

6. LUTHER RICE ARRIVES AT THE BAGBY HOME

The John R. Bagby home, known as "Bunker's Hill" in King & Queen County, was one of the favorite places for Rice to stop in his journeys through Virginia. There he always found a warm welcome. The Bagby family included several children who looked forward to Rice's visits. They were greatly influenced by the visiting missionary preacher.

One of Rice's habits in all of his travels was to have a period of worship with the family where he visited. He prayed for every member of the family by name, and remembered in prayer by name all of the persons with whom he had talked during the day. Rice was never permitted to return to the mission field, but he gave unselfishly of his life to Baptist causes, especially Columbian College. Rice traveled in a sulky and his last horse was named Columbus. A horse and sulky, his only possessions, were bequeathed to Columbian College on his death in 1836.

The Artist says:

The feeling of joy that a family had on seeing the arrival of Luther Rice was to be the dominate mood of this picture. His was a truly happy, captivating personality, permeated with his joy in Christ. The flute on his lap, which he played for many a family after dinner, also symbolizes the happy soul of Luther Rice. The Bible, partly showing beneath the canvas cover, significantly shows the dominant purpose for all his travels.

By viewing the scene from above, we are able to focus emphasis a little more on the individual action of members of the family moving toward Rice.

The happiness that this man, Luther Rice, brought to others might well be summed up in his dedicated life to Christ, as the Lord said in John 15: 7-11.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.