

## Carr Journal Transcription

I shall now give some little account of Charleston as a place and quite it, unless something shall occur that I have omitted – I take a skip across the atlantic to Englands famed land –

The coast & country to the extent of 100 or 150 miles in every direction is low & level – on the sea board it is flat sandy & dreary covered with a dwarfish growth of trees generally pitch pine some oaks, and a few of the Palmetto or cabbage tree valuable for the construction of wharves & works in the water that are exposed to the warm, that is very destructive to every other kind of wood especially during the months of the summer, from May to October – the bar & channel leading to the city are difficult – vessels drawing sixteen feet of water have sometimes to wait three or four weeks before the can get out – I was detained nearly a week; in going up to the city you pass Sullivans Island on the left & Fort Johnston on the right – an the former is pretty respectable works for the defence of the harbour – with a number of slight-built-houses generally on piles driven in the sand for the accommodations of the citizens during the summer months where the retire to enjoy the sea breezes during the warm season; it is a low sandy barren island

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and to me wou'd indeed be a place of dernier resort – it is about 2 ½ miles from the city & deserted in the winter, it is frequently inundated during storms & those who have retreated to this spot to escape disease have frequently come very near falling victims to the elements they have fled to for the preservation – Fort Johnston is also on an isl. But one that has much more of a champaigne appearance but is considered like the country in the neighbourhood, except upon the seaboard unhealthy – the fort does not appear to be kept in good order – the quaranteen laws of the city require all vessels to report themselves at this fort during the summer – further up & opposite the city is Castle Pinkney – a circular brick work built on a piece of marsh the foundation even with the water, it mounts two tier of guns & has a very respectable appearance – it is the same place where a similar work stood at the time of our glorious struggle – before the city on Coopers river is a large marsh covered with coarse grass or rushes – as you approach the city you appear on board your vessel to be higher than the streets. I was told by Mr. Crafts an intelligent gentleman, that the highest of their streets was not more than two feet above the highest tides - you frequently meet long narrow barges belonging to plantations or used for packet boats with awnings over the stern to defend the passengers from the intense rays of the sun rowed by 4, 6, & 8 negroes – plantation boats with produce poultry pigs &<sup>c</sup> for the market – larger river boats laden with rice - cotton corn flour wood &<sup>c</sup> almost all

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of them propelled by oars & managed by negroes, some few of them have [illegible] looking sails – this appearance with the song of the negroes & the martial sound of a musical instrument about 8 feet long made of a bamboo by the negroes resembling in sound the French horn has all together a very pleasing effect – you are struck by the appearance of the vessels with their awnings. The wharves, the stores & houses built in the West India manner – flights of Turkey buzzards &<sup>c</sup> taking the tout ensemble –

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buzzards, houses, stores wharves vessels negroes french, Spanish black & white inhabitants Charleston is much more like a town in the West Indies than our towns in the United States – As you approach the wharves the song of the negroes at work greets your ear cheerfully from every quarter, I had so much of it while they were loading the ship, that is made such an impression on my mind as to enable me to give you a few specimens of the african working songs in Charleston:

Cheerly up, and cheerly down;

hey boys hey.

Cheerly up, and cheerly down;

ho boys ho.

Cheerly up, and cheerly down;

high land a.

Cheerly up, and cheerly down;

high land o.

—  
one gives the words of chorus in which the whole join.

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Sing talio, Sally is a fine girl, sing talio;

Sally is a good girl, sing talio, sing talio;

hoora, hoora, sing talio.

Sally in the morning, Susan in the evening;

sing talio, sing talio;

Sally is a sweet girl, Susan is a beauty;

sing talio, sing talio,

hoora, hoora, sing talio.

—  
Ceasar should you like a dram;

Ceasar boy Ceasar.

Ceasar will you have a dram;

Ceasar boy Ceasar.

Ceasar is a smart fellow,

Ceasar boy Ceasar.

—  
Tis grog time a day,

huzza my jolly boys, tis grog time a day;

Back like a crow bar, belly like a tin pan,

huzza my jolly boys, tis grog time a day;

Tis grog time a day; tis grog time a day;

huzza my jolly boys, tis grog time a day.

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—  
Tis time for to go, its time for to go;  
    huzza my jolly boys, tis time for to go;  
Haul away so, its time for to go,  
    huzza my jolly boys, tis time for to go.

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Those words underscored is the chorus – those double scored are sung more loud & strong, in which the whole gang join with all their force, and generally much glee – the black having remarkable nice ears for music, are very correct in their time & pause one & seldom more than two, repeat what they consider the words of the song, all join in the chorus, and whatever work they are doing when in gangs – they work & sing with all their might & whither hoisting hauling – rowing – or heaving at the Jack screw, they keep perfect time in all their motions – this gives them more force as they are united & simultaneous in the exertion – besides it makes their tasks go off hand more cheerily – for five days I had four p<sup>r</sup> of Jack screws & four gangs of five each at work on board the ships stowing cotton – I was in the midst of them – it often happened that they all had their throats open at the same time as loud as they cou'd ball – you may be able from the discription I have given you to form some opinion of the music – add to that the savoury smell that may be supposed to arise from twenty negroes using violent exercise in warm weather, in the hot and confined hold of ship and you may imagine what a delicious treat I enjoyed, I was happy for business was brisk – things went on well – I retired to rest satisfied and resumed my station the next day with pleasure – A negro along, seems a solitary being – he delights to work in large gangs – is loquacious & appears perfectly happy.

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Charleston as I have before observed is a perfect flat & low, as is the country for great distance round – the streets are mostly ornamented with trees, the pride of India – resembling our locusts – bearing a small green or yellow fruit very profusely that hand in clusters about as big as musket ball – looking not unlike a green cranberry – the side walks are covered with brick or stone flagging, narrow, in bad order & broken by cellar doors, the streets are not paved, very sandy & when it is dry which is very often the case they are excessively dusty, to such a degree as to be almost insufferable – there are a great many foreigners, Jews French – Spanish, Scotch, English & Irish – the hucksters many of them keep their shops open on the Sabbath which is to generally considered a day of pastime with the inhabitants – this place has been thought to be unhealthy – during my stay in the months of Oct<sup>r</sup> & a part of November it was very much otherwise – Doct<sup>r</sup> Ramsay asserts it to be as healthy as any city in the United States – the bill of mortality published weekly has been very favourable – still the children have not that glow of health that marks our sn—ty nosed boys – they look pale thin & feeble – it is further

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true that a large proportion of the white population leave the city in the summer & do not return until after the frosts set in the last of Oct<sup>r</sup> or first of Nov<sup>r</sup> – what is a little remarkable – it is considered almost fatal for a citizen to go in the country, or, for a countryman to visit the city during this season – many of the rice planters abandon their plantations in

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the summer & do not dare return to them again until the frosts = they have habitations on the sea board where they pass this season of the year. The countrymen that come to market from the neighbourhood, are a miserable cadaverous set of looking beings – they are so shriveled up that one half of them cannot cover their teeth with their lips – while those who come from 150 to 200 miles back are stout, bong good looking fellows. The people of Charleston during the war have a line of defensive works, reaching from Ashley to Coopers river that do them a great deal of credit – the distance is about 1 ½ mile. It was done by voluntary associations & each pieces work has the name of the association whither military or civil inscribed on their respective works – it has a very handsome appearance and I shou'd say was a well planned and efficient piece of work for the purpose it was intended – and if Charleston had had a Jackson, Jonny would probably have found another New Orleans – his “beauty” would have been grim death – his “booty” the permanent occupancy of a small piece of earth – happily, peace rendered their works useless for the present – though they are durable & if they answer no other purpose it will be a lasting and honorable monument of the spirit patriotism & resolution of those who constructed them, the fair sex too performed their part by encouraging the works with their presence and smiles of approbation.

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The manners of the people of S. Carolina, like those of all the Southern States – differs from ours as one might expect from persons born & educated with slaves that they are taught to look on as an inferior order of beings, and to tyrannize over – as those who are in the bait of commanding may be supposed to differ from those who are in the habit of obeying particularly at that period of age when the strongest and most lasting impressions are made – as far as my observation goes so the inhabitants of the slave holding states differ from the others of the United States – though not so well informed generally as those of the north – they have a nicer sense of honor – are quicker to resent an injury more impatient of restraint less perseverance and enterprise less vigor of constitution – more vivacity – warmer in their friendship, but not stronger in their attachments – a calamity such as the loss of friends, sickness, loss of property &<sup>c</sup> is not so likely to make a man of the south cut his throat or turn religious devotee, as it is a man of the north – they are not educated in the habits of industry and economy, as we are – a laday of Charleston wou'd give but a sorry account of herself – called on to perform your yearly task with the needle – That I shou'd consider a yankee wife with your education and habits without a cent a much better fortune than a South Carolinaian with their usual education and habits and ten thousand dollars – their slaves are convenient, but they are made too necessary to their common wants.

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In this quarter the planters are considered the lords of the land & rank in the first class – they look on men of business with a degree of self superiority & think it an honor for a trader or factor to have their names in the books without giving themselves any trouble about paying their debts – from this habit of pride & carelessness they frequently get much involved – their crops are good this season and command an unusual high price – Sea Island cotton 50 upland 30 – rice 475 to \$5 – the long staple or Sea Islands - requires a different and much more tedious operation in cleaning or ginning, as it is termed – is of longer, finer, stronger and a more silky staple than the upland – and appears in little lumps or bunches as you take it out of the bag. This appearance is caused by the manner in which it is passed through the ginning machine, in little locks or tufts as it is put in by the fingers each lock separate – the Sea Island cotton of Georgia & South Carolina is considered equal if not superior to any cotton whatever – the upland is raised on higher ground & from the sea shore from the green seed – the black seed has been tried in the country & is said generally to produce a better kind of cotton – but its superior excellence is attributed principally to the peculiar soil & sea air of the Islands – the cotton is

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usually picked in Oct<sup>r</sup> or Nov<sup>r</sup> – depending some on the season, a rainy cold autumn puts it back, as a warm autumn has the contrary effect – rice is harvested in October, but not considered in shipping order until the following spring – cotton comes in to market from the last of Oct<sup>r</sup> – the greater part of it is in by Christmas – this however depends on its prices – this year the season and price were both favourable – and considerable quantities of the new crop was in market by the 6<sup>th</sup> of Nov<sup>r</sup> - Sea Island cotton plantations are immensely productive – at the price of that article this season I was informed by intelligent persons, that where there was good management – each hand would furnish for the market to the amount of \$500, besides raising their own provisions – so that each slave would yield to his master a net income of five hundred. Deducting there from the small expense of his clothing perhaps 20 or 30 dollars per year. This wou'd make a new England farmer starve – there is no question but that the cotton, sugar & rice plantations of the south are highly profitable – on the latter however none but Aligators & negroes can live – but a small proportion of the cotton is Sea Island, which is the most profitable – attempts were made in Georgia during the war to cultivate the sugar cane, and succeeded remarkably well – it is thought it will be persued with considerable spirit – as that culture promises to

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be equally lucrative with the cotton – and the planters by dividing their crops will almost always be sure of obtaining a tolerable good one either of cotton, sugar or rice – but alas! Here ends the bright part of the picture, we turn over the leaf & behold a very different page, with all the advantages we ought not to envy them – though they grown an abundance – brother Charles would put the most robust of them out of countenance long

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side of a plate of rice – a well crowned dish of half a peck would leave a Carolinaian nibbling round it for a week. While C. wou'd toss it off in five minutes & look to his mother for more – the vigor & health of the planters can no more be compared with our farmers, than the produce of our farms with that of their plantations – here a dead flat sandy country meets the eye as far as it can extend – nothing like our rising hills & fruitful valies to regale it – a transparent & running stream like Reeds brook wou'd be here a paradise its banks wou'd be saught like the rich banks of the Nile not after abundant crops but health – the days are hot, the nights oppressive, the evenings & morning pernicious – the nights debilitate – the morning is dead and stagnant charged with foul vapour & fog from low land & stagnant water to breath this is to enhale feaver ague - none of those invigorating elastic breezes wafted over our spruce hills & through out flowering valies, that makes our summer morning so delight-

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-ful – the respiration of this pure are is enough to restore exhausted nature and call one back to live his life over again; but here alas! Our song ends – our rejoicing is turned into mourning – winter bitter winter, is close before & after this delightful season – two winters to one summer in Maine, in South Carolina two summers to one winter – what, you will say my wife follows from all this – I will tell you – the country is not so pleasant as ours – you may live easier and become richer at the hazard of your health – of the two – for myself I shou'd prefer the warm climate – but – for you & our children, I shou'd hesitate – but on one point I can decided unequivocally – as Maine is too far North, so is Carolina too far South – this worked by a simple rule without the aid of much knowledge in mathematics will place us between the two extremes – and there with heavens blessing I hope ere long to be established.

My remarks on Charleston draw to a close, as my passage draws towards its end – among the vexations that you meet with at that place, I believe I have omitted to mention my aversion, the large winged Cockroach, with many other legged & winged insects as well as offensive to the eye as the ear & feeling, among them the musquitoe will come first in rank – they had but just began to make themselves scarce when I left – the cries of Charleston are

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to me rather annoying – when you are passing quietly along the street, to be overtaken or fall in with a fisherman screaming out with open throat, fine peck fish – fine whiting – mullet, black fish, &<sup>c</sup> - if you cross the other side 'tis a chance if you do not fall in with the shrill voice of an old wench, crying, fine oirts, fine oirts - oirts who will buy my oirts – or shrimps – fine fresh shrimps – who will buy my shrimps for nothing, as seven pence a dozen – you turn the corner & you meet direct in your teeth – fine hot chicken pic – or fine panecakes – hot panecakes, and all these things with such an accent & tone that it was a long time before I cou'd understand them – the chimney sweeps, little black imps, they look and make a noise like young devils. I never cou'd distinguish that they said any thing but merely make a hideous scream – though there was something novel in all this it was not of the agreeable king – I daresay my boys would have stood in a maze –

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mouth eyes & ears open, wondering what such strange sounds could mean, this wou'd have been a source of amusement to me – I have often wished I had the little monkeys with me to witness & enjoy their curiosity – they are better where they are – and it due time, I hope will be better qualified than their father when they arrive at my age to reap advantage from what they may see in the world – when they come to mix with mankind.

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