

I was 38 years old when we moved in. It seemed like a lot of house at first, but our four children filled it up quickly. We loved living in this house. Our four children and their friends made it always a busy place. We remodeled the kitchen and put a big screened porch across the back. That gave the rear of the place some style that it had lacked for a long time. (Once, in the late '70s, I heard someone ask Howard Bucknell what style his mother's house was. He replied, "It has a Queen Anne front – and a Sally Ann back." That was apt.) We lived on that screened porch. My wife knows how to run a happy home, anyway. I was struck once when Charlotte Thomas Marshall, who feels such a keen sympathy with all the nineteenth century Athenians she has studied so thoroughly, told me how congenial she thought Mary Ann Lamar Cobb and my wife Kammy would be. These two ladies sprang from very different cultures (Georgian and Hawaiian), but each lived with the same "calmness, patience, joy, and hope" that Mrs. Cobb wrote about to her husband in Washington. Charlotte is right about this.

Over the years, our house was open for tours several times, and frequently we had history-minded tourists knock at the door to see the place. I remember a middle-aged German couple who appeared once. The man told me that back home they had Gone with the Wind costume parties and dances. He said that he and his wife were always Confederates, and they would like to see General Cobb's house. "But you have such magnificent architecture in Europe," I demurred, and asked, "Why would you want to see this?" "Yes," he replied, "we do have palaces and beautiful opera houses and grand cathedrals, but the idea of an individual citizen's building a small Greek temple for his own house is, well . . . different." I let them in.

Sylvanus Morris was a native of Virginia who became a faculty member and later dean of the Law School at the University of Georgia. He strolled around Athens in the 1870s, and columns about these walks came out in serial form in the *Athens Banner*. In 1912, these sketches were published as a book entitled *Strolls about Athens during the Early Seventies*. Here is an excerpt from that publication:

The block between Harris and Milledge was the Howell Cobb residence. The house, now moved down to the corner, sat near the middle of the block. The beautiful green lawn, graceful statues, and spacious grounds made it one of the handsomest homes in Athens. Mrs. Cobb was a friend to all her boy's friends and nothing is more pleasant than the recollection of the hospitality of that home. And Mrs. Cobb herself, to natural charm was added all the grace that associations with the best and most refined gives. Ah, well, the civilization which produced women of that kind has passed away. Of Howell Cobb, nothing he said can add to his fame. He was a leader among men, Governor of his state, Speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives, Member of the Cabinet, General in the Confederate Army. He died before the stroller came to Athens. The first wedding according to the Episcopal ceremony the stroller ever witnessed was in the Cobb house, when Bishop Beckwith united in marriage Hon. Alex. S. Erwin and Miss Mary Ann Lamar Cobb (p.23).



Our family on the porch in 1986 with Hobo the bulldog and Adelheid the dachshund looking at the camera, too.

Photograph by Dan McClure.

Courtesy of Dan McClure.