

REDCLIFFE PLANTATION
181 REDCLIFFE RD
BEECH ISLAND, SC 29842
(803) 827-1473

UPCOMING EVENTS
AT REDCLIFFE

Christmas in the Quarters

Saturday, Dec 19

2:00 - 4:00

\$10/Adults, \$7/Ages 6-16

For more information on
these programs please con-
tact the park.

Park Staff

Park Manager
Joy Raintree

Park Interpreter
Elizabeth Laney

Park Technician
Doug Kratz

Asst. Park Ranger
Theresa Hipps

Join us for
*Christmas in
the Quarters*
on December 19!



With special guest
**Kitty Wilson
-Evans.**

Redcliffe Southern Times

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 6

DECEMBER 2015

Dining in the Capital

Following his election to the US Senate in late 1857, James H. Hammond moved his family to Washington, D.C. in order to assume his new duties which included both political and social engagements. In a letter from December 1857 Hammond's daughter Katherine expresses her anxieties about life in the capitol: *"I am surprised and delighted to hear that you will not go to Washington until Jan. and that you intend taking us with you. Mother need not be afraid of my carrying my head any higher now. I feel far from doing so when I think of myself as a poor awkward boarding school girl among all those grand people at Washington."*

James H. Hammond kept an engagement calendar which reveals the variety of engagements he attended from January to May of 1858. His first dinner was with fellow South Carolinian Laurence Kiett, a member of the US House of Representatives. Dinners followed with Speaker of the House James Orr, President James Buchanan, Vice President John Breckinridge and Banker William Corcoran. In a letter to a friend on March 9th, 1858 Hammond relates his meeting with British Ambassador Lord Napier: *"It is the etiquette here for foreign members to call on Senators. None but the Austrian have left a card for me. But today Ld. Napier came into the Senate - asked to get my speech and to [be introduced] to me. We had 15 minutes pleasant conversation."* After such a cordial meeting Hammond must have received a dinner invitation because four days later his engagement calendar reveals he was dining at Lord Napier's home.

Hammond was invited to the British Ambassador's home at least three times in the spring of 1858 and his son, E. Spann Hammond, relates an incident that occurred at one of the last visits in June of 1858. *"Last week we were all invited to a party at Lord Napier's. An amusing thing happened to Father. Just after he entered the house he had occasion to use his handkerchief, when putting his hand in his pocket for it he pulled out a pair of half-hose, one falling on the floor full length, and the other he held in his hand by the toe, exclaiming 'Good Good, What is this?' The joke is going the rounds."* This amusing incident may have been at one of Hammond's last social engagements in the capitol for just two weeks later, on June 30th, he and his family were back at Redcliffe.

In the fifties American hospitality acquired a reputation, and that of the capital was synonymous with an unceasing, an augmenting round of dinners and dances, receptions and balls.

~ Mrs. Virginia Clay, "Belle of the Fifties"

Senator James H. Hammond Dinner Engagements

Jan. 8 Col. Keitt's mess
Jan 28 Speaker Orr
Feb 4 Sen. Kennedy
Feb 8 The President
Feb 9 Secretary Cobb
Feb 11 Mr. Corcoran
Feb 12 Sen. Gwin
Feb 13 The Vice President
Feb. 16 Sen. Seward
Mar 11 Sen Toombs
Mar 12 Gen. Cass
Mar 13 Lord Napier
Mar 17 At Home
Mar 30 Keitt's mess
Apr 1 Russian Minister
Apr 8 Gwin's Bal Masque
Apr 27 At Home
May 11 Ld. Napier

SAND BAR FERRY: GATEWAY TO AUGUSTA

For more than 180 years the residents of South Carolina towns like Beech Island and New Windsor crossed the Savannah River to Augusta using the Sand Bar ferry. In 1739 Swiss settlers living in New Windsor (near the present day Beech Island) petitioned the General Assembly for a ferry to convey them from their side of the river to a sand bar on the opposite side. The ferry remained in operation until it was replaced by a bridge in 1924.



Sand Bar Ferry, near Augusta, Ga.

Image courtesy of USC's Caroliniana Library.

The scrapbooks of Redcliffe's last owner contain a number of pictures and postcards depicting the ferry, including the postcard left which was printed in 1920—just four years before the ferry became obsolete. The Hammond papers also include numerous references to how much the Hammonds paid for passage on the ferry. In October of 1863 James Henry Hammond sent a Mrs. Whatley "100 bushels of corn for a year's use of the ferry with all the privileges of the same use as before the war." Just forty years later in 1901 Hammond's grandson Henry sent a check for \$10.00 for "personal ferryage from July 1st to January 1st."

Document of the Month

Dec. 27, 1949
Kathwoods
Dear John & Frederica
Thank you for the money
you sent me. We have used it
to go to movies and to lunch.
We go back to school on
the second of January.
We got a football and
a football pump. Little
Harry got an erector set.
We fixed up the linen
closet for Katherine.

Love,
Jerry



Kathwood Christmas Thank You Letter

On December 27, 1949 young Jerry (James) Suber crafted this thank you letter to his cousin John Billings for some money sent to young Jerry, his brother Harry and sister Katharine. The young trio were the children of Mrs. Katharine Hammond Suber who, along with several siblings, were the owners of nearby Kathwood Plantation.

According to the record of Christmas gifts John S. Billings kept for 1949, he sent his young cousins \$15 dollars in cash. Jerry reveals that he and his siblings used the money "to go to the movies and to lunch."

Wondering what the price of a movie ticket was in 1949? Just .46 cents!

This Christmas thank you letter is one of many letters written to John and Frederica Billings currently in the collection at Redcliffe Plantation SHS.

In Memoriam - James C. Suber, Jr.

James, also known as Jim or Jerry, was the grandson of Christopher & Mary Hammond of Kathwood Plantation. In addition to the letter seen left, Redcliffe's collection also includes numerous pictures of the Suber family (Jim, his wife and two daughters) at Redcliffe in the 1960's. Mr. Suber (left with daughter) passed away this last October at age 77.