

## THE ALSTONS OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY, S. C.

John Alston, born in Scotland, was a graduate of Glasgow University. He came to America some years before the Revolution. He was commissioned by the King, George III, as a surveyor, and settled on Cedar Creek in the lower part of Fairfield County. He married Mary Boyd, a young Scotch girl, who was rescued from shipwreck and brought to America on the vessel on which John Alston was a passenger. The old brick house, their home, and near which is the Alston graveyard, was burned by Sherman in 1865. It stood forays by the Tories in the Revolution, and there are stories of very rough treatment of the wife and children at their hands.

James Alston, son of John Alston, married Frances Kirkland, whose family were prominent citizens of Fairfield. Their children were Elizabeth M., who married Dr. George Butler Pearson, and William John Alston, who married first, Marianna Brown, of John's Island, S. C., all of whose children have passed away leaving no descendants. The second wife of William J. Alston was Susanna Pope Cook, a very beautiful and splendid young woman of Fairfield, daughter of General Philip Cook and Jamima Williamson. General Philip Cook was quite prominent locally, and was the grandson of Captain John Cook and Martha Pearson. John Cook was a Captain in the Revolutionary War.

William J. Alston and Susanna Pope Cook were the parents of Philip C., Frances Kirkland, and Joseph Kirkland Alston. The two first named died in youth, which promised fair for them, leaving Joseph Kirkland the last living child of the second marriage.

Joseph Kirkland Alston was born November 6, 1860 at the home of his father, Prospect Hill, near Monticello, Fairfield, S. C. This fine mansion was the handsomest private dwelling in Fairfield, and was the seat of great hospitality and very considerable wealth. That beautiful home and three other good houses

(one being the beautiful Colonial one, built by James Alston, the grandfather of Joseph Kirkland) were among the numerous torches that lighted the way of Sherman's army on its march to the sea. Joseph K. Alston, then a child of four years in the arms of his nurse, had a bullet fired by a Federal soldier pass through his hat, but was unhurt.

William J. Alston died suddenly July 4, 1868. Susanna P. Alston, his wife, did not survive him many years. It was then that Joseph K., the survivor of his family, passed most of his youth in boarding schools--Sewanee, Charlotte Military Academy (Colonel J. P. Thomas), graduating from the Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, as first Captain in 1882. Returning to South Carolina, he studied law under Rion and Gaillard at Winnsboro. Passing a successful examination before the Supreme Court, he established an office in Columbia with the late H. C. Patton, the firm being known as Alston & Patton. For ten years he enjoyed and built up a lucrative practice, when he was elected Colonel of the First South Carolina Volunteers, in the war with Spain. Being "a Straight-out of the Straight-outs", the conferring of this unexpected and unsolicited honor by Governor William E. Ellerbe was, in the words of the Editor of the Columbia STATE, "equal to a promotion on the field". His regiment was slated to go with General Brook to Cuba, but the political chicanery at Washington prevented the fulfillment of his dream. A military man by training and instinct, he would have led his regiment proudly into battle, but it was not to be--so a splendid, forceful, magnetic personality passed at the early age of thirty-seven years from this sphere of action, from malignant malarial jaundice, contracted in camp, beloved and lamented by a throng of friends and admirers.

He was married October 17, 1888 to Miss Belle Bratton McCaw of York, S. C., whose grandfather, Dr. William Bratton of Winnsboro, the youngest son and namesake of the Revolutionary patriot--Colonel William Bratton of York--was in the forefront of men worth while in Fairfield. So that through birth and marriage Mrs. Joseph K. Alston is linked with names of prominence and ability in Fairfield. In this

connection I must mention General John Bratton, one of the wisest leaders and outstanding figures in the stirring times of the Civil War and the days of Reconstruction. Pages could be given to his patriotism and constructive work in both Eras! Through death and other states' claiming the descendants of old Fairfield names, some names are practically extinct. Joseph K. Alston, Jr., only child of Joseph K. and Belle McCaw Alston, died in infancy. And thus the curtain falls on the Alstons of Fairfield---with only memory to forge the links of an honorable past.

The above was furnished by

Mrs. Joseph Kirkland Alston, York, S. C.

7-28-1927

ABSTRACTS OF WILLS

Fairfield County, Court House  
South Carolina

ALSTON *Pages 7-9*

Alston, James (1839 -- Will Book No. 19, Pages 55-59). Written June 24, 1839. Plantation near Monticello, Fairfield County, S. C. Mentions: daughter, Elizabeth M. Pearson . . .  $\frac{1}{2}$  proceeds of sale of land inherited from my brother Samuel Alston; son, William J. Alston (Cedar Creek place); grandchildren who are children of Elizabeth M. Pearson; grandchildren who are children of son, William J. Alston; and George Butler Pearson as trustee.

Wits. James Lyles, John James and Thomas Richardson.

Probated December 31, 1839.

CALHOUN

Calhoun, Alexander (1825 -- Will Book No. 2). Written June 2, 1825. Plantation, near Monticello, Fairfield County, S. C. Mentions: sister-in-law, Patsey Calhoun (who helped to care for children); sons, John and Alexander Calhoun (Alex. to receive \$10.00 more, gift from Alex. Kincaid).

Probated 1-24-1825.

Calhoun, David. Appraisement of property 10-4-1820 (Book F, Folio 58). Wife, Martha (Henry) Calhoun. Administrators: wife, Martha Calhoun; Alex. and John Steele.

September 14, 1820.

Calhoun, Martha Henry (1883 -- Will Book No. 2). Written May 28, 1874. (Was over 80 years of age). Plantation near Monticello, Fairfield County, S. C. Mentions: son-in-law, Daniel Bradford Kirkland; grandchildren, William Wesley Kirkland, John Murray Kirkland, Martha Land and Margaret E. McGill.

Probated June 6, 1883.