South Carolina Historical Magazine

Volume 80 Number 2

April 1979

(ISSN 0038-3082)

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE
SOUTH CAROLINA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
FIREPROOF BUILDING
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29401

CONTENTS

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION (Required by 39 U. S. C. 3685). 1. Title of Publication: *South Carolina Historical Magazine.* 2. Date of filing: October 12, 1978. 3. Frequency of issue: quarterly. 4. Location of Known Office: Fireproof Building (100 Meeting Street), Charleston, S. C. 29401. 5. Location of Publisher: same. 6. Publisher: South Carolina Historical Society, Fireproof Building; Editor, Elise Pinckney, South Carolina Historical Society; Managing Editor, Gene Waddell, South Carolina Historical Society. 9. The purpose, function and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for Federal income tax purposes have not changed during preceding 12 months. 10. Total number of copies printed: average, 3,552, last, 3,640; Paid circulation, none; Mail subscriptions: average, 2,810, last, 2,697; Total paid circulation, average, 2,810, last, 2,697; Free distribution, none; Total distribution, average, 2,876, last, 2,757; Copies not distributed: average, 680, last, 843; Returns from news agents, none; totals, average, 3,552, last, 3,640. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete, Elise Pinckney.

THE FEATHER BED ARISTOCRACY: ABBEVILLE DISTRICT IN THE 1790S

MARY KATHERINE DAVIS *

"Until sometime after the Revolution, the social and financial prestige of a family was measured by the number of feather-beds owned. . . . The ambition of every mother apparently was to give a daughter at marriage or by will at least one feather-bed."

—H. L. Watson

When Governor James Glen travelled through the South Carolina upcountry in 1753, he offered the following observations of the few scattered inhabitants:

> . . . their lands are good, and when cleared yield plentifull Crops of Corn . . . some of them also have good Gangs of Horses, many of them abound in Children, but none of them bestow the least Education on them, they take so much care in raising a Litter of Piggs, their Children are equally naked and full as Nasty. The Parents in the back Woods come together without any previous ceremony . . . there is not a Minister within a hundred Miles of them, so that I am affraid others must answer for their Ignorance and crimes.[1]

Sophisticated gentlemen viewed dismal, pathetic sights in the hinterlands—vulgarity, impudence, illiteracy, poverty, and indolence. The people "delight[ed] in their . . . low, lazy, sluttish, heathenish, hellish Life," and were loathe to change.[2] To coastal residents, the interior of the province was useful only as a buffer to protect the more civilized settlements from Indian attack.

A missionary to the Sand Hills and Piedmont, equally unimpressed with the character of the settlers, was much concerned with the state of their souls. In 1766, Charles Woodmason, an intinerant Anglican minis-

* A doctoral candidate in the Department of History at the University of South Carolina.

[1] "Governor James Glen to A Gentleman of the Council, October 25, 1753," Papers in the British Public Records Office Relating to South Carolina, Vol. XXV, 349-357, South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

[2] Richard J. Hooker, ed., *The Carolina Backcountry on the Eve of the Revolution: The Journal and Other Writings of Charles Woodmason, Anglican Itinerant* (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1953), p. 52.

FIG. 12. Stairwell of the Fireproof Building.

ter, embarked on a crusade against the immorality, irreligion, and ignorance which pervaded the upcountry. Woodmason was undaunted in his mission, even when he found people "as rude in their Manners as the Common Savages, and hardly a degree removed from them." [3]

The prejudice of lowcountry inhabitants against the western section of the province was evident in their labelling the area the backcountry. More than merely a geographic designation for the frontier, backcountry suggested awkwardness, inadequacy, and inferiority. The more proper term upcountry, or even the antonym high country, might have become popular if a biased, condescending view of the west had not existed.

Had Governor Glen or the Rev. Mr. Woodsmason come to the upcountry after 1785, their impressions would probably have been different. By that time, the population had increased and an upper class had emerged with whom both the governor and the minister would have been comfortable. While the term aristocracy generally refers to an hereditary ruling class, it may also mean a group or class which is considered superior. The emerging aristocracy in the Abbeville District was different from, yet compatible with, the low country aristocracy. The appearance of a "feather bed aristocracy" indicates that a complex social order was rapidly developing in the upcountry after the Revolution.

Settlement of the Abbeville District began in the middle of the eighteenth century. In 1737, the British Board of Trade rejected John Hamilton's petition for a land grant in South Carolina. However, twelve years later, Hamilton, Solomon da Costa, and Joseph Salvador, all of London, obtained 200,000 acres in the South Carolina upcountry. Hamilton's Great Survey in 1751 resulted in the division of this property into four separate tracts of 50,000 acres each. Both settlers and land speculators purchased segments of these tracts.[4]

Governor Glen's successful negotiations to diminish the Indian threat on the frontier encouraged settlement of the upcountry, particularly in the area known as Ninety Six. Favorable tax laws for northern immigrants arriving in the upcountry stimulated settlement and, in the 1750s, a number of people migrated to the vicinity of Ninety Six.[5] The rough terrain, isolation, and the danger of Indian attack made settlement perilous and uncertain.

[3] Ibid., p. xxvi.

[4] Robert L. Meriwether, *The Expansion of South Carolina, 1729-1765* (Kingsport, 1940), p. 54; Margaret Watson, *Greenwood County Sketches: Old Roads and Early Families* (Greenwood, 1970), p. 5.

[5] *Journal of the Commons House of Assembly*, 1745-1746, pp. 29-35.

As the population of the upcountry increased, so did civil disorder. The short-sighted Commons House of Assembly, controlled by the low-country, showed little sympathy for the problems in the interior. Lawlessness was rampant since there were no courts and no officers empowered to arrest offenders.[6] In the fall of 1767, a gang of outlaws kidnapped James Mayson, a Justice of the Peace who lived near Ninety Six. Mayson, tied to his saddle, was "dragg'd and insulted" for eighty miles before he was finally released.[7] Such flagrant disregard for the law and the indifference of the provincial government prompted decent citizens to band together for their own protection. Calling themselves Regulators, one thousand men swore to uphold law and order in the upcountry.

A group of Regulators petitioned the Assembly for courts, schools, laws against trespass and more stringent laws against "idleness and vice." Their protests and petitions resulted in a 1769 law "for establishing *Courts*, building *Gaols*, and appointing Sheriffs . . . for the more convenient administration of Justice." [8] The Circuit Court Act of 1769 created seven judicial districts and provided for the construction of courthouses and jails in each. The small village of Ninety Six grew up around the courthouse for the largest judicial district.[9] The new courthouse and jail at Ninety Six were built near the profitable trading post operated by Robert Gouedy. By 1780, the community consisted of the two government buildings and about twelve dwelling-houses.[10]

As Ninety Six evolved into the principal commercial center of the upcountry, several families from Virginia and Pennsylvania obtained land grants on Long Cane Creek. The constant threat of Indian attack in the 1750s forced these settlers to temporarily abandon their land claims. When the Cherokee War ended in 1761, they returned.[11]

Another community was established in 1764 when a band of French Huguenots arrived in the upcountry. These Frenchmen, stranded in London when King George III ordered a ten-year release from quitrents for

[6] Richard Maxwell Brown, *The South Carolina Regulators* (Cambridge, 1963), p. 29.

[7] *South-Carolina Gazette*, October 10, 1767.

[8] Brown, *South Carolina Regulators*, p. 98.

[9] William Roy Smith, *South Carolina as a Royal Province* (New York, 1903), pp. 135-139.

[10] "Diary of Lieut. Anthony Allaire," in Lyman C. Draper, *King's Mountain and Its Heroes* (Cincinnati, 1881), pp. 488-489.

[11] Carl Julien and H. L. Watson, *Ninety Six: Landmarks of South Carolina's Last Frontier Region* (Columbia, 1950), pp. 13-15; Watson ,*Old Roads*, p. 174; A. S. Salley, Jr., "The Calhoun Family of South Carolina," this *Magazine*, VII (1906), 84.

settlers in the South Carolina upcountry, took advantage of the attractive offer. Twenty-six thousand acres near the Long Canes were set aside for the Frenchmen and called Hillsborough Township. The nucleus of the township was the village of New Bordeaux, named for the area in France from which most of the immigrants had come. The economic base of New Bordeaux was agriculture, with grapes and olives as the main crops. The village's principal industry was silk-making.[12]

After the American Revolution, an act of the legislature relocated the village of Ninety Six, a British strong-hold in 1780-81, about one-quarter mile west. Residents of Ninety Six were given comparable town lots in the new village named Cambridge.[13] Robert Mills noted in 1826 that Cambridge was "the most conspicuous" settlement in the area. The town had seven stores, three taverns, and a college established by the state legislature in 1785. Although this frontier school was never really a college and rarely had more than one teacher, Mills called it a "respectable academy,"[14]

The decline of Cambridge can be attributed in part to a change in the center of judicial administration in 1800 when the General Assembly created thirty-four counties within the seven original judicial districts. A court was established at Abbeville, the new county seat, to hear civil and criminal cases for the seven counties which comprised the Ninety Six District.[15]

Abbeville, organized in 1798, was named by a French Huguenot in honor of his native home. The town, located on the site of General Andrew Pickens' first home, grew into a "pleasant village" with about forty houses, an arsenal, a magazine, a jail and courthouse. There were about four hundred villagers.[16]

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, there were two other towns in the Abbeville District.[17] Vienna, a tobacco inspection point on the Savannah River, never achieved its founders' expectations of becom-

[12] Anne C. Gibert, *Pierre Gibert, Esquire: The Devoted Huguenot* (n.p. 1976), pp. 27-31.

[13] *Statutes at Large of South Carolina*, IV, 474-475.

[14] Robert Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina* (Charleston, 1826), p. 351; Watson, *Old Roads*, p. 22; "Diary of Edward Hooker," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*, 1896, p. 884.

[15] David Duncan Wallace, *South Carolina: A Short History, 1520-1948* (Columbia, 1950), p. 337; Watson, *Old Roads*, p. 9.

[16] Mills, *Statistics*, p. 349.

[17] After 1800, the Ninety Six Judicial District was abolished and each of the counties became a separate judicial district. See Watson, *Old Roads*, pp. 9-10. The Abbeville District provides the geographical boundary used in this paper.

ing a "place of considerable commerce." The only distinction of Willington, four miles east of Vienna, was Dr. Moses Waddel's Academy "which possessed a reputation equal to any institution of the kind in the United States." [18]

By 1790, a delineation in the class structure of the Abbeville District was apparent. A wide social, political, economic and educational gulf separated the upper class from the lower classes. The 1790 census enumerated 9,205 people in Abbeville. Of this number, 1,707 were slaves and twenty-five were free persons of color.[19] Slaves were at the bottom of the social order. Free blacks, some of whom were tradesmen, were only slightly higher on the scale.[20] The overwhelming majority of upcountry settlers fell into the middle bracket of the social scale. These men were white farmers whose small landholdings often provided only a marginal existence. Artisans—coopers, carpenters, wheelwrights—made up the fourth level of the social scale followed by shopkeepers and larger farmers. At the apex of the social order were the upcountry aristocrats.

While it is impossible to identify every single member of the upcountry aristocracy, it is possible to select a representative group. These men and their families were the foundation upon which the upcountry aristocracy was built.

The first permanent settler in the Abbeville District was Robert Gouedy, an Indian trader who built a trading post on the Cherokee Path at Ninety Six. By 1753, Gouedy's trading post was the bustling commercial hub of the upcountry where shoppers could purchase items ranging from thread to rum.[21] The trader also owned several plantations totaling about fifteen hundred acres which produced wheat, tobacco, hemp, indigo, and peaches.[22] Gouedy's role as a frontier banker indicates his prosperity and stature in the province.[23] After his death, most of Gouedy's property was divided between his daughter and his son, James.[24] The younger Gouedy, born after his parents settled at Ninety

[18] Mills, *Statistics*, p. 350.

[19] *Heads of Families at the First Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1790, South Carolina* (Washington, 1908), pp. 57-61.

[20] "Inventory and Appraisement of the Estate of Robert Locklier, Free Negro," Abbeville County Probate Records, South Carolina County Records, WPA Transcripts, p. 189, South Caroliniana Library, Columbia.

[21] An Inventory of the Goods & Chattels of Robert Gouedy, Charleston County Probate Court, Record of Inventories, 1774-1786.

[22] *South Carolina and American General Gazette*, November 4, 1774.

[23] Inventory of Robert Gouedy.

[24] Will of Robert Gouedy, *Record of Wills, Charleston County, 1774-1779*, Vol., XVII.

Six, may be considered the first upcountry aristocrat born in the region.[25] Though never as wealthy as his father, James Gouedy enjoyed a comfortable standard of living as a merchant in Cambridge.[26]

Ninety Six was the nucleus of the pre-revolutionary upcountry aristocracy. Planters such as Andrew Williamson, John Lewis Gervais, James Mayson, and Richard Rapley joined Gouedy as the owners of vast and profitable plantations.

Andrew Williamson, a Scotch immigrant, came to the upcountry in 1757 as manager of Dr. John Murray's estate, White Hall. Murray, a Charleston physician, owned one of the 50,000 acre tracts laid out in Hamilton's Great Survey. Williamson's management of White Hall was so successful that he was soon able to purchase the plantation.[27] In 1767, Thomas Griffith described White Hall as "one of the finest plantations in South Carolina." According to Griffith, the plantation produced corn, hemp, flax, cotton, rice, cattle, hogs, and peaches.

When the Revolution began, Williamson was a major in the South Carolina militia and a member of the Council of Safety. In 1780, he became a British collaborator. Although Williamson's property, like that of other Tories, was confiscated after the war, most of it was returned[28] Faced with the opprobrium of their neighbors and the loss of their property, a number of Loyalists from Ninety Six fled to Nova Scotia at the war's end. Many of these persons were well established in the district and would probably have emerged in the post-revolutionary era as members of the upper class.[29] Andrew Williamson chose to remain in the upcountry for a short time after the war, but the hostility of his patriot neighbors eventually drove him to seek refuge at Horse Savannah, his low country plantation. Although he kept in touch with former associates in the upcountry, Williamson remained at Horse Savannah until his death in 1786.[30]

John Lewis Gervais and his business partner, Henry Laurens, owned several thousand acres near Ninety Six. Herrenhausen, the Gervais plan-

[25] Tombstone, James Gouedy, deceased, 1816, Ninety Six Historic Site.

[26] Watson, *Old Roads*, p. 187.

[27] George C. Rogers, Jr., "The South Carolina Backcountry on the Eve of the Revolution," *Richmond County History*, VI (Summer, 1974), 36-37; Joseph Johnson, *Traditions and Reminiscences Chiefly of the American Revolution in the South* (Charleston, 1851), pp. 144-145.

[28] Watson, *Old Roads*, pp. 46, 49.

[29] Claims of American Loyalists, Public Record Office, A O 12/43-52, Microfilm in Canadian Archives.

[30] "Historical Notes", this *Magazine*, VI (1905), 177.

tation, yielded a variety of crops, the most profitable of which was hemp. Gervais' responsibilities kept him at Herrenhausen and he frequently lamented his exile from Charleston, "especially when he had to do his own cooking." Presumably, Gervais was much happier when he acquired an Irish cook. Although Gervais eventually returned to Charleston, he retained much of his property in the upcountry.[31]

Glasgow, the plantation owned by James Mayson, was a most profitable enterprise. Mayson, a Scotch immigrant, bought part of Hamilton's Great Survey from Dr. John Murray. After the Revolution, Mayson obtained a second plantation, Peach Hill, located on the east bank of the Saluda River in what is now Newberry County.

In 1769, Joseph Salvador, the wealthy Jewish merchant who owned part of Hamilton's Survey, sent Richard Andrews Rapley to America as his agent. Rapley and Francis Salvador, Joseph's nephew, managed the property for the absentee owner and soon acquired plantations of their own. Both Francis Salvador and Richard Rapley were ardent partriots and Salvador was killed in 1776 during a patriot expedition against the Cherokees.[32] Rapley, however, figured prominently in public affairs until his death.

Robert Gouedy, Andrew Williamson, John Lewis Gervais, James Mayson, and Richard Rapley were the pre-Revolutionary upcountry aristocrats. They came to the upcountry via Charleston. They enjoyed economic and political connections which enabled them to assume positions of leadership. Perhaps they were destined by circumstance to be upcountry aristocrats.

Other immigrants to the upcountry were not so fortunate. The Calhoun, Noble, and Pickens families came to the Long Canes which was, by 1776, a rather large and scattered settlement. Most of the settlers along Long Cane Creek came to the upcountry on the Great Wagon Road from Pennsylvania and Virginia. Patrick Calhoun, called the "patriarch of the upcountry," became the first upcountry member of the Commons House of Assembly.[33] Unlike those men previously mentioned, there is nothing in the background of the Long Canes settlers which indicates that they were "natural" aristocrats. Only after the Revolution did the Long Canes settlement emerge as a center of wealth and status.

[31] Raymond Starr, "Letters from John Lewis Gervais to Henry Laurens, 1777-1778," *this Magazine*, LXVI (January, 1965), 16; Gibert, *Pierre Gibert*, pp. 33, 50; Watson, *Old Roads*, p. 52.

[32] Watson, *Old Roads*, pp. 6, 16, 123, 323-324.

[33] Mills, *Statistics*, p. 355; Watson, *Old Roads*, p. 174; Alice Noble Waring, *The Fighting Elder* (Columbia, 1962), p. 1.

The Reverend John Harris, a native of Wales, came to the Long Canes in 1772. For the next twenty years, he served several churches in the Abbeville District. Harris graduated from the State College of New Jersey and was one of the few upcountry residents who had a college education. When the Revolution began, John Harris was the only Presbyterian minister in the Abbeville District.[34]

Several important upcountry aristocrats lived in the French settlement at New Bordeaux. Most of the French immigrants were of middle-class background, including Pierre Gibert, nephew of the Huguenot leader, Jean Louis Gibert. Pierre Gibert came to New Bordeaux about 1772 and became the schoolmaster as well as a prosperous farmer.[35] John de la Howe was also a Frenchman who settled near New Bordeaux but he was not one of the original Huguenot immigrants. Before the Revolutionary War, de la Howe and his "housekeeper," Rebekah Woodin, came to the upcountry from Charleston.[36]

In the late 1750s, the Benjamin Jones family of Virginia settled on the banks of Turkey Creek in the northeast corner of the Abbeville District. Jones' eldest son, Adam Crain Jones, was a successful planter and lawyer and may have been the most representative member of the upcountry aristocracy.[37]

Since it was still the Ninety Six District center when the Revolution ended, Cambridge attracted several professonal men who emerged as upcountry aristocrats. William Moore was a planter and merchant in Cambridge. It is quite likely that before the war Moore's emporium had served the residents of Ninety Six. Townfolk and farmers could purchase yardgoods, books, rum—almost any item necessary or desirable—from his establishment.[38] Zachery Meriwether was an important Cambridge physician and Ephraim Ramsay a prominent attorney.[39]

[34] *Plats Before 1776*, Vol. XV, 315, South Carolina Department of Archives and History; Watson, *Old Roads*, p. 76; Durward T. Stokes, "The Presbyterian Clergy in the American Revolution," this *Magazine*, LXXI (1970), 272; James M. Dallas, "History of Greenvale: Old Greenville Church" (Abbeville, 1925), p. 10.

[35] Gibert, *Pierre Gibert*, pp. 1, 10.

[36] Julien and Watson, *Ninety Six*, p. 15.

[37] *Plats Before 1776*, Vol. X, 163; David Duncan Wallace, *The History of South Carolina* (New York, 1934), IV, 16; Watson, *Old Roads*, pp. 270-271.

[38] List of Property to be Sold, Estate of William Moore, Esq., Box 66, pk. 1593, Abbeville County Probate Records.

[39] John Belton O'Neal, *Biographical Sketches of the Bench and Bar of South Carolina* (Charleston, 1859), I, 66-67; Watson, *Old Roads*, p. 327.

These men are only a few representatives of the upcountry aristocracy. Although drawn from different backgrounds, by 1785, they constituted a definite social, economic, and political elite.

There are three interrelated factors which immediately set the upcountry aristocrats apart from other elements in the society: wealth, land, and slaves.

In 1790, out of 1,311 households in the Abbeville District, only thirty-five reported more than ten slaves; 294 households listed fewer than ten slaves and of this number, 183 had three or less. More than two-thirds of the households owned no slaves. Richard Rapley, largest slaveholder in the district, owned fifty-seven slaves.[40] In the period from 1790 to 1820, slaves represented about one-half the value of an estate. For example, the appraised value of the twenty-six slaves which Patrick Calhoun owned at the time of his death in 1797 was £1180. The value of the remander of the estate, excluding land, was slightly more than £500.[41] Most estates in the Abbeville District during the 1790s were appraised at less than £350. The value was substantially less if the deceased had no slaves. An estate valued at £1000 reflected considerable wealth and a comfortable standard of living in the region.

The upcountry aristocrats were slaveholders and most owned more than ten slaves. Alexander Noble owned twenty, Patrick Calhoun owned thirty-one, James Gouedy owned seven, and Dr. John de la Howe owned fourteen. However, members of the upper class who were merchants or professional men, especially those who lived in Cambridge or Abbeville, usually owned fewer slaves since they were not required for a plantation work force. For example, Dr. Meriwether owned only four slaves in 1790.[42]

The ownership of slaves was directly related to the amount of real property a person owned. Land grants before the Revolution were usually one hundred to two hundred acres. After the war, there were two laws under which a person might obtain additional property. To entice men to serve in the military, a 1778 law promised a grant of two hundred acres to those who completed the required military service or to heirs of those who died for the patriot cause. Vacant lands between the Tugaloo and Keowee rivers were reserved for this purpose. After the Revolution,

[40] *Heads of Families*, pp. 57-61.

[41] A Just and True Inventory and Appraisement of All and Singular the Personal Estate of Patrick Calhoun, Esq., Box 19, pk. 393, Abbeville County Probate Records.

[42] *Heads of Families*, pp. 57-61.

another bounty program allowed the sale of vacant lands northwest of the ancient Cherokee boundary as well as in other parts of the state. The price of £10 sterling per one hundred acres required a rather heavy capital outlay, but offered a bargain to those who were financially able to participate.[43] Most of the upcountry aristocrats were eligible for the land grant and could also buy land. The amount of land purchased under the bounty program is a measure of affluence.

When Robert Gouedy opened his trading post in 1753, he owned about 250 acres. At the time of his death thirty years later, he owned more than fifteen hundred acres.[44] Patrick Calhoun's first land grant in 1756 was only two hundred acres, but he eventually accumulated more than twelve hundred acres.[45] John Ewing Colhoun, an attorney and husband of an heiress, probably acquired the largest amount of bounty land—nearly seven thousand acres. Most of this land was in the Keowee River Valley where Colhoun lived after about 1791.[46] John Lewis Gervais bought 640 acres near Seneca. Adam Crain Jones wisely purchased over seven hundred acres under the bounty program. Much of this property was on the banks of Turkey Creek near the site of his father's original land grant.[47] By 1787, Jones owned 1,581 acres; Richard Rapley held 2,513 acres and two town lots in Cambridge; Pierre Gibert's fifteen hundred acres were in Hillsborough Township.[48] Most of the property which the upcountry aristocrats owned was located in Abbeville District or in former Cherokee lands. John Ewing Colhoun's low country plantations made him a notable exception.[49]

[43] *Statutes at Large of South Carolina*, IV, 411, 590. The destruction of Abbeville County deeds in 1873 makes it difficult to determine the pattern of land ownership in the area. Wills usually do not specify the amount or location of land and appraisers, more often than not, failed to include property in estate inventories.

[44] Account of Sales of the Estate of Robert Gouedy, Esq., Box 39, pk. 858, Abbeville County Probate Records.

[45] A. S. Salley, Jr., "The Calhoun Family of South Carolina," this *Magazine*, VII (1906), 84; *Plats Before 1776*, X, 70; Plat Book A, pp. 189, 232, Plat Book B, p. 83, Commissioner of Locations, Abbeville County.

[46] Andrew Norris to John Ewing Colhoun, August 31, 1790, John Ewing Colhoun Papers, South Caroliniana Library; Plat Book A, pp. 8, 257-258, Commissioner of Locations, Abbeville County.

[47] Plat Book A, pp. 16, 62; Plat Book B, p. 229, Commissioner of Locations, Abbeville County.

[48] Brent Holcomb, *Two 1787 Tax Lists: Ninety Six District, South Carolina* (n. p., 1974), pp. 14, 17; Gibert, *Pierre Gibert*, p. 55.

[49] Andrew Norris to John Ewing Colhoun, August 31, 1790, John Ewing Colhoun Papers, South Caroliniana Library.

Wealth was intimately connected to slaves and property. The currency confusion in the wake of independence and the lack of a depository in the upcountry compounded the difficulties of accumulating large amounts of capital. Most inventories in the 1790s do not list cash. Proprietors of a thriving business such as William Moore kept meticulous records of their liberal extensions of credit and loans. At the time of his death in 1790, Moore's personal and business inventory showed an appraised value of £1,700, excluding outstanding debts. A list of Moore's debtors included nearly everyone in the southern section of Abbeville District.[50]

Most of the upcountry aristocrats were planters whose life style differed significantly from that of the less prosperous. A typical small farmer had no slaves, perhaps three hundred acres of land, and probably lived in a one or two room house. The house was furnished with crude, homemade pine furniture. Possession of cherry or walnut furniture and a feather bed indicated a great improvement in economic and social status. The family ate from pewter and earthenware dishes. Although nearly every household possessed at least one book, usually a Bible, most people were virtually illiterate. The farmer owned several cows and horses, numerous pigs, perhaps some sheep and geese. He raised the raw materials from which his wife made linen and woolen clothing. Most small farms produced crops for home use rather than for sale. More affluent farmers, usually those engaged in the cultivation of hemp or tobacco, could afford the luxury of hiring slaves or free blacks at harvest time.[51]

The plantations of Cornelius Brown, John de la Howe, and Richard Rapley offer a useful contrast to the small farms of the upcountry. Although the acreage of these plantations cannot be exactly determined, they must have been extensive.

Cornelius Brown lived on the Savannah River in a house of at least four rooms. The plantation outbuildings included a smoke house, milk house, two barns, two kitchens, and a second house. The main house apparently had plastered walls and glass windows. Twenty household and plantation slaves enabled Brown to produce tobacco, flax, hemp, and probably cotton. He owned thirty cows, a yoke of oxen, more than

[50] Inventory and Appraisement of the Estate of William Moore, WPA Transcripts, pp. 49-53.

[51] "Inventory and Appraisement of the Estate of James Morrow," WPA Transcripts, p. 9; "Inventory and Appraisement of the Estate of Stephen Bates, WPA Transcripts, pp. 7-8; "Inventory and Appraisement of the Estate of Peter Thompson," WPA Transcripts, p. 210-211; Julien and Watson, *Ninety Six*, p. 20.

three dozen pigs, seven horses, five sheep, and eight beehives. Brown's enterprise provided enough to sustain the household as well as food and staple crops to sell. The appraised value of Brown's estate, excluding land, exceeded £1,000.[52]

Lethe, the Savannah River home of Dr. John de la Howe and Rebekah Woodin, was the most elaborate plantation in the Abbeville District in the 1790s. In addition to a large main house, the doctor had a separate office where he saw patients and stored medical supplies. The house was expensively and tastefully appointed. Carpets covered the floors. The furniture was of walnut, cherry, and mahogany and included one of the few pianos in the upcountry. Ms. Woodin dressed in silks, furs and diamonds. At dinner, the couple drank from wine glasses and porcelain cups, and ate from Nankeen china using silver flatware. Among other things, the plantation produced leather, candles, wine and brandy. The barnyard consisted of cows, horses, sheep, pigs, and pea fowls, a rarity in the upcountry. As one of the few physicians in Abbeville District, de la Howe undoubtedly had a profitable medical practice which enabled him to live in aristocratic style and comfort.[53]

At the time of his death in 1823, Richard Rapley owned and managed three plantations—Belford, Westwood, and Twitenham. Eighty-eight slaves, valued at $19,515, provided the required labor force. Rapley owned forty-nine horses, most of them thoroughbreds. There were sixty-three sheep and nearly one hundred pigs. Rapley was obviously one of the most well-read men in the upcountry. His library included books on farriery, history, law, agriculture, medicine, and religion. He read Thucydides, Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia,* and Spencer's *Faerie Queen.* He studied French, Italian, and Portuguese. Rapley, a bachelor, decorated his home with walnut and mahogany furniture, brass candlesticks and andirons, and even pictures. Something about Rapleys personality is indicated by his possession of two silk umbrellas, surely an uncommon sight in the upcountry. Belford, Twitenham, and Westwood produced meal, lumber, vegetables, and cotton. The appraised value of the estate was over $25,000.[54]

[52] "Inventory and Appraisement of the Estate of Cornelius Brown," WPA Transcripts, pp. 146-150.

[53] "Inventory and Appraisement of the Estate of John de la Howe," WPA Transcripts, pp. 309-313; "Inventory and Appraisement of the Estate of Rebecca Woodin," WPA Transcripts, pp. 14-15.

[54] "A true and perfect inventory of all the goods, chattels and personal estate of Richard Andrews Rapley Esquire," Box 79, pk. 1930, Abbeville County Probate Records.

It has been said that "old Ninety Six never knew what it was to suffer from a dearth of brandy, of the best and purest bead." Virtually all the upcountry aristocrats had stills. Cornelius Brown's seventy-gallon still was one of the largest.[55]

Unlike the smaller farmers, the upcountry aristocrats could afford to buy fabric from the general stores in the area. Samuel Cargo's store in Cambridge catered to the women. There one could purchase velvet, silk, corduroy, artificial flowers, perfume and ivory combs. The clientele included the Meriwethers, Joneses and Gouedys.[56] Although the upcountry aristocrats usually wore homemade clothing, they were not poorly dressed. One no less genteel than Charles Pinckney remarked that Pierre Gibert "dressed in a suit made from a mixture of wool and silk, both the growth of his own plantation so handsomely and finely woven and dyed that it would do honour to any manufacture in Europe." [57]

The amount of formal education which most of the upcountry aristocrats attained is unknown. Though possessed of little formal schooling, these men were almost certainly not illiterate. A desire to establish an educational system in the upcountry is one of the characteristics of the upcountry aristocracy.

The Huguenot schoolmaster, Pierre Gibert, and his wife opened a school in New Bordeaux in 1785. This grammer school was "approved of and countenanced by Gentlemen of the first note." [58] The Willington Academy, organized about 1805, was perhaps the most important educational institution in the Abbeville District and the upcountry aristocrats played a prominent role in its establishment. Pierre Gibert, whose own school dissolved, reportedly was influential in bringing Dr. Moses Waddel, a Presbyterian minister and "a teacher of much merit" to Willington. Due in part to Waddel's efforts, Willington Academy grew to a student body of over two hundred and its graduates included John Caldwell Calhoun, son of Patrick Calhoun, and later Vice President of the United States.[59]

[55] John H. Logan, *A History of the Upper Country of South Carolina from the Earliest Periods to the Close of the War of Independence* (Charleston, 1859), I, 326; "Inventory and Appraisement of the Estate of Cornelius Brown," WPA Transcripts, pp. 146-150.

[56] "Inventory of Samuel Cargo," WPA Transcripts, pp. 121-123; "Accounts Due Estate of Samuel Cargo," WPA Transcripts, p. 123.

[57] Gibert, *Pierre Gibert*, p. 61.

[58] Ibid., pp. 55-56.

[59] John Furman Thomason, *The Foundations of the Public School System* in South Carolina (Columbia, 1925), pp. 83-84; Gibert, *Pierre Gibert*, p. 57.

In 1784, Ninety Six had a Board of Trustees for a Public School. Whether or not the school actually operated is uncertain. The trustees, all residents of the Abbeville District, were John Harris, Andrew Pickens, Robert Anderson, Patrick Calhoun, William Moore, and John Bowie.[60] The following year, the state legislature established the College of Cambridge. Trustees of the public school at Ninety Six and John Lewis Gervais represented the Abbeville District on the college board of trustees. In 1787, the legislature appointed a second board which included upcountry aristocrats James Mayson and James Lincoln. After the college had been operating for a decade, the General Assembly directed Richard Rapley, Jonathan Bowie, Henry Wilson, and Julius Nichols to liquidate the school's assets, but two years later, the directive was rescinded.[61] By about 1820, Cambridge College no longer existed.

Churches and philanthropical groups shouldered the burden of education in the state. During the last half of the eighteenth century, a number of philanthropic organizations appeared. While most of them, such as the St. Andrew's Society, were in the lowcountry, there was at least one society which flourished in the Abbeville District for almost a century. Members of the Upper Long Cane Presbyterian Church organized the Upper Long Cane Society in 1793 to support the Gospel and "for works of benevolence among themselves, so as to place these great objectives above the difficulties and vicissitudes which the fluctuation in society and the inconveniences of a new country . . . . occasioned." Membership was restricted to an area within ten miles of the church. As an indication of his devotion to the society's goals, John Bowie, a former president of the organization, bequeated it $50.00.[62]

The most altruistic of the upcountry aristocrats was John de la Howe. The physician's 1797 will provided for the establishment of a school on his 2,630 acres for twelve "poor" boys and girls in Abbeville District. De la Howe explicitly outlined his plan for the school. No detail, not even the type of pillow upon which the students were to sleep, escaped his attention. Almost radical in his belief in education for women, de la Howe instructed that both boys and girls learn mathematics, read-

[60] Indenture, November 25, 1784, John Ewing Colhoun Papers, South Caroliniana Library, Columbia.

[61] Watson, *Old Roads*, p. 22; *Statutes at Large of South Carolina*, V, pt. 1, 3,459; VIII, 234.

[62] Thomason, *Public Schools*, p. 68; "The Constitution and By-Laws of the Upper Long-Cane Society of Abbeville District" (Abbeville: Wilson and Wardlaw, Printers, 1881); Will of Major John Bowie, Box 213, pk. 265, Abbeville County Probate Records.

ing, writing, and elementary chemistry. However, the emphasis was upon agriculture and industrial arts.[63]

Gibert's school at New Bordeaux, Willington Academy, and Cambridge College provided ample opportunity for the second generation of upcountry aristocrats to obtain an education. Those upcountry aristocrats whose children did not attend these institutions made arrangements for private tutors.[64]

With regard to the fallen state of upcountry inhabitants, Charles Woodmason lamented, "Hence their many vices, their gross Licentiousness Wantonness, Lasciviousness, Rudeness, Lewdness, and Profligacy they will commit the grossest Enormities, before my face, and laugh at all admonition." [65] Redeeming such sinners must have been a challenging task and Woodmason set about baptizing, marrying, and instructing the backwoods settlers in the ritual and creed of the Anglican faith. Outsiders such as Woodmason were not alone in voicing their concern for the state of religion in the upcountry. As early as 1766, Patrick Calhoun and Andrew Williamson were among a group which requested that the Provincial Assembly provide a church in the upcountry "as many people had never seen a church or heard a sermon." [66]

Almost all of the upcountry aristocrats were dissenters. Due to the large number of Huguenot and Scotch-Irish settlers, it is not surprising that most of them were Presbyterians. One of the first churches established in the Abbeville District was Greenville Presbyterian Church in the northeast section of the district.[67] John Harris was the minister and Adam Crain Jones signed the petition for the church charter. Hopewell Presbyterian Church on Long Cane Creek counted Andrew Pickens and Patrick Calhoun among its members.[68] In addition to regular contributions to the church, Ebenezer Pettigrew gave a stipend to Francis Cummins, Hopewell's minister from 1789-1796.

[63] Will of Dr. John de la Howe, Will Book I, 1787-1815, pp. 167-170, Abbeville County Probate Records.

[64] "Statement of Debts and Credits of the Estate of Cornelius B. Williams, a minor," WPA Transcripts, p. 307.

[65] Hooker, *Woodmason*, p. 52.

[66] Watson, *Old Roads*, p. 74.

[67] John H. Leith, *Greenville Presbyterian Church: The Story of a People, 1765-1973* (n. p., 1973), pp. 18-19, 126: Watson, *Old Roads*, p. 76.

[68] George Howe, *History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina*, I (Columbia, 1870), p. 554; Waring, *Fighting Elder*, p. 129. Although Pickens was one of the early settlers in the Abbeville District, about 1785, he moved to Hopewell on the Keowee River. See also Logan, *South Carolina*, p. 152.

The French Protestants of New Bordeaux temporarily worshipped at Gibert's Mill on Little River. The elite of the community must have participated in the church services for Peter Moragne "is said to have read sermons and acted as precentor" while Pierre Gibert "offered prayer." [69]

Lest it be presumed that the ministers who came to the upcountry were as ignorant and provincial as some members of their congregations, one must only consider the Reverend Doctor Thomas Clarke. Clarke, pastor of Cedar Springs Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, came to the Long Canes from New York in order to be among friends he had once known in Ireland. The minister must have seemed a bit odd to some of his neighbors for he kept pheasants, wore a beaver hat, and read the *Book of Common Prayer*, the *Odyssey*, and the *Talmud*.[70]

When the legislature prepared a new constitution for the state in 1776, a central issue for the upcountry convention delegates was the alteration of the status of the Church of England in South Carolina. A petition to disestablish the Church of England circulated throughout the state and led the Ninety Six Grand Jury, whose foreman was Patrick Calhoun, to demand equal treatment for all Protestant denominations. The Grand Jury's presentment reasoned that "we are equally entitled to religious as well as civil Freedoms and Liberties." [71]

There was often a close relationship between upcountry churches and the patriot cause during the Revolution. John Harris, "an ardent Whig", reportedly had his long rifle handy on pastoral journeys and even in the pulpit in order to ward off both Tories and Indians. When William Tennent and William Henry Drayton came to the upcountry to persuade Tories to join the Association, an agreement "not to bear arms against but for their country," they found sympathetic ears at Harris' "preaching sheds." [72] Pierre Gibert was influential in convincing many Hillsborough settlers to support the patriot cause. [73]

[69] "Account of the Expenditures of the Estate of Ebenezer Pettigrew," WPA Transcripts, pp. 276-277; Howe, *History*, pp. 557, 631.

[70] Howe, *History*, p. 555; Watson, *Old Roads*, p. 82; "Inventory and Appraisement of the Estate of the Reverend Dr. Clarke," WPA Transcripts, pp. 105-109.

[71] Newton B. Jones, ed., "Writings of the Rev. William Tennent, 1740-1777," this *Magazine*, LXI (1960), pp. 132-133.

[72] Dallas, "History of Greenvale," p. 10; Watson, *Old Roads*, p. 76; A Fragment of a Journal kept by Rev. William Tennent, September 31, 1775, South Caroliniana Library.

[73] Gibert, *Pierre Gibert*, p. 41.

Generally, the post-war aristocrats in the upcountry had been patriots and had served in the military. One of the South Carolina triumvirate, General Andrew Pickens, grew up in the Abbeville District. Pickens became a major and commanded the First Division of the South Carolina Militia. Captain Adam Crain Jones led a company of patriot militia at the first battle of Ninety Six in November, 1775. Other high-ranking patriot militia officers were James Mayson, Alexander Noble, John Bowie, and Pierre Gibert. Although not a militia officer, John Lewis Gervais was Deputy Paymaster General of the Southern Department. After the war, in appreciation for making provisions available to the patriots, Gervais was awarded an honorary colonelcy.[74]

Many militia officers were also active in the extra-legal governmental bodies formed in South Carolina during the Revolution. The Rev. John Harris, James Mayson, William Moore, Richard Rapley, Patrick Calhoun, and John Lewis Gervais were among those who represented Abbeville District in the Provincial Congresses of 1775-76. The Provincial Congress appointed Mayson, Calhoun, Rapley, Moore, Francis Salvador, John Bowie, and Andrew Williamson to execute the Continental Association in the Ninety Six Judicial District.[75]

Of the upcountry aristocrats, Patrick Calhoun had the most experience in various public offices. Calhoun served as Deputy Surveyor, Coroner, Justice of the Peace, and Surrogate in the Court of Ordinary. His first election to the Commons House of Assembly was in 1769 when a group of armed supporters walked 150 miles to the polls to assure his election. From that time on, except for a brief period, Calhoun served in the legislature until his death in 1796.[76] Other state legislators were

[74] Jean Martin Flynn, "South Carolina's Compliance with the Militia Act of 1792," this *Magazine*, LXIX (January, 1968), 41; John A. Chapman, *History of Edgefield County from the Earliest Settlements to 1897* (n. p.: Elbert H. Aull, Publisher and Printer, 1897), p. 57; Annie Walker Burns, *Revolutionary War Soldiers and Other Patriotic Records of Abbeville County, South Carolina* (Washington, D. C.: n. d.), p. 20. Watson, *Old Roads*, p. 233; Sara Sullivan Ervin, *South Carolinians in the Revolution* (Ypsilanti: Michigan University Lithoprinters, 1949), pp. 57-58, 71, 74; Gibert, *Pierre Gibert*, pp. 43, 50; "Historical Notes," this *Magazine*, V (1904), p. 59.

[75] Walter B. Edgar, ed., *Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives* (Columbia, 1973); William Edwin Hemphill, ed., *Extracts from the Journals of the Provincial Congress of South Carolina* 1775-1776 (Columbia, 1960), p. 22.

[76] Watson, *Old Roads*, pp. 13, 174; *Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives;* Wallace, *Short History*, p. 253; Adele Stanton Edwards, ed., *Journals of the Privy Council, 1783-1789* (Columbia, 1971), p. 99.

Adam Crain Jones, Richard Rapley, William Moore, John Ewing Colhoun, Pierre Gibert, James Mayson, John Harris, and James Gouedy. John Lewis Gervais was a state senator from Abbeville District and at one time was President of the body. William Moore relinquished his legislative seat when he was elected sheriff of Ninety Six District in 1779. Moore, John Bowie, and John Harris were Justices of the Peace. Adam Crain Jones was twice tax assessor and collector.

Even before the Revolution, the determination of the lowcountry to control state government was apparent. In 1774, a group of upcountry aristocrats, including James Mayson, Andrew Williamson, Patrick Calhoun, and Robert Gouedy complained that all magistrates "were appointed at the behest of the Charles Town merchants." [77] After the Revolution, sectionalism in the state became more pronounced. One historian noted that upcountry congressmen "were half apologetic and seemingly conscious of being a different social group." [78] The lowcountry dominated legislature reinforced this insecurity by virtually ignoring the representatives from Abbeville District. Only John Lewis Gervais, co-partner of Henry Laurens, Richard Rapley, the proper Englishman, and John Ewing Colhoun, husband of a lowcountry heiress, were assigned to the important committees dealing with state-wide matters. Both Colhoun and Gervais belonged to the Privy Council and Colhoun served in the responsible position as Commissioner for the Sale of Confiscated Estates.[79] Committee assignments for other representatives of the Abbeville District were generally to committees concerned with local matters.

The General Assembly made certain that the high quality of the state's lawmakers was maintained, even with the adoption of the more democratic Constitution of 1790. Voters as well as office holders were required to meet specific property qualifications. For example, election to the South Carolina Senate required a freehold, "unincumbered with debt," valued at £300. Non-residents of a district were eligible if their property in the province were valued at £1,000.[80]

Although the upcountry was represented at the conventions to ratify both the United States Constitution and the 1790 South Carolina Con-

[77] *Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives;* Waring, *Fighting Elder,* p. 176; Watson, *Old Roads,* pp. 14, 271.

[78] J. Harold Wolfe, *Jeffersonian Democracy in South Carolina* (Chapel Hill, 1940), p. 5.

[79] *Privy Council Journal,* pp. xxiii-xxv; *Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives.*

[80] William A. Schaper, "Sectionalism and Representation in South Carolina," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association,* 1900, p. 379.

stitution, the contributions of its delegates to the debates were infrequent and hesitant. In the legislative struggle over the allotment of delegates to the convention to ratify the national constitution, James Mayson and Andrew Pickens insisted upon more equitable upcountry representation. Their efforts resulted in three delegates from the newly settled area north of the old Indian boundary line.[81]

The Ninety Six Judicial District sent twenty delegates to the ratification convention. James Lincoln, Adam Crain Jones, Andrew Hamilton, John Harris, John Bowie, and John Lewis Gervais came from Abbeville. James Lincoln, in one of the rare speeches made by an upcountry delegate, probably spoke for his upcountry colleagues when he described the proposed constitution as having an "evil tendency." He deplored the lack of a Bill of Rights and warned that the constitution would result in "an haughty, imperious aristocracy, and ultimately tyrannic monarchy." In spite of reassurances by the constitution's supporters, only John Harris voted in favor of the document.[82]

Gervais, Jones, Hamilton, Ebenezer Pettigrew, Joseph Calhoun, and William Moore represented Abbeville District in the ratification convention for the new state constitution. John Ewing Colhoun, James Mayson, and Andrew Pickens represented other districts in which they owned property.[83]

During the 1780s and 1790s, upcountry legislators accelerated their effort to assure the upcountry an equal voice in the government. Abbeville representatives favored moving the capital from Charleston to Columbia and continuing the importation of slaves into the state.[84] The former indicated their desire to shift the center of power inland; the latter, to imitate the slave society of the lowcountry. Legislative reapportionment was an issue of paramount importance in South Carolina at the turn of the century. In 1808, the upcountry won its battle for political parity when a constitutional amendment gave the upcountry a bare majority on both houses.[85] For the next several decades, the upcountry aristocrats played a prominent role in the affairs of the state. Eventually,

[81] *Charleston Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, February 8, 1788.

[82] *Journal of the Convention of South Carolina Which Ratified the United States Constitution*, pp. 19-20, 39; *Charleston City Gazette or Daily Advertiser*, February 1, 1788.

[83] *Journal of the Constitutional Convention of South Carolina, 1790*, pp. 4-6.

[84] *Journal of the House of Representatives of South Carolina, 1789*, pp. 79, 123-124.

[85] Wolfe, *Jeffersonian Democracy*, p. 49; Wallace, *Short History*, p. 359.

one of them, John Caldwell Calhoun, became the spokesman not merely for the upcountry, but for the entire state.

The upcountry aristocrats by the end of the eighteenth century were able to leave their children a much more substantial legacy than "at least one feather bed." They left lowcountry social and economic ties, political power, slaves and property—the new yardsticks of social and economic status. Upcountry planters were hardly distinguishable from those who owned extensive rice and cotton plantations in the lowcountry and who had been in the state for generations. The emergence of an upcountry aristocracy belied the assertion of one Charlestonian who remarked: "You cannot, sir, raise a gentleman away from the tidewater." [86]

[86] Julien and Watson, *Ninety Six*, p. 3.

THE LOWCOUNTRY IN ECONOMIC TRANSITION: CHARLESTON SINCE 1865

JAMIE W. MOORE *

The sophisticated commercial system of colonial South Carolina arose naturally, an extension of the simple assumption that the requirement for survival—trade in furs, indigo, rice, and cotton with the Indians, Spanish, French, British, and fellow Americans—was also the key to permanent prosperity. The trade network had three primary components: commodities, which were produced locally or brought to Charleston for export, transportation facilities that connected the city to interior sources of goods and markets, and a first class natural harbor. Merchant activity complemented the agricultural economy and shaped subsequent ideas for economic development.

The planners who labored between 1815 and 1860 conceived a grand vision. They dreamed of an improved and extended system of trade that would funnel the produce of the trans-Appalachian region to the Atlantic shore via South Carolina, enriching Charleston in the process. Transportation connections inland were forged by constructing the Charleston to Hamburg line, a masterwork of railroad technology in its day, by completing a river and canal navigation system, an extraordinarily expensive project that took on the dimensions of a statewide financial disaster, and by planning to build the railroad that would cross the western mountains. Harbor improvements were begun when, for unknown reasons, the channels across the harbor bar began filling in at about the same time steam technology made construction of large ocean going ships feasible, threatening extinction to ports limited to shallow draft vessels. Meanwhile, a combination of private enterprise and public investment produced the complex of docks, warehouses, and processing facilities essential to carrying on the cotton trade.[1]

* Associate Professor of History at The Citadel, Charleston.

[1] Message of Governor Andrew Pickens, Nov. 25, 1817, and "Report of the Civil and Military Engineer of the State of South Carolina for the Year 1818," South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia; *First Semi-Annual Report to the President and Directors of the South Carolina Canal and Rail-Road Company by their Committee of Inquiry* (Charleston, 1828); William Howard, *Report on the Charleston and Hamburg Rail-Road* (Charleston, 1829); "Statistics of the So. Carolina Railroads in 1846," *Hunts Merchants Magazine* (Oct., 1847), 426-427; Daniel W. Hollis, "Costly Delusion: Inland Navigation in the South Caro-