

Eliza Clitherall Diary, Vol 5 Transcriptions by Historian Elizabeth Laney, 2018. Do not reproduce without permission or appropriate citation.

Eliza Clitherall Walterboro Passages

From the Caroline Elizabeth Bergwin Clitherall Papers at Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library, UNC, Volume 5

<https://finding-aids.lib.unc.edu/00158/>

Transcription by Historian Elizabeth Laney, 2018.

Page 27 – 30 descriptions of town, community

Pages 31-33 2nd summer in Wboro she describes neighbors and sickness in the town, Fraser family

Pages 37 – 43 3rd summer in Walterboro, rules and upset at the assembly hall, Mr. Clitherall's duel with Robert Fishburne.

027

Our winters were passed at Belleville, but it was unsafe to remain upon a plantation during the summer 16 miles from us, was a tract of Pine land, upon which by paying the Collector a small sum, for an acre, we could build upon & claim – there were then 14 families who resorted there - ; The day previously to our leaving home, we sent off two wagons with our bedding [?] furniture & provisions – servant's baggage, & House Servants so that the next day, we found everything ready for our reception. We partook of a lunch before we left & arrived at "Walterborough" – in the cool of the day – The Houses were of logs, , merely barked & lined with clapboards – in order to insure social union & cast off etiquette or any approach to luxury the families came to an agreement, the the Houses erected there should be "log house" no framed House – No iron in the building wooden hinges – shingled roofs, pegged clothes presses, side board – closets, all of clapboards – and lockes only to the [rooms store room?] – Stables – The Chimneys were made of logs, well covered with clay – The tables of Pine – and yet how comfortable did we make these Houses – a little taste & contented heart, rendered them as eat & pleasant, as a splendid Mansion. The location was a thick pine wood, and cleared only where the buildings stood – roads or paths were cut out from House to House – before each House was a high stump of a felled tree, the top well covered with clay, & upon it a pile of lightwood, placed every night – This when lit, threw a fine light all around & had a very pretty effect – it was customary to visit of evenings; a male servant walked in front, with a blazing torch necessary to guide one thro' the stumps & roots – "Walterborough" took its name from the 1st Planters of that name who built the first House & was followed by several of his married Children. There were before our first summer closed, 16 families settled there & we entered into the [??ulations], unanimously, & uniformly observed – These families, being but (the farthest) 16 miles were supplied from their Plantations with fruits, Butters, Pultry & c – alternately, they had a Beef killed, which was divided into 16 shares – every Saturday. The killer of course, had the tripe & a appurtenances. On Monday – each one o 4 – Provided a Lamb. On Wed - a Calf in which 8 joined – the killer was to send a bowl of Calf's head soup t the 7 partners. This regulation supplied fresh meats [at mere] nominal expense, three times a week – Poultry or cold meat – the other days the first summer our family, consisting of dearest Mother, Sister Mause, W.C., myself & our sweet

Eliza Clitherall Diary, Vol 5 Transcriptions by Historian Elizabeth Laney, 2018. Do not reproduce without permission or appropriate citation.

Eliza had excellent health – the society was plain & social – no City airs, or excitement – There was our Store – a market shed, little required – over it a large room used for a Meeting house, when by chance a Preachers came – at other times the Gentlemen alternately read the Church Service – the same room, was also the Pic-Nic Assemblage, which took place every 2^{ns} week – the Ladies each contributing, as most convenient their share of Provisions & candles & Plates, &c, &c, &c 2 Ladies were Managers of the [work?] supplied, & [tastily] arranged supper table – 2 others of the articles for use received & returned and two of the Gentlemen Managers of the ballroom. This little community liv'd in great unanimity - the refreshing scent of the pine, which tho' not an umbrageous tree, yet so thick a wood preserved a constant shade & a healthy fragrance – having no glaz'd windows a wide bush shed surrounding the house kept us cool & rendered it unnecessary to close the wooden shutters during the rain when these bushes became dry fresh were thrown upon them & they became quite impervious to rain, sun – a frost, was the signal for breaking up – the last dance, on the last evening, a friendly farewell, and I trust grateful hearts for so great a privilege as this healthy resort.

Pgs 31-32

Mr. Clitherall had rented a House the two first summers, but afterwards built & improved a lot, in the usual was of "Logs" – My dear Mother & Sister again returned with us to Walterborough; I cannot pass over this 2nd Summer, for some important events in the family marked its progress – Maj. Fraser, had purchased a Cotton Plantation at Edisto, & instead of removing to Charleston was resolved to try the health of the former place their family unaccustomed to a Summer residence, in the country, experienced the effects of the change – and in August, Sister Fraser & the two eldest Girls were taken with bilious fever – y dearest Husband heard of it & went to their relief, his efforts were blessed and they were restored to family duties, tho' weak & much reduced. Sister F. was a pious woman, of great energy & feeling & soon were these qualities called into action. Maria, 14 years of age, was next seized; Mr. C would ride to Edisto every other day, 22 miles & if any were very ill, endangered his own health by remaining with & administering to the sick finding Maria recovering, he procured the carriage & brought her to us at Walterboro' very few days past, [?] another summons came for him, requestin him to send for Dr. Bellinger to accompany his, as Anna (12 years) Charles & Alex were all very ill, & three of their most efficient servants. Our poor Sister, tho scarcely able to move about yet, went from bed to bed, with a most surprising energy – little Charles, a fine intelligent boy 8 years of age, died on the 5th day of his illness, & the beautiful little Alexander (4 years) on the 8th day – Majr. Fraser was ill a bed. My Sister & the eldest daughter followed the little corpses to their grave, in the Garden. Anna's fever hung on & her life suspended as it were by a thread – Mr. C upon his return, after these mournful duties (for all the arrangements devolved upon him) found our precious Eliza, with a high fever. Exhausted as he was, he was now to Perform the Physician & the father – for 19 nights he never went to his bed & twice during that period, visited his dear bereaved Sister at Edisto – Anna's disease had in a Measure yielded to Medicine & good nursing - & the other Members of the family were able to resume their several occupations – poor Anna never got over her trial, the fever settled upon the nerves – rendering her an involed for life - Our darling Eliza was for twenty three days extremely ill – when she began to recover,

Eliza Clitherall Diary, Vol 5 Transcriptions by Historian Elizabeth Laney, 2018. Do not reproduce without permission or appropriate citation.

the use of her limbs, & speech were for several days gone – but it pleased Holy God to raise her, to our Prayers – alas we know not what we ask – He gave her to us - & what has her subsequent life been, but one of sorrow, [wit?], care – woe. Oh for that Grace enabling me to say “Thy will be done.” Why, why do I wish any present trial removed?

Pg 37

The third Summer at “Walterborough” – I had in addition to Eliza & Emily, My little James Cambell born the March previous. Cap’n Cambell, having the summer before paid us a visit on his way to Belle bluff was so pleased with our location, &c, that he proposed, adding a room & servant’s rooms & passing the future summers finding provisions &c upon shares – this was quite delightful & with little [Ann/] we were as one family – their Boys were at school – Mrs. C was a lovely woman gentle, Lady like affectionate dear Mause, was at Charlestown. My Mother, Mrs. C. & Myself formed quite an agreeable circle – but [?] not the happiest & the most apparently secure, expos’d to unthought of trials! The House we had hitherto rented belonged to our Belleville Neighbor Mr. Jas. Postelle whose two orphan Gd. Daughters, had finished school & were living with their Gd. Mother, these young Ladies, very young, possess’d easy, but girlish manners & became by means of their large fortune attractive, & their society courted – among the sixteen families at “Walterboro,” was that of Gen’l Fishburne – a planter of influence & of many sons – the second young & dissipated had paid great attention to Eliza Postelle (15 years of age) – her Gd Mother, knowing the chief source of his attention was fortune, was much opposed to his visit, & had frequently expressed this to my Mother, & requested Mr. C if possible to watch over them at the Pic-nics [?] the rule of the dancing-room, was, that no Lday should dance more than two sets at a tie with the same partner – Eliza had this evening danc’d the six first sets with Rich’d Fishburne – Mr. C. desired me to warn her of the rules – he also called her aside & told her if she persisted, Maj. Hamilton & Mr. Webb, had told him, they would stop the music & as she came under my wing he would feel bound to withdraw with us from the room – Richd again led her out & she laughing took her stand – the music went on, until her turn came, when Maj. H “stop music” – until the regulations are complied with – Eliza would not yield & Mr. C coming to me said –we will retire, & asked Miss P would she accept another partner or return with us. “Mr. F. will see me home & I will dance with no other partner.” “Is that your determination?” “It is.” “I will take Mrs. C home & return for you.” Majr. H. Mr. Webb led off their wives & a general confusion prevailed as we past thro’ the door – R.F. said to Mr. C. “this is your doing & you shall pay for it Sir” at the same time pushing Mr. c. aside. I was very much alarme, but promised Mr. C to say nothing of it to our Mother – upon our arrival at Home, we found his dear friend & Class mate there, Genl Dan’ Huger – I felt rejoic’d, when he propos’d returning with Mr. C by way of a [walker?] to the assembly room – Eliza P. dreading the displeasure of her Gd. Mother, if she returned with R. F. had remained until Mr. C arrived in a few minutes to escort her. – Gen’l H. Cap’n C & himself sat up late – the next day they walked out for some hours – I could discover nothing of the gathering room tho’ I felt a presentiment, some trouble was rising – that night, Rose told me that Captn Walter had sent for Mr. C & that Mr. Huger & himself had met the other side of the stable & were in close confab – Mr. C was a member of the turf , & the next day, my horse [Fennaugh]

Eliza Clitherall Diary, Vol 5 Transcriptions by Historian Elizabeth Laney, 2018. Do not reproduce without permission or appropriate citation.

was to run. The first day of the Waltebroro races I could not sleep & when I asked why he was out to late, he replied it was necessary to pay great attention to visit the stable & watch the horse. My faithful Rose sat up all night suspicious of some evil, from having heard Mr. Fishburne had written to Mr. C. – little did I suspect that a challenge had been sent by Mr. C thro Captn Walter, & that the parties were to meet the [??] by sun upon the race-track. I had fallen asleep, & was awoke by tap upon my shoulder; found the bed had [nobody?] but myself. Rose whispered “Mas’r has gone somewhere with Capt’n W.” I jumped up, slipped on a pair of shoes, petticoat & wrapper, seized my sunbonnet & before Rose could recover from her fright, I was on the road to the course instinctively – running almost breathlessly when nearly there, I met Frank Fishburne’s carriage returning himself & Richard in it – I stopped the driver, & calling to R. said “Give me my husband, where is he – are you his murderer?” “No Madam, be composed – he is safe, unhurt” & soon as they passed me, I sank breathless upon the Earth – My beloved Husband came up, raised & supported me, & bore me to Cap’n W’s chair – to our House – dear Mother had not awoke & little Jamie’s eyes were sealed in sleep, his good Rose seated by his crib – it appeared the cowardice of the youth had thro’ threatening [?] blazon’d the premeditated dust, & in so doing the [?] had [possessed] an officer to arrest the parties Mr. C. & Cap’n W had been in waiting some time on the Fishburne’s rattling [?] gave notice of their approach – That excellent Gentleman, & good friend Gen’l Huger, thro’ Gen’l Fishburne & another Gentleman, persuaded [??] R.F. to apologize, & thus, ended, what might have been a [?] of misery to many – brought on by the silly [wistfulness] of a giddy girl.

With no desire to do so, I acceded to the wishes & Mr. C – that I should attend the races. My horse, ran by luck (now at Tuscd) took the purse – the congratulations I rec’d did not reach my Heart or cause any exultation the dreadful event which had threatened was overruled by a Merciful Providence occupied all my thoughts, and whilst I bless’d My Heavenly Father for my deliverance, I did most heartily unite with our dearest Mother in reprobating the dreadful barbarous custom of dueling. Soon after this event the season broke up and at dear Belleville we experienced another happy winter.