

St. James-Santee Parish Historical Sketches

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To emphasize the significant works of a native son and nationally acclaimed man of letters, Dr. Archibald Rutledge (1883-1974) of Hampton Plantation, we have highlighted this booklet with his poetry and prose (oftentimes indistinguishable) which memorialize the place and people that were dear to his heart. Most of the quotations are expressions of affection for specific parish locales.

Dr. Rutledge's philosophy concerning his place in the scheme of Hampton's history, eloquently and succinctly expressed in the quotation, "I, too, am but a visitor here; and I am trying to be a considerate guest," fortunately has had and continues to have proponents throughout the parish, men and women to whom we are indebted for preserving today's visual reminders of a colorful past.



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PEACH TREE PLANTATION RUINS (c. 1762)

754-1821) of Cumberland, England after the Revolution. His ship had run aground on the Santee River where he invented a mortar and pestle method of hulling rice. He used hand-tilers, woodpecker-type devices to clean about 3-6 barrels of rice a day. He built (c. 1787) for John Bowman the first water-powered mill for his mill could be managed by hand from 16-20 barrels of rice a day. He died with building in Charles City rice mill.

*Oh, I must go to Peach Tree
(Ah, sweet wild questing vain!)
Upon the mightiest hunt of all:
To find my heart again.*

From "Peach Tree"
—Archibald Rutledge

Jonah Lynch of Gallway, Ireland, left for America in 1677, and by April, 1677, had been granted 600 acres, which he named Blessing, on the south bank of the Cooper River. By 1725 his son Thomas Lynch I (c. 1680-1738) owned over 3000 acres in Berkeley County and had started moving northward toward Georgetown. He ended up acquiring thousands of acres along the Santee River and making huge fortunes in indigo for later Lynch generations. He probably was the builder of Fairfield (c. 1730). At his death Hopsewee and Peach Tree lands were under cultivation, but the houses on these plantations appear to have been built by his only son, Thomas Lynch II (1726-1776). Thomas I had 7 children, 5 of whom survived.

Thomas Lynch II married Elizabeth Allston in 1745 and had Sabina, Esther, and Thomas III. In 1755 he married Hannah Motte, as his first wife had died in 1752, and had one child, Elizabeth. Thomas II was one of the most important Santee planters. He served as first president of the Georgetown Winyah Indigo Society. The Peach Tree house, which appears to have been of grand proportions, was burned in 1846. It measured 48' x 55', was two full stories, and sat on a 9' basement.* The stuccoed brick walls are almost 3' thick at the ground, and the windows were approximately 6' high.

Thomas II left Peach Tree to his only son, Thomas III (1749-1779), who, having no children, left it to his sister Sabina and her second husband, John Bowman. It was Bowman who engaged Jonathan Lucas, Sr. to build the first water-powered rice mill in the new world (c. 1787) at Peach Tree.

* "Formerly, in the very center of the middle cellar, there was a mysterious well of weird aspect and dreadful depth. As a boy, I remember seeing a young man at a picnic, bent on impressing his prowess on the girls present, run and jump over this black chasm. In precariously landing, he dislodged a brick from the lip of the moldering structure, the top of which was flush with the ground. It fell; and all of us breathlessly waited, listening. Finally came the deep subterranean splash that told that it had finally reached the water, suggesting also the abysmal depth of the hole."

—Archibald Rutledge

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