

Cooper 1889

H. Simon 10. March 1809

My Dear Hamilton,

I should have been to Hopeton before

this but have been quite lame for some time

I must now give you the commencement of my history.  
I was born on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 1759 - at 1 o'clock in the morning  
in a dreadful snow drift storm, and this is all I recollect  
on my coming into this best of all possible worlds -  
I believe I was an idle boy - prefered fishing and running about  
to my book and so to get clear of me. I was transported  
from Scotland to Iowannah when I arrived 22. Oct 1775.  
So you have the first Chapter of your Grand History  
life.

I staggered out this forenoon to give old Honey  
our old Nick - but old Prison Honey - decided to -  
prepare land for me - and I took forward to sending  
Mr. Butler - some cart loads - for his good boys if he can  
find any amongst you - The bad boys may scrape  
their hands - & good enough for them.

If you have any kind of spin switches to spare send me  
some down for your cousin John Kerans.

How comes on your felly - disorder -  
What does old McConn say about your cheating him with  
your lame Blinder. osello

Tell Ala & John that I will send them each some melons with  
Mienoramus Musum. Make my respectful compliments to Mr  
Lutten - & tell him to remember Blondin - Ward -

I am My Dear Hamilton your affec<sup>t</sup>ed friend &c

John Cooper

Martin Hamilton Cooper

Hopeton

John Cooper  
March 1889

My Grandfather

Mr John Cooper, the son  
of this letter was the third  
son of the Rev John Cooper  
pastor of Scotch Church

of Scotland, who was the son  
of Mr Cooper the proprietor  
of Symington, near Glasgow.  
One of Mr John Cooper's sons  
brothers was Prof J. A. Cooper,  
the other Mr J. A. Cooper Esq  
of Glasgow & a third Alexander  
Cooper died young. He lived  
and at Hopeton

his burial at the church in Iowannah

March 1889

Hamilton Cooper  
May 1889



*An Atlanta writer and sixth-generation Georgian strings a fascinating necklace of gems excerpted from some family letters dating from 1775 on the Georgia Coast. She has donated the entire collection of Couper family memorabilia, including paintings by John Lord Couper, to the Coastal Historical Society Museum at St. Simons Island, Georgia, where they may be viewed this August.*

# The Coupers Of Cannon's Point

By Ann Giudici Fetrner

From the Civil War diary of one Colonel Dean, U.S. Army, on blockade duty off the coast of Georgia:

"We anchored in Altamaha Sound in December, 1861, after the fall of Port Royal to our cannon. The dark woods on a marshy spit of land could not hide from view a large home on a bluff above the river and, as we had been so long on board our ship and desired to explore this wild mainland, Henry and I took a dinghy and rowed ourselves landward. We tied up at a dock beneath the house and walked through a large garden. On all sides were what appeared to be palm trees of several kinds, many with dark red fruits growing from spikey projections of a strident yellow.

"The first story of the house was constructed of the same rough stone and shell [tabby, made of crushed oyster shell, lime and sand] we had seen in several coastal buildings, and the wooden house, white-painted with green shutters, rose high above this foundation. Crossing a wide piazza, Henry and I entered the front door and in some haste, for the house, though deserted, seemed full of its former occupants, made a tour of inspection and left. As we departed, I picked up from the library floor several old letters amongst the papers scattered

there. Their dates showed them to be some 75 years old, and I thought to keep them as souvenirs."

Written on a large manila envelope containing some nine letters and signed by James Maxwell Couper, New York, 1923:

"The letters in this envelope came into my possession in an unusual coincidence. When I was living in New York, in 1909, I became well acquainted with an elderly gentleman, a Col. Dean, and as we were talking one day, he recalled to me that the only time he had ever visited Georgia was during the Civil War, when he was stationed off the coast on blockade duty. He told me that one day, when everything was quiet and peaceful, he visited St. Simons and went into a large house which was deserted. As souvenirs, he took along several letters found on the floor. 'It seems to me that they bore your name, and I will bring them for you to see,' he told me. He did so, and I informed him that they were letters to and from my great-grandfather, John Couper. Now, the remarkable thing about this is that when Col. Dean picked up the letters in 1861, they were over 50 years old — then he had them in his possession for another 50 years and met the descen-

dant of John Couper in New York and returned them to me . . ."

It is now 70 years ago the letters referred to came into the possession of my grandfather, James Maxwell Couper. Together with some 346 other letters and documents still in family hands, they form a small, fascinating look at the history of one family and, as many of them are over 150 years old, they evoke a vital picture of the times in which they were written and of the early history of the Georgia coast.

My grandfather, in whose Atlanta home I was largely raised, was a delightful man. Much like his great-grandfather, old John Couper of St. Simons Island, he had a marvelous sense of humor which kept in perspective many of the sad realities of the post-Civil War South. "When people talk too much about their families," he'd say in my grandmother's general direction (her family was from coastal Virginia and everyone knows how that goes), "it's like talking about potatoes — the best part is underground."

Let me share some of my "Georgia potatoes."

A very long letter sent in 1775 by William Couper, pastor of a church in Lochwinnoch, Scotland, to his son John, then working in St. Augustine, Florida, shows much interest in the activities surrounding the opening of the American Revolutionary War:

"A spirit of privateering is going briskly on against the French and Americans in this country and with great success, especially against the French, from whom we have taken three or four East Indian ships, very rich, and several West Indian ships [successfully] in so much that it is computed that we have taken from them to the value of 2,000,000 [pounds sterling], which will help well to defray the expenses of the American and French war. If we go on to be successful making captures but for three months to come as we have been since we began, the French will repent their meddling between Britain and America."

Three years later, an even longer letter from Scotland does not mention blockades, privateers or France, so one can assume the ongoing American Revolution was an accepted fact, at least as far as the old minister was concerned, for he wrote to his young son primarily about various shipments from Scotland to St. Augustine. He did not neglect, however, to slip in a bit of moral advice to this boy so far from home:

"As I wrote in my former letter, keep yourself as free as you can from any lust, the cause of blame on any life, and for this purpose, act honestly and fairly, with care and integrity, joining with neither side, but in so far as they are in the right, keeping your own counsel."

That John Couper followed his father's advice — and his own inclinations — is evidenced in a letter written by Thomas Jefferson to the American Consul in Marseilles in March of 1806. Mr. Jefferson first states he is disappointed the French olive trees sent earlier by the Consul were distributed to those "without the enthusiasm necessary to give it success, and it has failed. Mr. John Couper of St. Simons Island in Georgia now proposes to undertake it, and being led to it by inclination and [being] a gentleman of property, he will give the culture a fair try, and I trust its favorable issue is beyond a doubt. He has been informed of the superior excellence of the olive of Marseilles and, knowing of your friendly disposition to our country, I have taken the liberty of

*"My son John  
has now been two  
years settled for himself in  
the wild woods of America  
(Florida), among the bears  
and tigers, upon a piece of  
good land in the center  
of a large swamp."*

advising him to address himself to you, to put his commission into your faithful hands. I ask the favor of you to give such aid to his operations as you can with convenience and will deem it a great personal obligation rendered to myself."

Two hundred olive trees were shipped to St. Simons Island, and most survived the five-month ocean trip from France. They grew well, and until the Civil War, they produced from 300 to 500 bottles of oil annually.

Olive oil, however, was simply one of John Couper's horticultural experiments, as were the date palms from Persia noted by Col. Dean. The house at Cannon's Point and the surrounding acreage, which made up the northeast end of St. Simons Island, was surrounded on three sides by gardens filled with orange, lime and lemon trees, as well as fig, guava and pomegranate. Although major farming would soon be done at Hopeton on the Altamaha River, mainland property which John Couper purchased the same year the olive tree order was placed, he always felt most at home on St. Simons.

In 1846 the English geologist and naturalist Sir Charles Lyell was taken from Hopeton by James Hamilton Couper, John's son, to Cannon's Point. Lyell wrote of that visit: "The banks of the river are adorned with orange trees, loaded with golden fruit and very orna-

mental. The Negro houses were neat and whitewashed, all floored with wood, each with an apartment called the hall, two sleeping rooms and a loft for the children.

"We landed at the northeast end of St. Simons, called Cannon's Point. We found Mr. Couper's villa near the water's edge, shaded by a veranda and a sago tree. There were also many lemon trees, somewhat injured by the late frost, but the olives, of which there is a fine grove here, were unharmed. We also admired five date palms which bear fruit. They were brought from Busora in Persia and have not suffered from the cold. The oranges have been much hurt. Some of the trees, planted by Oglethorpe's troupe in 1743, after flourishing for 93 years, were cut off in February, 1835.

"I went with Mr. Couper to Long Island, the outermost barrier of land between St. Simons and the ocean, four miles long. On the sea beach we gathered no less than 29 specimens of marine shells. We visited the hospital, which consists of three separate wards, one for men, another for women and one of lying-in women. The latter are always allowed a month's rest after confinement."

Long Island was described by Fannie Kemble, the famous British actress, as "a small green screen of wilderness that interposes between St. Simons and the Atlantic, a wild little sand heap covered by thick forest growth, beyond which is the desolate beach and the boundless ocean." It was grazing ground for Couper cattle. When the island was finally sold in 1895 to a company intending to build a resort hotel, its name was changed to Sea Island.

Although the family rumor has it that John Couper left Scotland partly as a consequence of having heaved snowballs at a newly married couple leaving his father's church, and while he himself said, "I left for the good of the country," his letters to Scotland make it obvious his emigration to the Colonies was prompted by his adventurous spirit. His life seemed always balanced between senses of responsibility and humor, as indicated by this letter dated May 24, 1828, to his brother:

"It is long since I wrote you and longer since I heard from you. I hope to hear oftener and promise better behavior. Since I wrote you last (as we Yankees say), I guess a considerable change has taken place in my concerns. Something like a bankruptcy. I have, however, paid all my debts in full and have a competence left.

"You know I commenced planting without capital, of course had to go into debt, and eight per cent compounded interest I find to be the real perpetual motion. Though tolerably successful, I had sad reverses. Embargoes, non-intercourse and war interfered with my prospects,

Photography By Stephen Rasé



whilst interest progressed. My loss of 80 prime and effective Negroes carried off by the enemy [the War of 1812] lessened my annual income [a] full \$15,000. To supply their place in part, I bought 120 slaves, for which I paid an average \$450.

"Crops were not favorable in 1824. I had matured a crop of 800 bales of cotton which would have produced \$80,000. This was lost in 12 hours by hurricane. In 1825 I again nearly lost my crop by caterpillars. Cotton then sunk in price without any prospects of improvement. Lands were reduced to one half of their value and slaves to \$250 or \$200.

"In short, I saw no hope of paying off my debts and retaining my property, and though not pushed, thought it best during my life to meet the storm. So, to make a long story short, Mr. Hamilton [his partner in both emigration from Scotland and in many land dealings] being my principal creditor, on his agreeing to pay what other debts I owed, I surrendered to him all my property, debts and dues of every description in a lump without valuation, except my lands on St. Simons and a hundred slaves.

"So on the first day of January, 1827, I was thrown on the world without a dollar to support my people and my family — and glad to get off so well." [Half of what Mr. Hamilton received from John Couper was, at the same time, sold to James Hamilton Couper, his oldest son, along with the management of all those lands, which continued until his death.]

The letter continues discussing his son's financial and planting plans in conjunction with Mr. Hamilton and goes on to relate to his oldest brother the status of his other children:

"My son John has been now two years settled for himself in the wild woods of America [Florida], among the bears and tigers, upon a piece of good land in the center of a large swamp. I should describe the situation, though I have never been there, but Mr. Fraser [his son-in-law] will give you a better account, as he is settling a place adjoining. He [John] now boasts of being a good liver, having cattle, sheep and poultry about him. Mr. Fraser will tell you of the approach to John's den by torchlight, equal in grandeur to the approach of Telemachus to the I.R. [this reference is unclear].

"Mrs. Fraser and the family are still with us. She now has five children, one boy and four girls, all fine healthy children. My daughter, Isabella, is near 13 years — quite a blue stocking — but too much of the Couper in appearance to be handsome. I beg my fair cousins' pardon. I don't include them. My son, William, now near 11, is an idle boy and would sooner walk a mile to race home on a plough horse than learn his lessons. I, however, intend to make a philosopher of him. Next year we shall send him to an academy at Northampton, Mass., and when he has laid in a sufficient amount

of Yankee cunning, I shall send him to Berlin in order to unlearn roguery and gain honor — German principles. At about 24, he may return home to plant cowpeas and pumpkins and eat fat meat, as his father has done." [James, the brother to whom this letter was written, was professor of astronomy at the University of Glasgow. How peculiar his younger brother's life in America must have seemed to him over the years.]

That John Couper saw himself in the same light is shown in a letter dated 1839, addressed to his grandson, Hamilton, who had evidently inquired about his grandfather's history:

"I should have been to Hopetown before this but have been quite lame for some time. I must now give you the commencement of my history. I was born on the 9th of March, 1759, at 1 o'clock in the morning in a dreadful snow drift storm, and this is all I recollect on my coming into this best of all possible worlds.

"I believe I was an idle boy, preferring fishing and running about to my books, and so to get clear of me I was transported from Scotland to Savannah, where I arrived 22 Oct., 1775. So you have the first chapter of your grandfather's life."

There were many more facts which young Hamilton would acquire about John Couper. One of the leading agriculturalists in America and the developer of long staple sea island cotton, John Couper experimented successfully with the growing and extraction of sugar cane. In 1796 he was a member of the State Legislature and was instrumental in defeating the Yazoo Fraud, a neat bit of scoundrellism by which previous members of the Legislature had sold 20 million acres of Indian land — comprising the territories of what are now Alabama and Mississippi — to four private companies.

In 1798 Couper represented Glynn County in the statewide convention which drew up the Constitution of Georgia. He was one of the first vestrymen of Christ Church (St. Simons Island), first president of the St. Andrews Society of Darien, first president of the Union Agricultural Society and lifetime member of the St. Simons Hunt Club. John Couper gave to the government the four acres on which the St. Simons lighthouse stands (he gave it for that specific purpose).

He contributed — at what must have been a sacrifice for such a lover of all growing things — the finest tree on his place to be used as the sternpost of the *USS Constitution*. An article in a *Darien Gazette* of the times reads: "There is an old live oak stump on Mr. Couper's plantation from which the original sternpost of the *Constitution* was taken. Shortly after the capture of the *Guerrière* by that vessel, a bay tree sprung from the center of the old stump — and has continued to flourish ever since — and as an

evergreen may be seen at all times of the year constantly increasing in beauty and strength. We are told that Mr. Couper guards it with uncommon care." The green bay tree was a symbol of ever-renewing life in the Book of Proverbs, a fact surely known to a preacher's son.

That John Couper knew most of the famous men of his day is reflected in a letter from Aaron Burr (who was retrenching in Georgia after his famous duel, fatal to Alexander Hamilton) to his daughter Theodosia. This letter describes the devastating hurricane which destroyed much of the Southern coast in 1804:

"On Friday last, hearing that Mr. Couper had returned home and was seriously ill, I took a small canoe with two boys and went to see him. He lay in a high fever. When about to return in the evening, the wind had risen so that after an ineffectual attempt, I was obliged to give it up and remain at Mr. C's. In the morning, the wind was still higher. It continued to rise and by noon blew a gale from the north, which together with the swelling of the waters became alarming.

"From twelve to three, several of the out houses had been destroyed, and most of the trees about the house had been blown down. The house in which we were shook and rocked so much that Mr. C. began to express his apprehension for our safety. Before three, four of the piazza was carried away, two or three of the windows burst in, the house was inundated with water, and presently, one of the chimneys fell. Mr. C. then commenced a retreat to a store house about fifty yards off, and we decamped, men, women and children.

"You may imagine in this scene of confusion many incidents to amuse one, if one had dared to be amused in a moment of such anxiety. The house, however, did not blow down. The storm continued until after four and then very suddenly abated and in ten minutes was almost calm. I seized the moment to return home.

"Before I got quite over [he had been staying with the Butlers across Jones Creek], the gale rose from the southeast and threatened new destruction. It lasted a great part of the night but did not attain the volume of that from the north, yet it contrived to raise still higher the water which was the principal instrument of destruction.

"The flood was about seven feet above the height of the ordinary tide. This has been sufficient to inundate a great part of the coast, to destroy all the rice, to carry off most of the buildings which were in the low lands and to destroy the lives of many blacks (not the Couper people)."

A few weeks later, Burr again wrote Theodosia:

"Yesterday, my neighbor Mr. Couper /continued on page 151

COUPERS/ from page 81

sent me an assortment of French wines, claret and sauternes, all excellent. Also an orange shrub, a delicious punch, and Madame Couper has added sweets and pickles sufficient to last at least twelve months.

"The plantations of Butler and Couper are divided by a small creek. The cotton crop in this neighborhood has been entirely destroyed. The crop of Mr. Couper was supposed to be worth a hundred thousand dollars. He will not get enough to pay one half of the expense of the plantation. Yet he laughs about it with good humor and without affectation."

Of all passed down through the years about John Couper, it is his sense of humor and gracious charm which most delights. He once suggested one of his men, Johnny, to whom he had taught the blowing of the bagpipes, be allowed to play them in lieu of a disputed organ in Christ Church. His six-foot, blue-eyed, red-haired presence was always welcome at social functions, and he was eagerly sought out by his myriad grandchildren, many of whom were raised under his feet.

Of his oldest son, James Hamilton Couper, John was to be justly proud (though he would twit James' seriousness and refer to him as "the old gentleman" among the grandchildren). James was to become a leading agriculturist, conchologist, paleontologist and naturalist (the family of gopher snakes, including the long, night-sky blue, rodent-killing Indigo, are named after him).

The young girl James took as his wife was Caroline Wyly, youngest daughter to a family split by the Revolution and recently returned to the United States from their exile in Nassau. A partial account of Caroline and James' wedding comes from letters written by Mary Williamson Houstoun, Caroline's first cousin, to her mother:

"I write again today for I know you wish to hear from us. After breakfast, 'Aunt' Margaret said Caroline would show us the things that had been provided for her outfit, but before telling you of them, I must from the very thankfulness of a satisfied appetite speak of the delightful things we enjoyed at our morning meal — hot waffles 'crisp,' fish caught just an hour and brought still fluttering to old Die, the cook, who had grilled them over the hot coals, honey hominy and orange and peach preserves with coffee half cream, but which was so strong that the cream became a part of itself. Captain Wyly's fish was not broiled but unscalded (I hope not alive) had been wrapped in a brown leaf and buried in hot ashes. He lifts the sides and declares that until one has eaten fish cooked this way, you do not know the true flavor of fish fresh from the water. He drinks three cups of green tea, eats one waffle and his one fish each morning

and but a little dinner. Nero, the fisherman, goes out every night so as to keep the table provided. He grooms the three horses and fishes when the tide suits. These are the whole day's tasks. Is that a hard slavery? or even a hard lot in life when we remember he has no care for the morrow to worry his mind or old age to dread?

"But I must return to a more important matter, Caroline's outfit. She has had two dresses made in Savannah by Madame Beaulard, Congress Street, the wedding dress and a visiting and reception costume, and she has four home gowns made by 'Delia,' the seamstress under Cousin Susan's direction. They are very pretty and will be becoming. The wedding dress is of crepe de lisse over a white satin slip. The corsage [sic] full and rather high in front, edged with a narrow rouleau of lace. The sleeves are very short, puffed full and set in a satin band, giving the effect of a calyx of flower. The skirt has 2 rows of graduated satin leaves, arranged in 2 rows from the hem to the waist. In front, the waist is finished with a satin sash. The reception dress is of 'gros de Naples' of a brownish rose color and is trimmed in white. It fastens in the back, finished off in front with two rows of interlaced crescents. The sleeves are long, the bodice is ornamented by the continuation of the double crescents diverging from the skirt's center to each shoulder. These crescents are in silver braid."

This mother-daughter letter details in the most careful terms the rest of the trousseau, including the quantities of lingerie and the pearl jewelry which was "the groom's gifts." Mary Houstoun's description of the main drawing room in the house continues: "The room is large and lighted by four windows. The walls are white with a wainscot of dark cypress three feet above the floor. Engravings hang on the walls, mostly water scenes of the West Indian seas. Above the mantle hang two portraits (side by side), one of Wellington and the other of Nelson, the ideals in this household of ability, loyalty, truth and honor. I wonder if Aunt M., Capt. W. and Susan ever recall to their minds Lady Hamilton, Honoria or Lady Sybil in Portugal, but we women of 1827 can shut our eyes and close our ears, 'blessed by God for the power.'"

Her next letter home describes the wedding: "Well, the 25th passed and Cousin Caroline is Mrs. James Hamilton Couper, and by this time . . . for it is four o'clock . . . is at Hopetown in her own house. She was married at seven thirty in the drawing room, standing before the Wellington and Nelson portraits, which was, Susan says, 'the real reason Aunt Margaret refused to have a church ceremony.' The Rev. Mr. Matthew officiated. Capt. Wyly wore his regimentals (the first and only time he has donned

## WHERE GREAT EXPECTATIONS ARE FULFILLED

Greek Revival Mansion Built in 1848 surrounded by 13 acres of the original plantation.

Featuring a Traditional and Regional American Menu offering five course complete dinners. Open Monday-Saturday, 5 pm for cocktails, 6 pm for dinner.

For Reservations—427-4646  
780 South Cobb Drive, Marietta

The American Express® Card. Don't leave home without it.

Need Promotional Buttons In A Hurry?

Call The Button Factory  
(404) 457-2523

ATLANTA'S ONLY AUTOMATED BUTTON FACTORY: MANUFACTURERS OF CELLULOID BUTTONS WITH COMPLETE IN-HOUSE CAPABILITY. COMPUTERIZED TYPESETTING, PRINTING AND CAMERA WORK DONE ON PREMISES. FAST SERVICE (72 HOURS) BADGES ARE ALSO AVAILABLE.

IN PINETREE SHOPPING CENTER  
5269-15 BUFORD HIGHWAY  
DORAVILLE, GEORGIA 30340

### "OLD WORLD CRAFTSMANSHIP AND PERSONALIZED SERVICE"

- Tune-Ups to Overhauls.
- 25 Years Experience In Import Repairs
- All New Facilities

IMPORT PERFORMANCE CENTRE, LTD.

2400-B Old Stone Mountain Road  
Chamblee, Georgia 30341 404/455-4752



# ATLANTA

ditos Of Luxury Living	Neil Shister
pers Of Cannon's Point	Ann Giudici Fettner
cks A Deadly Killer	Jeffrey R. Lauterbach
g Professions	Tom Chaffin
Candidates On The Record, Part Three	Paul Troop
ne Darden Has Our Number	Margaret Doris
rkness To Light	James B. Sanders
Notes	Melinda Boyer
	Joseph H. Perrin
	Barbara Thomas
	Mavis Coady
	William Schemmel
	James B. Sanders
que	Jim Peck
Sphere	Tom Houck
	Thomas Cook
	William Schemmel
tings	Neil Shister
1981 Decorators' Show House	Alexandra Mettler
: Summer In A Jar	Ann Giudici Fettner
Designer Cosmetics	Alix Kenagy
ics Par Excellence	Nathalie Dupree

COVER PHOTOGRAPHY  
CLARK/MACDOH

Volume 21, Number 2 Editorial, Subscription and Advertising offices are at 6285 Barfield Road, Telephone for all departments: (404) 256-6800. ATLANTA Magazine is published by Communication Media, Inc., Chairman of the Board; B. J. Koster, President; Arthur T. Patten, Secretary; John W. Second Chair, Chairman of the Board; Atlanta, Georgia. SUBSCRIPTIONS: The rate (12 issues per year) is one year in the U.S. and possessions. Per year in Canada and Mexico, \$14; foreign, \$40 per year. Prices include postage. Subscriptions are not available for less than one year. BACK ISSUES: \$2.25 each, prepaid. The Circulation Department. ALL PRICES are subject to change without notice. COPYRIGHT: All rights reserved. Copyright 1981 by Communication Media, Inc. All rights are reserved under the Pan American Copyright Act of 1978. ATLANTA Magazine is registered. REPRINTS: No portion of this magazine may be reproduced in any form without prior consent of the Publisher. CONTRIBUTIONS: The Editors do not assume responsibility for the return of unsolicited contributions. A stamped, self-addressed envelope must accompany all such contributions. RESPONSIBILITY: Neither ATLANTA Magazine nor Communication Media, Inc. stands responsible for the opinions or facts of authors. CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Please send your new address and return address to the Circulation Department, ATLANTA Magazine, 6285 Barfield Road, Atlanta, Georgia 30318. Allow six weeks for the change to become effective. ISSN-0046-6701.

them since leaving Nassau. All the island people were here, which made it so crowded that there could be no dancing. The negroes, though, were pressed all around the windows, and Johnny, Mr. John Couper's musical personal man, played on the lawn, and they performed some marvelous gymnastics. The lawn was lit by 4 fire stands, and it was very picturesque. This Johnny, I am told, is a marvel [and] wonder. He plays the fiddle, which he calls his 'violine,' the clarinet and a set of Scotch pipes or pipe Brooch sent him from Aberdeen at Mr. Couper's request. He fills the place of court jester to Mr. John Couper, who has all the wit and humor of the family, excepting, of course, George Baillie, who is in quite another class, being English bred and Oxford taught.

"The groom, to whom I have left the larger part of my letter, I saw first in the forenoon of the 25th, when he came to sign some papers Capt. Wyll thought necessary. He is very tall, well-made — for endurance, not activity — of the Roman type, a broad and high forehead and sensitive mouth. He wears whiskers close-trimmed, army fashion, no mustache. His manner is stiff and formal but very courteous. His fund of information, practical and literary, is immense, but he is rigidly correct in speech, tone and thought, so much that one cannot help wishing he were less so. He is so perfectly proper that impropriety gains a charm to those thrown with and associated with him.

"At eleven we went in to supper in the dining room with an overflowing table set in the piazza, mostly a meat affair, cold roast and a boiled turkey, stuffed hams, two oyster pies and plates of shrimp and crab, syllabub by the 100 glasses, the punch bowl (twice filled). At 12 the health of the bride and groom were drunk in full glass and 'they turned down.' They curtsied and bowed good night and took leave for Cannon's Point. From there they will go tomorrow to Hopetown with the early flood tide. I will write again soon, dear Mother. Caroline has asked both of us to come to Hopetown — and when we are at Mrs. Brailsford, we may see her big house, a sketch of which her husband gave me. It looked like an English Country Seat."

The seriousness of James Hamilton Couper, his meticulousness noted by young Mary Houston, as well as his own father, can be seen in his existing plantation records. There are careful notations of each crop's planting and progress and illustrations, many in color, of the diversified planting, dikes and set-off fields. His days were scheduled to the minute, with five hours set aside for his own continuing study; the hours between two and four for natural history; those after dinner, for literature and philosophy.

He was a dedicated participant, how-

ever, in the boat racing popular among Southern planters, and his boats, the *Walk-Away* and the *Becky Sharp*, the latter a cypress dugout of his own design, won many races in Savannah and Charleston. In a letter from Charleston dated Nov. 20, 1852, to his son, Hamilton, who was studying in New York, James wrote of a race:

"I telegraphed you at 5oc [5 o'clock] on the 17th instant, mentioning the victory of the *Becky Sharp* and sent you the *Charleston Mercury* containing an account of the race. The *Becky Sharp* was the admired of all admirers, and her fame is spread far and wide, and she deserves her reputation.

"There was a heavy swell, a strong wind and a current of 2 miles against her, and yet she made the distance of a mile, less 12 yards, in 6 minutes, without pressing her crew. She rode the waves like a duck, skimming from wave to wave with a continuous gliding motion. Her crew of 8 oars consisted of Jesse, Sandy, Malbrouck, Isaac and Quash (Dr. Screven's), Edward and Charles (Mr. Forman's), and Carolina (Mr. Spalding's) — and a finer one never rowed. They kept time perfectly, were perfectly cool, and not a false stroke was made. It was a pleasure to sit behind them — I steered myself. Mr. Bourke came on for that purpose but was so tight that I found it necessary to be my own coxswain. In 100 yards I perceived that the race was mine, and after that distance, my only competitor was the *North Star*, a very clean clicker boat from North Carolina, of 10 oars, manned by a pilot from Cape Fear River, the pick of 50. She was soon, however, shaken off and was left four open lengths in the rear, with so little effort that they [the Couper crew] threw their hands in the air and cheered repeatedly; and on rounding the coming-off boat, they struck up Jesse's favorite song of *Slippers, Shoes and White Stockings*."

Old John Couper's charm is nowhere better seen than in a letter written to Dr. James McGillvray Troup, planter-physician of Darien and brother of Governor George Troup. The letter is dated St. Simons Island, April 16, 1842:

"Believing it would be acceptable to you to know some particulars respecting that singular kinsman of yours, Captain Roderick McIntosh of Mallow, I sit down at the age of eighty-three to give you my reminiscences after the lapse of more than half a century.

"Recollections are not to be depended on, yet as my acquaintance with him was principally between 1777 and 1781, [I] being then from eighteen to twenty-three years [of age], and having then been strongly impressed with his character, my recollections are more vivid than matters of more recent date.

"My first recollections of Rory were on his arrival in St. Augustine in 1777,

Just The

ell  
If you don't

Northlake — a  
Cumberland —  
Southlake — a  
Candler — Ca  
Cheshire — Ca

S  
Fra  
COUNTRY

DINNER  
LUNCHEON

Featur  
wood  
for yo

Masterch

FREE PARK

2345 CHESHIRE  
IN CHESHIRE

325-69

## Good times you can taste.

Choice Steaks • Spinach Salad • Baked French Onion Soup • Nachos • 2-for-1 Happy Hours (Afternoon Late Night) • 19 Burgers • Real Value • Salad Bar • Great Chops • Tender crab and Chicken • Plentiful Platters • Sunday Brunch • Complete dinner feasts • Scrumptious desserts •

Ruby Tuesday

In Lennox Square

PUTTING ON THE RITZ  
Vintage Clothing & Collectibles

3007 Peachtree Rd., Buckhead  
263-2224 Hours: Mon.-Sat. 12-7

Kajiki

Gojinka RESTAURANT  
Authentic Japanese Cuisine

Sushi, Sashimi, Tempura  
Teriyaki, Tonkatsu and more...

Inside Pinetree Shopping Center  
5269-4 Buford Hwy.  
Doraville, Ga.  
458-0558

His loyal character was well known. On parade, some of the officers congratulated him on making his escape from the rebels. 'My escape, Sir? No, I despised them too much to run away but sent them a message that I would leave Mallow for East Florida at twelve o'clock on [the date is unclear] and to come and stop me if they dared.'

"Rory was not wealthy — a few negroes and a large stock of cattle at Mallow made him comfortable. Hunting was his business and amusement and in those days supplied a bountiful table.

"Whilst the Spanish held East Florida before 1763, he had carried there a drove of cattle and received payment in dollars, which he put in a canvas bag behind him on his horse. In returning home and near Mallow (the roads were hog paths), the canvas gave way and part of the dollars fell out. He secured those left without looking after those which were dropped. Some years after, being in want of money, he recollected his loss, went to the place, picked up as many dollars as he wanted and returned home. It is said he more than once had the same recourse.

"He was fond of dogs and besides hounds had some setters, one in particular, Quath, which he had taught to take his back scent. He laid a considerable bet that he could hide a doubleton [under a log] at three miles distant and Quath could find it. Quath went off on the trail — returned panting, his tongue out, but no doubleton. 'Treason!' cried Rory, and off he and Quath went.

"The log was turned over, and [there were indications] the dog had scratched under. A man appeared at some distance splitting rails. Rory, without ceremony, drew his club; he swore he would put him to instant death unless he returned the money. The man gave it up, said he had seen Mr. McIntosh put something under the log and [on examination] found the gold. Rory tossed him back the money. 'Take it,' says he, 'vile catif. It is not the pelf but the honor of my dog I cared for.'

"I was present in St. Augustine when Rory was once introduced to an elderly Scotch gentleman (Mr. Marion) just arrived. Rory addressed him in Gaelic. Mr. Marion lamented his ignorance. 'I pity you,' says Rory, 'but you may be an honest man for all that.'"

As he did with all others, John Couper saw the humor and humanness of this most extravagant of the Georgia McIntoshes — and loved Roderick McIntosh for himself.

John Couper left "this best of all possible worlds" at age 91 and is buried in the Christ Church yard on St. Simons. On the patinaed marble tomb are these words: "His long life was devoted to the duty of rendering himself most acceptable to his Creator by doing the most good to his creatures."