounts are set down and balanced with greater regularity. She does not seem to have interfered with the children's "schooling," as entries are made from time to time with regard to their school bills. Besides being taught by Madam Dogett and Mr. Faur, they went to school to Mr. Lepier; Nelly and Elias had music lessons; and Johnny went to Mr. Newbery to "learn arithmetick." Accomplishments were expensive, too, in those days. Later, Johnny and her own eldest daughter, Sally, learnt to dance, at a cost of ten pounds a quarter.

The troubles with the overseers continued, however. In September, 1722, it is noted: "Mr. John Netman came to live with me." He, too, was charged with rum and sugar, previously consumed in this instance, at Mr. Faur's, also with "seven all sick days." He remained but two months. Early in 1725 or 1726 Mr. Thos. Dyer appears on the scene, and runs up a goodly account for corn, beef, sugar and some rum; but late in May it is entered



ELEANOR BALL

Daughter of Elias Ball (Emigrant), by 2nd wife, Mary (Delamare)  
Married Col. Henry Laurens





against him; "you left my Employ and gave me no notis." His account runs on for a month or two longer, and amounts to over 51 pounds. The credit side shows only a blank.

I take it that the division of the land was made about the time of the second marriage. The Balls and Harlestons may have continued to live together at Comingtee during Elizabeth's lifetime, but after that I judge that John Harleston moved to Fishpond and made some kind of settlement there. For Elias Ball signed a paper on the 20th June, 1722, in which he pledges himself, his heirs, etc., "not to lay claim to any Land or parcel of Land now in the possession of John Harleston Esqr. & lying *on that side the Creek where the said John Harleston now dwelleth*, on pretence of Purchase, or any other right which I now have, or at any time may have had to the said Land." The Harlestons' headquarters afterwards seem to have been at Irishtown, an inland place near the headwaters of the Eastern Branch. Up to 1716, letters were *addressed* to John Harleston at Coming T., near Charles Town. One of 1722 has no *address* copied, and one of 1721 is *addressed to him* "at his house in South Carolina." He dates his letters from Carolina, or South Carolina.

Mary Delamare Ball had seven children—Sarah, Delamare, William, George, Eleanor, Mary, and a fourth son whose name has been decipherd as "Yabsley." Neither of the two elder boys lived to be two years old; Sally died at fifteen, and Mary at about the



same age; only Nelly's namesake lived to grow up. Merely entries, these, in a lost Family Bible; but how much tragedy is wrapped up in them, what suggestions of anxious nights and sorrowing days, as one after another was laid to rest!

Elias's name seldom occurs in the memorandum-book—not more than two or three times, once in connection with music lessons taken, and once with a purchase of hogs from “my son Elias;” at that time, however, he had reached manhood. Johnny also sold hogs. The last mention of Nelly's name is in the account with “Mr. Harleston,” in which he is credited with “sugar borrowed at Nelly's funeral.” After Nelly's death, which occurred when she was about seventeen—Johnny and Sally seem to have been the father's favorites, as their names occur most frequently. When “my Sarah” was about two years old, she had a pair of red morocco shoes—we can imagine the little maid's pride in them. When she was nine, she and Johnny had dancing lessons. At thirteen, she took lessons in playing “the Viol.” This “Bass Violl” evidently got smashed; for, not long after, it was “*glewed*” by Mr. Thompson, “the Carpenter of the Free School at Childbury.” He knew how to charge, too, for this same “glewing” cost 2 pounds 10 shillings. At the same time, he glued two small tables for 40 and 50 shillings apiece. Later in the year, Mr. Thompson worked four days at Comingtee, and his journeyman six, “only between sun and sun.” In that time, they “mended ye chest of drawers, the desk and two little boxes, and put locks on the

black drawers," "and doth charge me 13 pounds 10 shillings for it." One wonders what wholesale damage had overtaken the furniture that year.

About two years later, in October, 1737, poor Sally closed her eyes on all earthly things.

Life had its petty annoyances, too, in those days, as well as its graver troubles. Besides the overseers' delinquencies, the neighbors' negro and Indian slaves raided upon turkeys and hogs in a very provoking manner, especially one Dublin, belonging to Mr. Weed, aided and abetted by slaves of Mr. Childs. A memorandum with the signature of "Mary Ball," states the offence, and also that Mr. Weed had promised to pay for the victims of the raid. In the account with Mr. Weed he is charged with the three turkeys killed by his slave. Then there was the petty carelessness of people in not returning what they had borrowed—a small matter comparatively, but nevertheless capable of producing great inconvenience when so many articles were imported, and were both scarce and expensive.

The Dogetts—Madam Dogett, Mr. Dogett and Mrs. Elizabeth Dogett (Madam's daughter, apparently)—come to the fore on the question. Mr. Dogett seems to have been an apothecary or physician, as he is credited with "Visit and attendance for Mr. Ball and Sally," and with sundry doses of medicine. I take this entry to be in Mary Ball's handwriting. On the opposite page is an indignant entry in the same hand—"I gave you a 20 pound Bill and you gave me but 13 and your Bill is not 8

pound. Madam Dogett had milk for two years, which ran up a little bill of 5 pounds 10 shillings. Mr. Dogett borrowed a large Bowl "when Mr. Small's daughter died." In 1727 it is charged against him; and three years afterwards "the Punch-Bowl" had neither been returned nor paid for. Mrs Eliz. Dogett borrowed Rum; and though she returned it it was "not in ye same jug." The Balls, by-the-bye, seem to have valued their jugs, for in one instance, it was stipulated that some rum should be returned in the same Jug.

Besides the staple "crops" of pitch, tar, and rice, which were considerable, Elias Ball sold large quantities of shingles and wood. Neither did he despise the smaller industries; for he supplied his neighbors with corn, peas, potatoes, "stall-fed beef," and occasionally with milk and butter, mutton and veal, in quantities to suit purchasers. He also supplied the shoemaker with hides, and got in return shoes for himself and the children.

About the year 1738 most entries are in the handwriting of the second Elias. In February, 1740, he says in one of the memoranda which he was so fond of jotting down, "My father went to town to live, being of a tuesday." After this they are all in his handwriting. In 1739 Mr. Charles Pemberton, a carpenter who had repaired the house the year before, is credited with "a coffin." Whose coffin? Those for the negroes were made by the plantation carpenters, and no family death is recorded for that year. It may, however, have been made for one of the younger boys, the date of whose

death is illegible. If so, we may well surmise that Comingtee had become overshadowed by so many sad memories that both parents would be ready to go with the remaining children elsewhere. Death, however, is omnipresent, and they found it in the city; for Mary died, presumably there, at the age of fifteen—Eleanor being the only one that reached maturity.

As the accounts passed into the second Elias's keeping, in 1738, he probably had the management of the plantation, or at least the greater part of it, from that time—not, however, from physical inability on the part of his father; for John Ball tells us that “when turned of seventy, being in one of the forts in Charlestown in time of an alarm, he offered to turn out and take a wrestle with either of the invalids in the Fort.”

According to family tradition, the first Elias lived in the house on his lot at the corner of East Bay and Pinckney streets. That house has long since gone to wreck; but what was left of it has been seen by a member of the family, still living, who remembers, when driving out as a child with Mrs. Lydia Bryan—the daughter of the second Elias—how the old lady pointed out this decaying house, calling it “Grandtata's ribs.”

We know but little of Red Cap after his removal to the city. We conclude that he made his home there; for in his will he styles himself “Elias Ball of Charles Town in the province of South Carolina, Gentleman.” The second Elias, on the contrary, in papers signed by him not long after, follows his

signature by the words, "of Coming T., Planter." There is no record of the first Elias's death; but from the date of the codicil to his will, February 4th, 1751, and that of an Exhibit of the lands inherited by his son Elias, filed in the auditor's office in Charlestown, March 5th, 1752, he must have died in the interim. We know that Eleanor was married a year or so before his death, as she is mentioned as Eleanor Laurens in his will of 1750, as well as in the codicil of 1751. His burial place is only a matter of conjecture; it is supposed that he was interred in the western half of St. Philip's Churchyard; but no headstone has been found.

In the portrait from which he gets the *sobriquet* of "Red Cap" he appears advanced in years, yet hale and hearty. Something pathetic in the eyes, and in the lines of the strong old face, indicates one who has had a hard fight in life and known many sorrows. And truly he had many griefs. He saw laid in the grave one married daughter, three girls, just budding into womanhood, and several young children:—surviving his first wife, and eight out of the twelve children whose names appear on the record. There is little doubt that he survived his second wife also, as no mention whatever is made of her in either will or codicil.

In his will the bequests to his son Elias seem very few and small—only the plantation of Com-tingtee and "a small Silver Canister" with "a Griffin's Head engraved thereon." To John Coming, on the contrary, they were many and large: The Cypress Grove plantation; 1,000 acres of land near



Three Mile Head; Dockum plantation; 300 acres of Eveleigh's Land; fifty feet of the lot in Charlestown; a negro man named Sambo; a bond of John Coming's own for 1,000 pounds; a large silver tankard and a "soop spoon;" two silver salvers, and all the other silver spoons that should be found in his house at his death; his chaise and harness; and his large Family Bible. Such division of the property would seem rather unfair to the elder son, were it not that certain other tracts of land came to him by right of primogeniture—a law which seems still to have been in force in the Province. Comingtee was also of more value than some of the other tracts; so that leaving such an amount of land to the younger son was only an equalization.

After certain other legacies were paid, the remainder of the property was to be equally shared by his two sons, whom he appointed Executors. Pew No. 16 in St. Philip's Church was left to them jointly; and by the terms of the codicil, Lot No. 49 was to be divided between them "to their own liking." But two of his grandchildren were named, though he had several at the time—the two Elizabeths, daughters of Elias and John Coming—to each of whom he bequeathed a negro girl. All the cash, bonds and notes for money (except John Coming's bond) were left to his grandchildren, to be put out at interest and paid to them as they came of age.

To his two surviving daughters, Ann Austin and Eleanor Laurens, he bequeathed 1,500 pounds

apiece. Eleanor was also to have had the larger part of Lot No. 49. It was entailed on her eldest son and his heirs;—failing him, it was to go to each of her children in succession, first the sons and then the daughters. But the codicil revoked all this, dividing the lot between his own two sons, and giving her 1,500 pounds additional.

There is also a legacy of 50 pounds to his nephew Elias Ball, “to buy mourning with.”

NOTE.—After Elias Ball’s second marriage an account appears every now and then with “My mother;” money was sent to her, and goods were purchased by her—noticeably cloth and trimming. And on one occasion 300 pounds were paid to her, “being my mother’s portion.” Now, Mrs. Elizabeth Delamere signs as witness twice, and once some article was sent down by her. It does not seem likely that a man of two or three and forty would so far have adopted his second wife’s mother as to call her “my mother” in the pages of an account book—inference being that some of these accounts were kept by Mary Ball herself. The handwriting, in all, is very similar—even in the entry regarding “Mr. Ball and Sally,” which would hardly have been made by him. (The handwriting of the second Elias was marked.)

Was the “mother’s portion” any regular income that Elias had covenanted to pay his wife’s mother?

There is a large plain gold ring, a good deal worn, within which may be deciphered “S. B., Sepr. 22nd 1722.” It cannot be a wedding ring of any member of this branch of the family, for none of



them was married on that date. It could not have been commemorative of Sally's birth, for, though it was in 1722, it was on July 22d and not in September.

The old Bible—unfortunately lost at Pawleys when the family were driven from there in 1865—had in it the name "Sarah Ball, her book." This Bible came from Kensington and contained the names of Red Cap's children, including those by the first marriage—it passed by inheritance from John Ball, Jr. (grandson of both the second Elias and John Coming) to his daughter, Mrs. Lydia Jane Waring; and from her to her daughter, Mrs. A. W. Simons.

Does it seem likely that a family Bible with the names of the first wife's children should have been the property of a girl of fifteen, who died long before her father? Might not "Sarah Ball" have been Elias's mother, and the "S. B." ring have been commemorative of her death? This, however, is only conjecture.

## IV.

### RED CAP'S DAUGHTERS.

#### ANN BALL.

Twice married—First, to Capt. Daws, R. N.; second, to George Austin.

Ann was the eldest child of Elias and Elizabeth Ball, born—in all probability at Comingtee—in 1701. She was five or six years older than Elizabeth, the next in age—at least, of those that survived infancy.

At the age of fifteen she married Capt. Philip Dawes, R. N., a rich old man of sixty. This ill-assorted marriage seems to have been arranged by the bride's mother—at any rate, her own brother gives her the credit of so doing. But he also admits that his niece, "being something anxious for the world \* \* \* consented to the match." The elderly bridegroom owned "a good Estate in Slaves," and lands near Charleston, on what was afterwards called Hampstead—a name still surviving in Hampstead Mall, in the northeastern part of the city.

Of the young bride's disposition we may catch a glimpse from the foregoing remarks; of the husband we have a sort of etching from the sharp pen of his uncle-in-law, who, by-the-bye, was his junior in



TABLE OF ELEANOR BALL  
(Mrs. Keating Simons) Miss Nellie  
With old jardiniere from Comingtee



years. In answer to Mrs. Bulkeley's questions he writes:

"As for Cousin Daws, I believe neither she nor her husband has any thoughts of coming to Ireland; it's something like his romantick airs, for he often talks of that he has no mind to do. He has been a Capt. in the Navy several years and has commanded several good ships, and being in years was desirous to live ashore, and settled in Carolina; he is related to the present Bishop of York, who is of his name. \* \* \* Though he was not agreeable to her in years, he makes her a very good husband and she makes him a very good wife."

Family tradition says, however, that at first she was not very kind or affectionate to him; but that one day having overheard him praying, in the closet adjoining their room, that God would make his wife love him, she was so much touched by it that she became thenceforward a most affectionate wife. And the fact that he left her all his property, —there being no children—seems conclusive that they lived harmoniously.

Capt. Daws evidently planted on Cooper River during the latter years of his life; where, is not known, but probably on lands given by Elias Ball to his daughter—even John Harleston having been compelled to admit that he had "done very well by Cousin Dawes." (It is a significant fact that George Austin afterwards held lands adjoining those of Elias and John Coming Ball.) In the marriage-settlement of his sister-in-law, Mrs. Elizabeth Ashby, of which he is trustee, he appears as Philip Dawes,

Planter, Berkeley County. There are several accounts with him in the old memorandum book, beginning in 1722,—for the hire of the “pettiauger” for fourteen days and for a hundred bushels of corn; after that, for corn by a few bushels at a time, for drinking glasses and rum, flour, nutmegs, etc.—such things as pre-suppose neighborhood. The last time his name appears is in 1733, in an account with “Mr. Wood, Capt. Dawes’ sawyer.” From which date we conclude that he lived sixteen or seventeen years after his marriage.

Some years after Capt. Dawes’ death his widow married George Austin, a merchant in Charlestown, who was for some time the partner of Mr. Henry Laurens. He seems to have been a man of strong prejudices and violent temper; so that her first marriage, unsuitable as it was in disparity of years, may well have been the happier. Beyond the fact that there were two children of this marriage, George and Eleanor, and that Mr. Austin owned a considerable estate on the Ashepoo River, and was besides engaged in a lucrative business, we know nothing of the domestic affairs of the Austin family. But, early in the year 1762, Eleanor made a runaway match with John Moultrie, which so exasperated her father that he refused to speak to her or even to see her, and all communication between the families was cut off. From the present point of view, it is hard to see what was the objection to Eleanor’s choice, for Moultrie was a man of unexceptionable family and of intellectual ability; and as he was over thirty years of age, must have al-



MRS. GEORGE AUSTIN, nee ANN BALL  
Born January 22nd, 1701      Died June 7th, 1765





ready given signs of the capacity which caused him four years later, to be appointed Lieut. Governor of East Florida, a position which he held until the territory was ceded back to Spain. Indeed, of the five brothers in that family, three held high civil office, one was a colonel in the American army and died gallantly in the defence of Charleston, and the fifth was Gen. William Moultrie, whose name will be honored so long as Charleston exists. Of course there may have been other circumstances of which we know nothing,—perhaps one cause of the father's anger was that a man of *his* age, and a widower besides, should have induced a girl, ten years his junior, to elope with him. Yet, after all, she was no mere child, but a woman of twenty-four; and both had doubtless well considered the step they were taking. Any run-away match, however, pre-supposes an amount of domestic friction that must have rendered a home very uncomfortable, while the sudden and complete casting off of the offender must have greatly increased its unhappiness—so doubtless the three years that intervened between her daughter's marriage and her own death, must have been far from pleasant for Mrs. Ann Austin. If she were indeed “something anxious for the world” in her youth, the significant lines of her pictured face suggest that she was sated with it in her old age. Her death occurred on the 7th June, 1765; and she was buried by her sister Elizabeth in St. Philip's Churchyard. Their tombs may still be seen in front of the South door.

It was probably after this that Mr. Austin went to live in England, taking his son with him, but still cherishing resentment towards his daughter. Tradition makes Mr. Laurens the means of bringing about a reconciliation. Being in England on business, he made up his mind to obtain Eleanor's forgiveness; and, as an old and valued friend, he seemed the best fitted to make the attempt. He carried over with him a likeness of Mrs. Moultrie and her two boys; and, armed with this as his weapon of persuasion, proceeded to call on Mr. Austin at his London house. He was out, but his visitor prevailed on the maid to allow him to leave the picture on the mantel-piece, to make its own plea. Mr. Austin shortly returned, and recognizing the likeness, angrily demanded who had dared to leave *that* there. The servant replied that it was a gentleman who did not give his name, but said he was an old friend of Mr. Austin and would come again. Next day Mr. Laurens returned. The picture had probably had some influence; yet not until after a long argument, was the father induced to forgive his daughter.

We are indebted to a letter of George Appleby, a nephew of Mr. Austin's and one of the executors to his will, for further light on the affairs of the Austin family. This letter was written to the second Elias Ball, and dated 23d July, 1774—about a month after Mr. Austin's death. It seems that his son George, had fallen into dissipated ways; and was drinking heavily, and his father, in a fit of anger, cut him off with an annuity of 200 l. a year.



JOHN MOULTRIE, of Aston Hall, Shropshire, Eng.  
Born January 22nd, 1764      Died December 19th, 1823  
Son of Lt.-Gov. John Moultrie, Royal Gov. of East Florida  
Nephew of Gen. Wm. Moultrie



The bulk of the property, which Appleby computes at about 40,000 l. sterling, was left to one of Mrs. Moultrie's sons; and, singularly enough, the choice of *which* son was left to her. About eighteen months after this will was made, Mr. Austin died of putrid sore-throat, after only thirty-six hours illness; and, as he had lost the power of speech before he realized his danger, he had no means of intimating whether or not he had changed his views toward his son—consequently, the will remained in force. The executors were endeavoring to arrange with the heir for a small addition to the son's income; but we are not told with what success. Poor George had begun to reform before his father's death, and seems to have sobered down completely after it—we can only hope the reformation was permanent. This glimpse of him, sober and repentant in his cousin's house is the last we have. We only know he died unmarried.

How the division of the Austin estate was arranged, I do not know; but John Moultrie, the eldest son, had Aston Hall, Shropshire, Eng., and James, the second son, had the property on the Ashepoo River, S. C. John married Catherine, daughter of Elias Ball of Wambaw, the Tory; and James married Catherine, daughter of his uncle Alexander Moultrie, Attorney General of South Carolina.

Mrs. Eleanor Moultrie died in London, in the year 1826, at the advanced age of eighty-eight.

### ELIZABETH BALL.

Thrice married—First, to John Ashby; second, to John Vicaridge; third, to Richard Shubrick.

Although Elias Ball's other daughters do not come in regular succession here, I have ventured to group them together, as their history closed before the greatest interest of their brothers' lives had well begun to develop.

Of Elizabeth Ball, the third daughter of Elias Ball, no mention is anywhere made from the time that the bill for three months' "schooling" was paid for "Betty," aged nine, until her name appears in her first husband's will. We have no information as to her character and disposition beyond the brief record on her tomb-stone, that she was "a woman of rare economy."

Her first husband was John Ashby, a widower with one son. The Ashbys were of a good English family, who had settled in St. Thomas's Parish, on the left bank of the Eastern Branch, at a place which they called Quinby, after their family estate in England. Quinby was about eight miles up the river, it is true, and on the opposite side; but "Capt. Bonneau's ferry" simplified affairs in that direction.

Elizabeth must have married almost as young as her sister; probably when about sixteen, certainly not over seventeen, as John Ashby's will is dated in March, 1728, and she was born in 1711.





MRS. JOHN MOULTRIE, nee CATHARINE BALL  
of Aston Hall, Shropshire, Eng.  
Born 1766      Died July 30th, 1828



We do not know where they lived, as Ashby does not mention the name of his plantation; but, as Elias Ball paid Capt. Bonneau a heavy ferriage account for his son-in-law, they probably lived across the river.

Ashby's will is very liberal towards his young widow of barely eighteen, and was evidently drawn up during his last illness, perhaps shortly before his death. After stating that he is "weak and sick of body," he devises the plantation on which he resides to his son John Ashby and his heirs; failing them, to any posthumous heirs by his wife Elizabeth. To such heirs he leaves the plantation on the Santee called Webdoe; failing them, it reverts to his son John. Should John die without children, and should there be no other heirs, both plantations were to go to Elizabeth; and in all cases, she was to have the right of residence at the first plantation, and the use of it, until John came of age. He leaves her five negroes by name, and divides the rest of the property equally between herself, his son, and any posthumous heirs. Elizabeth and her father are appointed executors; the witnesses are Phil. Dawes, John Coming Ball (who must have been a mere boy), and Charles Pinckney.

Eleven months after Mr. Ashby's will was made, the wife in whom he reposed such confidence signed her marriage contract with John Vicaridge, a merchant in Charlestown. It is to be supposed that the marriage took place shortly after, though Letters Testamentary on Ashby's will were not taken

out until three months after the date of the settlement. Phil. Dawes was the trustee, and the whole of her property, real and personal, was settled on herself. Elias Ball evidently continued to take charge, as Executor, of Ashby's property; for in 1731 there is an item of "cash paid John Blake for wages as an overseer to Mr. John Ashby's plantation, deceased."

An account begins with John Vicaridge in 1729; it concerns principally corn, peas, rice, and shingles, sent him in large quantities, and casks of sugar, wine, etc., received in return, and cash paid. This account is carried on until 1735, but in this year the items are trifling, apparently mere matters of neighborly convenience. His name appears but once more, in the summer of 1738, in connection with cash paid to a third party.

After Mr. Vicaridge's death, Elizabeth took a third husband,—Richard Shubrick. She died at the age of thirty-five, in September, 1746, and was buried in front of the south door of St. Philip's Church, Charleston, where her tomb-stone and that of her sister, Mrs. Austin, may still be seen.

Her son, Richard, went over to England, married and settled there, and had a large family.

This is all that we know certainly of Elizabeth Ball; but a family tradition has come down on the side of the Shubricks, as well as the Balls, of which we *suppose* her to have been the heroine.

Capt. Shubrick was once off at sea, when a violent storm came up. That night she dreamed that she saw him, floating on something on the water.

The locality was unknown to her, but the dream was so vivid that the scene of it was indelibly impressed on her memory. In the morning she related the dream to a friend or relative, imploring him to go in search of Capt. Shubrick, who, as she felt sure, had been shipwrecked somewhere along the coast. She even described accurately the appearance of the locality. The notion of such a search was ridiculed—the ship, I believe, not even being due as yet. The second night the dream was repeated with equal vividness, but again she could not prevail upon her friend to undertake what seemed so foolish a quest. The third night the dream recurred, and this time the earnestness of her appeals and the remarkable persistency of the dream sufficiently prevailed over her friend's incredulity and sense of the ridiculous, to lead him to get a boat and coast along to the northward. Entering Bull's Bay, he was struck with its correspondence with the locality, described by Mrs. Shubrick, and, looking closely, he perceived some floating object, which proved to be Capt. Shubrick, holding on to a hen-coop, but in an exhausted condition. But for her dream and her persistence, her husband must have perished.

ELEANOR BALL.

Married—Henry Laurens.

Eleanor was the only surviving child of Elias Ball's second marriage. She was born in 1731, and named, as we suppose, for that elder Eleanor

who had died a few years before her birth. We have but few personal items regarding her. What we know is chiefly in reference to others. As we have seen, her father removed to the city in 1740, when she was but a child. In the ten years that intervened before her own marriage, she lost her younger sister, Mary, two years her junior, and, as we have every reason to suppose, had lost her mother also. In the early part of 1750 she married Mr. Henry Laurens, a merchant of Charlestown, whose name is identified with the patriotic history of his State, and who irreproachably fulfilled his domestic duties as husband, father, and master. Such is his character as delineated by his son-in-law, Dr. David Ramsay.

A little more than a year after Eleanor's marriage, her father died, leaving her £3,000 in current money,—part of which seems to have been in lieu of a house and lot, previously settled upon her and her children, but now transferred to others. He probably thought that she did not need the house as much as the others of his family, for her husband was a man of means, and owned a fine residence on East Bay St., surrounded by an extensive garden and shrubbery.

No kind uncle has left letters to tell us whether she was "anxious for the world." If so, she must have been amply gratified; for Mr. Laurens, besides being of an exemplary character, was rich, young, prosperous, thoroughly educated in letters and in business, and soon began to take a prominent part in public affairs.



She died at the birth of an infant, in May, 1770, and was buried in the western half of St. Philip's Churchyard, in the northwest corner. Mrs. Poyas, in one of her books, tells us that the grave was covered by a granite slab, set on a brick foundation, and that "it was broken down and destroyed by the British when the Old White Meeting House (now the Circular Church) was converted into a granary or store-house by them." Doubtless this act of vandalism was in retaliation for the patriotic stand taken by her husband and son during the Revolution.

Four children survived her:—John, whose short and brilliant career deserves further notice; Martha, who married Dr. David Ramsay, the historian; Henry, of Mepkin Plantation, St. John's Parish; and Mary Eleanor, who married Gov. Charles Pinckney, one of the framers of the Constitution.

Mr. Laurens, having, like many gentlemen of those days, sent his sons to England for their education, went thither himself to superintend it. The mutterings of impending war recalled him to his native country, where John, at least, soon followed him. As Mr. Laurens's career is so inseparably inwoven with American history, to touch on its salient points is sufficient. He was President of the Continental Congress for some years; was sent by Congress to negotiate with France; was captured by the British on his way thither, and imprisoned in the Tower of London on a charge of high-treason; was treated during his imprisonment with great rigor; and was only re-



leased when negotiations for peace were set afoot. He then returned to Carolina. The latter part of his life seems to have been spent at his beautiful plantation on Cooper River—Mepkin, where he died in 1792.

According to the wish, expressed in his will, his body was wrapped in twelve yards of tow-cloth, and burned on a funeral pile. Tradition still points out the spot, on the southern spur of the bluff at Mepkin. There are two other such spurs; the middle one, on which the house stood, and the northern one, where the cemetery was located, and where Mr. Laurens's grave may still be seen—a grave of ordinary size, not in the least suggesting that it holds but a mere handful of charred bones and ashes.

Eleanor Laurens's history would be incomplete without a brief account of her gallant son. Dr. Ramsay places his birth in the year 1755. As we have seen, he was educated in England. He was proficient, not only in the solid branches of learning, but in the lighter graces and accomplishments of music, drawing, dancing, and fencing, and was noted for the charm of his manners and the nobility of his sentiments. He had a keen sense of honor, and was brave even to the point of rashness. He rendered distinguished service as a colonel in Lee's Legion, was sent to Paris on a mission to the French Government while Franklin was there, succeeded in his mission, returned to his command, and was slain in a petty skirmish in 1782, having left a sick-bed to join the fight. He was killed in the Combahee region, and, according to Dr. Johnson's "Rem-

iniscences," buried on a neighboring plantation. But his place in the cemetery at Mepkin is reserved, by a grave, whose simple head-stone bears the classic epitaph:

"Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori."

## V.

### THE SECOND ELIAS.

#### ELIAS OF KENSINGTON.

The second Elias Ball, eldest son of Red-Cap, was born, presumably at Comingtee, in December, 1709.

Of his youth and early manhood we know little. He was twelve years old, at his father's second marriage, sufficiently grown to be impatient of the rule of a step-mother who was only a few years his senior; but, as neither tradition nor memoranda hint the relation between them, they were probably in the main amicable. He seems to have had the same amount of "schooling" as his brother, with the exception, perhaps, of "Johnny's" special instruction in "arithmetick" and dancing. His name occurs less frequently, and his only accomplishment seems to have been music, there being a bill for his music-lessons—only one such bill, however. Some years after, there is a memorandum: "hogs bought from my son Elias"; so that he must soon have established some business interests, independent of his father, for whom he is also mentioned as receiving and paying out money.



ELIAS BALL

Born December 22nd, 1709

Died August 8th, 1786



Tradition throws but a faint glimmer of light on these hidden years of his life. He is said to have fallen in love with his fair neighbor, Lydia Child, grand-daughter of Mr. James Child, founder of the neighboring town of Childbury. (See Note.) The old account-book gives some color to this, for, inserted in the very midst of heterogeneous plantation memoranda, is the statement in his handwriting: "Mrs. Lydia Child was 19 to-day"—a queer setting for a bit of sentiment, but sentiment it undoubtedly is. And, strangely enough, not only did Mrs. Lydia marry George Chicken this very year, but was actually married to him at the time of this memorandum. There is no other mention of her; and Elias appears to have gone on his quiet way, unmarried, not finding attraction in any other woman.

Father and son seem to have taken their share in cultivating the land, for there is a story to the effect that, one afternoon, the younger Elias, who was contemplating a visit to his lady-love (at Childbury, no doubt), brought a plough-share to his father and complained that it was too dull for longer use. His father readily acknowledged its dullness, but remarked that his son would have plenty of time to take it on his shoulder and "step up" to Moncks Corner—fourteen miles above—and have it sharpened—which he had to do.

As we have already learned, the elder Elias Ball moved to Charleston in 1740. For a year or so previous, the younger Elias seems to have been largely associated with him in his planting inter-

ests; and the notes and memoranda in the old book are almost altogether in his handwriting, and after that date entirely by him, and the entries are somewhat changed. There are fewer small industries noted; it is more and more of a planter's book. There are accounts with carpenters, or for lumber sold, besides all manner of household memoranda and some of a personal character; but this part is taken up chiefly with lists of negroes' names—the dates of their birth, and sometimes of their death,—with the number and recipients of the blankets, etc., given out, and with the purchase and probable age of African slaves. He was fond of making memoranda; and there is a certain little note-book, bearing his wife's maiden name and containing sundry notes in a round, childish hand, most of whose available space is filled with entries in his peculiar handwriting, which, though rather small for a man, is of a marked character,—firm, regular, and tolerably easy to read.

Elias evidently lived at Comingtee; but I do not know where John Coming lived up to this time. He may have had the care of the property farther away from home; but, at all events, he made a home for himself soon after his father left Comingtee. Elias must have been lonely enough in the empty house at Comingtee. Even the parrot which his father sent him must have proved but a poor solace. Instead, however, of finding a helpmeet for himself, he bought and cleared a tract of land adjoining Hyde Park, and built and settled therein,—in order, as his son tells us, to be near the brother



to whom he was so deeply attached. He named this plantation Kensington.

"All things come to him who waits;" and in 1745 Mrs. Lydia Chicken was left a widow, with one little girl. Elias doubtless lost no time in renewing his suit; and two years afterwards they were married. He was then thirty-eight. He seems to have been the kindest of step-fathers to little Catherine; she grew up with his own boys as of the same family, and frequent references are made to her in his letters and in theirs.

Little Catherine Chicken was the heroine of a family tradition that tells how, having once incurred the displeasure of the brutal school-master at Childbury School, she was tied by him to a tombstone in the neighboring churchyard, by way of punishment, and was left there and forgotten. She was not missed until night-fall, when search was made for her; and she was found, half dead from fright and exhaustion. Though she recovered, her mouth was permanently drawn into a crooked shape, and a portrait, in possession of one of her descendants, shows the distortion of features plainly. The school-master was drummed out of Childbury.

We have only a few dates from which to construct the annals of the subsequent twelve years, doubtless happy and prosperous, in the main, though chequered by the sorrows inseparable from human life. The first child of this new marriage was a daughter, Elizabeth—one of the only two grandchildren, mentioned in the First Elias Ball's will:

—the two that bore the name of his first wife. This daughter died, however, but a month after the will was made, at the age of two years.

After his father's death, Elias seems to have set diligently about improving his property. Comingtee had been left to him by will, and he had inherited, as eldest son, several thousand acres besides, most of which must have been timber land. He also came into possession, in right of his wife, of Strawberry Ferry and Plantation, in which tract the larger part of the town of Childbury was included. From time to time, he made purchases of African slaves, some of whom were grown, and some, boys and girls. He planted oaks to beautify Kensington; and seems to have had some special interest in pigeons, as several memoranda concern them. In 1754, he notes: "my clock came home." And never did a clock need so much cleaning and so many repairs, from professionals and from non-professionals! Nevertheless, we cannot help thinking that it may have been one of the two exactly similar timepieces which in after years stood in the houses at Limerick and Comingtee. We would like to think, too, that these two clocks had been imported by the two brothers—but this is imagination, pure and simple. Building, also, must have been going on, this year, or have been projected; for the well was "bricked in"; and, the day before Christmas, 1755, "Elias Ball and family moved into his new house." The "family" by this time consisted of his wife and two boys—Elias and Isaac—and Catherine Chieken. Two more children, Lydia

and John, were born afterwards. There are, in both books, various memoranda of the weather—of unusually heavy rains, late frosts, a great freshet, and the celebrated “whorlwind” that did so much damage to the shipping in Charleston Harbor in May, 1761.

There is an entry of March 10th, 1763:— “Mrs. Catherine Chicken and Elias and Isaac Ball went down in Mr. Bonneau’s canno (canoe) and he went with them to their Uncle Laurens to be inoculated for ye small-pox.” We can almost see the sad little party, and hear good Mr. Bonneau’s attempts to cheer and comfort them. In this same year, too, Mrs. Catherine Chicken married Mr. Benjamin Simons, son of the second of that name. The Simonses lived at Middleburgh, a plantation in St. Thomas’ Parish, not many miles distant.

It seems possible that the education of these elder boys and of Catherine Chicken may have been carried on by a tutor. They must have had education of some sort, as there is no memorandum of Elias ever being sent to school, and of Isaac only once; and yet Elias wrote and spelt fairly well, and Isaac, even better. There is a suggestive memorandum of April, 1763, to the effect that John and Thomas Cordes came to school—at a given rate. “Schooling” as well as boarding was charged to them.

An opportunity presented itself in 1764 of purchasing the plantation of Limerick, \* \* which adjoined Kensington on the other side. It was then

a well-settled place, with a fine dwelling, and was owned by Daniel Huger, son of the Emigrant.

But prosperity in wordly goods was soon offset by heavy griefs. John Coming Ball died in 1764, in October; and we can well understand how heavy the blow was to the surviving one of these two devoted brothers.

A yet heavier blow, however, was in store. Only a few months later,—in April, 1765—his wife died, leaving him, much as his father had been left, with four small children. But, unlike his father, Elias did not take a second wife. His eldest boy was twelve—much about his own age when he was left motherless;—and perhaps his own experience may have made him hesitate to put a step-mother in authority over his boy. Or it may have been—and facts would seem to bear it out—that Lydia was really the only woman for whom he ever cared. At any rate, circumstances and times were different, and he could afford to indulge his preferences. The country was well-settled now, and every household boasted trained servants, devoted to the family of their owners. And, more than all, his brother's widow and children lived on the next plantation. No existing memorandum gives even a hint of what became of the children, the youngest of whom was only five years old; but it is natural to suppose that Mrs. Judith Ball assumed the care of them. The very absence of memoranda hints that domestic matters must have worked smoothly.

There are few memoranda of any kind, until Feb. 1769, when it is noted: "my son John went to Mr.



KENSINGTON PLANTATION (taken 1900)  
House Built by Second Elias Ball



Gibson to school." In April, Isaac went there too. Where Mr. Gibson taught, I cannot state, nor how long he continued to instruct the boys.

The uniformity and monotony of events was broken in October, 1771, by a wedding in the family. Little Lydia, not yet fifteen, married Edward Simons, a brother-in-law of her half-sister, Catherine,—not an old man, though nearly twice as old as she was.

In June, 1772, "John Ball went to Mr. Sam Bonneau's in order to go to school at Mr. Thomson's," who may have been the master of the Childbury Free School, or of the Beresford School in St. Thomas's Parish;—in either case, some of the Bonneaus would probably have been nearer than Kensington. Yet, notwithstanding all the school-going, John Ball says: "My education was too much neglected by my fond father."

Mrs. Judith Ball died in August, 1772. Nothing is said of any arrangements made by Elias Ball for his family; but, indeed, none were needed. Lydia, the only girl, was already provided for; John, now twelve, was at school; and Elias and Isaac, twenty and eighteen respectively, lived with their father, by this time, and took an active part in his planting interest.

Nothing regarding them is noted until July, 1774, when "John went to town to live with Mr. Edward Simons," whether to attend school or to learn some business does not appear; but the former seems most likely, as he was only fourteen; and, besides, his brother Elias, writing of Isaac's failing health,



earnestly wishes that John were "old enough" to come and take charge of the planting.

For more than a year after this, some insight into the domestic life of the family is furnished through the letters, written by the three elders to the absent youngest member, which also help us so to know their kindly, simple, affectionate natures as to make them very real and present to us.

John leaves home on the 27th July; and on the 2nd of August a short letter from his eldest brother "to dear Jack," thanks him for his "kind favor," ending, "I hope you will follow the advice you had from me, which will give me a great deal of pleasure to hear it. I beg you will keep up a constant correspondence with me." The boy, living in the city, in the midst of its opportunities and temptations, becomes the recipient of a great amount of good advice, of many commissions, and sometimes of what was more acceptable—country dainties dear to the boyish palate, such as "ground-nuts," fruit, etc.

There was much sickness in the family at this time, Mr. Ben. Simons, "Caty's" husband, being seriously ill; "Bro. Ned," Lydia's husband, miserably out of health; Elias Ball, Sr., apparently suffering all the time from some chronic "Disorder"; and Isaac having already developed symptoms of the disease of which he eventually died; besides which, Elias, Jr., had one or two sharp "bouts" of sickness. Yet the tone of the letters is cheerful in the main; it is only over those of the younger Elias that a shadow sometimes seems to hover.



ELIAS BALL

Born April 10th, 1752

Died January 2nd, 1810



But we will let the letters speak for themselves in a few extracts.

The first letter from his father runs thus :

“My Dear Son John,

I received yr Kind favor dated ye 29 July, it was for want of an opportunity of answering it sooner. I beg you'll write to me all Opportunities you have. \* \* \* Be sure, John, be a good Boy and mind your Business to the best of your Power. Come home Early of an Evening and Don't get into bad Company. If you see any Quarrel going forward, turn your back and walk off, and have nothing to say to them on either side \* \* \* You may tell your Sister that I am afraid I shall never see Charlestown again.

My Blessing to you all, and am, dear Son,

Your loving Father,

E. BALL.”

Under date of Aug. 27th, 1774, Elias Sr. writes :

“Your brother Isaac and John Langstaff (John Coming Ball of Hyde Park, a boy of John's own age) have been out shooting summer-ducks, and Langstaff had an opportunity of firing at 38 yds. Dist., as fair a shot as man could have, and killed but \* \* \* (the number is illegible, but was apparently small) I suppose if he had not had your Silversight he would not have killed one.” Then follow commissions for shoemaker's thread, rice-sickles etc., and then : “Your brother Isaac is very

unwell. Just now he was most strangled with his own blood this morning;—he was at Limerick, and was going a hunting this morning, but he came to me, and I took some blood from him, I hope it will be of service to him.”

Elias Jr. writes of this the next day,—28th:

“Brother Isaac was unwell yesterday with a spitting of blood, for which my Father bled him, and I think it was of service to him, as he spit no blood to-day \* \* \* John Coming staid a week with us on his way to St. Stephen’s.” \* \* \*

Oct. 3d the father writes quite a long letter, the first part being taken up with Mr. Ben Simons’ illness, in consequence of which he himself has been at Middleburgh every day, and Elias, day and night, for a week. The latter part relates hunting anecdotes: “A stout Buck” was started by Mr. Joseph Bell, who “gave him a long chase; at length he took the river, and swam till he came where Stepney was minding rice, and he heard a noise in ye river, he looked about him, and there he saw this stout Buck; up he starts and runs up to Cupid, who immediately went and got a shot, and Laced him from stem to stern; for all that, he made shift to get up as far as Silkhope Orchard, and there he lost him; he stept to Mr. Bell and got his Dogs and put them on the scent, and when he found him, he found him Dead and Stiff. I do assure you he was a fine fellow.” The Wednesday following, \* \* \* there was somebody else a hunting—I suppose it



ISAAC BALL

Born May 11th, 1754      Died January 5th, 1776





was Mr. Quash's Billy—and there was another “stout fellow roused, and he came Blundering down ye River as ye other did” \* \* \* here there are one or two lines illegible, but the substance of it is, that the person to whom the buck came “had no shot; he broke his Pipe in pieces and put that in his gun, and got so close to the buck as to shoot him in his ear, and got him; and just as I came home from your Bro. Simons, lo, he came swaggering with him. I do assure you, John, he was a Stout fellow, much stouter than the other.” Poor John! shut up with books or business when there were such glorious doings in the neighborhood of the dear old home!

In less than a month after, Isaac was in danger of his life from another source. His father writes:

“I heard my dear son Isaac was Castaway near Town or in it \* \* \* I shall be very uneasy until I see him or hear from him, pray, John, tell him to take more care of himself, and Don't bring my Grey hairs with sorrow to the Grave.”

Not long after, Elias Jr. writes that Isaac has been very ailing, and that he thinks he will never be better if he does not go away. Indeed, he seems to have been anxious about him from the first.

Poor little John was about this time seized with a boyish desire to own a watch, and wrote to ask his brother Elias to let him have money enough, out of some that he owed him, to purchase one. Apparently, however, watches were not considered suitable for boys in those days, and his brother,

after referring to his own severe sickness, answers thus :

“Dear John you mention to me in one of yours about a watch, and that the money should be drawn from the sum I have given you a note of hand for, and your reason for getting one is to know when to go to breakfast and dinner. I do assure you it gave me a great deal of concern to think that you should want to lay out your money so foolishly. But my advice to you is that I think you stand in no need of a watch; which if you did, I would advise my Father to give you one. But, however, John, if you do not choose to follow my advice to you, I will pay up my whole Note as soon as I have sold some of my rice, then you must do what you please with it.” But in case of the purchase, he gives John to understand that he will never undertake to advise him again; but adds: “I hope that by your next you will think quite otherwise.”

To this period is apparently referable the following letter from his father, the date of which is torn off.

“Dear John,

\* \* \* it is time enough for you to think of such things six years hence. You seem to let your head run too much on Dress and this fine thing and that fine thing; my advice to you is to mind your business and study that more than you do—what signifies if you don’t come to meals to a min-

ute or not; be a good Boy and you shall want for nothing that I can help you to. Your head seems to run too much on dressing yourself, as if you Came into the world for nothing else."

Poor John must have felt as if he had inadvertently pulled the string of a shower-bath! It must have been a great consolation when "Sister Caty" wrote to him about making up some shirts, and promised to have them ruffled if she had to sew the ruffles herself. Probably she had heard some of the masculine discussions on the subject. Shortly after, he seems to have been guilty of some more serious misdemeanor, for on the 1st of December is this little note:

"Dear Son John,

I have recd. your very kind favour, and that you acknowledge you were a naughty Boy. I forgive you sincerely, and you shall hear no more of it." That is all, except a few words about stockings that were being knit for him, and the health of his brothers.

The year's correspondence ends thus:

"Please let me know by the return of the boat when I shall send your horses for you, and you may depend I shall send them."

Strange, that a boy of fourteen should own "boys," horses, and several guns, yet not be thought old enough to own a watch!

Even Christmas holidays in the country, with the riding and the hunting and the shooting, and all the charms of the dear familiar home life, must come to an end, and 1775 sees John back in the city.

The first letter for this year is a long one from his father, dated Comingtee Feb. 10th.

“Dear Son John,

I have received your several letters, etc. \* \* \*  
My son, I am not angry with you at all. I heard yesterday that you had a Bruising bout with Bob Simons, and that he gave you a Black Eye; my son, I would not have you to be Quarrelsome or litigious, but at the same time I would not have you be put upon by no Lad of your match. \* \* \*  
I shall send down your moneys by your Bro. Isaac when he goes down, so you may buy your watch as soon as you please; if you get it at Mr. Downes' take it on his word and honour, be sure you get a good one or not at all. Be sure, my dear Son, behave yourself like a young gentleman, and be obliging to your Bro. and Sister, and be strictly honest; always take care how you promise, but when you promise always perform your promise. I had your two guns cleaned and put up immediately, I did not wait for Tycho telling me. \* \* \* I received your Jar of raisins some time ago. \* \* \* Be sure, John, write to me all opportunities, don't wait for my answering yours, but write to me, it is your Duty. In so doing you should say, I remain, Hond. Sir, your dutiful Son John Ball,

not and humbl. Servt., that is all foolish to a father.

My blessing to you all and am dear John,

Your Ever Lo. Father

E. BALL."

John evidently made a successful plea for that watch, on this Christmas visit.

His brother Elias seemed mindful of his threat of never sending him advice again, for there is none in his letter from Comingtee next day,—but doubtless John would have preferred the driest counsel to what he did write. After stating that he had been kept there some time by sick negroes, and begging John to send up the plantation things by a certain boat, he proceeds:

"You promised the next time you wrote it should be a long letter, I desire it may, for by accounts you have a good subject to write on—the Battle with the Boy as little again as yourself, and am credibly informed he gave you a good drubbing with two black eyes. I was sorry that you should fight that Boy, for I thought you were on much better terms than to fight, but as it did come to a battle, I was much surprised to hear you had parted with consent and with two black eyes. I had imagined you were able to flog two such boys as him at one time. My father is well, he is now with me. I have not heard lately from Isaac."

But Isaac had heard of John, for on the 13th he writes in that clear copper-plate hand of his:

"I shall be glad to hear in your next how that Battle was fought between Messrs. Simons and Ball, and who came off Conqueror."

It was in March of this year that Elias wrote to John wishing he were old enough to come and take charge of things, for Isaac's health is so bad that the negroes take advantage of it to feign sickness, and the family can get no work done satisfactorily. Even the horses break bounds, and can't be kept out of the oats patch—John's *three* being as bad as any.

In July, the father writes from Kensington, accusing John of forgetting various commissions: "Out of sight out of mind, as the old saying is—you quite forgot me too, as well as the rest of mankind."

In every letter now there is mention of Isaac as being "very poorly." On August 27th, 1775, Elias, Jr., writes sadly of Isaac's health, and fears that his only chance lies in his going away somewhere. He then goes on to say: "I have entered into a volunteer company under the command of Capt. Job Marion and R. Gough, first Lieutenant. (Isaac also joined this company.) I am much in want of a gun to have a bayonet fixed in, as my old piece is too short, and I beg that you will let me have yours for that purpose. My father tells me you shall have his to make use of till we have better times, and then I shall give you one in the room of yours, equally as good. I think the offer I make you so fair that you can't have any objection to it.



I beg you will acquaint me by the first opportunity whether I shall have it or no. If you consent to it, I shall send it down with one of the bayonets that is at Kensington, and get you to put it in one of the best workman's hands in town to get fixed up for me."

We have not John's answer, but its tenor may be guessed from the following letter from his brother.

"In regard to the Gun, I think the offer I made you very fair, and you have been so ungenerous as to ask me more for it than the first \* \* \* and not then without my being one of the \* \* \* (lieutenants, apparently). Your being so ungenerous has induced my Father to make me a compliment of his gun, and I intend getting Jeudon to fix it up for me. We are to be a company of foot, but I can't acquaint you what the uniform is to be, as cloth is so scarce in town."

The letters of the father and brothers cease after August, and the probability is that John soon returned home, as his brother-in-law, Edward Simons, died early in October of this year (1775), and Lydia's home in Charlestown must have been broken up. We do not know whether she came back into her father's house or not; but probably she was there on long visits, at any rate. She seems too young to have lived entirely alone. There is some mention in one of the letters of "your Sister's things" being stored at Limerick; and writing in 1776 from Charlestown to John at Ken-



sington, she asks if "her people" have been "up to any tricks at Limerick," and begs John to come for her on a given day. Once or twice in the years succeeding her husband's death, Elias, Jr., then in Charlestown, sends love to his sister. I have seen it stated that "Lydia Simons went to live at Limerick with Elias" after Mr. Simon's death; but this *must* be a mistake. In the first place, it was then understood that Limerick was to be *Isaac's*, it being so stated in the will made three years previously, so Elias would scarcely have been living there *then*. And in the second place, Elias—judging from his own letters—was very little at home after Isaac's death; and it surely was more likely that so young a widow should have lived in her father's home than alone on a plantation in those troublous times, when the whole surrounding country was for so long in the hands of the British.

These were exciting days, and the elder Elias made some of his accustomed notes in his wife's old note-book on the current news—the arrival, and then the flight, of Lord William Campbell, etc. It is easy to see that all his sympathies were with the patriots. Therefore, it must have been a sore trial when his brother's eldest son openly declared himself a Tory. He seems to have been uneasy about the younger son too, as he inquires, rather anxiously, "In what troop does he ride? and what is his uniform?"

There was need of Lydia's presence in the household now,—though, indeed, she had griefs enough of her own, in the loss of husband and child. We

have not the exact date of her child's death; but as John writes shortly before Mr. Simon's death that "little Neddy" was very ill, it is likely that he died the same autumn. This only child, as well as the father, seems to have been always ailing, and the poor child-mother must have had but a sad and anxious life, between the two.

I cannot say if any one at Kensington realized the impending sorrow, except Elias; but doubtless it was a shock to all, when, on the 5th January, 1776, Isaac breathed his last. To the father, it must have been a specially heavy blow; this son had been always with him; had managed the home plantation; and of him he expressed himself in most affectionate terms. One cannot help feeling that, if he relied more on Elias's administrative ability and firmness of character, Isaac was nearer his heart. And to Elias, this brother next in age was evidently very dear.

There are few memorials left of the young life, whose flame was so early quenched. Half-a-dozen short letters—scarcely more than notes,—written in a clear, regular hand, better spelled than was usual with country gentlemen in those days, and with occasional dashes of pleasantry; a little memorandum-book, containing a few miscellaneous items; and a portrait by Theus, of cabinet size, showing a pleasant-faced boy in the prim dress of that day, holding a bird in his hands. His body rests in the family cemetery at Strawberry.

Things were changed at Kensington now. Elias, the main-stay of the family, was necessarily often

absent, and the active management of the business devolved upon John, now a lad of sixteen. The stress of the war began to be felt, too, in the scarcity of cloth and salt, as well as of such luxuries as good wheat flour. From time to time, too, some of the negroes went over to the British, who after a while over-ran the country, and finally, even John joined a company in active service.

Elias, Sr., seems to have continued to keep most of the accounts—the register of the births of negro children, for example, is kept by him up to 1780. Possibly it was at the time of John's marriage—this same year—that he divided his property between his sons. In a manuscript book, belonging to John Ball, there is "A List of Male Slaves from sixteen to sixty, at Kensington, with each negro's age to the best of our knowledge, made the eight day of March, 1780." There is also a "Copy of the Ages of the Negroes belonging to my Father, taken from the original, March 6th 1780." In another part of the same book is a list of the Negroes that came with his wife, born after he had possession of them. The first birth registered is June 5th, 1780. The latest writing of the second Elias seems a memorandum slip of the births of his grandchildren in 1782, 1784, and 1785.

How he fared in these times, with ill-health and increasing years, we do not know; nor how much Elias, Jr., was able to be at home; but from a letter written after the Peace, we presume that he had been absent most of the time.

In the Spring of 1779, we find John a second



STRAWBERRY CHAPEL

Ball Cemetery in lower right hand corner, Harleston Cemetery in background



Lieutenant in Screven's company, Col. Daniel Horry's regiment of Light Dragoons; and in 1780 he married his cousin Jane Ball, daughter of John Coming Ball and his wife Judith Boisseau. So Elias, Sr., *may* not have been left alone in his old age. Doubtless the wife was the "Cousin Jinny" about whose health Elias, Jr., inquired in the autumn of 1776, and who seems to have been then on a visit to Kensington.

In 1780, over forty negroes, men, women, and apparently some children, left Kensington to go to the British army. Some of these afterwards returned.

The year before the war closed, 1783, Lydia married Mr. Bryan, and settled (I believe) at Campvere, near the Simons' place, Middleburgh.

In the summer of 1786, Elias Ball's long continued ill-health brought on death on the 8th of August, at the good old age of seventy-seven. He was buried beside his wife and his son Isaac in the centre of the family cemetery at Strawberry Chapel, where a single wide slab covers their graves.

The second Elias Ball and his family—so I have always heard—were the first to be interred in this Family Cemetery at Strawberry Chapel (formerly Childbury Chapel). The cemetery at Hyde Park, which belonged to the John Coming Ball branch, has been long disused in favor of this one.

There is a will extant, dated March 13th, 1772, an original, not a copy. It is duly witnessed, and seems to have been duly signed—though the signa-



ture has been cut out—but I do not see that the will has been proved. In this he devises Coming-tee to his son Elias; also “Eveleigh’s Land;” some other tracts which had been granted to his father; certain special legacies of negroes and silver; and his “clock and Family Pictures.” To Isaac he leaves Limerick, and special legacies of negroes and silver. To John, Kensington and Hyde Park, except a piece of ground on the latter of twenty feet square, “reserved as a Place of Family Sepulture for ever.” John also has special legacies like the others. To Lydia he leaves Lot No. 49 in Charlestown, and the sum of 10,000 l. currency; her special legacies include furniture also.

Of course, Isaac’s death must have made a change. Limerick became Elias’s; but as far as I know, John and Lydia retained their original shares. Any difference in value *may* have been equalized in money. It is strange that in this will no mention is made of Mrs. Lydia Ball’s landed property, which consisted of Strawberry Plantation, and about 160 acres on the other side of the river, left her by her aunt Mrs. Durham, yet confirms the bequests of personal property made in her will. In this will, dated the day before her death, she appears uncertain which of her sons was to have Strawberry.

Elias Ball’s character may best be given in the words of his son John. “My father and Uncle John C. Ball were *honest*, peaceable, domestic men. Their ambition was to live happy and contented in private life. They resided chiefly on



their plantations, Kensington and Hyde Park, that they might be near each other, as there ever subsisted the utmost harmony and brotherly affection between them. They were very easy, indulgent masters, which united to their not being of an enterprising disposition, prevented that accumulation of property which was so favorable in their younger days; especially in taking up grants of valuable lands, vast bodies of fertile swamps were then vacant. They, each of them, however, had the happiness to leave a pretty beginning for their children."

There are three portraits of the Second Elias, taken in early or middle life. They show us a pleasant-faced man, not strictly handsome, but unmistakably the gentleman.

NOTE.

#### CHILDBURY.

The town of Childbury was founded by "James Child, Yeoman," of Buckinghamshire, England, who, having in some way incurred the enmity of the notorious Judge Jeffries, and being fortunate enough to escape his clutches, fled to Carolina. He left his wife and a large family in England; only one son, Isaac Child, accompanied or followed him.

Mr. Child acquired property around what is now Strawberry Ferry. Here he laid out a town on the English plan, and called it Childbury. It was laid off in lots, one of which was reserved for a church, and another for a school-house; the streets were

named; several houses seem to have been built; and semi-annual Fairs, incorporated by Act of Assembly, were duly held.

But conditions were not favorable to the growth of small inland towns so near the capital of the Province, and after the death of Mr. Isaac Child, the town gradually passed out of existence, and the unsold lots were incorporated by the heir, William Child, with Strawberry Plantation.

## VI.

### THE TWO JOHN COMINGS.

(JOHN COMING BALL OF HYDE PARK.)

(JOHN COMING BALL OF BACK RIVER.)

#### JOHN COMING OF HYDE PARK.

Our acquaintance with John Coming Ball is not nearly so intimate as with his brother Elias; since we have no letters or memoranda through which he might become to us a real and living personage instead of a mere name. This absence of material is probably due to the fact that the original house at Hyde Park was destroyed by fire; and many valuable relics of past days doubtless then perished.

Of the First Elias Ball's two sons, John Coming seems to have been the favorite. His name occurs frequently in the memorandum-book in connection with "schooling" and dancing, and is frequently associated with that of his eldest half-sister, Sarah. He was only six at the time of his mother's death, and probably accommodated himself to the ways of the young step-mother more readily than the elder ones were able to do. And, as we have seen,

the personal bequests to him in his father's will far exceeded those to his brother. In spite of the five years' difference in age, however, the strongest affection and friendship existed between them; and if their father *did* make any difference in his treatment of them, it does not seem to have influenced in the least their feelings towards each other.

"Johnny" was duly sent to school after his mother's death; and we know that he had at least one full year's schooling—for it was paid for. Johnny also went to Mr. Newbery to "learn arithmetick," but whether from natural aptitude or inaptitude, does not appear. As he grew older, the notices of him are limited to occasional purchases of hogs "from Johnny," showing that Johnny began early to strike out for himself in some directions. It is probable that the sons assisted their father in his various branches of business as soon as they were old enough to do so.

In course of time, John Coming bought a tract of land on the Eastern Branch, from Mr. Gough, and built and settled there, calling the plantation, "Hyde Park." I have not the date of this purchase, but suppose it was somewhere about the time of his father's removal to Charlestown—1740. This original house at Hyde Park did not occupy the site of the present one. It stood on the hill near the family cemetery, and is said to have been a comfortable square house, resembling that now standing at Kensington. I have not been able to ascertain the time at which it was burnt down, but it may have been shortly after the Revolutionary

War. It was subsequent to Mrs. Judith Ball's death, for she died at Hyde Park; and the present house was not built until long after. The fire is said to have originated from a lighted candle which had been left in a closet.

In 1742 he married Catherine Gendron—daughter of John Gendron and his wife Elizabeth Mazyck,—Huguenots of the Santee settlement. There were six children by this marriage, two of whom died in early childhood and in the same year.

Mrs. Catherine Ball died in the latter part of September, 1755, the eldest of her four children being under thirteen, and the youngest only two. In ten months' time her place was filled by another Huguenot bride,—Judith Boisseau.

By this marriage there were five children, two of whom, also, died in childhood.

John Coming Ball himself died in October, 1764, and was buried in the family cemetery at Hyde Park, where the bodies of his first wife and of four of his children had already preceded him.

Well might his nephew say of the two brothers that "they each of them had the happiness to leave a pretty beginning for their children." John Coming died possessed of nearly 9000 acres of land, including at least two settled plantations; and, as sawing lumber and making tar were then important industries, even the large body of uncleared pine forest was by no means unproductive. Some of this land had been left him by his father, and some had been purchased by himself. A considerable part

of his land was in the vicinity of Wambaw Swamp, near the Santee river. Part of this he owned jointly with his brother-in-law, Henry Laurens, and another part he mentions as having been bought from Col. Gendron.

He left the plantation on Wambaw to his eldest son, Elias, who was already living there. Hyde Park was also bequeathed to Elias, with the proviso that the widow and the other children should have a home there and the use of the plantation during her lifetime. The will is long and very explicit, providing for every possible contingency except the one that actually arose, viz., the birth of a posthumous child. Six children survived him; four of the first wife's, Elias, Elizabeth, Catherine, and Ann; and two of the second wife's, John Coming and Jane. Five months after his death, another daughter, Eleanor, was born.

The Santee lands were all left to the first wife's children, with directions that the slaves that fell to her daughter's share should be kept at work on their lands there; whence I surmise that some, at least, of this property must have been acquired by his first marriage. The slaves belonging to his second wife and her children were to be kept at work on the lands near Cooper River.

Mrs. Judith Ball died at Hyde Park, in 1772, eight years after her husband. By this time her stepchildren were all married; Elizabeth and Elias having married shortly after their father's death, and Ann in 1771. She was buried by her husband in the cemetery at Hyde Park. A single stone





STRAWBERRY CHAPEL

Ball Cemetery at left of picture (corner of Cemetery)





marks the resting place of them all, and bears the inscription:

"John Coming Ball died at Hyde Park, Oct. 20th, 1764, aged 50 years and 2 months.

Katherine Ball died at Hyde Park Sept. 23d, 1755, aged 32 years.

Judith Ball died at Hyde Park Aug. 2d, 1772, aged 41 years.

Also to several children and grandchildren. This stone is erected to their memory in 1821 by Isaac Ball, Grandson of John Coming and Judith Ball."

Mrs. Judith Ball seems to have lived on harmonious terms with her step-children. She made her step-son Elias, executor of her will and guardian of her children, conjointly with her nephew-in-law, Elias Ball; and her girls seem to have found happy homes with their step-sisters.

Of John Coming's children, ELIAS and JOHN COMING will have separate mention.

ELIZABETH married Mr. Henry Smith of Goosecreek, son of Landgrave Thomas Smith, and left a numerous family.

CATHERINE married Benjamin Smith, another of the Landgrave's family, and died before a year was out.

ANN married Mr. Richard Waring of Tranquil Hill, near Dorchester, where, as wife and widow, she lived a long and honored life. She had no children.

JANE became the wife of her cousin, John Ball of Kensington.

ELEANOR'S first husband was Mr. John Wilson, a merchant of Charlestown, who lies buried in the cemetery at Hyde Park; and her second husband was Mr. Keating Simons. She died on her birthday, in 1827, of consumption, and was buried at Lewisfield Plantation. She had no children.

Family tradition says that "Miss Nelly" (her pet name) was "a beauty and an heiress." Of her beauty we have abundant proof in the very fine portrait by Morse, painted only a few years before her death. Though an old lady, she is a very handsome one, with clear-cut, regular features, which testify to the firmness and attractiveness of character for which her step-children and grandchildren admired her. The heiress-ship seems more doubtful. As we have seen, she had no part in her father's will; and I have found no letters or papers which point to the relinquishment of any part of the property to her by the heirs. Her mother left her 6000 currency, and a yearly income of 100 until her brother John Coming should come of age; but we gather from family letters that this legacy was not paid. There were other special legacies to her; of three negroes, and of silver, furniture, etc. She was also to share equally with John Coming and Jane the rest of their mother's personal property.



MRS. KEATING SIMONS, nee ELEANOR BALL  
Born March 20th, 1765      Died March 20th, 1827



## JOHN COMING BALL OF BACK RIVER.

### "POOR JOHN COMING."

The second John Coming Ball was the youngest son of John Coming Ball. His mother was the second wife, Judith Boisseau. He was only six years old when his father died, and fourteen, at the time of his mother's death. We know very little of him, there is only an occasional mention of him in the letters of his uncle and cousins, and a reference or two to him by his half-brother. He was about two years older than his cousin, John Ball of Kensington, and doubtless they were much together in their boyhood. It is not mentioned with whom he lived after his mother's death; but he seems to have been sent to school, and was at one time in Charleston. "John Langstaff" was his nick-name with the family at Kensington; sometimes in full, at other times "Langstaff," or "Cousin Staff;" occasionally, he was known by the more dignified proper name "John Coming."

We cannot help thinking, from the way in which he is mentioned by every one, that his words were stronger than his acts, and that there was something incomplete and inefficient about him. This may have been due to the want of wise guidance and methodical training in his youth. The two Eliases, his half-brother and cousin, had been appointed by Mrs. Judith Ball as guardians to her children; but the cousin must have declined to act,

as he nowhere refers to such a responsibility, and he was a man to have shouldered it bravely if he had assumed it. The boy seems to have drifted around aimlessly; sometimes stopping in at Kensington and bringing his gun from Bossis, where some of his Harleston relatives lived; sometimes going on to his elder brother at Wambaw; or to St. Stephen's to school, where some young man had promised to help him find board. He was in Charlestown too, for a part of his time; his uncle asks John if he knows what business he is in, and a little later on, what uniform he wears and in what troop he rides; but unfortunately, I have not John's answer. He has the reputation of having been a Tory, chiefly founded, I believe, on Gen. Marion's having captured a fine horse in a skirmish from a John Coming Ball, which horse he rode for some time, and called *Ball*. It is possible that there may have been some mistake in the name, and the horse may have been Wambaw Elias's; but poor John Coming gets the credit or discredit of it.

He remained in America, however, and seems to have drifted on somehow through life. His half-brother and guardian invested in land for him; and he appears also to have bought land for himself, as his brother regrets his having done so, since it prevented his own buying Fishpond. It is his brother who calls him in one of his letters, "Poor John Coming." He owned a plantation on Back-River, in Goosecreek Parish.

John never married; and does not appear again in any letters. Tradition reports that his health



was bad, and that he went northward for a change. He died on Long Island, N. Y., in October, 1792, and was buried in Greenwood Cemetery, where a stone was erected to his memory. He left his property to the children of his two sisters, Mrs. Jane Ball and Mrs. Eleanor Wilson, and appointed his brother-in-law, John Ball, one of his executors. The will was drawn in August, 1792. John Ball was the only executor who qualified; and he managed the estate for eighteen years, until after the youngest heir had been of age for some time. When the estate was divided in 1810, the whole was vested in John and Isaac Ball, the only surviving children of Mrs. Jane Ball. How well it was administered is proved by the following memorandum:

“J. Ball gave up the Estate of John C. Ball to the heirs the 7th May 1810—Having added a plantation that cost 2500 l.—paid off Debts to about 6000 l. & deliver'd up 138 Negroes—being 50 negroes more than was appraised—run out for Estate abt. 130 Acres near Jericho—and paid the heirs in cash and Notes \$7828.79.”

## VII.

### ELIAS OF WAMBAW.

#### "WAMBAW ELIAS."

John Coming Ball, as we have seen, left two sons, one by each marriage. The elder of these, Elias, was born at Hyde Park in 1744, and was consequently about twenty at the time of his father's death. To him were left Hyde Park, and the plantation on the Santee River, whither, as we learn from one of his letters, he had already gone to reside. He sold Hyde Park to his uncle Elias; but his step-mother, according to the terms of his father's will, continued to reside there until her death.

Of his earlier years we have no record, but after his father's death we begin to hear of him. In May, 1765, he married Catherine Gaillard, a lady of Huguenot descent. His step-mother, Mrs. Judith Ball, appointed him, conjointly with his cousin Elias Ball, executor of her will and guardian of her three children. When the War of Independence began, he sided with the British; and while we do not know exactly what part he played, various circumstances would seem to suggest that he was sufficiently active to render himself dis-

agreeably unpopular. His property was confiscated by the Jacksonboro' Assembly, and, but for the prompt action of his cousin Elias, between whom and himself there existed a strong friendship, he would probably have been left penniless. Elias stepped in and purchased his slaves at a high price, probably before the Act of Confiscation was passed. At the close of the war, he moved with his entire family to England, and settled at Frenchay, near Bristol. I have in some way got the impression that he did not sail direct from Charleston, but retired first to Florida, and sailed thence.

For some years he kept up a correspondence with the younger Elias, the dominant topic in his letters always being the money due him for his negroes. It is true the letters express friendship and esteem, and perfect confidence in his cousin's integrity, but the omnipresent reminder of the pounds, shillings, and pence, owing, must have been galling to a young man who, under great difficulties, was straining every nerve to meet a debt incurred through a chivalrous friendship. Occasionally, the writer provoked a remonstrance, as when he made an unreasonable proposition as to the fixed price at which the other's rice should be taken in payment, or when he wished to charge interest on the bond for negroes who had been bought at an exorbitant price; and *this*, after five years of unpropitious seasons and lost crops, of every particular of which he had kept himself informed. Galling, too, must have been his supercilious tone, his open sneers at the country and friends of his

correspondent, and his rather dictatorial manner which must have made even good advice distasteful. But, on the other hand, we catch glimpses of a different side of his character; in his inquiries after his former servants, "old Tom" in particular; in his messages to them and his pleasant acknowledgments of "ground-nuts" and other things sent to their young mistresses; and in his solicitous anxiety that bundles of clothes sent should reach them safely.

There can be no better proof of friendship than the way in which the American Elias, strong of will and prompt and resolute of action, passed over or condoned in his exiled relative what no other man would have been permitted to say or do. Doubtless he made allowances for the bitterness engendered by defeat. Far different was it with our ancestor, John, who had married the "Tory Ball's" half-sister, Jane, in the very middle of the Revolution. Some question of property had arisen, and in reply, the Tory's peculiar way of expressing himself fell upon his quick-tempered cousin like a spark upon tinder. The correspondence does not seem to have been a long one; I have but two of the letters, and, as no extracts can do them justice, I give them entire.

The first is from Wambaw Elias to John Ball.

No. 10 North St., Bristol, Aug. 27th, 1786.

Dr. Sir:

I received your favour of the 8th July yesterday, forwarded to me by my kinsman J. Moultrie;

in answer to the First part thereof acquaint you that I never had the Hundred Acres of Land left by my father to his daughter Jane laid off, the rest of the land being left to me I thought it best to be left until my sister came of age, and then it might be done without leaving room for censure, my Father in his Will empowered either one of his Executors to do it, and I certainly might have had it platted off, and I should have done it if it were not for the above reason, but the Will so particularly points out the spot that I don't see how you could possibly be at a loss to fix it. He mentions the Great pond, a piece of Oak and Hickory land he once cleared and planted; that land is so well known by all the neighbors, the Guericas and other people, that it cannot admit of a dispute. Your fellow Peter, old Tom, Frank, and many other of your negroes knows the spot. It was the best piece of Highland on the whole tract, when my Father cleared it he planted it two years, the first in Indigo, the next in Corn, and both was remarkable fine crops. I planted it one year when I first went to live at Santee in my Father's lifetime, but he giving it away in his Will, never planted it after. I once went with my brother to the spot to show it him, and told him it was his sister Jane's land, and proposed his planting corn on it for the use of Jericho plantation.

In regard to the other part of your letter regarding my sister Nelly's affairs, must acquaint you agreeable to the information you have given me that she has not been done justice by agreeable

to her mother's Will. How any person can mistake the plain express words of the Will, I can't conceive; does not the words of the Will expressly say that Nelly is to First have six thousand pounds out of the estate, and then the Rest to be divided equally between her three children, share and share alike? Instead of that, you and her brother John has taken it upon you to give her four, and then shared the residue. How people can mistake Six for Four I cannot account for any other way than their being blinded by Interest. I will for argument's sake suppose the whole estate to be worth but six thousand pounds at the time the Will authorized a division, must she not then have had the whole?—but you and John C. would say, no, she ought to have but four, the other two thousand we must share. I must say, John, that you, from your first marrying my sister, showed an inclination to grasp at her Mother's estate; you was strenuous for having the estate divided when the Congress money was in circulation, when the six thousand pounds that she was to receive was not worth Six half-pence, to the utter ruin of that poor child who never knew the tender patronage of a Father, and to frustrate the good intention of a tender Mother, who endeavored to ward off from her helpless child poverty and want. Good God, my heart bleeds whenever I think of it, and now at last when Fate has stript me from her, to seize the estate and share it in the manner you have. I should not be worthy the great trust reposed in me by her Mother, nor should I deserve the name



of an Elder Brother were I to let so glaring injustice to her go unnoticed; had you not been quite so eager and consulted me on the matter, your conduct might have been less liable to censure, because under the express words of the Will no other Executor was authorized to qualify until I was either dead or had refused to take the administration on me; neither of these two cases having happened, consequently no person had a right to transact the business of that Estate but by a power from me, which might have been easily procured. But when Persons can lay the Will aside in one case they may in all, and its a wonder to me you had not shared the Estate without regarding the legacy left Nelly, and shared the negroes particularly given her with the rest, there is as much justice in the one as in the other; and I now, John, as a friend advise you to take the Will and pull off that Veil of Self Interest from your eyes, and read it with attention, and lay your hand on your heart and say if Nelly has had her share of her Mother's estate agreeable to the express words of the Will, and if not, do her immediate justice. Otherwise, if she marries a man of any spirit, you may be involved in a litigious Lawsuit; and if any thing ever carries me to Carolina it will be to assist that child to her right, which I may do under the treaty of peace. I now conclude this long letter with wishing you and yours all Earthly Felicity and Eternal in a Future State, and I would not have you think I am less your friend for writing so plainly to you on the above case, you ought to



consider what a capacity I stand in with regard to my Sister Nelly, whom I tenderly love and wish to serve, and would have done had not fate parted us and put it out of my power. Give my kind love to my Sister and tell her I lay it much to heart her neglect of her cast off Brother, and believe me to be

Your affect. Kinsman and Friend,

ELIAS BALL.

We must remark that while the war was in progress, it might not have been very easy for a lieutenant of cavalry in Horry's Brigade to consult, or even to communicate with, a pronounced Tory;—nor would it have been a very simple matter to conduct the affairs of an estate from so distant a point as England. And he seems ignorant of the fact that John and John Coming Ball had been legally appointed administrators, and were acting as such, apparently with the will annexed.

Let John Ball speak for himself, however.

Kensington, S. Carolina, 27th Dec. 1786.

Sir,

Your scurrilous letter of the 27th August came to hand a few days since—and in order to vindicate my character of the aspersions which you have so profusely bestowed—I will endeavor to convince you of your error. The enclosed paper contains the whole amount (by Appraisement) of such part of Mrs. Judith Ball's estate as John Coming Ball produced to the Appraisers. To convince you—

Miss Nelly—and the world that there was no fraud intended, I have, since the receival of your letter, offered Nelly to have the whole estate sold, pay her the six thousand pounds and divide the remainder. Now, Sir! I shall take the liberty of making some comments on your character as an Executor—in the first place I will leave it to the impartial World whether or not an Executor (“not to mention one who boasts the epithet of an elder Brother and of fidelity to his ward, and so much laments for justice sake that fate had strip’t him from her”) ought to give in to the heirs when of age a clear state of his proceedings with an estate committed to his care for upwards of sixteen years.—What improvements or additions did you make to your sister Jane’s portion in this long space of time?—surely in the manner she was brought up, her income, though trifling, could not be expended in Board &c.—No purchase of negroes was ever made for her; on the contrary, there was one of hers sold, as I have been informed.—Pray was the expenses for Coming so much less than for Jane, as to enable you to purchase for him 1500 acres of land at 40/ per acre, without making the least purchase for the other.—But *by the bye* you have not made Titles to Coming for this land yet; which methinks an honest man might have done seven years ago, and before fate had strip’t this worthy elder Brother from the younger.

In your letter to Nelly you inform her that her legacy of 100 l. per annum was never paid,—that your legacy of 120 l. was likewise never paid, and

that you make it a present to her. Liberal Sir! can't you make a present to your sister out of your own purse, for be assured I will never pay sixpence of your Legacy until you produce a clear account of the monies you received for that Estate, as I have reason to believe that you have embezzled more than the amount of your Legacy. To my certain knowledge, Wershing the Butcher paid you many guineas in the year 1781 for cattle belonging to that Estate.—From Nelly's annual legacy having never been paid, and from the very few receipts which appear on your and the other bonds given to Nelly by the heirs of my Uncle, it would appear (if we were not too well acquainted with your liberality) that you entirely maintained her from the decease of her mother until fate had strip't you from her—poor unfortunate Nelly, what must you sustain from the loss of this bountiful elder Brother and most faithful Guardian.

Good God! is it possible that thirty odd negroes could not pay their own expenses and these trifling legacies in the course of seven or eight years—Surely the best that can possibly be said for you as an Executor will be to compare you to a parable of the servant in the Gospel who had one talent committed to his care, which he hid in the earth and delivered again to his Lord on his return, without improvement.

I must now point at those parts of your letter which are repugnant to truth; you say “that from your first marrying my Sister showed an Inclination to grasp at her Mother's Estate.” I deny it,

Sir! I only wished for my wife's portion of that Estate which was my due on the day of Marriage, and might have been divided then (as it has been since) without Nelly's losing anything by depreciated paper.—But you were pleased to keep me from it as long as you could.—In your letter you affirm that it was “The express words of the Will that no other Executor was authorized to qualify until I was dead or had refused to take the administration on me,”—what a glaring falsehood is this—and how clandestinely did you act on the occasion—for you must certainly know (if ever you read the will) that my brother was left in equal power with you, both as Executor and Guardian—you recorded the will and qualified thereon without ever informing him that he was mentioned.—You further add that “No person had a right to transact the business of that Estate but by a power from me.”—This point you may dispute with Mr. Lining, Ordinary for Charleston District, who granted Letters of Administration.

Towards the conclusion of your letter you seem to threaten to return to this country to have justice done to Nelly, now as matters remain just as they were before you wrote, I hope you will come over “to assist that poor child to her right,” and answer to the charges herein alleged against you.—You may rest assured that you may come with all safety under the treaty of Peace, more especially under the Administration of the present Governor (Major Pinckney) whose conduct hitherto has been such against Mobs and riots as I believe will effectually

prevent there being any while he continues Chief Magistrate.

After writing the most scurrilous letter that you could well pen, you conclude yourself my Friend, this I doubt as much as any other part of your letter, and will leave you to judge from what I have wrote whether I still remain your Friend or am now become your Enemy.

Yrs. &c.

JNO. BALL.

After this reply, the family relations, for a time at least, could hardly have been cordial; though the correspondence with Elias of Limerick was still kept up.

Time heals even domestic wounds, however, and amicable relations were resumed between the English and American Balls. William James Ball, son of the writer of this fiery epistle, stopped at Bristol, on landing in England in 1805, inquired for his uncle and paid him a visit at Frenchay. Elias of Wambaw's two sons-in-law, Moultrie and Slater, were on very friendly terms with John Ball's second son, Isaac, who, for his part, looked after Moultrie's property on the Pee-Dee. Mrs. Moultrie also kept up a friendly correspondence with him, recommended her son to his care during a contemplated visit to South Carolina, and gave him a handsome watch-seal engraved with the family coat-of-arms. This seal is now in the possession of his great-grandson, John Ball.

Elias of Wambaw's eldest daughter, Catherine, married her kinsman John Moultrie, the grandson of Mrs. Ann Austin, and heir to Mr. Austin's estate of Aston Hall. Besides Mrs. Moultrie, he had six children, all but one of whom were born in America. Two of these were sons, and both died in early childhood. The next daughter was named Lydia,—we wonder if it was in compliment to his uncle's wife, the mother of his stanch friend. She must have thought well of him, as she made him one of her executors. The correspondence with Elias was kept up certainly until 1795,—and I do not know whether it ceased when the debt was paid. He now drops out of sight until the record of his death in 1822, at the age of seventy-eight.

Wambaw Elias does not leave a pleasant impression on our minds. We cannot help picturing him as a man over-bearing, selfish, arrogant, lavish of sneers and criticism, and not over-considerate of other people's feelings. Yet we are sensible that there is another side to the character,—one that reveals itself occasionally—in the constant thought of the faithful old servants in a sort of vague unexpressed yearning after the old familiar places, in the injured feeling of the "cast-off brother" whose sister does not notice him—and we feel that perhaps much of the bitterness comes from the heart of a defeated, disappointed, exiled man who at the age of forty is set to begin life anew, in a strange land.



PAPER ENCLOSED IN JOHN BALL'S LETTER.

NOTE.—Mrs. Ball's Will after some small legacies leaves her Daughter Eleanor 6000, and the rest of the Estate to be equally divided.—Query, what is Miss Nelly's share of the estate.

Appraisement amounting to 2085..12 Sterling.

	7	
Whole estate .....	14599.4	Currency.
Nelly's legacy .....	6000	
To be divided between	3 8599.4	Surplus.
the Three Heirs.....	2866.8	Each share.
Miss Nelly's full	6000	
	8866.8	Share of the Estate.
To Amount of Miss Nelly's lot of Negroes.....	677	Sterling.
	7	
To Amount Ditto's lot		
Cattle ....	4739	Currency.
Reduced to Currency....	127.8	
To J. C. Ball and J. Ball's Bond for 2000 Currency Each .....	4000	
Miss Nelly's share by Division .....	8866.8	





LIMERICK HOUSE IN 1900  
(Taken from the back)



## VIII.

### ELIAS OF LIMERICK.

"OLD MAS' LIAS."

The eldest son of the second Elias Ball was called Elias, and was born at Kensington April 10th, 1752.

We do not hear much of him for the first twenty years of his life, except the little glimpse of him, going in Mr. Bonneau's canoe, with his brother and half-sister, to be inoculated for the small-pox. At the age of twenty, we find him and his brother Isaac, two years his junior, assisting their father in the management of his planting interests. Isaac seems to have had special charge of Limerick—which was intended as his patrimony—and to have had at least a great deal to do with the control of the home place, Kensington. Elias managed Comingtee and Strawberry, both of which were to be his after his father's death.

Elias seems early to have realized the responsibilities of life; and there is a certain tone of gravity, almost sadness, about his letters, which seems strange in so young a man. His letters to John are full of elder-brotherly advice, given with an air of authority. Indeed, his firmness and decision of

character *show* through them quite plainly. These traits, coupled with reliability and judgment, must have manifested themselves early in life, as Mrs. Judith Ball, in her will, made him joint executor and guardian, giving him equal powers with her own stepson. He was then barely twenty years old. Strength seems to have been linked with kindness, in him; for he writes with expressions of anxiety amounting to a personal feeling of solicitude about the ill negroes at Comingtee, where he remained for some time to look after them. He was much at Middleburgh during the illness of Mr. Ben. Simons, his half-sister's husband; and at one time, when he was most ill, was there day and night, for a week. He *seems* to have been on terms of great intimacy with the Simonses, as, indeed, was but natural, as both his sister and half-sister had married into the family. Keating Simons, the one nearest him in age, appears to have been his special friend.

He went to the North in 1770—why, it is not said—but it was doubtless on account of his health, as he seems to have suffered frequently from fever.

All through Elias's letters to John, in 1774 and 1775, he expresses himself as being very anxious about Isaac's state of health; indeed, he, more than any one else, seems to have realized its serious condition. In the summer of 1775, both Isaac and himself joined Capt. Job Marion's Company of infantry; and Elias was elected first lieutenant, "against my will," as he informs John; adding that he would be glad to get out of it if he could do so with honor.

In the same year, evidently (the date of the letter is torn off), he was duly elected, in conjunction with Gabriel and Job Marion, Maurice Simons, James Ravenel and William Moultrie, Jr., to serve in the House of Assembly. He was then but twenty-three.

Accordingly, we find him in Charlestown in September, 1775. His lodgings being uncomfortable, he went to stay with the Jamisons; Mrs. Jamison had been a Miss Simons. When they moved into the country in November, he offered them his father's assistance, and wrote to Isaac to send carts, etc., to help in moving their goods from the boat. In the same letter he asks Isaac to ride to Comingtee now and then with John, and look after affairs there; and in his next, he thanks him for having done so, and gives some further directions. But Isaac could not long have attended to his brother's business, as he died early in 1776. We do not know if the end was sudden, or if Elias was able to be with him at the last.

The "House" continued to sit for a long time, and there are several letters from Elias during the next two years, in which he speaks of being kept there by business, though his presence was evidently needed at home. In the beginning of 1777 there was some difficulty in ousting a man named Harvey from Strawberry. He had been duly notified to leave at the end of the last year; but the new year had come in and Harvey still remained. Perhaps he thought that when the young master's back was turned, he could do as he pleased, having only an

old man and a boy to deal with; but he reckoned without his host. Elias wrote promptly up to John, expressing his surprise at Harvey's conduct, and requesting him to ask his father to go there (and to go himself with him) and tell Harvey to leave at once. If he refused, his father was to "summon the carpenters and have enough of the shingles stripped off to compel them to move out;" but if he asked for two or three days' grace, he could let him have it. Heroic measures, these, but they accord with the family tradition that no one could "trifle with Mas' Lias." Nearly all of his letters contain news of the war to the northwards.

When the British troops and fleet appeared before Charlston in 1780, the Assembly broke up, delegating its authority to Gov. John Rutledge and his council, until ten days after the next meeting. What now became of Elias Ball, I cannot say, as there is no mention of him (in any letters that I have seen) until the close of the war. But doubtless he had his share of marching and fighting.

It must have been a source of mortification and distress when his cousin and intimate friend, Elias of Wambaw, took sides with the British; but the friendship he felt for him must have been peculiarly strong, since it endured the tests of political disagreement, bitterness of speech and absence. When the new House of Assembly met in 1781 at the little village of Jacksonboro' on the Edisto it passed laws (in February, 1782), banishing the active Tories and confiscating their estates. Elias prob-



ably foresaw and forestalled their action, and purchased his cousin's slaves at a high price.

When peace was declared, he went home and took up the arduous task of restoring his neglected plantations and bringing the demoralized slaves into order. That the difficulties he had to encounter were not small, appears from a letter to Elias of Wambaw in which he refers to "The great expense of bringing those people (from Wambaw) and the heavy duty of 31. per head, and expenses with settling my plantations almost anew, and plagued almost out of my life with the negroes not knowing how to work or an unwillingness in them and running away." \* \* \* This was the time that his cousin chose to charge interest on the bonds for a debt, voluntarily assumed out of simple friendship. At one time he was so discouraged as to entertain the idea of selling Comingtee. The seasons, too, were unpropitious, and the water supply at Comingtee was unsatisfactory. To obviate the latter difficulty, he proposed to his relatives, the two young Harlestons who had recently bought Fishpond, to mend the broken bank which had damned the creek between the plantations, forming a reservoir sufficient for both. I do not know what terms he offered; the papers relating to this bank are lost, and our information is derived only from the letters which passed between the two Eliases. As the Harlestons were slow in coming to terms, Elias Ball very characteristically set about making reserves of his own, banking in the low lands near the creek, and securing the "leads" which passed through



Comingtee. It was a great undertaking, and involved a vast amount of labor; but he accomplished it, and thus rendered himself practically independent of the Harlestons. Later, they agreed to his terms, and the bank was made up. Then, owing to a dry season, the reservoir remained empty until near the end of July, when the rains set in. We know already what became of the dam, and how Elias absolutely refused to have anything more to do with it.

From a letter of Wambaw Elias's, we learn that Elias of Limerick was not on speaking terms with his cousin, the gallant Major Isaac Harleston. There is no clue to the cause of this quarrel, unless on the principle that

“Lands intersected by a narrow frith  
Abhor each other,”

and Major Harleston owned The Bluff, opposite Strawberry Ferry. Consequently, one of the Ferry “slips” was situated on his plantation.

At some period, either just before, or more probably after, his father's death, Elias took up his abode at Limerick, which was henceforward his home. He was the first—and for some time the only—Old Bachelor in the Ball family. We know absolutely nothing of his love affairs; in fact, we only surmise that he had one experience of Cupid's dart, from an expression in one of his letters to Elias of Wambaw, in which he says that he hopes to be married soon. But neither tradition nor let-

ters give us any hint as to the name of the lady. Truly, he could not only speak to the purpose, but be silent when need arose. And as for the lady—whoever she was—she surely made here one of the great mistakes of her life.

Comingtee affairs being settled, Strawberry began to give trouble. In October, 1791, his neighbor at Rice Hope, Dr. William Read, entered suit against him for some lots in the former town of Childbury; lot No. 36, and the fourth part of the other lots in the town. These, by the will of William Child, had been incorporated with Strawberry Plantation, which he left to his sister Lydia. Elias wrote to his brother John, desiring him to look into the matter, as he himself was on the eve of leaving for the Pee-Dee—with what object we do not know, but it may have been connected with the property afterwards owned by Moultrie. "I wish you to call on Dr. Read," he writes, "and have a serious talk with him on the matter for which he has entered an action against me, for which purpose I have enclosed the Deed I had shown you, and the right." The sight of these papers seems to have satisfied Dr. Read, as the following is endorsed on the writ.

"The suit commenced by virtue of this writ is hereby postponed until farther inquiry can be made in the business by the plaintiff.

William Read,

December 18th, 1791."

And we hear no more about it.

The next annoyance at Strawberry was on account of the Ferry. The Commissioners of Roads, in the summer of 1801, refused to have anything more to do with the slips at the Ferry, which for many years they had kept in repair. Strawberry Ferry was established by Act of Assembly in 1705; it then belonged to Mr. James Child. An additional Act was passed in 1748, vesting all rights in his granddaughter, Lydia Ball, for the term of *seven* years, and stipulating that she should keep the slips, as well as the ferry flat or boat, in proper order. But for many years after this the Commissioners had kept the slips in order, and had made no objection to doing so; wherefore Elias Ball claimed that they were under obligation to continue the practice. His brother-in-law, John Bryan, writes that he had had a talk on the subject with Mr. Pringle (Hon. J. J. Pringle) and records it as *his* opinion: that "from the great length of time that the Commissioners have made and kept the slips in repair, you have a very good right to claim the privilege." Also, that if any of the Commissioners go to him (Mr. P.) for an opinion, "he will give it as his that you have a right to claim the rights of privilege, as it will appear from the different Receipts and the Commissioners' books." I am not certain how this controversy was settled, but I think the Commissioners carried the day.

While on the subject of the Ferry, I cannot forbear referring to the old cypress board on which the rates of ferriage were painted and the inscription on which is now nearly illegible. It is mor-

tised into a tree on the Strawberry side, and is partly overgrown by it. Indeed, the tree had overgrown it in this way *seventy-five years ago*,—from which we conclude that the sign board has been there for several generations.

There was one more worry about Strawberry—that we know of: While Elias Ball was away on a tour to the North in 1806, one of the Childbury lots, owned by Dr. Bolton, was offered for sale, and Elias writes to his nephew, John Ball Jr., to buy it for him, as he does not want either Dr. Read or Dr. Fayssoux to get possession of it.

This tour, which was apparently for his health, was undertaken in the summer of 1806, in company with his nephew Isaac Ball. Judging from the elder man's letters, they had a most enjoyable time. He was not going over the ground for the first time, and he seemed to find great pleasure in reviving old memories, and in noting the changes that had taken place in the interval. They went by packet to Philadelphia, and travelled through the country by coach, visiting the villages of Bethlehem and Nazareth. Thence they went to New York; then to Albany; and extended the tour into Canada. They returned by way of Boston and Newport to Philadelphia. The last city does not seem to have met with much favor in the eyes of the elder traveller; he finds it hot, and the lodgings not very comfortable. From New York he writes: "The only thing that looks like when I was here in the year 1770, is the ferry from the Hook to town; it is conducted just in the same way it was

then, but every thing else appears as strange as though I had never seen it; it is, to be sure, a great city, and a prodigious trade carried on. Philadelphia in several parts of it appeared as familiar to me as if I had been there but a few years, and I found it so at Bethlehem." \* \* \* Of Boston he says: "I like this city better than New York or Philadelphia." He met there several friends from Charleston, which doubtless added to his pleasant impressions of the place. He goes on to say: "We intend leaving it in a few days for Providence, from thence to Newport, where I expect to meet with a great many Carolina folks, and try whether Old Townsend's lobster is unwholesome for supper. From thence we shall be jogging on Southerly, and try to pick up some good horses; but this I have my doubts of. I find the very great run of stages through these States destroy a great number of Horses, which makes them scarce and dear. I ordered a Jersey wagon made in the city of Philadelphia, with harness for four Horses, and hope to set off from that place the 15th or 20th of October, and arrive about that time at Limerick in November." He does not say whether "Nat (his servant) and the baggage" travelled home with them, or were sent home by the packet. His health does not seem to have been very good at this time; and his medical-student nephew—after the manner of medical students—hints that his "Game leg" may have been due to too high living.

These letters were addressed to his nephew, John Ball Jr., who was at this time living at Comingtee,

where he had been settled by his uncle on his marriage.

“Mas’ Lias always maintained the pleasantest and most cordial relations with his three nephews, John, William James, and Isaac,—corresponding regularly with them when absent, and giving besides such substantial proofs of affection as that mentioned above. He died at Limerick, Jan. 2nd, 1810; but according to his request, the funeral service was read in the passage-way at Comingtee. He was interred in the cemetery at Strawberry Chapel.

He willed his property to his brother, John Ball, and his two nephews, John and Isaac,—William James being dead. To his brother, he left his three plantations on the western side of the Western Branch,—Pimlico, Kecklico, and Mepshew (now I believe, all comprised under the name of Pimlico); with all the slaves employed upon them, and the cattle, horses, sheep, hogs, stock of every kind, plantation implements, vehicles, flats, boats, etc., belonging to the place. To John Ball Jr., he leaves “my plantations on the T. of Cooper River called Comingtee and Stoke, also my plantation called Strawberry Ferry, and all my right, title, and interest in and to the Ferry, also the vacant lots of land annexed thereto;”—five tracts of pineland; and the slaves attached to the plantations, with the stock, vehicles, implements, etc. To Isaac Ball, he gives Limerick Plantation, and a plantation or tract of land called The Cypress; all the negroes, and the stock, etc., on them; also his Household goods of every description,—furniture, bedding,



household linen, books, carriages, etc., and all the ready money in the house “(except a deposit by a free Negro Man named Nat Weaver, who I have employed as a Driver and Miller);” also his schooner, the Strawberry, and the hands employed on board of her. Then follow some special legacies;—two families of negroes, and the pew in St. Philip’s Church, to John Ball Jr.; a life-estate in his house and lot on East Bay St. to his sister Lydia Bryan, reverting to her daughter Elizabeth Ball, wife of John Ball Jr.; two other lots in the city to his nieces Caroline and Angeline Ball; a tract of land on Watboo Creek, called Watboo Landing, to his ward William Morgan; and \$2,000 apiece to his two grand nephews, the Horts (grandchildren of his half-sister Catherine Simons).

This will was drawn in December, 1809, less than a month before his death. His brother and his two nephews were made residuary legatees. We cannot help thinking that by the gift of Limerick and all his personal belongings there, unreservedly, he recognized in Isaac the representative of the one whose name he bore.

Some months after his death, the executors carried out an expressed wish of his, by making a deed of gift to Biggin and Strawberry Churches in the Parish of St. John’s Berkeley, of “a plantation or tract of land” of 63 acres, to be held by the Vestry and Wardens in trust for the use of the Episcopal minister in that Parish. The heirs, however, reserved the right of fisheries and of digging marl etc.; and in case there should be no minister, or the



minister should not make use of the land then it should be "to and for the use, benefit, and behoof of those three and their heirs and assigns." The only portrait of him is a companion picture to his brother Isaac's, and was evidently taken about the same time,—by Theus, who painted the portraits of Red-Cap, the second Elias, and Ann Austin.

Elias Ball of Limerick was held in high esteem by his fellow-parishioners. They erected a mural tablet to his memory in Strawberry Chapel—a mark of consideration which, so far as I know, has been bestowed on no other layman of that parish. We give it entire.

ELIAS BALL ESQUIRE.

Endeared to his friends  
By his social qualities,  
Entitled to the gratitude  
Of  
His fellow parishioners  
By his constant, faithful  
And valuable exertions  
In their service  
And by  
His liberal benefactions  
To their Church  
Died  
At Limerick in this parish  
January 2nd A. D. 1810.  
Aged 57 years.

\* \* \* \* \*

The members of this Church  
In testimony  
Of the respect and affection  
With which they cherish  
His memory,  
Have caused this tablet  
To be erected.

\* \* \* \* \*

Strong-willed, kind-hearted, clear-headed, resolute, generous, affectionate, he was respected by all classes, black and white alike. On his plantation his word was law with all. He was a kind and just master to his slaves, personally attentive to them in illness, and always considerate of their welfare and comfort. And it is safe to say that they were strongly attached to him. During his last Northern tour, he wrote to beg that "Maurice Cooper and my people" might be notified of his safe arrival; and before starting on his homeward journey, hoped that either John or his father would purchase his negro cloth for him; but, as he did not wish it distributed until he should come himself, he asked his nephew to tell Maurice Cooper to have the clothes of the new negroes mended, and any others that might need it.

As an illustration of his undisputed sway, the following anecdote has been handed down in the family. There was to be a wedding one night in the house of the overseer on one of his plantations. The feast was ready, the company had assembled, the minister and the groom were on hand; but the

bride, at the last moment, turned recalcitrant, and refused to be married at all. What was to be done?—she would listen to neither coaxing, nor threats, nor arguments. Fortunately, the Court of Final Appeals, in the person of “Mas’ Lias,” happened to be on the plantation. A few minutes after, the master was interviewing a panting and breathless negro boy;—“Mas’ Lias, Miss Katy say she *wun’t* married!”—“Tell Miss Katy I say she *Must* married!” Back sped the messenger in hot haste,—and Miss Katy *was* married.

## IX.

### JOHN BALL OF KENSINGTON.

(JOHN BALL, SENIOR.)

JOHN BALL, known in the family as John Ball Senior, was born at Kensington, July 10th, 1760. We have already had pleasant glimpses of his boyish days, through the letters of his father and brother, and have seen how the active management of Elias Sr's extended planting interests devolved upon his shoulders at the age of sixteen. Nothing develops a boy into a man so rapidly as responsibility; and as John was already a manly and self-reliant boy, it is no wonder that he speedily assumed responsibilities of his own.

We find him in Philadelphia in August, 1777. It is not very clear why he went there; but I surmise, from a letter to his brother, that it was for a change of air. The letter is dated August 21st, 1777.

"Dear Brother,

I just a day or two returned from Reading, a pretty inland town in this state, 55 miles from this city. Taarling and myself travelled together up there, we are very uneasy here about the Fleet's go-



JOHN BALL

Born July 10th, 1760      Died October 29th, 1817



ing to Charlestown, or at least it's surmised so. If I hear certainly that they are there, I shall set off (with intent to return) as soon as possible. I never was so tired of a place as I am of Philadelphia, a Gentleman must spend a deal of money, and has but little satisfaction for it either (at least I have found it so). I wish with all my Heart I was at Kensington now. In short, I repent altogether coming here this year. I thank God I am well over the small-pox, and had them extremely favorable; so had Hammond (his servant) also. \* \* \* I am extremely well and hearty, and am not now of an opinion that I shall soon go into a Consumption.

Mr. Laurens hires two or three rooms in a House and keeps his own Table. I staid with him whilst I had the small-pox, but after I was well I thought it not proper to be living at his expense when I had money enough to support myself. I now lodge at Dr. Bond's House. The Doctr.'s family is in the country, and there is one Mrs. Davis that has the house \* \* \* the Dr. himself is a Lodger in his own house. I think it is now high time I should hear from you all, and most ardently wish to hear of you and all my friends being well.

Aug. 25th

The Fleet has gone to Maryland, it is thought they will land there and endeavour to march to Philadelphia or to Lancaster and destroy our stores that is there. General Washington at the Head of His Army march'd through this city yesterday, all in



great order, he and his army are gone towards the Enemy. I believe I shall set off the last day of this month or the first of next month, shall come in company with Major Deming, a Gentleman of Georgia who was Aid-de-Camp to Lord Sterling.

We shall travel but slow, but I shall be Home soon after this letter, if nothing happens extraordinary. I think it will be much better for me to be at home minding my Business than to be here spending money at so great a Rate without any satisfaction."

In the postscript he adds:

"I have not been any Farther to the norward than this place, I believe I shall go up to Trenton and Morristown and about there this week with our friend Col. Taarling, and as soon as I return here and rest a day or two, will set off for Home."

Two years after, at the age of nineteen, we find him a lieutenant of cavalry in Screven's company, Horry's Brigade. The cavalry in the days of '79 and '80 led a stirring life, their field of action extending over nearly the whole sea-board, and especially along the roads leading from Charleston. Consequently, the gallant young lieutenant had many opportunities of visiting his relatives in the neighboring parishes of St. James, Goosecreek, and St. George's, Dorchester. Mrs. Richard Waring, daughter of his uncle John Coming, lived in the latter parish, at a plantation called Tranquil Hill; and with her lived her half-sister Jane,—John's junior by less than two years. What wonder that

the young officer was captured by a force far more powerful than the British!

Notwithstanding the gloomy state of affairs in 1780, the young people were married. The wedding took place at Tranquil Hill; but I do not know whether the bride continued to reside there or not. John could not have been much at home, unless he were on parole, and not even a tradition *to that effect* has been handed down to inform us on this matter. With Charleston in the hands of the British, and the whole surrounding country laid open to their foraging parties, the only safe place for a patriot soldier was in some impenetrable swamp, whence parties could swoop down on the enemy as occasion offered. But after the evacuation of Charleston by the British in 1781, when the supremacy of the Americans was restored, John seems to have taken his wife back to Cooper River; for his father notes on a scrap of paper that two of John's children were born at "Pumpkin Hill." Pumpkin Hill, or Middleburgh, we remember, was the home of John's half-sister Catherine Simons. It was not very far from Hyde Park, across the river, and he may well have left his young wife under his sister's care when he was unavoidably absent.

The present house at Hyde Park was built by John Ball, but I believe at a later period, as it was intended as a place for a maroon of a few days or weeks, rather than as a residence. He must have been living at Kensington when it was built.

By the terms of her parents' wills, Jane was entitled to come into her property on her marriage;

but as we have seen, John complained that this provision was not properly carried out by the executor. There is a memorandum of planting done at Kensington by John Ball in the early part of 1780, but none after April. The memoranda begin again in 1781.

John and Jane Ball had five children:—John, Elias, Isaac, William James, and Edward; but Elias and Edward died in boyhood.

There is an exquisitely painted miniature, by an unknown artist, of Mrs. Jane Ball. It represents a delicate-looking lady, whose thin face is framed in a wealth of dark hair, which is surmounted by a marvellous cap. This miniature was put away in a drawer, and forgotten; and when it was found, years after, no one could tell whose it was. But it occurred to Mr. W. J. Ball that it might be recognized by old Hetty, an aged woman at Lime-  
rick, who had been a nurse in the family; so he showed it to her. As soon as she saw it, she exclaimed, "That's Kin's'ton missis!"—meaning it was the lady who had been the mistress at Kensington when she was a girl—Mrs. Jane Ball. Mrs. Jane Ball died of "long decline" in October, 1804, and the next July the widower married Martha Caroline Swinton. By this marriage there were (including two sets of twins) eleven children, seven of whom lived to maturity.

Of the latter part of John Ball Sr.'s life I know but little, except that he prospered in his business. He was a practical man, of good business parts; and judging from the variety and minuteness of



2nd MRS. JOHN BALL, nee MARTHA CAROLINE SWINTON  
Died September 14th, 1847



his accounts and memoranda, he must have given close attention to every detail, a habit which is by no means an unimportant factor in success. When he died, he owned the plantations of Kensington and Hyde Park, with large tracts of pineland; Pimlico, Kecklico and Mepshew, White Hall, Midway, Belle Isle plantation on the Santee River, St. James or the Saw-Mill tract, near Kensington; tracts of land at Three Mile Head, the Marshland Farm, a few miles above Charleston; a large brick house in the city, a lot of four or five acres near the New Bridge, and a share of a lot which had been left by Elias Ball to his daughter, Angeline. Each plantation was stocked with negroes, and he seems to have had a good number of cattle. He had also bonds, and—I think—stock, and a considerable amount of silver plate. He died in Charleston, October 29th, 1817, of bilious colic,—a malady to which he was subject; and was interred in the family cemetery at Strawberry.

He was a man of sincere piety,—beloved and esteemed by his own family, and respected by his neighbors. We cannot close this account of him better than in the words of his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Isaac Ball, one who knew him intimately, and was eminently qualified to judge.

“This loss is felt most largely, he has left a numerous family of small children to whom his domestic turn of mind rendered him a peculiar blessing; besides two sons who well know his value, a widow, and numerous relatives who mourn his loss, besides a number of domestics to whom he was a kind

and just master. But may we not truly say of him, 'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of him is peace.' He was indeed the upright and true Christian; charity and benevolence, combined with prudence, marked his character."

I know of but one portrait of John Ball Senior. It represents just such a man as one would suppose him to have been like—a stout, cheerful-looking gentleman, whose face shows frankness and benevolence, yet is not without a hint of quick temper.





JOHN BALL, JR.

Born September 12th, 1782      Died June 24th, 1834



**A List of Stages on the Road from  
New York to Charleston, as Trav-  
elled by John Ball, Jr., in Oct.  
and Nov., 1802, Mostly on the  
Main Post Road.**

	Miles from N. Y.
New Ark, A. Giffords, good house	9
Elizabethtown	6
Bridgetown	6
Woodbridge, tolerable house	
2nd X keys	4
New Brunswick, good, just over the bridge	10
Kingston, Vantillbury's good	15
Princeton, Gifford's	3
Trenton, Scott city tavern, so-so	12
PENNSYLVANIA.	
Bristol, Tombs, good	10
Frankford	15
Germantown, racefield house good	5
Philadelphia	4
Blue Bell Tavern, good	7
Chester, Anderson, good	8
DELAWARE.	
Practical Farmers' Tavern, so-so	7
Wilmington	6
Newport, Jesse Harris, good	3
Christiana Bridge, good	6
MARYLAND.	
Elkton, Richardson, good	12
Charlestown	10
Havre de Grace, tolerable house	6
Hartford or Buotown, tolerable	12
Well's Tavern, good for horses but hot man	8
Baltimore, Peck's not so good as it appears	16
Spurrier's Tavern, good	14
Boss' Tavern, good	18
Bladensburg	3
Washington, Stell's hotel not ex- traordinary	6
Georgetown	3
Alexandria, Gadby's city tavern excellent	8
Leicester	16
Dumfries, good house	9
Stafford Court House, pretty good	13
Fredericksburgh, several houses	12

Todd's, indifferent	10
Bowling Green, good	13
White Chimneys, good	15
Hanover Court House	10
Oaks, good	6
Richmond Eagle Tavern, indiffer- ent	16
O-borne's, good	15
Petersburgh, Armstead's indiffer- ent	10
Kirby's, good	13
King's, bad	7
John Harris, good	10
Gholson's, Wallis, good	20
Drummond's, good	8
Basses, bad	5

**NORTH CAROLINA.**

Mosley's Ferry, Roanoke, no house	7
Geo. Nicholson's, good	7
Warrenton, a very good house	8
Mrs. Walker's, very good	11
Booth's, said to be good	1
Louisburgh Hills, good	14
Price's	9
Rogers, good house	9
Rogers' Bridge	1
Releigh, P. Casso, not very good	11
Mark Myeth's, good	16
Hogens, tolerable	8
Atkin's, very indifferent	5
Sprolie's Ferry, Cape Fear River, no house	3
Payton's, very bad	13
Fayetteville, Col. Dekeiser's very good	11
Connelles, a good house, 1802	16
Lumberton, Martin's, very good	18
Rowland's	13

**SOUTH CAROLINA.**

Watson's, indifferent	11
Baetfield's Mills, Little Pee Dee, Fort	6
Squire Hodge's, indifferent	3
Rob Durham, good but an old Jacob's	8
Godboth, bad	16
Britton's Ferry, E.g. Pee Dee, in- different	7
Black Mingo, Mrs Robinson, very bad	16
Potato Ferry, Black River	12
Lamman's Ferry, Santee	14
Ingler's Bridge, Eastern Branch Cooper River	15



## X.

### JOHN BALL'S CHILDREN AND GRAND CHILDREN.

JOHN BALL, JR., the eldest child of John Ball, was born Sept. 12th, 1782, at Pumpkin Hill, according to his grandfather's memorandum. He received a good education, finishing with a course at Harvard or Yale. At one time he entertained the idea of studying for the ministry, which his uncle Elias does not seem to have approved. Possibly he thought his nephew not altogether suited to this vocation. His advice was, "Marry Betsey Bryan, and I will settle you at Comingtee." If John Ball had felt himself really called to the ministry, he was not the man to have given it up. He must have been merely thinking about it, for he took the advice about Betsey Bryan—doubtless not at all unwillingly—and was duly settled at Comingtee.

This marriage with his cousin Elizabeth Bryan—daughter of Lydia—took place in 1804. They had five children—Elias, Lydia Jane, Elizabeth Bryan, Eleanor Simons, and John Coming. It seems to have been a happy marriage, though their married life was a short one. She died of apoplexy in September, 1812, scarcely a fortnight after little John Coming's birth.

Not quite two years after her husband married Mrs. Ann Simons, widow of Thomas Simons, and daughter of the Keating Simons who had been his uncle Elias's friend, and who was now the husband of his aunt Eleanor—the Miss Nelly of our former acquaintance. By this marriage there were three children—Ann, Keating Simons, and Judith Boisseau. The last died at the age of three.

Under his father's will John Ball was left an executor and the guardian of his half brothers and sisters, the eldest of whom was but eleven, and the youngest a posthumous child, who, however, lived but a year. This onerous trust he fulfilled faithfully and well, managing the estate with great judgment, so that the heirs, as they came of age, possessed a considerable amount of property.

He was a man of exemplary character and of deep religious feeling. Upright, firm, and just, but also kind and generous, he was alike esteemed by his neighbors and beloved by his friends. He died of country fever, contracted at Comingtee, in June, 1834. His widow was gifted with administrative ability almost equal to his own. Against the advice of some of her friends, she kept the plantation, and with the assistance of competent overlookers, managed it with success. She also died of a like disease, in June, 1840.

ISAAC BALL, the second son, was born in 1785. As we saw, he came into possession of Limerick on his uncle's death. At that time he was living at Midway, an inland rice plantation a few miles from Limerick. A few months after his uncle's



ISAAC BALL

Born September 6th, 1785      Died December 2nd, 1825





death, in November, 1810, he married his cousin Eliza Catherine Poyas, a grand-daughter of John Coming Ball's daughter Elizabeth. They settled at Limerick, and lived a happy and useful life there for fifteen years.

For several years there were no children, and they adopted a little nephew of Mrs. Ball—James Poyas—whom they brought up as their own child. Nearly eight years after their marriage, a son was born, then a daughter, then three more children—William James, Jane and John. The two elder children died in the same year, 1824, aged six and four, respectively. And the crushing blow of the husband's and father's death followed in 1825.

The widow continued to reside at Limerick during the winter season, spending the summers in the city. The plantations had now become so sickly for the whites in the hot months, that the planters generally moved their families to the city during the summer, occasionally visiting the plantations themselves to look after their business. Thence came many cases of country fever, and the loss of valuable lives. Mrs. E. C. Ball lived to see these children grow up and marry, and to survive one of them. She saw her elder grandchildren, too, grow to man's estate, and come in comparative safety through the dangers of war; and she died at Limerick, April 1st, 1865, beloved, and in an honored old age. She was a woman of deep and unaffected piety, and a blessing to all who surrounded her.

The patriarchal life at Limerick—the hospitable

mansion full of happy guests; the negroes, scarcely considered as slaves, but rather as dependents attached to the family (a feeling which they fully shared); the domestic servants present at family prayers; the religious instruction given on Sundays to the other negroes; the constant care of the sick and aged, all these have passed away. Only the memory of this household life remains, deeply imbedded in the hearts of those who witnessed it.

It is related as a proof of the attachment of Mr. Isaac Ball's slaves that on one occasion, on his return from a long journey, they actually took him from the carriage and carried him home on their shoulders.

WILLIAM JAMES BALL, son of John Ball, was next in age to Isaac. He went to Edinburgh to study medicine in 1804, graduated in September, 1808, and went to London to pursue his studies in the great hospitals there. But soon after his arrival in that city he developed a case of quick consumption, the seeds of which had evidently been in his system for several months. His physician ordered him to the Island of Madeira, the voyage home being considered too much for him in his weak state of health. He died and was buried in that island, in December, 1808.

Only seven of John Ball's children by the second marriage lived to grow up, and all of them married.

CAROLINE OLIVIA, the eldest, married, at the age of seventeen, her relative, John Laurens. She died in 1828, when only twenty-three, leaving two children—John and Caroline Laurens.



ELIZA CATHARINE BALL, nee POYAS  
Mrs. Isaac Ball      Died April 1st, 1867



The next, ALWYN, was the eldest son by this marriage. He married, very early in life, Esther McClellan, and had five children, three of whom lived to grow up—Martha Caroline, Isaac, and Alwyn. Mr. Alwyn Ball lived at Elwood, a plantation a little above Comingtee. I have heard my uncle, Col. K. S. Ball, speak of him often. He saw a good deal of this young uncle, and liked him very much. Mr. Alwyn Ball had a passion for hunting; he had also a gift for music, and was a fine performer on the violin. Col. Ball often spoke of the beautiful “touch” which made his playing something not to be forgotten; he was not musical himself, but the memory of his uncle’s playing remained unfaded after the lapse of many years. He described him as a handsome man, not very tall, and with delightful manners. Mr. Alwyn Ball built the house in Cordesville (the summer Pineland village), which was afterwards purchased by his nephew, K. S. Ball. It was a quaint-looking building, with an enormous shed which covered the wide piazza as well as the house, and gave it somewhat the appearance of an East Indian bungalow.

Mr. Alwyn Ball died in Charleston, in the summer of 1835, before he had quite completed his twenty-eighth year. The house in which he died was situated on a part of the lot now occupied by the St. Francis Xavier Infirmary, and I believe is still in existence. He was buried in the family cemetery at Strawberry, the remains being taken up by boat. Col. Ball has often described the funeral procession, as it wound its slow way along

the streets to the wharf. First went the hearse, and behind it walked Josh, his faithful servant and huntsman, leading his master's hunting horse, saddled and bridled. With them were his favorite dogs, two couple of deer-hounds. The elder couple seemed to realize the state of affairs, for they kept near the coffin from the first, following quietly, close beneath the hearse, while the younger ones strayed around a little, as dogs will do. Then came the carriages with the mourners and friends. When the coffin was placed on its trestles on the bow of the boat, the dogs seemed to feel that they must guard it, and all the way up the river, one or other of them lay curled up directly under the coffin—if one dog moved away, another immediately took its place. When the coffin was being lowered into the grave, Josh carried out his last directions by sounding a long blast on his hunting-horn; which, if I remember rightly, was then thrown into the grave.

Mrs. Alwyn Ball afterwards married Mr. Edward Gamage.

The next was HUGH SWINTON BALL, born in 1808. He married Miss Anna Channing, daughter of Walter Channing, of Boston. They had several children, all of whom died very young. His wife and himself both perished in the wreck of the steamer Pulaski, on their way from New York to Charleston. The boilers exploded on the night of the 14th of June, 1838; the vessel was blown to pieces, and many of the passengers were lost. Soon after their death, a lawsuit, which lasted several years, arose about the property. As the survivor





ALWYN BALL

1807-1835



was to inherit the bulk of it, the question was, which one *was* the survivor—a question not easily decided after a scene of such confusion and terror. The court finally decided in favor of the plaintiffs—Mrs. Ball's family—the evidence (as I have heard) showing that Mrs. Ball's voice had been heard in the darkness calling for Mr. Ball; and the presumption was, that, had he been living at the time, he would have answered her. By this decision, not only his wife's property, which was considerable, but more than half of his own, went to the plaintiffs. His intention had been to leave his plantation, Pimlico, to his nephew, Elias Nonus Ball, son of his brother Elias Octavus; but the plantation and negroes had to be sold for division. His nephew, however, found himself in possession of a very comfortable property on coming of age.

ELIAS OCTAVUS BALL, the next in age, was born in 1809. He married Amelia Waring, daughter of Dr. Edmund Thomas Waring. They had four children, all of whom lived to grow up. He, too, died as a comparatively young man.

Next came SUSANNA SPLATT BALL, who married Mr. William E. Haskel, and died in the thirty-first year of her age, leaving six children.

ELIZA LUCILLA BALL came next. She married Robert Dewar Simons, who died soon after. There were no children. She survived him several years, dying in 1849.

The last was LYDIA CATHERINE, who married Mr. Thomas Waring, a brother of Mrs. E. O. Ball's. They had twelve children, eight of whom died un-

der the age of eight years, and most of them in infancy. She died in 1858, aged forty-two.

### JOHN BALL'S GRANDCHILDREN.

Of John Ball, Jr.'s children by the first marriage, Elizabeth (Betsey, as she was called) and Eleanor died young. The latter lived with Mr. and Mrs. Keating Simons—"Miss Nelly" being the one for whom she was named. She seems to have been a very attractive child.

ELIAS, the eldest son was the second Dr. Ball in the family. He studied in the Charleston Medical College and entered upon the practice of his profession; but he died too early to have made any mark as a physician. He married Catherine Cordes Dawson, and left one daughter, Elizabeth Carolina, who married Capt. Edmund T. Shubrick.

LYDIA JANE married Francis Malbone Waring, another brother of Mrs. E. O. Ball's, and died in her thirty-fourth year, leaving three children, one of whom died in boyhood.

JOHN COMING, the youngest child by the first marriage, lived at Strawberry Ferry, and died in the late spring of 1845. He never married.

ANN, the eldest of the second wife's surviving children, married Dr. Elias Horry Deas, and died in Cordesville, of consumption, in her forty-fifth year. She left two children, a son and a daughter.

KEATING SIMONS BALL, the other surviving child, and the second old bachelor in the family, lived to the age of seventy-three—being one of the few Balls



MRS. ALWYN BALL  
(Esther McClellan)



who have passed the limit of three-score and ten. He was the owner of Comingtee, where all his life was passed, except that part of it spent in acquiring his education; and he is so identified with the place, that it scarcely seems as if its history would be complete without a brief sketch of his life and character.

He was born Feb. 24th, 1818, and was always a delicate child, suffering from severe illnesses, both in childhood and youth. Indeed, at no time of his life could he have been said to enjoy perfect health. He was educated at the Charleston College; studied medicine in the office of Dr. B. B. Simons, the leading physician in the city, and then attended the Charleston Medical College. He only took one course of lectures, and then left to assume charge of the plantation, without completing his medical education, a step which he often regretted in after life. He was devotedly attached to his chosen profession, and to the end of his life gave freely and gladly of his time and knowledge to those who sought his help, and were too poor to pay for medical attendance.

After his mother's death, in 1840, he lived entirely in the country, spending most of the summer months in the village of Cordesville, and the rest of the year at Comingtee. Twice at least, between this time and 1860, he suffered so severely from chill and fever that his health was almost entirely broken up; and he was, besides, once on the verge of death from congestive fever. Visits to the Virginia Springs restored his health in great meas-



ure, though he always continued to suffer from attacks of chill and fever. He was for some time a Lieutenant Colonel in the Militia, and fulfilled the duties of the position faithfully. His health did not admit of his going into active service during the Confederate War; but he joined a company for local defence, called the Etiwan Rangers.

In 1866, when Gen. Potter's army passed through the country (an event from which the negroes still date occurrences, under the title of "When de Union come troo"), the house at Comingtee escaped being pillaged and burnt by negroes and camp-followers—as so many other houses were—by its being near headquarters and by its being visited by several of the officers, who, meeting with a courtesy which was unfailing to friend or foe, gave a paper of protection. The following summer, when the small pox was raging among the negroes from one end of the parish to the other, and there was no physician to call in, Col. Ball attended the sick unwearingly, often driving miles to visit them, and never shrinking from exposing himself to the most pestilential atmosphere.

At the end of this war, as at the end of the Revolution, life had to be taken up anew, but under very different circumstances. The labor was not only demoralized but utterly irresponsible, and apparently unable to realize the necessity of self-support. Under these conditions Col. Ball struggled along as best he could, having additionally to contend with infirm health, advancing years, and sight that was already beginning to fail; and last,



ELIZA LUCILLA BALL

Mrs. Robt. Dewar Simons

Born August 13th, 1814

Died November 1st, 1849



but by no means least, with a plantation that, owing to unpropitious seasons, was heavily encumbered with debt. He did not succeed in the planting, and finally rented out the plantation to Mr. J. C. Porcher, through whose courtesy he retained a home in that part of the house which had been added by his father. (The original lessees were Messrs. Heyward and Porcher, but the former withdrew in a few years.)

Another severe illness—blood-poisoning, contracted from a carbuncle which he was dressing for a patient—resulted in the stiffening of the fingers of his right hand, and a still more enfeebled state of health. Two years before his death he lost his sight almost entirely, an affliction which he felt deeply but which he bore with Christian cheerfulness and courage. From that time his health failed rapidly, and after months of intense suffering, borne with patience and fortitude, he passed to his rest and reward on the 20th September, 1891, at his house in Cordesville. He, too, sleeps with his fathers in Strawberry Cemetery.

Col. Ball served as a magistrate both before and after the war, until the institution of Trial Justices; and was at different times Warden, Vestryman, and Chairman of the Vestry, in his Parish—positions which he filled with diligent conscientiousness.

Of a most affectionate disposition, devoted to his relatives, loyal to his friends, kind-hearted, open-handed, unselfish, the soul of hospitality, and generous almost to a fault, the ever ready and sympa-

thetic nurse and helper in sickness and trouble, he will live in the memories of all who have ever known him.

The eldest surviving child of Isaac Ball was WILLIAM JAMES BALL, who succeeded his father at Limerick upon coming of age. He married quite early in life. His first wife was Julia Cart, a lady whose charm of manner was equal to her beauty of face. They were, indeed, a singularly handsome young couple—as their portraits testify. Limerick, like Comingtee, kept its hospitable doors always open, and guests were as welcome in the busy, happy household as at the bachelor's solitary fire-side. There were five children, the youngest of whom died in infancy. Mrs. Julia Ball died in the summer of 1858, after some years of ill-health, and was interred at Strawberry.

Near the close of the war Mr. Ball married his cousin, Mary Huger Gibbs. They continued to live at Limerick, making their summer home in Cordesville.

Until the war, Mr. Ball had been a prosperous planter; but with changed conditions came changed circumstances and as one industry after another failed, his means became more and more straitened. But he bore his reverses with dignity and cheerfulness, and his doors were as wide open as ever, with that truest ideal of hospitality, which welcomes guests into the family life, confident that they "seek not yours, but you."

With the summer of 1890 came a marked and rapid decline in his health, and after long suffer-



HUGH SWINTON BALL

Born October 18th, 1808

Drowned June 14th, 1838





ings, borne with Christian patience, he "fell asleep" on the 26th of April, 1891, aged 70.

Mr. William J. Ball was a sincere Christian and devoted Churchman. Like his cousin, K. S. Ball, he was at different times and for many years vestryman, warden, and chairman of the vestry. Every summer, for twenty-five years, from the close of the war till his health failed utterly, he held regular lay services in the Cordesville chapel on alternate Sundays—as the rector divided his time between the summer villages of Cordesville and The Barrows. He was a remarkably fine reader and conducted the service with the utmost thoroughness, dignity and earnestness—three qualities which he carried into all church and parish matters, as well as into daily life. He was a man of cultured taste and marked individuality, and was always a prominent figure in the parish. Like the patriarchs of old, he "dwelt in the midst of his brethren," nearly all of the families in Cordesville being related to him, and at least half of the inhabitants being his children and grandchildren. He was ever a most loyal friend and affectionate relative, and no man held more firmly the esteem and respect of his neighbors. Not soon will the presence and influence of this Christian gentleman be forgotten; and sorely has he been missed in the parish, as well as in the homes of his many friends and kinsfolk.

Isaac Ball's only daughter, JANE, married John G. Shoolbred, who lived but a few months. She had one son, who has passed away before her. Honored and beloved, she still lives.

JOHN, the youngest son, was the owner of Hyde Park and married his cousin, Maria Louisa Gibbs. He died of country fever in 1852, at the early age of twenty-six—beloved by all, and leaving behind a beautiful memory to the widow and son who survive him.

Taking up the descendants of the second marriage: Alwyn Ball left three children. The only daughter, MARTHA CAROLINE, married Mr. Bulow, who died a few years after, leaving two boys.

ISAAC, the elder son, married Miss Caroline Rutledge and lived in Charleston. He died comparatively young, leaving a son and a daughter.

ALWYN, the younger son, married Miss Alicia S. Butler of Dublin, Ireland, and settled at the North. He had one daughter and five sons—one of whom, Alwyn Ball, Jr., owns Comingtee and resides at Rutherford, N. J.

Elias O. Ball's four children all grew up and married. AMELIA, married Dr. Hugh Rutledge.

ELIAS NONUS, as we have seen, inherited a fortune from his uncle, H. S. Ball. On coming of age he bought Dean Hall plantation, nearly opposite Comingtee, where he planted until the war began; he then went into the army. Just about the beginning of the war he married Miss Odenheimer, daughter of the Bishop of New Jersey. After the general break-up in 1865 he moved to Pennsylvania, where he died in 1872. A son and a daughter survived him. The son has since died.

SOPHIA MALBONE married William H. Odenheimer, who had come South and held a position in the



MRS. WM. E. HASKELL, nee SUSANNAH S. BALL  
Married March 4th, 1828  
Born December 2nd, 1810      Died June 23rd, 1841



Confederate navy. They had one son. Lieut. Odenheimer was ordered to report on board a vessel in English waters and ran the blockade from Charleston in the little steamer *Juno*. The fate of the *Juno* was never known; she was not heard of again, and it was supposed that she foundered at sea.

Mrs. Haskell left seven children: OLIVIA, who married Wm. L. Venning; CHARLOTTE, who married Benj. B. Simons; M. CAROLINE, who married B. Gaillard Pinckney; E. LUCILLA, who married Hutson Lee; LYDIA CATHERINE, who has remained single; and WILLIAM E., who married Emma Hayward. 214

Only four children survived Mrs. Waring—LYDIA CATHERINE, who is single; THOMAS MALBONE, who married Fanny Simons; and ANGELINE and SUSAN, both of whom died in early womanhood. Angeline had joined an Episcopal sisterhood and died in Mobile, Alabama.

## XI.

### COMINGTEE FIFTY OR SIXTY YEARS AGO.

Time workes changes everywhere; but the transformation wrought at Comingtee during the latter half of the last century was so great that one who had known it only in its palmier days might well have failed to recognize it at present. Perhaps the best way to realize how great the difference is, would be to present a sketch of the plantation as it was in the forties and fifties.

Approaching it by steamer, the first thing that struck the eye was its extreme neatness and orderliness. The thresher, the barn, the wooden story of the brick pounding-mill, the Stoke negro houses, were all white, with red doors and windows. A trim schooner lay at the threshing-mill wharf—her usual berth—or was perhaps taking in a load from the pounding-mill, where the busy pestles kept rising and falling; while the clink of hammers resounded from the “cooper-shop” behind the mill, where all the barrels were made. The steamboat wharf was here by the pounding-mill, and the mill-yard was shaded by several fine live oaks, one or two of which drooped over the water.



BRICK POUNDING MILL AT COMINGTEE





Proceeding up the road towards the dwelling-house, we first notice, on the left, some low ground leading down to the mill-pond, with two pretty oaks beyond. This is "Cuffee's Dam." "Missis' Groun'" lay to the right. A little further on we come to the "Robintation Tree," a tall and once extremely handsome live-oak standing on the edge of the right-hand side of the road. The great bough on the east was cut down by the negroes about thirty years ago to get the honey from a hive of wild bees that had unfortunately settled in it; but the other half remained "a thing of beauty" until the great storm of 1893 robbed it of its last claim to special attractiveness. The "Robintation," we must explain, was a ghost of a style peculiar, apparently, to the Ball negroes or the Ball *habitat*, as the only similar one that I ever heard of haunted the road near Kensington and was known as the "Someting in Kin's'ton Path." The Robintation appeared first as a small animal, like a cat or a dog crossing the road at this point; it grew, as you looked, into something as large as a hog; and then into something as large as a calf. What it became after that no one could ever tell—for no one ever stopped long enough to see.

Opposite the Robintation Tree, at some little distance, is the negro burying ground, a grove of tall hickories, white oaks, etc. Shade and silence reign there, and under the carpet of fallen leaves lie generation upon generation of a simple people, who were, in the main and according to their lights, faithful and attached to their masters.

Here and there on this side of the road were some fine live oaks, only a few of which are left. One large and apparently very old tree still stands on the side of the road not far from the site of the old corn-house; another one farther down, and nearly as fine, was destroyed by fire about twenty years ago. On the other side the open cornfield was dotted with occasional live oaks, all of which have long since disappeared.

The corn-house and the Comingtee barn were still standing and in use in those days. In the corn-house the provisions of corn and rice and peas were stored. Some, at least, of the Comingtee rice crop was brought to this barn and threshed there by flail, before steam threshers were known.

The wagon road from Stoke entered the avenue opposite the big sycamores, as it still does; but there was a "short path" up to the house through the orchard. Just inside the orchard, at this lower end, were two large poultry houses where the turkeys, fowls and guinea fowls lived; and near by was a tiny pond, which, the children were always warned, was "very deep."

Mounting the slope to the yard, you entered the latter behind a cabin of two rooms, with a chimney in the middle. I cannot say what was the original purpose of this house, but I always knew the southern half of it as the wash kitchen, and the other part as the shot-house. In the latter were kept the shot and powder used on the plantation—of which the bird-minders alone required no little quantity; and there were two great chests, one of which, tra-



WM. JAMES BALL

Born October 14th, 1821      Died April 26th, 1891



dition says, was Capt. Coming's sea chest. It is probable that the hoes, axes, etc., for plantation use were also kept here.

On the north edge of the road was a shallow circular pond, called the Bee-house pond; the beehives stood under a shed on the opposite side of it. On the yard side of the pond was "Daddy Surrey's" house, a double negro house, part of which was the residence of an old negro, one of those faithful, honest servants who were trusted and honored by the family through a long life. On this north side of the yard was a motley collection of buildings. Here stood the detached brick oven, called into requisition when the house was full of guests; here was the "carpenter's shop;" and here the fattening coop and the pigeon house, substantial structures of no small size.

On the top of the slope, and quite near the dwelling-house, stood the two-story kitchen, containing four large rooms with great, yawning fire-places, and having a brick-floored piazza in front. The western room was the kitchen, in which a smaller brick oven was built into the side of the chimney. It was from this room, doubtless, that Plenty, the cook, would send out one of the kitchen boys to race round the building holding the roast pig aloft on the spit, so that the cold air might give it just the proper degree of crispness. The corresponding room was the "sausage room;" and it presented a busy scene in hog-killing time. On the long table that ran down the length of the room lay piles of red and white pork ready for the chopping blocks,

of which there were two or three—solid sections of live oak, on which the cleavers of the men servants fell almost as regularly as the pestles in the mill. There, too, were great oblong trays of chopped meat, into which Maum Mary Ann and Maum Maria, with possibly a junior helper or two, were kneading the pepper and salt, while in the frying-pan in the depths of the chimney, bits of the mixture were sizzling to test the seasoning. Here, too, were the big balance scales in which the meat was weighed, and the smaller scales by means of which the proportion of pepper and salt was meted out.

The room above this was called "Possum Hall"; it was roughly fitted up as a bedroom in which the boys of the family could be quartered when the house overflowed with guests. And surely never was there a jollier place of exile. Over the kitchen was the "Mangleroom." It contained little besides the mangle through which the house linen and table linen was passed instead of being ironed.

On the eastern side the knoll sloped suddenly down to the large pond, which was oblong, and embraced two small islands, with a live oak and some cedars growing on each. The pond was bordered by large cedars and weeping-willows. On the bit of level land between the pond and the slope, stood the meathouse, the dairy, and the smokehouse. In the first the cured bacon was hung on hooks in the ceilingbeams; and in the last, the bacon and hams were smoked previous to bagging and hanging. On the crest of the hill and on the way leading to the creek and the reserves,





MRS. WM. J. BALL, nee JULIA CART  
Born November 20th, 1823      Died July 12th, 1858



stood another "double house," half of which was the Blacksmith's Shop, and the other half his residence.

On the top of the hill at the south was a large stable with a hayloft above, and a shed for the mules on one side. In front of it was a long, narrow building called the cart-house; and behind it was yet another "double house," where the man in charge of the stable lived. The carriage house was at the foot of the hill on this side. Between it and the stable were a large pecan tree and a beech; and at the corner of the yard beyond it was a little gate with pointed posts, leading to the fields. The southern side of the yard was bounded by the garden and orchard fence. Half-way down the slope, between the house and the dairy, was a row of great trees, white oak, walnut, hickory and pig-nut.

We have already alluded to the avenue proper, which led to the public road along the western branch. Part of this, next the yard, is still bordered by fine old sycamores; but a still longer space on the other side, after passing the sick-house (which also has been already alluded to) was once bordered by goodly cedars—most of which have passed into the making of fence posts. At the Rice Hope line there used to be an ornamental white gate, where some ghost was supposed to dwell; horses almost always shied in passing it, even those belonging to the place. They kept up the practice after the gate was down, and have been observed to prick up their ears and look uneasy long after every vestige of gate and fence had disappeared. The

rest of the avenue has right of way through the Rice Hope fields. The other fork, or So'boy Avenue, led over a bridge and causeway across the reserve to the river road along the eastern branch. At the top of the little clay hill beyond the reserve was a gate, called the So'boy Gate.

In those days the Comingtee house consisted of two parts—the colonial brick dwelling called the “Old House” and the modern wooden addition known as the “New House.”

It is needless to go again into the question of who built the Old House; we content ourselves with glancing at the outside and then at the inside to see the arrangement of the rooms and furniture. The house fronts the west and a continuous piazza ran from the northern gable of the Old House to the eastern gable of the New. Against the wall were long wooden benches, painted blue. Those on the Old House piazza—for things never changed their places at Comingtee—were evidently of oak and showed by their style that they were genuine antiques. In front of the house still stands a large live oak, whose branches, unless often trimmed, covered the piazza shed.

A marked peculiarity of the Old House was the irregular size of the windows. The east and west windows were all of normal size, but those in the south gable on the first floor were much larger, while those in the closet above were very narrow, and the garret window in each gable was really tiny. Mounting the brown stone steps, and entering the double-leaved front door, we come into the hall



JOHN BALL

Born September 1, 1825

Died July 11th, 1852



way, or "entry." Opposite was the staircase, and under the landing the back door—wide enough, but necessarily so low as to compel a tall man to stoop. Under the staircase another low door led to the cellar. There were two rooms on this floor: the southern, familiarly known as the "Old Hall," was divided from the entry by a partition of paneled wood against which hung most of the family portraits. The floor was covered with much-worn grey and white oil-cloth, over which the carpet was spread in winter. This oil-cloth must have been laid down for generations, for, when an attempt was made to take it up, parts seemed almost incorporated with the flooring boards. The fire-place was of cavernous size, and was furnished with large brass andirons and fender, burnished and shining like gold. The high wooden mantel-piece was very narrow, and had circular projections to accommodate gilt and white china jars, kept full of fresh pine, branches of which also hung from four hooks in the ceiling. Two mirrors, with carved frames and beveled edges, faced each other from the wall-spaces between the east and west windows; plain wooden book-shelves were fastened to the wall in one chimney jamb and the tall old clock stood like a sentinel in a "catacornered" position in the southwest angle of the other. The windows were strikingly, and very gracefully, draped with heavy white curtains, edged with ball-fringe: Never, elsewhere, have I seen others so draped and arranged.

The furniture consisted of a mahogany centre-table, two antique card tables—one under the book-



case and the other under the west mirror; a large rocking chair; and heavy mahogany chairs with carved backs. An inlaid and quite ornamental piano stood against the partition; and, under the other mirror, was a stuffed sofa made on the plantation by "old Hackliss," (Hercules) an African who had been taught the carpenter's trade. A square seat; also of plantation make, stood on each side of the fire-place. (These, I believe, have disappeared some years since.)

Before the New House was built, the old "butler" doubtless occupied a place of honor in this room, as it was the dining room.

Opposite was a room, apparently meant for a parlor, for the wall above the mantel-piece was elaborately panelled in wood; but not within the memory of man has it been used except as the best bedroom. The bed was a stately structure with carved mahogany posts, and hung with the characteristic chintz curtains of former days whereon birds with wonderful plumage were depicted, perched among the branches of marvellous flowering trees. When the curtains were drawn the bed was completely shut in, like a square tent enclosed on all sides and overhead.

On the second floor, were two bed-rooms, and a third room much smaller, secured by taking in the end of the passage-way with a wooden partition. Both larger rooms had big fire-places; and the chimney jambs were made into light closets which partly answered the purpose of dressing-rooms. The garret also had three rooms, exactly corresponding



JANE BALL

Married January 27th, 1842, to John G. Shoolbred

Born May 14th, 1823

Died February 9th, 1905



to those on the second floor. It had never been ceiled; but the south room was sometimes used as a bed-chamber. The north garret was for a long period the wine-room, fitted up with capacious bottle-racks, whereon many dozens of old Madeira had ripened, through the years. Under the house was a cellar of two rooms, and in the larger one a huge fire-place.

The Old House, particularly the north room upstairs, had the reputation of being haunted. Strange and unaccountable noises were often heard; but no one, I believe, ever claimed to have seen anything ghostly; except a negro girl, who, after the war, averred that she frequently saw ladies and gentlemen coming down the stairs and going out. But, as according to her report they invariably vanished through the second story window, her testimony was supposed to be of doubtful value, and she was credited with a lively imagination.

## XII.

### PLANTATION INDUSTRIES AND OLD SERVANTS.

Probably, one reason why planters made money in former days is that so much was produced within the plantation itself, nothing being bought that could there be grown or made; hence the money realized from the crop was clear gain, except what was paid out for clothing and groceries. The large quantities of corn, peas, and potatoes, planted on the highland, nearly, if not quite, supplied the year's provisions for the negroes. A number of hogs were raised, and enough bacon cured to meet the needs of the white family and sometimes in part, also, those of the plantation. A herd of cattle furnished milk and butter, and a well-stocked poultry-yard, turkeys, ducks, geese, fowls, and eggs. The feathers from the geese were made into pillows and feather-beds; and the wool from the sheep, into most comfortable mattresses.

There were always skilled mechanics of various kinds on the plantation. Besides the barrels for the pounding-mill, the cooper's shop furnished cypress or cedar tubs, buckets, pails, and piggins, of every size and sort; so that a "bought bucket" was rare. These were not only strong and serviceable, but some were beautifully finished. The carpen-

ters could not only construct the flood-gates and rice-field trunks, and build the negro houses, but make the plantation wagons and carts, and do work, requiring great neatness of finish. Very creditable pieces of furniture were sometimes made by them. The wooden addition to the dwelling-house was built and completed, inside and out, by these plantation carpenters;—even as I have heard, to the window-sashes. The blacksmiths made and mended what ever of wrought iron was used on the place; and could do finer work on occasion; I have been told that some of the iron-wire nursery fenders in the house were of their making. Among these mechanics was always to be found one, capable of being miller to the pounding-mill, or engineer to the thresher; and the simpler repairs to the machinery were done at home.

If a boy showed an aptitude for any branch of mechanics, he was put to learn in that “shop;” and if he developed a special gift, he was bound apprentice to a master-mechanic in the city, and taught the trade thoroughly. In general, if a boy had a native ‘bent’ for any special branch of service, he was taught that;—if prompt and neat, he was “taken into the house” and put under the butler for training;—if fond of horses, he was employed about the stable;—if he liked to run after the cattle, he was made “cattle-minder’s boy.” And, if any girl showed an aptitude for any branch of domestic service, she likewise was put in training; and in this way, some were always being fitted to take the places of others who were growing old and incapable.

Baskets were also made on the plantation, generally by some of the old men. Large round rush-baskets sewed with oak, were much used in the mill and barn-yard. There were also baskets for domestic use; some round or oval, deep and with covers; others shallow, without covers; and yet others smaller, woven of grass and sewed with strips of palmetto. Some of these were really tiny; and some had "steeples,"—i. e. a second and smaller basket worked on the cover of the other, and having a cover of its own.

The Ball negroes were always well fed, well clothed, and well treated. Clothing was distributed twice a year,—cotton osnaburgs in summer, and in winter thick "Welsh Plains,"—called by the negroes "white woolen." Six or seven yards was the ordinary amount for adults; the children were measured for their share. The cloth, held by one end on the forehead, at the roots of the hair, passed over the head and down the back until it touched the ground at the heels; then doubled and cut off, it gave ample measure. I have often myself seen the process when a child. Blankets were given every third year from the time of birth to the time of death:—smaller ones to the children, and full-sized to the adults. These were generally Duffield blankets. Contracts with the overseer were drawn up and signed by both planter and overseer,—defining the latter's duties and privileges, and enjoining proper treatment of the negroes. (See Appendix.)



## OLD SERVANTS AT COMINGTEE.

It seems scarcely fair to close this memoir without some reference to the faithful old negroes, identified with the place and the family, and who were instrumental in rendering plantation life safe and pleasant as it was.

On all of the Ball plantations, were certain families of negroes who seemed above the average; intelligent, faithful, trustworthy, and much attached to their masters and their families, which latter returned their devotion by the fullest confidence, respect, and consideration. Some of these people are rather shadowy to me, though very real to those who told me of them; while others are equally real to myself. First comes the name of "Jenny Buller,"—frequently met with in the plantation records of the second Elias Ball, and sometimes in Lydia Child's little memorandum-book. Jenny must have had marked characteristics. In the note-book it is stated that she was sent to a physician "to be cured of a sore leg," and came back. The result of this doctoring does not appear to have been a "cure," for she ultimately lost the leg and hobbled around on a wooden stump:—"doing as much work as a man," as her great-granddaughter has often told me with pride. She had many children, some of whose descendants are still living. The family, as a general rule, were proud and high-tempered, but intelligent and trust-

worthy; and many of them were prominent about the plantation and in the household.

Next comes the name of "Hackliss." Of him, however, I know nothing, except that he was an African by birth and a carpenter by trade. Some of his work still speaks for him in an old sofa at Comingtee.

"Old Marcus" and "Old Bristol" were both fine carpenters. The former was small, and peppery-tempered; he kept a strap hanging up in the carpenter's shop as a persuader for the benefit of his apprentices,— and, incidentally, for any of the plantation children who made a noise or disturbance in the yard. It is even said that he did not hesitate to order "the boys of the family" out of the shop when they "pestered" him in his work.

"Old Bristol" had a general supervision of the yard, especially during the owner's absence. He had charge of the valuable or pet horses left in the country in summer, doctored the sick ones, and had an eye on things generally. Overseers might grumble about him in their letters, but dared not interfere. Indeed the master felt far more assured of Bristol's reliability than of theirs.

"Old Violet" was another 'character' of those days. She held the responsible position of plantation nurse, and was unusually competent for its duties, having received some instruction under a physician. She knew what simple medicines to give for various ailments and could weigh and measure them out. Her services were often in request in the white families of the neighborhood.

Violet's son, 'Josey,' was the "body-servant" of Col. K. S. Ball, and one, more faithful and devoted, never lived. He played with his young master when they were both boys; and, as they grew up, became his valet, huntsman, butler, and "right-hand-man" in every way. He was a skilled and fearless rider, yet very careful of his horses, was an admirable "driver" in a deer-hunt and was equally at home in the care of his master's horses, dogs, guns, vehicles, military equipments, or dining-table. He died in the prime of life from the kick of a mule, received a few days after a bad fall in the woods while out hunting. Josey was fearless in other respects than his riding. He used to tell how, when quite a young man, he was told to take a horse and fetch the doctor for his mother, who was dangerously ill. It was midnight, and when he got into the heavy sand under the sycamores, he saw a dark object rolling and grunting in the road before him. His first impulse was to turn back, but he remembered his mother and called to it. It kept on approaching,—he called again, and still the strange apparition advanced. At the third challenge, he drew his large hunting knife and swore that, ghost or man, if it did not get out of his way he would jump off his horse and stab it. Then the ghost arose, and begged him not to tell on him. He was an old negro man, who was out after hours,—doubtless on some predatory expedition, and had taken this way of avoiding recognition. Most negroes, in Josey's place, would have

fled at hearing the first grunt, without waiting to explore the mystery.

'Maum Mary Ann' was the housekeeper at Comingtee for Col. K. S. Ball. She had the keys of store-room and pantry, "gave out" the meals, made the bread, and supervised the household generally. She was fat and black, with clean white palms and a cheerful face. I never saw her without a large white apron and a bright-colored "head-handkerchief." Her husband, "Cappen Dannill," was the patroon of the plantation schooner.

"Daddy Surrey" was Maum Mary Ann's brother, and was a prominent figure on the plantation. An old man, when I first recollect him, rather small, with regular features, always dressed in a suit of grey woolen, and very clean and neat. He was held in high respect, from the heads of the family down. He had charge of the cattle, with subordinates under him; and when the family boys came up for the December and April holidays, he had charge of them also—to go out shooting, for Daddy Surrey knew all about guns and game and such things,—in fact, there seemed to be few matters, about which he did *not* know. He lived to the age of ninety-three. One of his sons, Daniel Pinckney, was also faithful to the family through troublous times. Another son succeeded him as cattle-minder.

'Brawley Asgill' began as "hog-minder." He lived in the times that tried men's souls,—and could not rise quite superior to them; he professed and retained a certain amount of faithfulness to his master, but it was of a modified kind. As a

preacher, he had considerable influence on the plantation; and, though tricky, was of great use, after the war, in inducing the hands to sign contracts for the next year's labor,—something which they were often unwilling or slow to do. He and his wife, 'Binah,' lived in the picturesque little cabin on Indian Spring Hill, fronting the So 'boy Road. About fifty yards from his house he built a rough little clap-board church, in which he preached, up to the time of his death. His sorrowing congregation resolved that he should have a grand funeral; and one of them was promptly given funds and despatched to Charleston, with directions to return that very evening and bring a fine coffin. But evening came, and no coffin; the next day passed, and the last possible train arrived, but still no messenger and no coffin. At last the interment could no longer be delayed, so a rough box was hastily improvised by the carpenter, and the funeral proceeded. Before it was quite over, the tardy messenger arrived with a grand coffin. But it was too late to use it for him; so the heads of the congregation economically decided that it should be put up on the rafters of the church, to wait for the demise of his widow. Some years afterwards, when, a new church being built near the public road, the old one was taken down, and the coffin was turned over to old Binah's own keeping. Having no other place to put it, she shoved it under the bed, and kept grist and sugar in it. She told me herself, that one day she sent out all of her grandchildren, and got into it to see if it would fit. She was actu-

ally buried in it. Had she ever heard of the great Emperor Charles V. and his similar experiments with his royal coffin?

One of Jenny Buller's descendants, Hagar, was my nurse. Though much of her life was spent away from Comingtee, she deserves mention here, from her faithfulness to the family and her attachment to the place; for Comingtee has always been "home" to every one, white and black, born or raised there. She was most capable, efficient in all branches of domestic work—a devoted child's nurse, an admirable and untiring sick-nurse, a good seamstress, a fine washer and clear-starcher, and an excellent pastry-cook. She had the family interests at heart, but had almost *too* decided a taste for managing, which kept her from being popular with the other servants. At the general break-up in 1865, she ran actual risk of life for her faithfulness—and with her died the last of the "old Maumas" of Comingtee.

#### OTHER OLD SERVANTS.

As has been remarked, the relations of the Balls to their slaves seem always and everywhere to have been marked by kindness and good-feeling; and thus was a reciprocal attachment, on the part of the slaves to their owners, and they were proud of the "family." Indeed, it was no slight tie that bound together those whose ancestors for a hundred year had occupied the same relative positions. From the first Ball down to the days of Emancipation—



and afterward—the same consideration, on the one hand, and loyalty on the other, have been manifested. We mention a few of these faithful servants, who, though not connected with Comingtee, are still identified with the history of the Ball family.

Perhaps the name that stands out above the others is “Dolly.” We know little about her, but enough to show that she was thought well of in the family. Perhaps she had “minded” the children, and been a faithful nurse in illness. The ministrations of such humble friends of the family—they were surely no less—have soothed many a bed of suffering; and in death their hands have tenderly performed the last offices. “Dolly” probably began her career at Comingtee, for the first mention of her is a memorandum made by the second Elias of the birth of some of her children; but in 1748 he notes, “Dolly and her children went to St. James to live.” And in a letter of 1774 he says, “Poor old Dolly died Monday night, aged 62.”

In later days, “Old Maum Mary of Kensington” is well worthy of mention. She was the faithful nurse of John and Isaac Ball, and was like a humble friend of the family. The younger generation called her “Grand-Mauma;” and she was highly thought of by all. When she grew old, she was entirely exempted from work, had a house appropriated to her use at Kensington, and land to plant, —and hands were sent to work the land when necessary. One of her grand-daughters, a namesake of her own, lived with her and waited on her, having nothing else to do. When Kensington was sold



after Mr. E. O. Ball's death, the purchaser, Dr. J. B. Irving, offered her the privilege of retaining her home there as long as she lived. But she declined, saying she would rather go to "the family," and moved to Hyde Park, where she lived for the rest of her life. When feeble and infirm, she was kept supplied with ale and other things to cheer her up.

The second Mary was a woman grown when her grandmother died. She became a house-servant in Mrs. Deas' family, and was a worthy descendant of the faithful old woman. The close of the war found her with her young mistress in Greenville, S. C., far from her home and friends; there were many hardships and discomforts, and no money with which to pay wages. When told that she was free to go where she liked, and that it was impossible to offer her wages if she remained, her answer was, "Missy, your grandparents stood by my grandmother, and I will stand by you." And she did;—serving at first for a bare support, and afterwards for such moderate wages as the family could afford. She returned with them to Charleston; and when the work grew rather heavy for her, she retired to Comingtee, and lived with her relatives, helping herself by various odd jobs—for she was no idler—and receiving in need whatever help could be given by her former owners. She finally bought with her savings a few acres of land at the Saw Mill, and in conjunction with her nephew, built a house. There she died, only a few years ago, faithful and devoted to the last. She never married, and was



ALWYN BALL

1834—



what is rarest among negros, an irreproachable "old maid."

Nat, who belonged to Mrs. Shoolbred, was a great-grandson of "Old Maum Mary," and was equally faithful to his owners. He followed his young master and the three "boys" from Limerick through all the hardships of camp life, stuck to them throughout, up to the surrender at Greensboro', N. C., and came back to Quinby, to take up life where he had left it. He continued to be the right-hand man of the family until his master's death, and is now entrusted with the care of the property there.

Neither must old "Josh Lovely" be forgotten. He was Mr. Alwyn Ball's huntsman, and as fond of hunting as his master, to whom he was much attached. He was a daring rider, and would risk anything when well mounted. Of course, he sometimes got falls, but escaped without serious injury. One of the "bays" (low, swampy land, thickly overgrown), between Cordesville and Midway, was called "Josh's Drive," because in a wild dash through it while "driving" the deer, he had such a terrible fall that he was brought out for dead. After the war he was a bricklayer and plasterer, and lived at The Bluff. He died a few years ago, in a good old age. It was a pleasure to see him ride, even when quite an old man, he "sat" his thin little pony with such style.

Many an old negro retained not only a considerable amount of feeling for the family, but of pride in it; and has been heard to boast, even after Eman-

cipation, of being "a Ball nigger." In the general upsetting of all order in the early days of 1865, there were many to whom family possessions in the shape of blankets, clothing, etc. (more valuable than jewels), were entrusted for safe-keeping; articles which were being taken from the whites by the soldiers, and given to the negroes; and every such article was brought back as soon as the coast was clear.

It would take a large volume to record the faithful acts of all those faithful servants. Name after name, and deed after deed, recurs to my mind—Ben's long journey, undertaken in the vain hope of saving the mules under his care—Friday's driving off and saving the whole herd of cattle for "Mis' chillun." \* \* \* But I forbear. Memory has led me too far afield, perhaps, already.

\* \* \* \* \*

Having now brought down the Account of the Ball Family to the generation immediately preceding my own, I feel that some apology may be due for the length of the story; and I know not how better to apologize than in the words of the great historian.

"A lively desire of knowing and recording our ancestors so generally prevails, that it must depend on the influence of some common principle in the minds of men. We seem to have lived in the persons of our forefathers. \* \* \* Fifty or a hundred years may be allotted to an individual, but we step forward, *beyond* death with such hopes as Religion and Philosophy will suggest—and we fill up the



MRS. ALWYN BALL  
(Alicia Sarah Butler)  
1832—1897





silent vacancy that precedes our birth, by associating ourselves to the authors of our existence. Our calmer judgment will rather tend to moderate than to suppress the pride of an ancient and worthy race." \* \* \*

## APPENDIX.

### JOHN BALL'S PAPER.

“The following account of the Ball family wrote by John Ball, the son of Elias Ball, and grandson of Elias Ball, the first of the family who settled in South Carolina, at the plantation called Coming’s Tee, now in the possession of my brother Elias.

I often conversed with my Father about his Father, and endeavored to collect the family affairs, with intent to write this Genealogy for the satisfaction of my posterity. I was 26 years of age previous to my Father’s decease; my Father was about 40 years old at the death of his Father; so that the tradition handed to me. which I now commit to paper is pretty good for two generations antecedent to myself. My children and their descendants (for whom only I write this) must not expect elegant language, or even that this writing will be free from grammatical errors, as my education was too much neglected by my fond Father, never being taught even the English grammar; but I hope one of my sons will put this work into better language, and continue the genealogy, with an injunction for its continuation from generation to generation, which may the great Creator of the universe bless and



COMINGTEE PLANTATION  
Present House



prosper in every generation, as my Father and Grandfather have been blessed with temporal blessings.

But to proceed—

My Grandfather, Elias Ball, was second son to William Ball, a farmer in the county of Devonshire in England. Captain John Coming, who commanded a vessel in the American trade, got grants at different times for land, among others was the plantations of Coming's Tee and Fish Pond, and a very considerable part of where the city of Charleston is now built on. Captain Coming was an uncle to my grandfather. He desired one of his nephews to come out to Carolina. The elder brother William could not bear the idea of coming among the savages of America, so Elias, the second son, who was a bold and enterprising youth, came to South Carolina during the reign of William and Mary. Captain Coming's vessel was lost on or near Charleston bar, himself and crew saved themselves in the long-boat; some censures that fear caused the loss of the vessel stimulated the Captain to undertake a perilous voyage to England to vindicate his character. He raised and decked his long-boat, and did absolutely go to England in her. When hailed in river Thames, his answer could not be credited, so miraculous did the voyage appear. He afterwards settled in South Carolina, on the plantation called Coming's Tee now in the possession of my brother. At his decease his widow had his estate. She was an aunt to my grandmother Ball, and to my grand-uncle, John Harleston. At her death the estate

was jointly between my grandfather and grand-uncle aforesaid. On the division of the Estate my grandfather committed a capital error in renouncing to his brother-in-law, John Harleston, his part of the lands in Charleston, formerly called Coming's point, but now Harleston's, in lieu of which he got the country lands that was settled, without running the risk of getting Fishpond instead of Comingtee. At that early period there were very few houses in Charleston, and to think of the lands at Coming's point being built on, I suppose my grandfather thought was looking too far forward, therefore chose rather to give up so distant a prospect for the certainty of an immediate habitation and ready-cleared fields. Fishpond at that time being an undivided, uncleared, and unsettled part of the same tract. The River swamps in those days and for a long time after were not known to be of any value.

My Grandfather was about 18 or 20 years old when he came to Carolina; he married when he was about Twenty-two years old to Elizabeth Harleston, sister to the above-mentioned John Harleston, which family was last from Ireland, but originally an English family, that had gone over in or about the troubles of Charles the first, of whose party was that family, and, of course, shared in the misfortunes of his unlucky friends and followers. My Grandfather had many children by Elizabeth his wife; only four of whom lived to enter the matrimonial state, viz.:

1st. ANNE BALL was born January 20th, 1701.

She married when about 15 years old to a Captain Daws who was 60 years old. He had been an officer in the Navy. My Aunt had no issue by him. They lived together several years, and the old Captain left her all his estate, which was considerable, the lands on which the village of Hamstead now stands being part of it. My Aunt afterwards married George Austin, merchant, by whom she had a Son and Daughter. The former died without issue, the daughter married John Moultrie, Esqr., Lieut.-Governor of East Florida, while that country belonged to the British Nation. The two eldest sons who came in for all old Austin's Estate, are John Moultrie, Esqr., of Aston Hall in Shropshire, who has married Catherine Ball, daughter of Elias Ball, formerly of Wambaw, South Carolina, but now of Bristol in England. The second son, James Moultrie, M. D., who has the Ashepoo Estate of Austin, has married his cousin, Catherine Moultrie, daughter to Alexander Moultrie, Esqr., Attorney General to the State. She died June 7th, 1765.

2nd. ELIAS BALL was born December 22nd, 1709, and was married the 28th day of January, 1747, to Lydia Chicken, widow of George Chicken, daughter of Isaac Child, and grand-daughter to *James Child*, the founder of Childbury Chapel and School. By her my father has 3 sons and two daughters, viz.: Elizabeth Ball, born 22nd March, 1748, and died the 30th of September, 1750.

Elias Ball, born the 10th April. 1752—this is my elder Brother—he is now an old bachelor.

The third was Isaac Ball, born 11th of May, 1754,



and died at Kensington 5th January, 1776. The 4th was Lydia Ball, born 13th January, 1757. She was married to Edward Simons, Esqr., the 17th October, 1771. Mr. Simons died in October, 1775. And my sister was married to Mr. John Bryan in February, 1783. They are both living and have one daughter. (Named Elizabeth. She married her cousin, John Ball, Jr. Lydia also had a son, John Bryan, born in 1791. This account of my Grandfather's was evidently written about 1791. W. J. Ball.) The fifth was myself, John Ball, born the 10th July, 1760. Married the 20th January, 1780, to my cousin, Jane Ball, the daughter of my Uncle, John Coming Ball and Judith, his wife—and have five sons, viz.; 1st, John Ball born September 12th, 1782; 2nd, Elias Ball, born March 1st, 1784; 3rd, Isaac Ball, born September 6th, 1785; 4th, William James Ball, born April 28th, 1787; 5th, Edward Ball, born July 3d, 1788. 6th, a still-born child in May 1791. My mother died April 1st, 1765, aged 43 years and 6 months. My Father died August 8th, 1786, aged 76 years, 7 months and 6 days.

3d. ELIZABETH BALL, born Aug. 31st, 1711. She first married John Ashby,—then John Vicaridge, and lastly to Richard Shubrick, by the latter husband she left one son Richard Shubrick, who lives in England, and I am told has a large family. She died in Charleston, Sept. 4th, 1746.

4th. JOHN COMING BALL, born Aug. 25th, 1714, was married to Catherine Gendron, Oct. 25th, 1742. 1st.—Elias Ball their son was born May 11th 1744—this is the Elias Ball of Wambaw (but now of



MRS. JOHN BALL, nee JANE BALL  
Born September 29th, 1761      Died October 5th, 1804



Bristol in England) whose estate was confiscated by the Jacksonborough Assembly; he married Catherine Gaillard (in 1766—daughter of Theodore Gaillard and Eleanor (Cordes) W. J. B.) by whom he had five daughters (and 2 sons W. J. B.). The eldest of them is married to John Moultrie Esqr. of Aston Hall in Shropshire, the others not yet married. 2nd.—Elizabeth Ball, born Feb'y 6th, 1746. She married Henry Smith, Esqr. of Goose Creek, by whom she left four daughters, viz.; Catherine, married to Dr. John Ernest Poyas, Elizabeth, single, Harriet, married to Richard Scott, Esqr., Mary Ann, single.

3rd was John Coming Ball, who died an infant. 4th was William Ball, also died an infant. 5th, Catherine Ball, born July 12th, 1751, was married to Major Benjm Smith (Major B. Smith's first wife was Elizabeth Ann Harleston, daughter of Nicholas Harleston & Sarah (Child) W. J. B.) She died without leaving issue. 6th—Anne Ball, born June 2nd, 1753. She married Richard Waring, Esqr., of Dorchester, who has left her a widow without child. Catherine Ball, wife of J. C. Ball, died September 23d, 1755. John Coming Ball married his second wife, Judith Boisseau, July 29th, 1756. John Coming Ball their son was born December 24th, 1758, he is now living. (Died October, 1792, on Long Island, N. Y. W. J. B.). Jane Ball, their daughter and my wife, born September 29th, 1761, and was married to her cousin, John Ball, January 20th, 1780, and has five sons as before mentioned. Eleanor Ball, their daughter,

born (after the death of her father), March 20th, 1765. She married Mr. John Wilson, merchant, no child and now a widow. (She afterwards married Mr. Keating Simons and had no children. Died March 20th, 1827. W. J. B.).

My uncle, John Coming Ball, died October 21st, 1764, aged 50 years and 2 months. My aunt, Judith Ball, died August 2nd, 1772, aged 41 years. Both of my Uncle's wives were descendants of French Refugee Families that settled in this country after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantz.

5th. ELEANOR BALL, daughter of Elias Ball and Mary his wife, (Born April 17th, 1731—died May 22nd, 1770. W. J. B.). Married Col. Henry Laurens, by whom she left two sons and two daughters.

1st, John Laurens, who was the justly celebrated Col. John Laurens in the American Revolution.

2nd, Martha Laurens, a most amiable and accomplished woman. She is now the wife of Dr. David Ramsay.

3rd, Henry Laurens, Jr., of Mepkin, member of Assembly for St. John's Parish, and a Justice of Quorum.

4th, Eleanor Laurens, now the wife of his Excellency Charles Pinckney, Esqr., Governor of this State.

The mother of my Aunt Laurens was my Grandfather's second wife; her maiden name was Mary Delamere, by whom he had many children. (The records give the names of 7. W. J. B.), but only one that lived to be grown up.

I have heard my Father say that my Grandfather was a great sportsman in shooting and fishing. Was bold and resolute; and had frequently commanded scouting parties after Indians. A Commission, from one of the former Governors under the Lords Proprietors, for that purpose is now in my possession. At the age of Seventy, while in one of the forts in Charlestown, in time of an alarm, he offered to turn out and take a wrestle with any of the veterans in the Fort. He was about 75 or 76 years old when he died.

My Father and Uncle, John C. Ball, were *honest*, peaceable, domestick men. Their ambition was to live happy and contented in private life. They resided chiefly on their plantations, Kensington and Hyde Park, that they might be near each other, as there ever subsisted the utmost harmony and brotherly affection between them. They were very easy, indulgent masters, which united to their not being of an enterprising disposition, prevented that accumulation of property which was so favourable in their younger days; especially on taking up grants of valuable lands, vast bodies of fertile swamps were then vacant. They each of them, however, had the happiness to leave a pretty beginning for their children.

NOTE.—“*James Child*, of Childbury, formerly of the parish of Amersham, in the county of Berk, who making some opposition to Lord Chancellor Jeffries, was thereby obliged to fly. He came to Carolina for refuge, where he spent the remainder

of his days. His son Isaac was the only one of his children that came to America."

(This paper is copied from a copy taken from the original by Mr. W. J. Ball, of Limerick Plantation. A. S. D.).

ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT made February, 1818, between John Ball, Planter, and Arthur McFarland, Overseer.

ARTICLE 1. John Ball will pay Arthur McFarland at the rate of two hundred and fifty dollars per Annum as wages, provided he discharges his duty faithfully as an Overseer—superintending Back-river plantation.

ARTICLE 2. Arthur McFarland shall have one-third of the hogs raised at Back-river plantation and one-half of the poultry raised on the said plantation during his superintendence.

ARTICLE 3. Arthur McFarland shall have liberty to keep one horse, which shall be fed in the same manner that the plantation horses are fed, and shall have the milk of one cow from the first of October to the first of May, and the milk of four cows from the first of May to the first of October every year during his superintendence.

ARTICLE 4. John Ball will let Arthur McFarland have a boy to wait on him and a woman to cook and wash for him.

ARTICLE 5. Arthur McFarland engages on his part for and in consideration of the foregoing wages and privileges to be active and diligent in promoting the interest of John Ball—taking care of the ne-



groes; especially when sick—treating them when well with moderation and humanity—and is on no occasion to beat them with sticks—when necessary always to correct with switches.

ARTICLE 6. John Ball reserves to himself the right of discharging Arthur McFarland from his employ at any time that he should think A. McFarland's conduct deserving of such treatment, and in such case will only pay up to the time of such discharge.

In witness of our agreeing to the above six articles, we hereunto sign our names.

ARTHUR MCFARLANE.

JOHN BALL.

It is considered by John Ball that Arthur McFarlane is to have Bread Kind for his family use, such as Rice, Corn, and Potatoes.

NOTE.—No ill treatment was permitted. I know for a fact that an overseer was immediately discharged when a child of six who had seen him kicking an offending negro, rushed to his father and reported the occurrence.

# CHART A.

(Emigrant, 1698.)	1 Elias Ball Eliz. Harleston }	2 Ann 1 Capt. P. Dawes 2 George Austin }	Austin	George Eleanor John Moultrie	14 Elizabeth 15 Elias 16 Isaac 17 Lydia 1 Edw. Simons }	Simons	Edward	46 Catherine John Moultrie }
	2 John Coming 1 Cath. Gendron }	3 Eleanor	Shubrick	Richard	18 John 1 Jane Ball 2 M. C. Swinton }	Bryan	Elizabeth John Ball John Miss Legari }	47 Jno. Coming Elias Lydia J. Slater Elizabeth Fisher Ann Shute Eleanor Henry Son Catherine Dr. I. E. Poyas Elizabeth Judith Ann Harriet Mary Ann Sarah Jane Ball }
Mary Delamare }	7 Sarah 8 Delamare 9 William 10 George 11 Eleanor Col. Hy. Laurens }	6 John Coming 1 Cath. Gendron }	Laurens	20 Elizabeth Henry Smith	21 John Coming 22 William 23 Catherine Maj. Benj. Smith 24 Ann Richard Waring	Smith	Elizabeth Judith Ann Harriet Mary Ann Sarah Jane Ball	
	12 Mary 13 Son	2 Judith Boisseau }		25 Jane 26 John Coming 27 David 28 Jane John Ball 29 Eleanor 1 John Wilson 2 Keating Simons }				

## DATES FOR CHART A.

Chart No.	Born.	Died.	Married.	
1. Elias Ball ..... (About)	1675	1751	(1) 1700	(2) 1721
2. Ann .....	1701	1765	(1) 1716	(2)-(3)
3. Eleanor .....	1707	1724	—	
4. Elias .....	1709	1786	1747	
5. Elizabeth .....	1711	1746	(1)-(2)	1729 (3)
6. John Coming .....	1714	1764	(1) 1742	(2) 1756
7. Sarah .....	1722	1737	—	
8. Delamare .....	1723	1725	—	
9. William .....	1726	1727	—	
10. George .....	1728	—	—	
11. Eleanor .....		1731	1770	1750
12. Mary .....	1733	1748	—	
13. Son .....	1734	—	—	
14. Elizabeth .....	1748	1750	—	
15. Elias .....	1752	1810	—	
16. Isaac .....	1754	1776	—	
17. Lydia .....	1757	1843	(1) 1771	(2) 1782
18. John .....	1760	1817	(1) 1780	(2) 1805
19. Elias .....	1744	1822	1765	
20. Elizabeth .....	1746	1787	1764	
21. John Coming .....	1747	1750	—	
22. William .....	1750	1750	—	
23. Catherine .....	1751	1774	1773	
24. Ann .....	1753	1826	1771	
25. Jane .....	1757	1760	—	
26. John Coming .....	1758	1792	—	
27. David .....	1760	1760	—	
28. Jane .....	1761	1804	1780	
29. Eleanor .....	1765	1827	(1)-(2)	1793
46. Catherine .....	1766	1828	—	
47. John Coming .....	1768	1771	—	
48. Elias .....	1769	1769	—	
49. Lydia .....	1770	—	—	
50. Elizabeth .....	1773	—	—	
51. Anne .....	1775	—	—	
52. Eleanor .....	1779	—	—	

## CHART B.

			53	Elias Catherine C. Dawson }	75	Elizabeth Carolina Edmund J. Shubrick }
	30	John 1 Elizabeth Bryan }	54	Lydia Jane F. M. Waring }	76	John Ball E. C. Harleston Ann Simons Lewis Simons Edmund Thomas Francis Malbone }
			55	Elizabeth Bryan		
			56	Eleanor Simons		
			57	John Coming		
			58	Ann Dr. E. H. Deas }	77	Deas Ann Simons Henry Deas }
		2 Ann Simons }	59	Keating Simons		
			60	Judith Boisseau		
	31	Elias				
			61	Isaac		
			62	Eliza Catherine		
					76	William James Catherine J. Gibbs
					77	Isaac Mary L. Moultrie
			63	William James Julia Cart }	78	John A Edith Prioleau
John Ball 1 Jane Ball }					79	Elias Mary H. Wilson
					80	Francis Guerin
					81	Eliza Catherine
					82	Maria Louisa
					83	Jane James P. Foster
	32	Isaac Eliza C. Poyas }		Mary H. Gibbs }	84	Mathurin Guerin R. Julia Locke
					85	Mary
					86	Lydia Child
					87	Eleanor
			64	Jane Jno. G. Shoolbred }	Shoolbred	John Gibbes
			65	John Maria L. Gibbs }	88	Isaac
					89	John Coming Ann H. Simons
	33	William James			90	Mathurin Guerin
	34	Edward				
2 M. C. Swinton }						See Chart C

## DATES FOR CHART B.

Chart No.	Born.	Died.	Married.	
30. John .....	1782	1834	(1) 1804	(2) 1814
31. Elias .....	1784	1797	—	
32. Isaac .....	1785	1825	1810	
33. William James .....	1787	1808	—	
34. Edward .....	1788	1796	—	
53. Elias .....	1805	1834	1829	
54. Lydia Jane .....	1807	1841	1827	
55. Elizabeth Bryan .....	1809	1826	—	
56. Eleanor Simons .....	1811	1817	—	
57. John Coming .....	1812	1845	—	
58. Ann .....	1815	1859	1838	
59. Keating Simons .....	1818	1891	—	
60. Judith Boisseau .....	1820	1823	—	
61. Isaac .....	1818	1824	—	
62. Eliza Catherine .....	1821	1824	—	
63. William James .....	1821	1891	(1) 1842	(2) 1862
64. Jane .....	1823		1842	
65. John .....	1825	1852	1846	
75. Elizabeth Carolina .....	1830	1896	1850	
76. William James .....	1842	1880	1868	
77. Isaac .....	1844		1869	
78. John .....	1846		1869	
79. Elias .....	1848		1891	
80. Francis Guerin .....	1850	1850	—	
81. Eliza Catherine .....	1864			
82. Maria Louisa .....	1866			
83. Jane .....	1867		1891	
84. Mathurin Guerin .....	1869	1894	1893	
85. Mary .....	1871			
86. Lydia Child .....	1873			
87. Eleanor .....	1878			
88. Isaac .....	1847	1847	—	
89. John Coming .....	1848		1877	
90. Mathurin Guerin .....	1850	1852	—	

# CHART C.

John Ball  
Jane Ball

}   See Chart B		John Eliza R. Laurens	
35	Caroline Olivia John Laurens	} Laurens	{ Caroline 1 J. W. Read 2 Lieut. Maffit, U. S. N.
36	Martha Angeline	}	{ Bulow T. Lionel John Charles
37	Alwyn Esther McClellan	}	{ Louisa Laura Rutledge John Alwyn Emilie G. Fraser Esther Sarah Wm. A. Butler Wm. Carol 1 Isabelle Fraser 2 M. H. Tompkins Alwyn Rebecca O'Brien Jno. Isaac Lionel McClellan Augusta A. Hunt Dillon Edward Cynthia E. Hunt
38	Hugh Swinton Anna C. Chauning	}	{ Infants Amelia Waring John Hugh Rose Elias Ball Maria Kate Waring Susan Rose Jas. Rose
39	Elias Octavus Amelia Waring	}	{ 71 Amelia Waring D. H. Rutledge 72 Elias Nonns Annie Odenheimer 73 Hugh Swinton Rosa Lucas 74 Sophia Malbone W. H. Odenheimer 75 Susan Olivia W. L. Venning Charlotte B. B. Simons Martha Caroline B. G. Pinckney Eliza Lucilla Hutson Lee Lydia Catherine Wm. Elnathan Emma Heyward
40	Susanna Splatt Wm. E. Haskell	}	{ 76 Annie Odenheimer J. C. Brewster 100 Elias Hugh Swinton 101 Margaret Mary 102 Elias Duodecimius 103 Rosa Adela Wm. Henry
41	Alphonso Coming Eliza Lucilla	}	{ Edmund Thomas Martha Caroline Wm. Edward Lydia Catherine Sophia Thomas Malbone Fannie C. Simons Caroline Angeline John Ball Susan Ball Francis H. Edward A. Canny Lucilla
42	R. Dewar Simons	}	{ Edw. William Angeline

M. C. Swinton

## DATES FOR CHART C.

Chart No.	Born.	Died.	Married.
35. Caroline Olivia .....	1806	1828	1823
36. Martha Angelina .....	1806	1816	—
37. Alwyn .....	1807	1835	
38. Hugh Swinton .....	1808	1838	
39. Elias Octavus .....	1809	1843	1830
40. Susanna Splatt .....	1810	1841	
41. Alphonso Coming .....	1812	1822	—
42. Eliza Lucilla .....	1814	1849	
43. Lydia Catherine .....	1816	1858	1832
44. Edward William .....	1816	1816	—
45. Angeline .....	1818	1819	—
66. Martha Caroline .....	1827		
67. John Alwyn .....	1828	1829	—
68. Mary Catherine .....	1830	1832	—
69. Isaac .....	1831	1852	1850
70. Alwyn .....	1834		1853
71. Amelia Waring .....	1832	1892	1853
72. Elias Nonus .....	1834	1872	1861
73. Hugh Swinton .....	1836		
74. Sophia Malbone .....	1837	1891	1862
91. Louisa Rutledge .....	1854	1882	—
92. John Alwyn .....	1855		
93. Esther Sarah .....	1856		
94. William Carol .....	1858		
95. Alwyn .....	1859		
96. John Isaac .....	1860	1861	—
97. Lionel McClellan .....	1862		
98. Dillon Edward .....	1866		
99. Annie Odenheimer .....	1865		
100. Elias Hugh Swinton ....	1867	1885	—
101. Margaret Mary .....	1872	1872	—
102. Elias Duodecimus .....	1868		
103. Rosa Adela .....	1871		







PLAN OF BALL CEMETERY  
AT  
STRAWBERRY





BALL CEMETERY AT STRAWBERRY



GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST



STRAWBERRY CHAPEL, 1907  
St. John's, Berkeley Parish, S. C.





















