


Family Letters Reveal Personal Side of Manly Family

Chatham County proudly claims to be the birthplace of North Carolina Governor Charles Manly, and many are aware that his Pittsboro law office, "Fort Snug," is maintained by the Chatham County Historical Association. Manly's legal and political accomplishments are noted [elsewhere on our website](#).

A recent donation to CCHA reveals a more personal side of the Manly family. Two letters—one from Charles Manly to his daughter Ida, and a second, from Governor Manly's wife, Charity Haywood Manly, to Ida's future husband, J. H. Baker —provide a rare glimpse of the Manly's family life.

The letters were donated, along with the dining table from the Ingleside plantation of Governor Manly, by the families of Finley L. Williamson, III and Louise Gay Williamson. The late Mrs. Williamson was a direct descendant of Charles and Charity Manly.

The letters have been transcribed by CCHA volunteer Cindy Schmidt. You can link to the original letters and read the transcripts below:

Original	Transcription
 <p data-bbox="342 1919 751 1948">Link to p1 Chas Manly to daughter</p>	<p data-bbox="935 1068 1446 1136">From Charles Manly to his daughter Ida:</p> <p data-bbox="935 1178 1247 1213">Raleigh Dec. 20/57(?)</p> <p data-bbox="935 1253 1198 1289">My Dear Daughter</p> <p data-bbox="935 1289 1318 1358">I have just received your letter & hasten to reply.</p> <p data-bbox="935 1358 1294 1652">Your uncle is going home on Saturday to spend his Christmas, & can tell you how we all are — Except a pain in my foot which confines me to this house we are going on as usual.</p> <p data-bbox="935 1652 1396 1946">I am having gas in all the rooms & passages of this house up & down stairs & have had a grate in the drawing room fireplace & we are using coal there. It makes a great difference in the comfort.</p>

A photograph of a handwritten letter on aged paper. The text is written in cursive and discusses the writer's feelings about a visit, mentions Sophie's visit to Hillsboro, and describes Basil C. as a steady and intelligent companion.

I do not insist on your
coming home until you
feel like your visit was
approaching a visitation.
I know you are perfectly
safe at your aunt's, when
I your "stick & stay late"
"do" "stick & stay late". -
Sophie was delighted
with her Hillsboro visit to
the wedding & Mrs. McKimmon
says she was quite a Belle.
Basil C. has grown stout
& seems steady. He was invited
to Col. Sittle's last night and went
of course. His friend Cole
spent a few days with us on
his way down & made a
very favorable impression for
his intelligence & gentle manners,
I wish Basil C. may always select
such companions.

[Link to p2 Chas Manly to daughter](#)

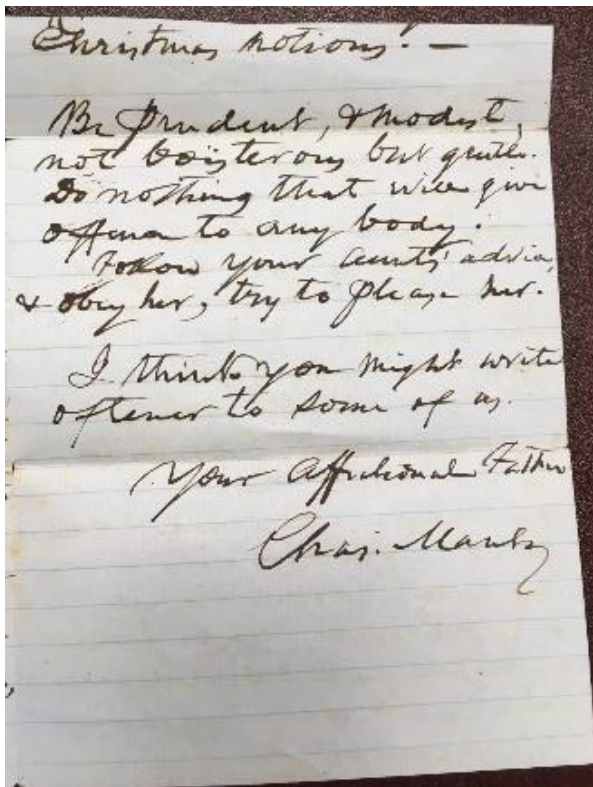
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I do not insist on your coming home until you feel like your visit was approaching a visitation.

I know you are perfectly safe at your aunt's, even if your (???) young "un" does "stick and stay late."

Sophie was delighted with her Hillsboro visit to the wedding & Mrs. McKimmon says she was quite a Belle.

Basil C. has grown stout & seems steady. He was invited to Col Sittle's last night and went of course. His friend Cole spent a few days with us on his way down & made a very favorable impression for his intelligence & gentle manners, I wish Basil C. may always select such companions.

A photograph of a handwritten letter on lined paper. The text is written in cursive and provides advice for Christmas, emphasizing prudence and modesty, and mentions the writer's affection for the recipient.

Christmas notions! -
Be prudent, & modest,
not boisterous but gentle.
Do nothing that will give
offense to any body.
Follow your aunts' advice,
& obey her, try to please her.
I think you might write
oftener to some of us.
Your Affectionate Father
Chas. Manly

[Link to p3 Chas Manly to daughter](#)

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I think you might write oftener to some of us.

Your Affectionate Father

Chas. Manly

Raleigh September 2 1874

Lt Baker
 My Dear Sir

Your letter dated August 31st was duly received & as you must know, I was not unprepared to hear all you had to say, in regard to the love & engagement existing between my Daughter Ida & yourself, to which I had already given my consent & now repeat to you — with a blessing trusting, that my most earnest Prayers, may be answered for your future happiness in this world, as well as in that which is to come —

The Scripture says
 "Woe unto the man of whom all men speak well, but I hope in this instance it may not be

[Link to p1 Mrs. Manly to Baker](#)

From Charity Haywood Manly to J. H. Baker (her future son-in-law)

Raleigh September 2, 1874

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My Dear Sir

Your letter dated August 31st was duly received & as you must know, I was not unprepared to hear all you had to say in regard to the love & engagement existing between my daughter Ida & yourself, to which I had already given my consent & now repeat to you — with a blessing, trusting, that my most earnest Prayers, may be answered for your future happiness in this world, as well as in that which is to come—

The Scripture says
 "woe unto the man of whom all men speak well, but I hope in this instance it may not be

visited upon you — I shall welcome you to my heart & home as one of my own children — though must admit I am reluctant to give up one now, particularly my youngest —

The misfortunes of the war crushed my hopes in a pecuniary way, — as far as my children are concerned, but I trust, that in resigning her happiness into your keeping, she may prove a fortune to you, in the possession of her own dear self.

I hope you will visit Raleigh again very soon
 My whole household is ready to love you very much

Yours very sincerely
 C. H. Manly —
 (Charity Haywood Manly)
 (75 years old when written)

[Link to p2 Mrs. Manly to Baker](#)

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 C. H. Manly
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