28 March 1990

James McCarter Gaston Jr
587 Cherry Street, Apt 5
Macon GA 31201

Dear Mr Gaston;

Ogreta W Huttash of Jacksonville, Texas, with whom you corresponded in the mid-1980s, wrote that you had a family bible, or had seen a family bible, or had access to a family bible - she wasn't too clear about that(!) - which listed Joseph and Matthew Gaston, who had arrived in South Carolina direct from Ireland during the 1760/70s, as sons of an Alexander Gaston, born about 1702 in Ireland. She said your last address was invalid, so I wrote to your old South Carolina address; your father apparently received the letter and turned it over to the Chester County Historical Society, from whom I received a letter yesterday giving me your current address - together with some photocopied information on Gastons! Sort of a round-about of contacting you!

My interest is in my ancestor Alexander Gaston, reportedly born about 1750 in Ireland, who arrived at Charleston, South Carolina from Ireland aboard the ship Pennsylvania Farmer sometimes before 6 January 1773, on which date South Carolina Council Journal 37, pages 15-25, listed him as receiving a 100-acre land grant; later surveyed on 16 April 1773 in Craven (now Chester or York) County, South Carolina, on "waters of Fishing Creek, near Indian line". On the same ship was Mary Gaston, who also received a 100-acre land grant; surveyed 7 July 1774 "on Fishing Creek in Craven Co; bounded Hugh Gaston".

By 1797 Alexander had removed to the Long Cane Creek area of old Abbeville County, South Carolina, and was a member of the Cedar Spring Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in old Abbeville (now Greenwood) County, South Carolina, along with a younger John Gaston - probably a son, although he could have been Joseph's son John, born about 1772. He was still there on the 1800 census, but his future whereabouts are unknown. John died about 1806, and David Gaston, born 1802 - my ancestor - who I believe to have surely been John's son, moved to Butler County, Alabama about 1823. My Gaston relatives - my mother was a Gaston - still live in that area.

Some researchers believe that Alexander Gaston had been a brother of Joseph and Matthew, and it is about that possibility that I write. Do you have any information on that subject, one way or the other? Or any information on an Alexander Gaston other than that outlined above? Or any information of the identify of Joseph's son John, born about 1772, that might help confirm or reject him as the 1800 John of Abbeville County? If you have anything or any clues as to these questions, I would very much like to correspond with you about such information, in an effort to get it all sorted out! As you undoubtedly know, some

[illegible]

researchers believed Alexander to have been a sibling of Joseph and Matthew, as well as the late-arriving Robert and Jane Gaston.

Thank you for any help you may be able to give me; a SASE is enclosed for your convenience in replying.

Sincerely,

Ed Couey

Edward H Couey
5664 Crooked Finger Road
Scotts Mills, Oregon 97375

P.S. The more I think about it, the more I realize that the John of Abbeville Co could have been Joseph's son John. His age was about right. John's wife was apparently named Mary, and two of their children were surely Alexander, born about 1800, and David, born about 1802. Does that information tie-in with anything you know about Joseph's children? There was an Alex there in 1810, who I believe to have been Joseph's son Alexander; he was gone by 1820, so he must have been the Alexander of the 1820 Chester Co census - with his aged parents in his household - who later moved to Meriwether Co, Ga by 1840, where he died.

18 May 1990

James McCarter Gaston
587 Cherry Street, #5
Macon, Georgia 31201

Dear James;

Thank you for your response to my letter. Wish there was more time before your upcoming trip to Ireland, but there isn't, so I hope this letter reaches you before your departure.

As to Louise Kelly Crowder's sources of her claim that Joseph, Robert, Mathew, Jane, and Alexander had been siblings, I do not know if they are as a result of original research, but suspect that the information most probably came from either Charles A Hanna's 1900 "Ohio Valley Genealogies", or from Elizabeth Weir McPherson's 1939 "The Brotherhood of Man". They say, and I quote precisely:

Hanna	McPherson
"Three brothers, Joseph, Robert, Matthew Gaston, said to be great grandsons of the first Irish William, emigrated to South Carolina, with their sister, Jane Gaston Walker, leaving a fourth brother, Alexander, in Ireland, b. about 1750; d about 1840; of these Joseph Gaston m Martha Gaston, daughter of Justice John..."	"Brothers Joseph, Robert and Mathew, 'said to be greatgrand sons of the first Irish William' emigrated to S.C. with their sister, Jane (Gaston) Walker, leaving a fourth brother, Alexander, in Ireland, born about 1750, died 1840. Of these Gastons, Joseph married Martha, born June 11, 1741, second child and daughter of Justice John and Esther (Waugh) Gaston of Cedar Shoals, Fishing Creek, Chester Dist, S.C. Martha Gaston's youngest sister, Esther m 1777 Alexander, son of said Jane (Gaston) Walker, sister of said Jos., Matthew, Robt. and Alexander Gaston".

A very recent publication, Jane E Burgess' "The Gaston Genealogy", says: "One account reported that other early Gastons also came from Ireland. Three brothers; Joseph Gaston, Robert Gaston, and Matthew Gaston; and their sister Jane Gaston Walker, emigrated from Ireland to South Carolina". She cites Hanna, but cites him incompletely!

Chalmers Gaston Davidson's 1956 "Gaston of Chester" mentions "... Martha with her husband Joseph Gaston (a distant cousin), and Esther with her husband Alexander Walker (son of Jane Gaston Walker), and their children", but cites merely "Names of in-laws from wills and deeds in Chester courthouse". He goes on to say

that Joseph's will lists sons Alexander and John, and daughters Martha, Margaret, Esther and Jane.

None of these people cite original sources, and none of these people say that Alexander, born about 1750, stayed in Ireland, merely that the others left him in Ireland. Indeed, one must wonder how his date of death of 1840 was known unless he came to America later! Frankly, since nothing was known on him until I began researching, I think that his date of death has probably been confused with the date of death of your Joseph's son Alexander, who did, indeed, die about 1840 in Meriwether County, Georgia!

When we start talking about who left whom in Ireland, we must consider that it is a documented fact that Mathew "left" all of them in Ireland, because he was the first to arrive in America, arriving in Charleston, South Carolina shortly before 22 December 1767 aboard the shop Earl of Denegal(Donegal), as a 19-year-old. His 100-acre land grant in old Craven (now probably that part which became present-day Chester) County, South Carolina was recorded 12 August 1768, in Volume 16, page 33, Colonial Plats of South Carolina. He apparently did not remain long on this grant, if at all, as by 1768 he is known to have been in North Carolina.

It is claimed by other researchers that Joseph, Robert, and Jane arrived in 1772 as part of Rev William Martin/Martyn's congregation of Convenanters. Unfortunately, all of the South Carolina Council Journals for the year 1772 apparently did not survive, as these three are not listed in Janie Revill's 1939 "A Compilation of the Original Lists of Protestant Immigrants to South Carolina 1763-1773". However, their 1772 arrival is proven by the fact that Joseph received a 200-acre land grant in 1772 just south of the south fork of Fishing Creek in Chester County, South Carolina, and Robert also received a 200-acre land grant in 1772 just south on Rocky Creek. The size of their grants prove that both were accompanied by two other members of their families, so they were obviously both married in Ireland before their departure, and each must have already had one child.

The 1790 Federal census lists them living just two households apart in Chester County, South Carolina. Also, Joseph was later involved in the 1796 South Carolina estate settlement of William Elliott, husband of Robert's oldest daughter Jane, born 1 November 1762, buried at Greensbury, Indiana. Jane's family had also received their 200-acre land grant in 1772 so Jane also already had a child when she and her family arrived. I am not presently aware of the precise location of their grant, but they were living in Chester County, South Carolina during the 1790 Federal census, so their grant was undoubtedly in that county.

My point is that, strictly speaking, Mathew had "left" all of them in Ireland, and when Joseph, Robert, and Jane arrived they had "left" Alexander! It is my unproved contention that the Alexander described in my letter was the Alexander they "left" in Ireland -

his age on the 1800 census shows him as having been born before about 1755; he coming over shortly before 6 January 1773 aboard the ship Pennsylvania Farmer, together with Mary Gaston. Since unmarried women rarely traveled to the new world alone to take-up land grants, Mary was in all reasonable probability Alexander's sister! Also, in all reasonable probability, all six of them were probably siblings, otherwise, why would the last five have chosen to settle near each other in northern South Carolina?

Mary was still living in York County, South Carolina as late as 1810. Unfortunately, Alexander's presence in York County after 1773 cannot yet be verified. I just this morning got through reading the microfilm of the 1790 census of South Carolina for myself, and couldn't find him there, although part of the micro film was unreadable. Therefore, his whereabouts before his 1797 appearance in old Abbeville County, South Carolina are unknown; however, information recently received from a new researcher creates the suspicion that he may have left his land claim at some unknown time before 1788, at which time a not-yet-identified Alexander appeared in Lincoln County, Kentucky.

In 1796 this Alexander acquired land in Silver Creek in Madison County, Kentucky, but in early days Kentucky was divided into only three counties, one of which was Lincoln. While I hold no claim to being an expert on Kentucky(!), I understand that Madison was one of the counties later created out of Lincoln, as was Pulaski, where one of Alexander's sons appeared in 1799. That means that Alexander had not necessarily moved when his residence changed from Lincoln County to Madison, merely that the designation of the location had changed.

There was also a William who was in that area later, thought to have been another son of Alexander; that William had been born in South Carolina during the 1770s, which is further reason to suspect that this Kentucky Alexander was one and the same person as "my" South Carolina Alexander, since there was no other Alexander in South Carolina who could have been this William's father!

In any event, Alexander appeared on the 1800-1806 tax rolls of Madison County, Kentucky, but that doesn't prove that he was physically present there - merely that he owned land there. This new researcher and myself suspect that the following could have happened:

1. Alexander arrived in South Carolina from Ireland shortly before 6 January 1773; his land grant being surveyed 16 April 1773.

2. Between 1773 and 1788 he removed to eastern Kentucky; this move may possibly have been connected in some way with the fact that the aforementioned suspected brother Mathew had been involved in "building the road to Kaintuck over the Cumberland Mts in Va, as certified for land grants by Va for such services Nov. 9, 1780 by Commissioner (Capt.) Wm McBride of

the Illinois Regiment of the Va. State Line under George Roger Clark". Mathew could have taken his land grant in Kentucky, but Alexander could have actually settled on it or acquired it in some way(?). This is being investigated.

3. Sometimes after 1796 Alexander moved back to South Carolina, leaving his son James in Pulaski County, Kentucky. He settled by 1797 in old Abbeville County, South Carolina; a location which, incidentally, was between his suspected siblings Joseph, Robert, Jane, and Mary in Chester and York Counties, and his suspected brother Mathew who, by then, had settled in Greene County, Georgia.

Incidentally, by the time of the 1810 Federal census, a young Alexander Gaston and wife appeared in Abbeville District, South Carolina, who has to have been your Joseph's son Alexander. By 1820 he had moved back to Chester County, South Carolina, at which time his aged parents were apparently living in his household, and by 1840 he had moved yet again - this time to Meriwether County, Georgia, where he shortly died. Tell me those guys and gals weren't all interrelated??? If I was a betting man, I would give you odds any day that if Mathew and Joseph were, indeed, brothers, then they were also siblings to Robert, Alexander, Jane, and Mary!

On the other hand, we don't have a shred of proof! Which is why we need a photocopy of the pertinent pages of that family bible in the possession of Rosa B Guess' descendants! So that we can examine it for ourselves and make our own determinations, since it is obvious to even the most untrained eye that nobody knows for sure one way or the other!!! Do you suppose you could get us a copy? Or tell us where to write to get photocopies?

In any event, since Joseph had been born about 1739 in Ireland, the 1702 Alexander had to have been one of the two Alexander's listed on the 1740 Protestant Householders Index of County Antrim, Ireland; that is, if the bible supports the story of him being the father of Joseph - and Mathew. Perhaps your upcoming trip to Ireland will uncover something about that situation!

Hope you can make sense out of this letter! I've been as careful and as precise as time permits, but in my frantic haste to get a letter to you before you left on your trip, there may be areas that are not completely clear and understandable. But we can correspond at a more sedate pace after you get back, and straighten-out anything that is amiss.

Sincerely,

Ed

Edward H Couey
5664 Crooked Finger Road
Scotts Mills, Oregon 97375

(More on next page)

PS. No, I have not read the account of your findings in Ireland in the December 1988 issue of The Bulletin, but yes, I would VERY MUCH like to have a copy, and will promptly reimburse you for any expense involved in photocopying.

PPS. Huttash said she hadn't been able to locate you, so I sent her your new address and suggested she write you about our common interests. Hope that was OK?

I realize that I have told you a lot of stuff that you already know, but had to, in order to put my comments into some sort of logical context.

Ed

9 August 1990

James McCarter Gaston
587 Cherry Street, #5
Macon, Georgia 31201

Dear James;

I am writing on the assumption that you have returned safely from your recent trip to Ireland; hope you were successful with your research. I am especially interested in knowing if you discovered anything that would tie-in with my Alexander Gaston of York and old Abbeville Counties, South Carolina - who I believe to have surely been the younger brother of your Joseph, as well as of Matthew, Robert, and Jane - the Alexander, born about 1750, who was listed in McPherson's 1939 book.

In my last letter I mentioned an Alexander Gaston who had been in Lincoln (now Madison) County, Kentucky by 1788. Since then, information has arrived from a fellow researcher of the Kentucky Gastons which shows Matthew Gaston having received a 300-acre land grant on Paint Lick Creek, in present-day Madison County, Kentucky in 1783; undoubtedly as a result of his previous involvement in "building the road to Kaintuck" as mentioned by McPherson. Its simply too much of a coincidence for both a Matthew and an Alexander Gaston to have been in that same unsettled area at about the same time without there having been some connection, especially since there were no other adult Matthews nor Alexanders known to have been in the southeastern area of the United States at that time. The fact that Matthew later settled in Greene County, Georgia and Alexander in old Abbeville County, South Carolina does not in any way change my belief that they must - in all reasonable likelihood - have been the Kentucky Matthew and Alexander Gaston.

Also, Alexander disappeared from old Abbeville County, South Carolina after the 1800 Federal census, but in 1805 an Alexander appeared in Anderson County, Tennessee who has not yet been identified; he was listed on various Circuit Court records at various times, and was still there at the time of the 1820 Federal census of East Tennessee, but missing from the 1830 Federal census. If he was "my" Alexander, he would have been about 70 years old by 1820, so was probably deceased by 1830.

While all of this has no direct bearing on your own particular lineage, except for the probability that your Joseph and the others mentioned were siblings, I - and other researchers of the other "late-arriving" South Carolina Gastons - are very desirous of proving - or disproving - the connection. I keep running across old letters about the information contained in the "old Gaston family bible", that refers to it containing information on Joseph and Matthew, as well as information on Robert and some of his descendants. For that reason, we are all extremely anxious to see that information and hope that you can help us, as that bible

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is obviously the key document as far as this problem is concerned.

Can you furnish me the address of the present custodian of the bible, so that I can contact that person and present my case for getting the pertinent pages photocopied? Considering the age of the bible, surely someone has had the foresight to have already had it photocopied in order to preserve the information for others, so perhaps you already have photocopies of the information from that bible. If so, can we get copies from you? The information from McPherson's 1939 book must have come from that bible, and since I am convinced that "my" Alexander must have been the fourth brother mentioned in that book - Alexander, born about 1750 - we would all like to be able to see the original information for ourselves, so that we can make our own judgments as to who is related to whom(!), but since that is not possible, photocopies of the pertinent pages are the next best thing!

Looking forward to hearing from you, and to corresponding with you about those "late-arriving" South Carolina Gastons. Also looking forward to hearing about what you discovered on your recent trip to Ireland, as well as seeing the information in the December 1988 issue of The Bulletin, to which you referred in your last letter. I will, of course, gladly reimburse you for any photocopying you do on our behalf, and will see that the information is passed-on to the other interested researchers of that group.

Sincerely,

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Edward H Couey
5664 Crooked Finger Road
Scotts Mills, Oregon 97375

Reply Made 8/23/90

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Edward R Dowey
5664 Crooked Finger Road
Scotts Mills, Oregon 97375

Copy made 8/23/90