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## INDIGO IN CAROLINA, 1671-1796

G. TERRY SHARRER \*

British and colonial bounties ostensibly determined the beginning and end of the indigo industry in South Carolina and Georgia during the eighteenth century. So say Gray, Shannon, Faulkner, Fite and Reese and others as well. Virtually all economic and other history texts repeat the theme. In fact, bounties played only a minor and indecisive role in the indigo industry from the planters viewpoint. Most especially, Parliament's bounty on imperial indigo, lasting from 1748 to 1777, did little to stimulate the industry in one direction or another. The British government did, however, determine the life span of the American indigo industry through other trade war policies against the Spanish, the Dutch, the French, and eventually the Americans.<sup>1</sup>

In 1655, the British captured Jamaica from Spain and thus acquired their first indigo plantations in America. Then, in the Navigation Act of 1660 Parliament specified, in part, that producers of certain enumerated goods, including indigo, could export those goods only to England and her possessions. This act, and to a large extent all the Navigation Acts, also deprived all hostile nations of British imperial products and trade. For the colonial planters, however, the enumeration clause assured them of a market, even though it limited that market to the British empire. In 1670, Parliament levied a 3s/6d export duty on Jamaican indigo in order to force the island planters into sugar cultivation. This tariff had the desired effect, for planters had to and did shift to sugar production.<sup>2</sup>

In the same year that Parliament levied the Jamaican indigo tariff, Joseph West and a party of settlers arrived in Carolina. In the summer of the following year, a colonist, Maurice Mathews, reported some

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis Gray, *History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860* (Gloucester, Massachusetts: 1958), I, 292; Fred A. Shannon, *Economic History of the People of the United States* (New York: 1934), 67; Harold U. Faulkner, *American Economic History*, (New York: 1954), Seventh Edition, 68; Gilbert C. Fite and Jim E. Reese *An Economic History of the United States* (Boston: 1965), Second edition, 41.

<sup>2</sup> George L. Beer, *The Old Colonial System, 1660-1754* (New York: 1912), I, 82-83; Duriel Alden, "Growth and Decline of Indigo Production in Colonial Brazil: A Study in Comparative Economic History," *Journal of Economic History*, XXXV (March 1965) 41.

it an early boost. Starting with Sir John Yeamans in 1671, members of the big sugar planting families brought gangs of Negroes with them to South Carolina. I suspect that many of the poor whites who came from the islands also brought a slave or two. In the 1680's and 1690's, before the introduction of rice as a staple crop, the colony already had a sizable Negro labor force. Lowland Carolina would soon have a population ratio of four blacks to every white, not far different from the ratio in Barbados.

Carolina rice planters of the eighteenth century had more in common with Barbados sugar planters of the seventeenth century than large gangs of slaves. They too grew rich overnight. They too developed a proud and mettlesome school of politics. They too fashioned an aristocratic elite in which wealth, privilege and power were closely correlated. To be sure, the Carolinians adjusted more successfully to their semi-tropical environment than had Englishmen in the Caribbean. But Charles Town's brittle, gay and showy style of life echoed the Barbados milieu of a century before. Both societies displayed a remarkable compound of old world elegance and frontier boisterousness. In 1773 the *South Carolina Gazette* commented wryly on the aggressive habits of the Carolina gentry: "Their whole Lives are one continued Race: in which everyone is endeavoring to distance all behind him; and to overtake or pass by, all before him. . . . Every Tradesman is a Merchant, every Merchant is a Gentleman, and every Gentleman one of the Noblesse. We are a Country of Gentry. . . . We have no such thing as a common People among us: Between Vanity and Fashion the species is utterly destroyed."<sup>21</sup> One hundred years before, the Barbados gentry had been caught up in the same sort of continual race, sustained by vanity and fashion. And when some of them moved to Carolina, they kept on running. So it was that these Caribbean pioneers helped to create on the North American coast a slave-based plantation society closer in temper to the islands they fled from than to any other mainland English settlement.

<sup>21</sup> Quoted by Carl Bridenbaugh, *Myths and Realities* (Baton Rouge, 1952), p. 115.

success in raising indigo. Still, early frosts killed the plants and also prevented the necessary fermentation in making dye. Indigo culture in Carolina remained largely experimental until the mid-eighteenth century. Until the American colonies could produce an adequate supply of dye stuff, British textile manufacturers had to rely on foreign sources. Parliament, in 1734, allowed all indigo imported from friendly nations to enter Britain.<sup>3</sup>

In 1739, Eliza Lucas began a series of indigo experiments at her father's plantation near Charleston. The Bahama variety, she found, adapted to the climate in South Carolina and produced a good quality dye. Her tests continued for five years until, in 1744, she harvested the first successful commercial crop. After that, local planters recognized her methods as being highly successful in solving the horticultural problems of indigo production. By mid-century the main problems in the industry had become less biological than commercial.<sup>4</sup>

Significantly, success in commercial indigo production and dye making in the southern colonies occurred during wartime. From 1739 to 1743, the wars of Jenkins' Ear closed British ports to French and Spanish goods, including indigo. Carolina planters secured a virtual monopoly on the market and rapidly increased their production. In 1744, the legislature of South Carolina recognized the opportunity and tried to stimulate the industry further while the international situation favored America. The colony offered a bounty of one shilling, South Carolina money, per pound of indigo, or about 6d sterling, payable directly to the planter. Two years later, however, the assembly repealed the bounty because the subsidy imposed a tax burden on those who did not raise indigo. Exports of dye stuff during the prosperous war years rose to a high of 138,000 pounds in 1747.<sup>5</sup>

The treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in October 1748, restored the status quo between the European powers. Britain returned to the 1734 policy of open importation of indigo from nations in amity with England. This return to international trade in indigo sharply cut into American sales. Exports from South Carolina in 1748 dropped to 62,200 pounds or less

<sup>3</sup> Maurice Mathews to Ashley, August 30, 1671, South Carolina Historical Society, *Collections* (Charleston: 1897), V, 333 in Gray, *History of Agriculture*, I, 53; Great Britain, *Statutes At Large* (Ruffhead) 1734, 6, 166.

<sup>4</sup> *The Gentleman's Magazine* (London: May 1755, XXV, 201.

<sup>5</sup> Gray, *History of Agriculture*, I, 290; Thomas Cooper, *Statues of South Carolina* (Columbia: 1837), II, 615; Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council, *The Statistical History of the United States from Colonial Times to the Present* (Stamford, Connecticut: 1965), 762.

than one half of the trade in the previous year. Provincial planters quickly realized that their product brought great profits only under conditions of restricted trade. Without a protected market, Carolina indigo could not successfully compete with superior foreign dyes.<sup>6</sup>

Planters reacted to the re-opened market by petitioning Parliament for an imperial bounty on dye stuff produced in America. Since Parliament had already enumerated indigo, the Carolinians had a reasonable ground for their request. Both Lords and Commons considered the planters' argument and agreed that it would be an advantage to all concerned to have the industry securely within the empire. On March 25, 1749, Parliament established a "6d Premium allowed on the Importation of Indigo, of the Growth of the British Plantations."<sup>7</sup>

The bounty provided a definite incentive to those in the industry, but it did not necessarily encourage the planters in South Carolina. The law directed the Receiver General of customs at the port of arrival to pay for the bounty to the "importer of such indigo." Supposedly, planters received the benefit of the premium by the importers' ability to pay a higher price for the dye. In fact, the producers received very little incentive. For example, loss of cargoes at sea or declining prices reduced the benefit the planter might receive from the subsidy. By creating the indirect bounty, however, Parliament subsidized the entire industry without creating any large outflow of specie from England. The planter, of course, could take his portion of the bounty, if any, in credit with the British merchants. All in all, the bounty nicely suited mercantilist imperial theory. The act insured the welfare of those with whom Parliament first concerned itself: the British merchants and textile manufacturers.<sup>8</sup>

In the first year of subsidy payments, South Carolina indigo exports rose to the wartime level of two years earlier, but declined immediately thereafter. Importation of foreign indigo hurt American producers more than the indirect bounty helped. The ineffectiveness of the subsidy became clearly apparent as indigo planters steadily cut production. From

<sup>6</sup> Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council, *Statistical History*, 762; Stephen Dowell, *A History of Taxation and Taxes in England* (London: 1884), IV, 464-466.

<sup>7</sup> Great Britain, *Statutes at Large* (Ruffhead) 1748, 7, 119.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 119-121; Albert Sanford in *The Story of Agriculture in the United States* mentioned that the bounty allowed the British merchants to pay a higher price to Carolina producers, but he did not attach any particular significance to that fact. Gray, Carrier, and Norman S. B. Gras (*A History of Agriculture in Europe and America*, 1940) do not mention at all that the bounty was not paid directly to the planters.

1750 to 1753, Carolina indigo exports declined so sharply that the combined shipments of those years did not equal the exports of 1749 alone.<sup>9</sup>

In 1754, the French and Indian War broke out in America and two years later hostilities overwhelmed most of Europe in the Seven Years War. For colonial planters, these wars meant a return to the guaranteed market in addition to the bounty. South Carolina indigo exports during the Seven Years war rose to a peak of 876,400 pounds in 1757. Clearly, the degree of market competition determined the success of the industry in Carolina. For that reason, the planters paid keen attention to England's post-war trade adjustments.<sup>10</sup>

Unlike the earlier periods, peace in 1763 did not retard the industry. After the Treaty of Paris, the Bute cabinet advised Parliament to cut expenditures in order to pay the backlog of war debts. The government included among its economy measures a reduction of the indigo bounty from 6d to 4d per pound. This reduced payment, however, had no more impact on colonial producers than the grant had had in 1749. More importantly, in 1764 Chancellor of the Exchequer George Grenville initiated the American Revenue Act (Sugar Act) which included a 6d per pound duty on foreign indigo imported into the empire. This tariff directly favored the American planters, for it created a trade wall in peace time that foreign producers found nearly impossible to hurdle. From 1764 to 1770, the tariff and the bounty together provided a 10d per pound difference in the price of colonial and foreign indigo. As a result, South Carolina dye shipments maintained a high and steady level, averaging nearly 500,000 pounds annually over the six year period. In 1770, the North ministry, following colonial reaction to the Townshend duties, returned the bounty to the original 6d per pound. This came to a 12d per pound preference, and American exports rose even higher. By 1775, planters had reached the height of the indigo trade, with shipments of over one million pounds or thirty-five per cent of South Carolina's total exports.<sup>11</sup>

Within the empire, the Carolina indigo industry prospered because of unusual advantages. Besides the indirect bounty, the protective tariff

<sup>9</sup> Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council, *Statistical History*, 672.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Oliver M. Dickerson, *The Navigation Acts and the American Revolution* (New York: 1963), 10; Great Britain, *Statutes At Large* (Ruffhead) 1764, 26, 33; Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council, *Statistical History*, 762; Lelia Sellers, *Charleston Business on the Eve of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: 1934), 167.

and the market monopoly in wartime, planters also had the protection of the Royal Navy and trading ties with British agents. When the Revolution broke out, however, planters lost the imperial encouragement and protection. International rivalries, which had stimulated the growth of the indigo industry for nearly a century, served to shatter it after 1776.

The first and most obvious effect of the Revolution on the indigo industry was the destruction resulting from military action. For seven years contending armies fought back and forth over South Carolina. As in all wars, soldiers burned plantations, destroyed livestock and implements, and confiscated property. Farmers in Williamsburg, South Carolina complained that their indigo works were broken down and their processed dye rotted in the casks, while fields reverted to underbrush. John Drayton, in *A View of South Carolina* said that agriculture went "from bad to worse" in the state. Beside the property destruction, planters lost "not less than 25,000 Negroes, who were either destroyed by disorders introduced with the British army, or were carried away by the same, at the close of the war." When the British captured one local planter, Peter Sinkler, they burned his plantation home at St. Stephens, and destroyed 20,000 pounds of his prepared indigo valued at \$30,000 or \$1.50 per pound.<sup>12</sup>

In 1774, the Continental Congress met at Philadelphia and took up the question of suspending trade with England and the British West Indies. On September 30, the Congress resolved on non-exportation after representatives of each of the southern states had made pleas for specific exemption for their major export crops. John Rutledge of South Carolina, angered by the resolution, threatened to withdraw his state from the Continental Association if Congress did not exempt rice and indigo from the agreement. These products, he argued, supported the economic life of South Carolina in a greater degree than did the products of Maryland, Virginia or North Carolina in those states. Unlike tobacco or corn, indigo could be neither smoked, nor eaten, nor used enough locally to prevent a serious depression among its producers. It had to be exported to be of any value at all. Although rice could be consumed by the American armies, its luxury prices in Europe made it a handsome item for exchange in the munitions trade. After a vigorous debate threatened to dissolve any cooperation at all, the Congress agreed to a compromise recognizing at least part of the

<sup>12</sup> Emory Q. Hawke, *Economic History of the South* (New York: 1934), 195; William Boddie, *History of Williamsburg* (Columbia: 1923), 134; John Drayton, *A View of South Carolina* (Charleston: 1802), 77; City of Charleston, *Yearbook* (Charleston: 1884), 403.



Carolynians' demands. Congress provided that "after the 10th day of September 1775, America will not directly or indirectly export any merchandise or commodity whatsoever to Great Britain, Ireland, or the West Indies, except rice to Europe."<sup>13</sup>

Rutledge had saved the rice industry, but he then faced the anger of the indigo planters in Charleston who demanded compensation. In January 1775, the first Provincial Congress met in Charleston and attempted to appease those planters who felt their interests had been sacrificed in Philadelphia. Jealousies arose again, but a plan came out of the melee. The Carolina agreement ordered the states' commissioners to claim a third of the marketable rice crop, sell it to the army, and use the money to purchase indigo and other local products. This agreement, which was awkward and open to inequities, lasted until the summer of 1777, when the Congress imposed a complete embargo on exports to Britain, including rice. By closing the rice loophole, Congress also deprived the indigo planters of any good argument for special compensation.<sup>14</sup>

The embargo disrupted the normal trade channels for the planters, but some trade did continue. Farmers exported their goods wherever they could find a market. Apparently some indigo reached the northern states. Newspapers in Providence, Rhode Island, in January and February of 1778, noted that rum, sugar, steel, pottery, raisins, and indigo were still available; however, the papers did not mention from where these products came. As late as March 1781, when the British were in South Carolina, Nahum Baldwin quoted a price for indigo at his store in Amherst, Massachusetts. He sold indigo for \$12 an ounce (Continental currency) or approximately 8s sterling per pound. Joseph Clay, a Georgia planter, and William Murrel, a dye merchant in South Carolina both recorded in their books the successful arrival of their indigo shipments in New York and Philadelphia respectively. Some producers certainly must have carried their casks of indigo to Wilmington and the safe ports along Pamlico Sound for the contraband trade with the French and Dutch West Indies. Official state trade also accounted for some indigo exports. In 1777, the South Carolina Commissioners of the Navy dispatched the armed vessels *Comet* and *Defense* to proceed to one of

<sup>13</sup> David MacPherson, *Annals of Commerce* (London: 1805), III, 580; *Journal of the Continental Congress* (Washington: 1919), XII; 1121 in Gray, *History of Agriculture*, II, 598; Edmund Bennett, *The Continental Congress* (New York: 1941), 55; Edmund Bennett, *Letters of the Members of the Continental Congress* (Washington: 1921), I; 86.

<sup>14</sup> William Guess, *South Carolina: Annals of Pride and Protest* (New York: 1980), 115.

the French islands for the purpose of enlisting seamen. Each ship carried £500 sterling worth of indigo to "defray their expenses and purchase such necessaries as may be wanted." Other ships did likewise. On Martinique, South Carolina's representative, William Bingham, had the authority to re-export the indigo to France and Holland in return for ammunition and other war supplies.<sup>15</sup>

Until they entered the war, France, Spain, and Holland could trade indigo in England under the provisions of the Navigation Acts and the American Revenue Act of 1763. After 1780, however, this trade stopped and hurt both the American states and England. The Carolina producers no longer had a market, much less imperial encouragement; the British no longer had access to American dye products, except possibly from Brazil. Certainly a smuggling trade continued in the West Indies throughout the Revolution, but for obvious reasons accurate accounts for this trade do not exist.

General Henry Clinton captured Charleston and its vicinity in May 1780, and indigo exports entered a new phase. In that year Parliament also enacted a law stating that "such places in America as are under the protection of the British arms are allowed to have free commercial intercourse with Great Britain, Ireland or any of the colonies acknowledging the sovereignty of the mother country." Now, it would be too much to suppose that Clinton captured Charleston to give the British textile industry a supply of indigo dye products, but the capture of the city and the coincidence of the Parliamentary act had that effect. One of the areas occupied by the British was the Beaufort District, the richest indigo lands in the state. Although information is scarce, some records do show the extent of the indigo trade during the occupation.

<sup>15</sup> Robert A. East, *Business Enterprise in the American Revolutionary Era* (New York: 1938), 75; Nahum Baldwin to Loammi Baldwin, March 10, 1781, Amherst to Woburn, Baldwin Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan—price conversion based on averages from currency equivalency table for 1781 in Clarence A. Day, *A History of Maine Agriculture, 1604-1860* (Oronoce, Maine: 1954), 59-60 John Tobler, *The South Carolina and Georgia Almanack for . . . 1784* (Charleston: 1784) in American Antiquarian Society; *The Maryland and Virginia Almanack . . . for . . . 1782* (Baltimore: 1782); Thomas Fox, *The Wilmington Almanack . . . for . . . 1783* (Wilmington, Delaware: 1783) in American Antiquarian Society; Anthony Sharp, *The Continental Almanac . . . for . . . 1781* (Philadelphia: 1781), in American Antiquarian Society; Joseph Clay to John Rains, December 30, 1776, Georgia State Historical Society, *Collections* (Savannah: 1913), VIII, 18; Kate Furman, "William Murrell, An Old Time Merchant in South Carolina," *Southern History Association Publication* (Washington: 1902), VI, 233; A. S. Salley, Jr., *Journal of the Commissioners of the Navy of South Carolina* (Columbia: 1912), 15; MacPherson, *Annals of Commerce*, III, 659.

Robert McCulloch, the Charleston Port Collector, recorded that from May 27, 1780, to May 26, 1781, a total of 1,762 barrels of indigo left port. Wholesale indigo prices between July 1780 and July 1782 rose from 2.6s to 5.2s per pound. This price rise in the face of a considerable export suggests that the loss of French, Spanish and Dutch dye products hurt the British. The Parliamentary act opening occupied areas of South Carolina to exports did not, however, renew the indigo bounty that had lapsed in 1777. When the British finally withdrew forces from South Carolina in 1783, the occupation provision ended and planters never again sold American indigo in England.<sup>16</sup>

Market difficulties were certainly the most serious war-caused problems facing the indigo planter, but there were other problems as well. A most serious obstacle for the planter after 1776 was finding available money to continue his operation. He had to maintain his capital investment in the processing works. Johann David Schoepf, traveling in the lower South soon after the Revolution, estimated the cost of a set of processing vats at about one hundred dollars. If the planter had a large acreage under cultivation, he needed one vat set for every seven or eight acres of plant. In addition to the vats, the producer needed drying sheds, wells or other water sources and various packing materials (oak barrels, osnaburg sacks, etc.) Transportation costs to the outports added still more expenses. In earlier times, the planters relied on credit extensions from English merchants to meet their obligations, but the war ended that relationship. Pennsylvania merchants tried to fill the credit gap but their assistance in most cases seems inadequate. Without cash or credit, planters faced serious times as debts mounted.<sup>17</sup>

During the war, the problem of absenteeism contributed to the decline of indigo culture. The manufacturing process for indigo required a high degree of supervisory expertise. Few successful planters trusted overseers or slaves with the tasks of judging the exact time for fermentation, or the proper moment for the introduction of the lime catalyst, or the quality of the finished dye. If military or political activity required the planter, patriot or loyalist, to be absent from his plantation during

<sup>16</sup> MacPherson, *Annals of Commerce*, III, 659; Guion Johnson, *A Social History of the Sea Islands* (Chapel Hill: 1930), 21; Robert McCulloch, "An Account of the Exports from the Port of Charles Town in South Carolina from the 27th day of May 1780 to the 26th day of May 1781," Ms., Huntington Library, San Marino, California; Arthur Cole, *Wholesale Commodity Prices in the United States, 1770-1861* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: 1938), 359.

<sup>17</sup> Johann David Schoepf, *Travels in the Confederacy, 1783-1784* (Philadelphia: 1911), II, 157; Anne Bezanson, et al., *Prices and Inflation During the American Revolution: Pennsylvania, 1770-1790* (Philadelphia: 1951), 247.

harvest time, income from an entire season could be lost. Henry Laurens and John Lewis Gervais, for example, had planned to develop a 13,200 acre indigo plantation in Ninety-Six District before the Revolution, but the war made their plans impossible.<sup>18</sup>

With the signing of the Treaty of Paris, the indigo industry experienced a brief period of recovery. In 1783, the Charleston collector of the customs reported to the legislature that local planters had exported only 827 casks of indigo in that year. By 1790, exports had risen to 1,649 casks, but six years later the amount fell to 490 casks. John Davis wrote in 1789 that "the culture of indigo [in South Carolina] is nearly relinquished." If the war left the industry staggering, post war circumstances finished it off.<sup>19</sup>

When the importation of American dye stuffs stopped after the war, British textile manufacturers persuaded Parliament to encourage planters in other Crown colonies. Parliament simply shifted the imperial preference to India and the East Indies. In Bengal, the East India Company had phenomenal success. Using Bengali labor, the British-Indian planters produced an indigo higher in quality and quantity and lower in price than the American product. By 1806, British indigo imports from India alone amounted to almost five million pounds. As English and European buyers eagerly sought the Indian dyes and the East India Company met the orders, the American industry disappeared. Planters in Guatemala and Brazil, as well as in South Carolina, Georgia and French Louisiana had to begin cultivation of other crops or face financial ruin. The crisis in the indigo industry became hemispheric by 1800.<sup>20</sup>

With the indigo industry on the verge of collapse by 1796 many Carolina planters embraced cotton as their cash crop. Both long and short staple cotton grew well on former indigo lands; it did not require any manufacturing process other than removing the seeds, and cotton bales were easily transported. Two events added to cotton's desirability. In 1789, planters had cotton put in the protective tariff of the United States. The home market appeared. And with the development of Whitney's cotton engine in 1793, the cotton industry began its rise.

<sup>18</sup> Sellers, *Charleston Business*, 165; Arthur H. Hirsch, *Huguenots of Colonial South Carolina* (Durham: 1928), 9.

<sup>19</sup> Drayton, *A View of South Carolina*, 166-168; Hawke, *Economic History of the South*, 262.

<sup>20</sup> John Hay, *Notes Upon Indigo* (New York: 1904), 25; Alden, ". . . Indigo Production in Colonial Brazil," 35-60 . . .; R. S. Smith, "Indigo Production and Trade in Colonial Guatemala," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, XXXIX (May 1959), 181-211.

From 1797 to 1800, cotton exports increased from one million to six and a half million pounds. Planters schooled in the one crop psychology, made cotton king as the indigo industry fell.<sup>21</sup>

In the rise and decline of the Carolina indigo industry, government encouragement, resulting from international rivalries between the European powers in the 18th century, played the decisive role. The British, by enacting an indirect bounty, by closing out foreign merchants in wartime, and, most importantly, by creating a protective tariff, created both an extremely favorable market for Carolina planters and a certain imperial source of raw dye products for British textile manufacturers. To a lesser extent, the South Carolina legislature stimulated the industry when the international situation favored America. The Revolution, however, reversed the English preference. The bounty and the protective tariff stopped and the British market disappeared. The British, after 1783, used the system of bounties and tariffs against the Americans as they had used it against the French, the Spanish and the Dutch in earlier times. By 1796, most planters realized that government encouragement had artificially stimulated indigo production in an unfavorable climate. With a broken market, strong competition from the British East Indian indigo works, and the high cost of dye stuff production, Carolina planters turned to a new and more suitable cash crop. The story in the lower South continued as the history of cotton.

<sup>21</sup> Hay. *Notes Upon Indigo*, 29.

## JOHN MILLER AND HIS DESCENDENTS

HORACE G. WILLIAMS\*

Three John Millers are buried at the Old Stone Church; father, son and grandson. The first John Miller was born in London, England, about 1730; he was one of the fifteen partners who owned and published *The London Evening Post* and *The Advertiser* at the time that the famous "Junius Letters" were published in those papers. He with two other partners, Henry Sampson Woodfall and Mr. Almon, were tried for libel before the General Assizes in London in 1775 for publishing those letters. History says that the largest crowd ever seen assembled in the House and in the streets of London during the trial and evinced the greatest enthusiasm when they were found "Not Guilty." These three men, Henry Sampson Woodfall, Mr. Almon and John Miller, no doubt knew who was the author of the Junius Letters, but the secret died with them. Many believed that John Miller himself was the author, as his handwriting, and that of the manuscript of the "Junius Letters" were very much alike. John Miller's penmanship is very neat and peculiar as is shown by the ledger kept by him of *The London Evening Post* from 1769 to 1778, which ledger well preserved is still in the possession of his descendants in this vicinity.

In 1782 he came to America, landing at Philadelphia, From there he came with his family to Charleston, South Carolina, in 1783 and began the publication of the *South Carolina Gazette and General Advertiser*, one of the first papers ever published in the States. After the treaty with the Indians in this part of the Country he was given a grant of 640 acres of land by Governor Benjamin Guerard, the land lying on both sides of Eighteen Mile Creek near Pendleton and including the site on which the Old Stone now stands. He, or his son, Crosby Miller, deeded the site to the Trustees of the Hopewell Church. After getting this grant of land he and his family moved from Charleston to Pendleton in 1786; this was then known as Pendleton District. Here he commenced the Publication of *The Pendleton Weekly Messenger*, and continued to own and publish it until his death in 1807. It was the first paper published in upper South Carolina.

The Anderson County Historical Society and the New Era Club erected a marker to Miller at the supposed site of his printing plant in Pendleton.

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