

COLONEL WILLIAM J. ALSTON

OF

~~THE SECESSION CONVENTION~~

THE NAME ALSTON THROUGH PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS ON THE PATERNAL SIDE OF ONE, JOHN ALSTON, SENIOR, BELONGED TO ENGLISH HISTORY AS PROGENITORS OF THIS FAMILY OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY WERE RELATED TO THE NOBILITY OF ENGLAND AND POSSESSED GREAT WEALTH.

ONE OF THE EARLIEST KNOWN ANCESTORS OF THE LINE DIRECTLY TRACED WAS FATHER OF JOHN ALSTON, SENIOR, WHO MOVED FROM ENGLAND TO SCOTLAND, FROM WHENCE HIS SON, JOHN, SENIOR, EMIGRATED TO AMERICA TO SETTLE IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY BEFORE THE REVOLUTION. JOHN WAS A GRADUATE OF GLASGOW UNIVERSITY, AND HE HAD BEEN COMMISSIONED BY KING GEORGE III AS SURVEYOR. SETTLING ON CEDAR CREEK WITH HIS WIFE, MARY BOYD, A SCOTCH GIRL, HE BUILT A SIZABLE ABODE ON A GENEROUS LAND GRANT. THIS HOUSE WAS BURNED IN 1865.

THE CHILDREN OF JOHN ALSTON, SENIOR, AND MARY BOYD WERE: CHARNEL, JAMES, DAVID, JANIE, AGNES, ANNE, JOHN AND SEVERAL OTHERS WHO DIED. SAMUEL, BORN 1769, DIED JULY 1835, WAS QUITE PROMINENT IN THE DISTRICT.

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HE LIVED AND DIED IN THE HOUSE IN WHICH HE WAS BORN ON CEDAR CREEK.

DAVID LEFT THREE SONS, AND ONE OF THESE, JOHN, MARRIED, AND IS KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN PRINCIPAL OF MT. ZION COLLEGE.

JAMES, SON OF JOHN, SENIOR, AND MARY BOYD, MARRIED FRANCES KIRKLAND. THEY HAD TWO CHILDREN: ELIZABETH MARRIED DOCTOR GEORGE BUTLER PEARSON, AND WILLIAM JOHN ALSTON, THE SUBJECT OF THIS SKETCH, MARRIED FIRST, MARIANNA BROWN OF JOHN'S ISLAND, SECOND, SUSANNA POPE COOK, DAUGHTER OF CAPTAIN JOHN COOK OF THE REVOLUTION, AND WIFE, MARTHA PEARSON.

THE WILL OF JAMES ALSTON MADE IN 1839 IS RECORDED IN THE FAIRFIELD COUNTY COURTHOUSE. IT WAS WRITTEN AS HE WAS LIVING NEAR MONTICELLO, EIGHTEEN MILES WEST OF WINNSBORO; AND MENTIONS HIS BROTHER, SAMUEL, AND HIS SON, WILLIAM J. ALSTON, THE LATTER BEING GIVEN THE CEDAR CREEK PLANTATION. GEORGE BUTLER PEARSON WAS

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NAMED TRUSTEE.

HISTORY RECORDS "JAMES ALSTON WAS A MAN OF REMARKABLE FIRMNESS OF CHARACTER AND STRENGTH OF MIND. HE AMASSED A LARGE FORTUNE AND WAS EVER NOTED FOR HIS GENERAL NOBILITY OF DISPOSITION. HE DIED IN 1841, UNIVERSALLY RESPECTED."

COLONEL WILLIAM JOHN ALSTON WAS BORN JULY 21, 1802. A SON OF WEALTH, HE WAS EDUCATED AND INTELLIGENT. HE BECAME A MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATURE FROM FAIRFIELD COUNTY SERVING FROM 1840 TO 1846. WHEN A VACANCY OCCURED IN THE SECESSION CONVENTION CAUSED BY THE DEATHS OF GENERAL JOHN BUCHANAN, AND WILLIAM S. LYLES, MEMBERS OF THAT BODY FROM THE COUNTY, HE AND WILLIAM R. ROBERTSON WERE ELECTED TO FILL THE VACANCIES.

"COLONEL ALSTON HAD BUILT A FINE LARGE HOUSE in Fairfield County, which was said to be the finest residence NEAR MONTICELLO/A SHORT TIME BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR. SHERMAN'S ARMY BURNT IT, ALTHOUGH HIS FAMILY AND

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OTHER LADIES WERE IN IT WHEN IT WAS FIRED. MRS. ALSTON TOOK REFUGE IN ANOTHER HOUSE WHICH WAS ALSO FIRED. (ALSO, ATROCITIES WERE PERPETRATED ON THE HOME OF WILLIAM S. LYLES AS REVENGE FOR BEING A MEMBER OF THE SECESSION CONVENTION.)"

COLONEL WILLIAM J. ALSTON AND HIS FIRST WIFE, MARIANNA BROWN, HAD THE FOLLOWING CHILDREN: JAMES HENRY, WILLIAM SAMUEL, KIRKLAND, MARION KENNON. JAMES HENRY DIED AS A YOUNG MAN; KIRKLAND DIED AS A CHILD, AND MARION KENNON FELL AT THE BATTLE OF SOUTH MOUNTAIN, MARYLAND.

BY HIS SECOND MARRIAGE TO SUSANNA POPE COOK, WHO DIED IN SPARTANBURG IN 1870, THERE WERE THREE CHILDREN: PHILLIP C., FRANCES KIRKLAND; JOSEPH KIRKLAND ALSTON, THE LAST CHILD, WAS BORN MARCH 6, 1860 NEAR MONTICELLO.

COLONEL WILLIAM J. ALSTON DIED SUDDENLY ON JULY 4, 1868. HE SEEMED TO HAVE A PREMONITION OF HIS

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PASSING. HIS WIFE LIVED ONLY A SHORT TIME AFTER HIM. HE WAS A DEVOUT CHRISTIAN, LEADING WITH OTHERS IN THE PLANS AND GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS THE BUILDING OF THE MONTICELLO METHODIST CHURCH NEAR HIS HOME.

"THE SON, JOSEPH KIRKLAND ALSTON, GRADUATED AT VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE AT LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA, AS FIRST CAPTAIN IN 1882. RETURNING TO SOUTH CAROLINA HE STUDIED LAW IN WINNSBORO UNDER RION AND GAILLIARD, AND OPENED AN OFFICE IN COLUMBIA. HE DIED AT THIRTY-SEVEN YEARS OF AGE, HAVING MARRIED OCTOBER 17, 1888, MISS BELLE BRATTON McCAW OF YORK WHOSE GRANDFATHER, DOCTOR WILLIAM BRATTON OF WINNSBORO, YOUNGEST SON AND NAMESAKE OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PATRIOT, COLONEL WILLIAM BRATTON OF YORK, WAS IN THE FORE FRONT OF MEN WORTH-WHILE IN FAIRFIELD."

THERE ARE NO LIVING MALE DESCENDANTS OF THIS LINE OF ALSTONS. THUS ENDS THE SAGA OF A PROMINENT FAMILY NAME OF FAIRFIELD.