Low-Country Planter Society in Colonial South Carolina

John C. Dann

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LOW-COUNTRY PLAN TER SO CIETY
IN COLONIAL SOUTH CAROLINA

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of History
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

By
John Christie Dann
1970
This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

This is a general study of the planting society which developed in the low-country of South Carolina. In the course of the eighteenth century, South Carolina emerged as one of the very wealthiest and most cosmopolitan societies in British North America. The paper shows how very wealthy the leading planters were and emphasizes what an exclusive group it was that dominated every aspect of public life.

The local environment was in a number of ways unique to the American continent. Initial impulse for settlement came from men with ties in the West Indies, and early contact between these two areas left permanent marks. The staple crops, rice and indigo, encouraged the huge importations of slaves and led to the development of a slave-economy somewhat akin to that of the islands. Reaching the "take off" stage between 1710 and 1720, the colony's economy was probably the most expansive in North America in the half-century before the Revolution. Wealth was plentiful for merchants, planters, and professional men alike. The colony enjoyed the profits of a young economy but did not have to pay the price of land exhaustion etc. in the colonial era. The magnitude of this wealth enabled Carolinians to adopt the ways of the English aristocracy in a manner unthinkable for a poorer society.

South Carolina's culture was particularly English because of the intimate connections with the mother country. At the same time, the colony remained very isolated from those currents which were drawing together the northern colonies in the eighteenth century. In contrast to the sugar and tobacco areas, South Carolina possessed a city of considerable magnitude, sophistication, and charm. Charleston served to unify the planter society and to allow for the development of an indigenous culture. British society could be produced in microcosm, and the incentive to return to the mother country for permanent residence was removed.

In the colony's first one hundred years, a very English social, political, and economic system had been created in the American wilderness. But it had been forged not by Englishmen but by English-minded Americans. The social structure was closely modeled after that in Britain, but it was constructed on this side of the Atlantic and was made up of resident Americans. It was a British style aristocratic society, but it was dominated by a true American aristocracy.
LOW-COUNTRY SOUTH CAROLINA PARISHES 1704-1763

1. St. Philip's, 1704
2. St. James Santee, 1706
3. St. Thomas and St. Dennis, 1706
4. Christ Church, 1706
5. St. James Goose Creek, 1706
6. St. Andrews, 1706
7. St. Paul, 1706
8. St. Bartholomew, 1706
9. St. John's Berkeley, 1706
10. St. Helena, 1712
11. St. George Dorchester, 1717
12. Prince George Winyah, 1722
13. Prince Frederick, 1732
14. St. John's Colleton, 1734
15. Prince William, 1745
16. St. Peter, 1745
17. St. Michael, 1751
18. St. Stephen's, 1754

Map by the author, based upon those found on the inside covers of M. Eugene Sirmans' *Colonial South Carolina, A Political History, 1663-1763*, (Chapel Hill, 1966) and David Duncan Wallace's *South Carolina, A Short History, 1520-1948*, (Chapel Hill, 1951), and upon James E. Cook's *A Map of the Province of South Carolina...* (London, 1773).
LOW-COUNTRY PLANTER SOCIETY IN COLONIAL SOUTH CAROLINA
INTRODUCTION

Visiting Charlestown, South Carolina, in 1773, Josiah Quincy, Jr., in an oft quoted passage recorded in his journal "that in grandeur, splendour of buildings, equipages, numbers, commerce, shipping, and indeed in almost everything, it far surpasses all I ever saw, or expected to see in America," that "all seems at present to be trade, riches, magnificence, and great state in everything; much gayety and dissipation...." Although the colony had been first settled slightly over a century before, Society for the Propagation of the Gospel missionaries as late as the first two decades of the century had conveyed to their superiors in England a picture of a rough and impoverished settlement which was untouched by opulence and magnificence in any form. Within the course of about three quarters of a century, this colony had developed from a struggling outpost on the southern frontier of continental British North America into one of the wealthiest and most

Josiah Quincy, Memoir of the Life of Josiah Quincy, Jr., of Massachusetts Bay: 1744-1773, 3rd. ed. (Boston, 1875), 67-73.
cosmopolitan centers in the Anglo-American world.

The following paper investigates the rise and the nature of the unique aristocratic society which dominated every aspect of the colony's early history. It is the contention of the author that a very real aristocracy did develop in South Carolina, an American aristocracy with foundations in this country and molded by the local environment.

In a number of ways the local environment in South Carolina was unique. Social distinctiveness has been attributed to the early Barbadian political influence and to the aristocratic foundations incorporated within the Fundamental Constitutions, but neither should be emphasized. Economic factors were of great significance. Economic maturity arrived very late, yet once the dominant plantation system became operative, South Carolina emerged as one of the wealthiest and most expansive colonial economic units. South Carolina was not forced to pay the price of land exhaustion or to suffer from land scarcity in the colonial period. Of greatest importance in creating the unique South Carolinian environment was the ever increasing connection with Great Britain (at a time when colonies north of North Carolina were drawing farther away) and the colony's remarkable isolation from the other American colonies apart from those with which it had immediate economic ties (North
Carolina, Georgia, Florida). In effect, this local setting which produced the aristocratic society in South Carolina was much more British than that found in the other American colonies. South Carolinians accumulated fortunes approximating those of the British aristocracy. Possessing a real city, South Carolina could reproduce British society in microcosm far more successfully than could her southern sister colonies. Able to more closely reproduce British society, South Carolinians were coming closer to the British ideal upon which both contemporaries and later generations have measured the aristocratic quality.

---

2 Louis B. Wright's The First Gentleman of Virginia: Intellectual Qualities of the Early Colonial Ruling Class (San Marino, Cal., 1940), portrays a society with many similarities, but marked dissimilarities to that of South Carolina. Most obvious are those differences stemming from Virginia's greater age, her differing economy, and her lack of a metropolis.
II
ECONOMIC GROWTH OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Social leadership universally has been based on a combination of political and economic factors as well as less tangible qualities dependent on the mores of society (manners, actions, and attitudes which generate respect among contemporaries). Within the value system of the eighteenth-century British world, and particularly of the competitive and youthful colonial society, material considerations were elevated to a dominant position. A cursory examination of the economic development of the colony is of value in understanding the plantation system and the social structure which it supported.

A great deal has been written on the advantage of previous example in easing the pains of settlement for the post Jamestown and Plymouth settlers. South Carolina was fortunate in having among its pioneers a significant number of seasoned planters from Barbados and from other colonial settlements. The British administration had begun making halting efforts to formulate official policies which would define and regulate the position of the colony within the larger British world. Most significant was the fact that by 1670 an intercolonial system of trade was firmly established, and European and colonial
merchants were aggressively searching for markets and sources of supply and investment. A new settlement could now rapidly convert local resources into capital. Despite short periods of starvation and severe economic depression, South Carolina experienced a comparatively easy period of settlement after the landing in 1670.

In spite of this relatively easy initial settlement, South Carolina was to wait a full half century before experiencing anything resembling economic security. Affra Coming's letter in 1698 to her sister in Ireland vividly portrays many of the hardships of the earlier era and makes the later period of elegance seem remote indeed.

the whole country is full of trouble and sickness, 'tis the small-pox which has been mortal to all sorts of the inhabitants, and especially the Indians, 'tis said to have swept away a whole neighboring nation, all to five or six which ran away and left their dead unburied lying upon the ground for the vultures to devour; besides the want of shipping this fall, winter, and the spring hitherto is the cause of another trouble, and has been followed by an earthquake and burning of the town, or one-third part of it, which they say was of equal value with what remains, besides the great loss of cattle which I know by what has been found dead of mine, that I think as because of the hard winter that has been and being over-stocked, what all these things put together makes the place look with a terrible aspect, and none knows what will be the end of them.  


2 Affra Coming to Mrs. Elizabeth Harleston, Comin- tee Plantation, March 6, 1698, in Anne Simons Dees, Recollections of the Ball Family of South Carolina and the Cominette Plantation (pvt. printing, 1919), 29-30.
Numerous letters of the S. P. G. missionaries in the first years of the eighteenth century convey a bleak impression of a society beset with poverty and hostile neighbors. Common household items were of sufficient rarity as late as 1722, for a Robert Wigginton in London to specify in his will that,

To said Robert and Sophia also the Sheets, Bed, and Table Linnen and what else of such sort I have which though of small worth here will be of use in Carolina.

A prerequisite for economic expansion was population growth. The approximate figures for the colonial period in South Carolina were as follows.

---


### TABLE 1

**SOUTH CAROLINA POPULATION 1670-1770**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Negro</th>
<th>Negro % of Pop.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1670</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1680</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1690</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1700</td>
<td>3,260</td>
<td>2,444</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1710</td>
<td>6,783</td>
<td>4,100</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1720</td>
<td>5,048</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1730</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1740</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1750</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>39,000</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1760</td>
<td>36,740</td>
<td>57,334</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770</td>
<td>49,066</td>
<td>75,178</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most pronounced features are the relatively slow growth on the part of the whites in comparison to the other continental and West Indian colonies during the first five decades of settlement and the phenomenal increases beginning with the huge importation of Negroes in the decade after 1710. A similar pattern emerges when this growth is placed within a spatial context.6(see page 9)

---

FIGURE 1

SOUTH CAROLINA POPULATION GROWTH, 1675-1770

The earliest inhabitants of South Carolina were of varying origins: a small but influential group of seasoned planters from Barbados, a somewhat larger group of French Protestants, a few Scots and Presbyterian Irishmen, and a majority of lower-middle class Englishmen from the rural southern counties and the urban centers. The homogeneity of the population is most striking. Although set apart by language differences, the French émigrés numbered less than five hundred families in 1698-99, had almost all lived in London or Dublin for a number of years previous to emigration, and were products of the same Protestant middle-class backgrounds as were the majority of their English neighbors. The Barbadians who settled in the Goose Creek area, benefitting from previous colonial experience and having more capital than the average settlers, were able to dominate the early political life and set precedents which would be influential for years to come. But Barbados had not been settled until 1627, and those few Carolina settlers who had been born there were still very much Englishmen.


The first colonists settled in the immediate vicinity of the present city of Charleston (or the "Neck" as it was called) and on the opposite shores of the Ashley and Cooper Rivers and the nearby islands. They quickly began to obtain grants and push inland on the rivers and along the coast in a process of expansion which would go on unchecked throughout the colonial period. Particular impetus for expansion to the southeastern sections came with the defeat of the Yemasee Indians in 1717 and with the establishment of Georgia in the 1730's. The final withdrawal of the French in 1763 caused a surge beyond the borders of the colony and rapid settlement of the northern river lands of Georgia. The preceding series of population maps serves much better than words to trace the pattern of territorial expansion.

One of the instrumental forces which had led to the settlement of the colony in the late seventeenth century was the desire on the part of Barbadian planters to obtain provisions, timber, slaves, and naval stores more cheaply and rapidly in order to support expanding West Indian sugar plantations. Emigrating primarily in two short periods, 1671-72 and 1678-82, the Barbadian settlers established plantations for the supply of these

---

products for the island.  

Blessed with pre-existing markets and rivers and harbors of sufficient capacity for the minute sailing craft of the ubiquitous New England merchant, the settlers concentrated their energy in the areas where they could transform the bounty of a virgin wilderness into capital in the shortest amount of time. In a country covered by water transportation routes, this meant exploiting the forests along the banks and, after importing breeding stock, taking advantage of the unbelievably rich natural pastures, or savannas, which dotted the Carolina terrain. As in every colony, trade with the Indians became an important early source of income. Except for providing food, planting was a secondary occupation in the first generation. Indian trader and explorer John Lawson, in describing the South Carolina economy as late as 1709, could mention the mutton, veal, pitch, tar, and the "incredible" herds of cattle "being from one to two thousand Head in one Man's Possession" and entirely omit the mention of rice.

But a number of forces were at work which would make the growth of plantations inevitable. Hoping to establish a mainland equivalent to the tropical islands

12 John Lawson, A New Voyage to Carolina..., ed. Frances Latham Harries, facsimile ed. (Richmond, Va., 1937), 4-5.
in the West and East Indies, the Proprietary instructions included the usual overly opportunistic clauses as to the agricultural production. Early experiments were conducted to little avail with virtually every fruit and grain: with spices, hemp, indigo, cotton, tobacco, and silk. But experimentation was to be continued in South Carolina with spectacular results in the future. Equally significant in the long run was the fact that Negro servants were included in the first fleet, and that the Barbadian planters, although bringing few Negroes from the island, were well versed in the ways of plantation slavery.

Increasing population meant further migration into the interior in pursuit of untouched grazing areas and woodlands. Immigration and natural population increase provided home markets and more abundant unskilled Negro labor, and a growing number of individuals turned to the production of food crops for local consumption and re-shipment to the West Indies. Among the standard crops (corn, beans, peas) was rice, the key to future success.

The introduction and development of the staple crops in South Carolina must be rated among the great agricultural accomplishments in American history. According to the most authoritative sources, rice was planted in 1685 by South Carolina's first permanent settler,

---

Dr. Henry Woodward, from Madagascar seed obtained from a New England sea captain. The early seeds which he grew were distributed among friends. Grown in sufficient quantities for export by the late 1690's, the crop gradually emerged as the most important agricultural product and was to dominate the South Carolina economy throughout the colonial period. Eliza Lucas experimented with a number of crops and successfully raised and prepared indigo in the early 1740's and in a similar fashion distributed the seed which played such a vital role in revitalizing the economy in the quarter century before the Revolution.

South Carolina's development must be viewed within the broader perspective of the British mercantile system. Rice was but one of a number of promising experimental crops in the late seventeenth century. It was particularly encouraged by officials because it provided the entire British system with an inexpensive commodity for the European market. Suffering from a growing trade imbalance with the Baltic area, England, in 1705, established bounties on turpentine, rosin, hemp, and masts which were so effective that the American colonies were

---

14 There are conflicting accounts of the introduction of rice. For the most accurate, see A. S. Salley, "The True Story of How the Madagascar Gold Seed Rice Was Introduced into South Carolina," Contributions from the Charleston Museum, VIII (1936), 51-53.

the source of over half of the supply within ten years. Because of the bounties (allowed to lapse only between 1725 and 1729), this important industry, centered in the Carolinas, remained important throughout the colonial period. Equally as important in the establishment of the indigo industry as the efforts of Eliza Lucas was the success of former Charleston merchant James Crokatt in persuading the Board of Trade of the wisdom of granting a bounty on such a product on the grounds that it could deprive the French and Spanish of a lucrative British market and decrease the outflow of specie.

The best key to the development of South Carolina's colonial economy is the story of rice production. A graph of rice exports to England illustrates this development.

---

What becomes strikingly apparent from a study of each of the areas contributing to the growing importance of the colony is the great significance of the period of 1710-30. To apply Professor Walter W. Rostow's phrase to an agricultural area, the "take off period" of South Carolina's economy seems to have occurred in this era. It was

The above graph is based on "Rice Exported to England, By Origin; 1698 to 1776," Historical Statistics, Series Z 275. This is only one of a number of series which might have been used, each with certain defects. These figures include rice exports from North Carolina, but this would be somewhat balanced by the increasing rice exports directly to Continental ports (after 1730), South America, and the non-English West Indies (1764 on). (See Sellers, 53-54). Mean averages for each decade and for the 1771-75 period have been employed to present the long term growth and yet avoid the sharp ups and downs of yearly figures which are probably more the result of weather conditions than expansion or contraction of planting.
characterized by a variety of positive converging forces: a sharply rising white and Negro population, relatively peaceful Indian relations after 1717, the opening of western and southern lands for settlement, the development of the naval stores industry in response to the bounties, and even an apparent temporary arrest in the plague cycle. Despite currency problems, a very vital and expanding colony had arisen by the late 1720's. This comparative tardiness in economic growth yet rapid development once expansion had begun was a significant factor in influencing social development.

The economy received a sharp setback in the late 1740's, due in large measure to war. Yet the fact that external events could have such an effect is in itself a sign of the economic expansion which had occurred. By the 1750's, rice had been joined by indigo, and economic growth continued almost unchecked until the Revolution. Occupational specialization by merchants, planters, and

---

17 The disease factor can only be presented as a highly speculative hypothesis. However, St. Julian Ravenel Childs in "Notes on the History of Public Health in South Carolina, 1670-1800," Proceedings of South Carolina Historical Association, (1932), 13-22, records smallpox epidemics in 1697-98, 1711-12, 1732, 1738, 1760, 1763, and yellow fever in 1699, 1706, 1728, 1739, 1745, and 1748. John Duffy in "Yellow Fever in Colonial Charleston," South Carolina Hist. Mag., LII (1931), 159-97, notes the presence of yellow fever in 1711 and 1718. This still indicates a period with less disease from 1712 to 1728 than any comparable period until after 1761.

artisans was increasingly obvious with each successive year. Charleston rose from a small village in the early decades of the century to a city of 1,295 houses, 5,000 whites, and an equal number of Negroes. By 1770 it was the fourth largest city in America (not inconsiderable by British standards).

An enumeration of exports in 1769, although including a number of the growing up-country products, is an indication of the vitality and diversity of the economy.

**TABLE 2**

**EXPORTS OF SOUTH CAROLINA IN 1769**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rice</td>
<td>123,317 bbls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rough rice</td>
<td>1,624 bbls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corn</td>
<td>65,751 bu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flour</td>
<td>2,745 bbls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pork</td>
<td>2,170 bbls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indigo</td>
<td>309,570 lbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hemp</td>
<td>290,095 lbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raw silk</td>
<td>1,014 lbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deerskins</td>
<td>183,221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horses</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tar</td>
<td>1,646 bbls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rosin</td>
<td>80 bbls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>turpentine</td>
<td>4,616 bbls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spirits of turpentine</td>
<td>24 bbls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staves</td>
<td>229,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>timber, lumber</td>
<td>678,350 ft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shingles</td>
<td>1,987,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bricks</td>
<td>42,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beeswax</td>
<td>14,470 lbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oranges</td>
<td>39 bbls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orange juice</td>
<td>100 gal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What set South Carolina apart from the older northern colonies was the increasing conformity to the classic concept of a mercantile colony (which supplied the mother country with raw products in return for manufactured goods). In 1768 and 1769, South Carolina's exports exceeded those of Virginia and

---


Maryland in value and throughout the late colonial period were growing rapidly. With prosperity came the great personal incomes, the leisure, the extravagance, and the snobbery from which an aristocracy can be created.

---

III

THE PLANTATION AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

It is surprising how little actually has been written on the colonial plantations of South Carolina. This is partially due to the substantial loss of plantation records but probably even more to the fact that many of the works touching in any way upon race relations have been affected by obvious presentist motives. To the writer primarily interested in showing the evils or blessings of slavery and at least incidentally the justification for one or the other section in the Civil War, nineteenth-century records have been of more immediate value than those of an earlier period. U. B. Phillips' classic studies, *American Negro Slavery* (1918) and *Life and Labor in the Old South* (1929), although outdated by an archaic view of the capabilities of the Negro, present a brief picture of the system in South Carolina which surpasses that of any of his recent detractors. The finest and most thorough study is Lewis C. Gray's *History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860* (1933). Yet in describing the agricultural and labor systems of the entire section, the work contains certain generalizations which do not always apply to the colony in particular. To support any claims of uniqueness on the part of South
Carolina, it becomes necessary to isolate the plantation system as it existed there.

In preface to the study of the system there is value in investigating the changing definition of the word "plantation." Two definitions have been emphasized by American historians: "a settlement in a new or conquered country; a colony," and "an estate or farm, especially in a tropical or sub-tropical country, on which cotton, tobacco, sugar-cane, coffee or other crops are cultivated chiefly by servile labour." In South Carolina, at least a third meaning was common which was not directly recognized in the Oxford English Dictionary, being virtually synonymous with "an individual tract of land," regardless of settlement, agricultural utilization, or size. To the eighteenth-century Carolinian, a plantation could be a small farm operated exclusively by the white owner or an untouched tract of pine land. Contemporary references to an individual as a planter or a piece of land as a plantation, therefore, have none of the social or economic connotations which we are tempted to read into them today.

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A. The Land and The Crops

The formation of South Carolina as a political unit has provoked some particular interest among colonial historians because of the medieval character of the Fundamental Constitutions of 1669 which attempted the hopeless task of recreating a feudal society in America. By this fantastic plan, each Proprietor was to receive a "signiory" grant of 12,000 in each of the four counties, and a local aristocracy of feudal "Landgraves" and "Cassiques" were to receive similar grants and to dominate the political structure of the colony. It would simplify matters if the later aristocratic tendencies in the colony could be attributed to the early plan, but there is no real justification for such a view. In the first place, none of the original proprietors are known to have set foot in the colony, and none of them nor any of the Landgraves nor Cassiques were ever granted their full quota of 12,000 acre tracts. Although a probable source of pride to the land hungry English mind of the seventeenth century, a 12,000 acre grant of wilderness inhabited by hostile Indians was not a very valuable nor productive possession. Years after receiving the grant,

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Henry A. M. Smith, "The Baronies of South Carolina," South Carolina Hist. Mag., XI (1910), 75-76.
Lord John Carteret in 1730 sold his untouched Hobcaw Barony (13,970 acres) for £800 sterling or less than 2s. an acre. Landgrave Peter Colleton, who possessed one of the few tracts which was ever improved in any way by the original owner, disposed of his Cypress Barony in 1707 for £800 in Barbadian debts. At the time, Colleton’s settlement consisted of one house, one kitchen, one dairy, one milk house, fifteen Negroes, “eight hundred head of cattle great and small,” two teams of oxen, one plow and harrow, and five saddles, a settlement which hardly brings to mind a baronial seat in England. A number of those who received the grants, Sir John Colleton, Sir Nathaniel Johnson, Landgrave Thomas Smith, Edmund Bellinger, John Ashby, and Thomas Boone, were destined to be the progenitors of the later leaders of society, but the frequent and often futile efforts to sell the tracts throughout the colonial period would indicate that the early titles and grants gave little advantage to anyone. Untouched land was just too abundant and tenants unobtainable. Social and economic advancement was dependent upon land utilization, not simple ownership, and the crops rather than artificial systems of land distribution set the patterns for this

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4 Smith, "Baronies of South Carolina," South Carolina Hist. Mag., XII (1911), 5-6; XIV (1913), 61-80.

land development.

In the very early economy, based heavily upon timber products and livestock, the average plantation was the very humble establishment noted above in Landgrave Peter Colleton’s 1707 sale; a small wooden structure inhabited by many children, servants, and relatives as well as by the planter and his wife, one or two small outbuildings, a small clearing for food crops, and a nearby landing where the “canow” was kept for occasionally transporting wood products and barreled meat to market. Nearby would be a path upon which cattle would be driven “on the hoof” to town.

Marked cattle were permitted to roam freely in search of natural pasture, and the abundance of such herds is indicated by the frequency of regulatory laws. When, in 1695, there were a great number of trees blown down by the violence of the late “hurricane,” making “the woods difficult to be travelled” and preventing many inhabitants from “bringing their cattle to their respective pens and marking them as they were accustomed,” a problem arose in the form of cattle thieves who searched out the distant herds and made off with the unmarked yearlings. By 1703, “Whereas the great numbers of wild, unmarked and outlying cattle have drawn tame cattle from there ranges, as well as eat up their winter food,” settlers were required

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Thomas Cooper, ed., The Statutes at Large of South Carolina, II (Columbia, S. C., 1837), 106-8.
to send males to dispatch the wild beasts. The fact that one male was to be sent per family for "every one hundred head of neat cattle belonging to one or more of their stock houses, cow pens or plantations" would indicate that possession of such quantities was fairly common. When an epidemic threatened the industry in 1744, a detailed act was passed providing quarantine by districts, the immediate driving of unfenced cattle by owners "from their open range and confined within a good and sufficient inclosure," segregation and burning of diseased animals.

As rice planting spread out among the river basins, plantations took on a more formal character. The cattle were pushed into less inhabited areas, but the livestock industry remained as a very important appendage of the plantation economy. The origins of the system in South Carolina can be found among the progenitors of the planter families in areas as far to the east as the sea islands and the Ashley and Cooper rivers. Livestock was to remain as one source of income for a number of the planter aristocrats as well as for their less cultivated fellow colonists to the west. In 1752, Edmund Bellinger, a member of one of the leading families in the colony,

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Cooper, Statutes, II, 220-22.

Thomas Cooper, ed., The Statutes at Large of South Carolina, III (Columbia, S. C., 1838), 643-45.
offered for sale his three hundred acre Icotango Neck plantation on Port Royal Island on which there were five hundred cattle, one hundred goats, twenty-five horses, fifty of the steers ready for slaughter, and "a very good negro hunter with the stock, that lives on the said place, and is well acquainted with all the woods where the stock ranges."

The exploitation of wood resources was, as noted previously, a very early source of income. It remained so throughout the colonial period. Profits could be made from the production of barrel staves, ship timbers, boards, tar, pitch, turpentine, and firewood for the growing town and for ocean going ships. Stands of virgin timber seem to have been sufficient even along the rivers close to Charleston to provide winter employment for slaves and extra income for the planters. In 1732, Landgrave Thomas Smith not only offered 14,000 acres of land for sale but also 20,000 red oak barrel and hogshead staves and two hundred cords of wood. Most of the printed advertisements for land and working plantation sales mention the abundant oak, hickory, pine, and cedar

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10 South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), October 21, 1732.
trees as did Sir Alexander Nisbett's in 1752, "The whole timber, and cedar wood on the said plantation, may be carried in rafts, boats or ships to Charles-Town market." Sawyers, coopers, squarers, and carpenters are mentioned in the majority of slave enumerations.

What separated the low-country planter from the colonists in the back-country and those to the north was his large scale production of rice. Although the grain was often planted on a small scale in northern areas, the more temperate climate, long growing season, fairly frequent rainfall, and the presence of extensive fresh water swamps provided the unique environment among the older colonies capable of supporting rice plantations in commercially significant quantities. Comparatively cheap in proportion to volume and weight, rice like wood was further restricted to areas neighboring upon water transportation routes. Never the sole crop on the colonial South Carolina plantation, rice overshadowed the others because it was the cash crop upon which fortunes were made and the economy based. It was in the production of rice that the plantation slave system was most fully developed on the mainland of colonial America.

Methods of planting and production of the staple were at first quite haphazard. Small low lying patches of

11 South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), January 1, 1752.
existing plantations were increasingly devoted to rice as the possibilities for economic return became apparent. In describing a long settled area in 1773, a Philadelphia merchant noted that "here and there, in such Bottoms as we Northward People should make Meadow of; they damn across to raise a little Rice on...." Large profit margins however encouraged large-scale production. The history of rice planting in the colonial period is one of slow but steady progress toward efficiency not unlike the more familiar pattern of industrial expansion. Early eighteenth-century wills indicate that the location of plantations, formerly chosen solely for their proximity to pasture lands, to transportation routes to town, and for the quality of hardwood forests and their underlying soils (on the uplands), were now prized for the quantity of swamp land as well.

In general it seems that rice planting before about 1725 was restricted to inland swampland created by small and easily damnable streams. Planted in the small ponds, flooding of the crop was not very systematic, and slaves were required to periodically wade into the swamp to remove weeds.

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14 Moore and Simmons, Abstract of Wills of South Carolina, 1670-1740.

By the second or third decade, slave labor was abundant enough to enable the profit-hungry planter to tame ever larger streams and areas of swamp land, and Gazette advertisements of mid-century indicate that fifty to one hundred and fifty acres of a five hundred acre plantation were given over to rice, with large reservoirs, dykes, and canal systems provided for regular flooding. The rapidity of the transition from the limited inland swamps to the fresh water river swamps should not be stressed. The use of small swamps led to the larger ones, and when in 1737 Thomas Smith advertised "2,000 Acres of Land on Black-River... great part of which is good Rice Swamp, that the Spring Tide flows on...," he showed at least an appreciation that the natural flow could be harnessed for use. The description offered by James Deveaux in his 1753 advertisement for the sale of a 906 acre Prince William parish plantation serves to show that rice planting was big business well back into the colonial period. It affords rice land enough to employ 70 working hands, without clearing any back swamp, is very fit for two compleat settlements, and the whole may be laid under water when any part thereof is twelve feet deep: There is, about 100 acres now under convenient ditches, to stop and convey water from the great reservoir into any part of the field, wherefor ever it may be required: a large dam 25 feet foundation, 630 feet long, and high enough to reserve water for the whole spot of rice land, and to work a pounding mill in the winter....

16 South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), July 16, 1737.
17 South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), August 20, 1753.
Any planter who could build a 630 foot long dam and
ditch one hundred acres would be capable of constructing
similar fields from tidal swamps. After the initial ven-
ture by McKewn Johnstone on his Winyah Bay plantation in
1758 and encouragement by Gov. James Wright of Georgia in
the 1760's, swamps immediately contiguous to rivers were
increasingly planted. With proficiency at controlling
the water on the low lying fields, planters systematically
flooded the fields not only for irrigation but also to kill
the bothersome weeds which cut down on the rice yield. By
the end of the colonial period, the great planters and
their overseers were on their way to becoming the cross
between planter, boss, and hydraulic engineer which could
be found in the great days of rice planting in the 1840's
and 1850's.

Despite the advances in land utilization and the
growing size of plots devoted to cultivation, rice re-
quired intensive use of labor throughout the long April-
May to October growing season. Fields were broken and
trenched with the hoe and seed deposited in long rows
one to one and a half feet apart. Throughout the grow-
ing season, a series of flows was interspersed with
drainings for more hoeing and the picking of undesirable
"volunteer" rice. After a final draining, the stalks
were cut by hand sickle, given a short time to dry in
those exceptional fields which were actually dry themselves, and then gathered and bound into sheaves and piled near the barns for further drying.

Once the sheaves had been dried, the rice had to be threshed and winnowed, the husk removed from the grain, the grain sorted and polished, and the undamaged grains barreled before being sent to market. As in planting, important advances were made in this processing during the eighteenth century, and wind fans for winnowing and various forms of pounding mills for separating the husks seem to have been commonly in use by mid-century.

Like tobacco, rice was beset with a variety of pests which in combination with violent weather conditions, severe drought, or over abundant rainfall, could destroy a crop. Rice worms, maggots, crayfish, and rats attacked from the ground and blackbirds, jackdaws, crows, and ducks from the air. Most serious of all pests were the "rice birds" (bobolink) which invaded in May and August and were capable of utterly stripping a field within minutes. As the flocks approached, slaves were stationed around the fields with old guns and whips to provide noise, and carrion was put in the fields to attract the much feared

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20 Gray, History of Agriculture, 280-83.
hawks. Despite these foes, rice was produced in rapidly increasing quantities and with increasing efficiency.

In the 1740's, indigo became an important staple as well. After the initial successes of Eliza Lucas and the granting of the 1748 Parliamentary bounty, Andrew Deveaux, Thomas Hellichamp, Moses Lindo, and others helped to perfect the crop for competitive sale upon the English market. South Carolina indigo never was of finest quality, selling from 2s. 6d. to 6s. 6d. per lb. in contrast to as much as 9s. 6d. for the products of the French West Indies or as much as 13s. to 13s. 9d. for finest grade central American produce (Guatemala).

But 3-5s. per lb. was itself impressive when rice sold a 2-3d. This high value in relation to volume and the nature of the crop itself caused it to have more impact on the colony than its profitability alone would warrant. Best suited to dry sandy soils, the plant

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22 Hirsch, "French Influence," 8-9, and Sellers, Charleston Business, 165-66. The very best account of the indigo industry and one of the finest examples of scientific agricultural writing to be produced in the American colonies is [Charles Woodmason] C. W. to Mr. Urban (pseud.), Charles Town, S. Carolina, Nov. 30, 1754, Gentleman's Magazine, XXV (1755), 201-3, 256-59.
did not compete for space with rice and provided a valuable cash crop for formerly undesirable lands. This fact, combined with its high value, enabled the product to withstand extended transportation by road, and indigo became an important product in higher regions and areas remote from river transportation routes even well into the back-country. The sandy Sea Islands, formerly of little value except for grazing, became the ideal environment for the crop. The southern islands (Edisto, St. Helens, etc.) and the port of Beaufort first took on real importance in the 1750's and 1760's. On settled plantations of limited area, however, indigo seems to have competed for space with food crops and probably was an important step toward more intensive commercial farming and away from self-sufficiency. Gazette advertisements after mid-century generally mention "good corn or indigo land."

Although the first seed planted by Miss Lucas was obtained from Antigua, merchants' advertisements regularly offer "Guatemala" seed, indicating that the best was imported from the Spanish colonies. A leafy weed-like plant, indigo was in comparison to rice very easy to cultivate, but preparation for market required the

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25 See James Cook, "A Map of the Province of South Carolina...." (xerox duplicate of Clements Library copy in author's possession) for evidence of growing importance of the Beaufort and sea island area.

26 For example, see South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), January 1, 1752.

27 For example, see South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), January 1, 1752.
attention of an expert. In the intensity of labor in the final stages of production, indigo was very similar to sugar and like that crop, could be completely destroyed by mismanagement. Cut when in bloom, the plants were carefully carried to large vats and immersed and heated in water. The liquid was then drawn off to a second vat and constantly beaten while fermenting. At a crucial point, limewater was added to neutralize the solution and halt fermentation, the suspended material allowed to settle, and the water drained off. The moist residue was then scooped out, strained, pressed, cut into cubes, and dried.

One aspect of the plantation myth which does not fit in colonial South Carolina is the picture of the static agricultural system inescapably confined by a staple crop straight-jacket. Diversity rather than the single crop system dominated. The plantation records of Elias Ball in the 1720's and 1730's, while showing that pitch, tar, and rice were the most important products, also show that he produced shingles and firewood, and supplied neighbors with corn, peas, potatoes, "stall-fed beef," butter, mutton, and veal, and supplied a shoemaker with hides. James Marion is known to have requested a seven year monopoly on a cotton gin in 1747, and the fibre was grown in small quantities throughout the

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29 Deas, Recollections of the Ball Family, 46.
colonial period. Gov. Nathaniel Johnson, Gabriel Manigault, Charles Pinckney, and others continually experimented with the production of silk and met with enough success that Parliamentary bounties were levied, over 10,000 lbs. raised in 1759, and a number of spinning mills established in the 1760's. It is true that, in the last decades of the century, most of the experiments with exotic crops (coffee, olives, hemp, and wine production) were carried out in the back-country areas. But the low-country agricultural system remained fluid. Alongside the rice and indigo fields and the "vats for steeping, heating, and dyeing his indigo, the trough for pressing it, conveniences for drying etc..." on Mr. Marshall's plantation, Pelatiah Webster in 1763 saw his beautiful orangery and fine garden with variety of fine vegetables of the growth of the climate, as oranges, chickasaw plumbs, catalpas, nectarines, figs, etc.

Joseph Alston, with whom Josiah Quincy, Jr., stayed, took special interest in the propagation of "the Lisbon and wine Island grapes." A 1752 advertisement for a 2,200 acre James Island plantation went as follows:

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32 Quincy, Life of Josiah Quincy. Jr., 85-86.
extraordinary good for rice, corn and indigo, with a large quantity of live oak and cedars thereon fit for building large or small vessels. There is also on it, a good overseer's house, barn and out houses, a young orchard of two acres with variety of fruit trees, fine fishing of all sorts, a dam with sufficient water to work a dozen sets of vats, ten quarters of wild indigo, which is sufficient quantity for feed, a landing from the barn, about a stone's throw, and the whole plantation under good fence.33

Such an advertisement could attract not only the indigo planter, but the shipbuilder, fruit grower, the livestock raiser, or the fisherman.

B. Labor

Despite the occasional development of labor saving devices and of efficient methods in planting and preparation of crops mentioned in the last section, eighteenth-century agricultural production was very dependent on manual labor. In the young and expansive low-country South Carolina staple economy this meant slave labor, and a comparison of Negro population statistics and rice production (see charts, Chapter II) demonstrates the very direct relationship between the two sets of figures.

What is most impressive is the overwhelming number of slaves. The returns of S. P. G. ministers in St.

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33 South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), January 1, 1752.
James, Goose Creek for 1709-10 and 1742, and in St. George's in 1726 and 1741 emphasize the ever growing numerical superiority of the Negro.

TABLE 3
ST. JAMES, GOOSE CREEK PARISH POPULATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1709-10</th>
<th>1742</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White families</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slaves</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>2752</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 4
ST. GEORGE'S PARISH POPULATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1726</th>
<th>1741</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White families</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White persons</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slaves</td>
<td>1,310</td>
<td>3,342</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1736, St. Bartholomew's parish contained 120 white families and 1,200 Negroes and in 1752, 1,280 whites and 5,200 "Heathens and Infidels" (not including Dissenters). In 1741, St. John's, Berkeley contained 500 whites and 2,600 slaves. Without demanding complete accuracy in returns, the figures nevertheless indicate a Negro-white ratio rising from 2 to 1 or so in the second or third decade of settlement to 5, 6, and 7 to 1 by mid-century. Existing

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34 Klingberg, Appraisal of the Negro, 17, 59-60, 87, 92-93.
records of the St. John's Berkeley road commissioners in the 1760's and early 1770's show that in that parish the ratio topped 10 to 1 before the Revolution, and that the trend continued without pause until the very end.

Josiah Quincy, Jr., attempted to estimate the number in 1773, and, although informed by the best sources that Negroes were 7 to 1, stated that his own judgment "leads me to think it much greater." Averaging 12.0 slaves per white family in 1726, St. George's parish averaged 24.1 per family in 1741. From all indications such figures and rates of increase were typical of the other parishes in the Charleston area. By American standards of any period this was a great many slaves and to a degree would make low-country whites aristocrats by virtue of color alone.

Exactly why Negro slavery should have gained such an overwhelming place in South Carolina is a question which has no single answer. It is probable that little planning was involved in the great increases in Negro importations in the early eighteenth century and that practical economic considerations decided the issue. Warren B. Smith, in White Servitude in Colonial South Carolina (1961),

36 Records of the Commissioners of the High Roads of St. John's Parish, Berkeley Co., 1760-1798, Mss. volumes, South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston.


38 See Table 7 in Chapter IV.
has shown the importance of indentured white servants in the early period of the colony's history. But with the shift from herding, timber production, and produce farming to the plantation economy, there was also a change in labor needs. The new crops required the management of an expert in production of the particular crop and as many laborers as possible whose main qualifications would be brute strength, submissiveness, and (with rice) a willingness to labor in dank, muddy, mosquito infested swamps. White servants were never known for their docility, particularly in a country which provided so many routes of escape. As the number of Negroes multiplied, whites considered similar work to be degrading. After the early years of the century, white servants served primarily in domestic and managerial positions and as artisan laborers.

It is very difficult to get a picture of the labor system as it existed in the rural parishes because of almost total lack of records, but a detailed census of St. George's parish in 1726 gives some indication of the nature of the institution at that early date. At the top of the scale were a number of slaveholders, three of whom at least seem to have been absentee owners having only a single overseer and twenty-eight, forty-seven, and

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fifty-seven slaves. The majority of the families were occupants of the parish possessing five to fifteen slaves and families of four to five persons. A few entries show some variation from the norm. Of the 108 families, twenty-one owned no slaves at all, indicating that family-run farms were not uncommon. Benjamin Periman, who did own two slaves (one male, one child), also had eight adult white males, two women, and two children, suggesting that he employed white servants. One other individual unit had five adult males, twelve had three, and fifteen had two, also indicating that there was some white servitude and hiring (but the majority of these were probably relatives). Most surprising is the presence of Robin Johnson, one of five free Negroes or Indians, who not only had a wife and child but three male, three female, and three young slaves. The dominant picture which emerges from the St. George's record is that of a system in which a few large slaveholders are far outnumbered by the relatively small planter, the precursors of Frank Owsley's "plain folk" of the next century. In the following discussions of the slave system,

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40 Rev. Francis Varnd to David Humphreys, January 21, 1725, in Klingberg, An Appraisal of the Negro, 58-60. See Table 7 in Chapter IV.

it must be kept in mind that in primarily focusing on the
great planters, the paper is dealing with a distinct
minority.

Natural increase was an element in the long-range
growth of the Negro population, but importation and pur-
chase were the primary factors in the rapid increases of
the eighteenth century. Records concerning the mechanics
of the trade are scarce in pre-newspaper days (before
1732), but it does not seem that Charleston merchants
themselves ever were involved substantially in the African
slave trade. Participation in the business of importa-
tion and resale in Charleston, however, was perfectly
respectable and was the lucrative foundation for a number
of the great import merchant fortunes. Most of the
important merchants were involved at some time, and even
lawyers and planters such as Daniel Blake (1763), William
Bull (1765-70), and William Boone (1748-9) occasionally in-
vested in a cargo. Whether they stocked their own planta-
tions or resold at profit is a question, but they prob-
ably did both. Upon transfer to the merchant and after
careful inspection for disease and frequent quarantine,
the cargoes were advertised in the Gazette and in broad-

42 Elizabeth F. Donnan, "The Slave Trade in South Caro-
 lina before the Revolution," American Historical Re-
 view, XXXIII (1927-28), 804-16.

43 Robert W. Higgin, "Charles Town Merchants and Factors
Dealing in the External Negro Trade, 1735-1775," South
Carolina Hist. Mag., LXV (1964), 205-17.
sides and handbills circulated in the country. The larger the cargoes the more an auction was likely to attract the distant planters. Purchases on credit of lots of twenty to forty at a time were not uncommon. Merchant Henry Laurens requested that his agents obtain "the very best kind of Slaves black and smooth free from blemishes, Young and well-grown," and planters showed particular preference for Gambians, Gold Coast, and Guinea Negroes. Advertisements also note Widades, Coromantines, and imports from Bassa, Bance Id., and Angola. Calabar Negroes were particularly undesirable.

A particularly fine cargo could lead to a crowded, boisterous auction, and Laurens gleefully recorded in 1735 that

Some of the Buyers went to collaring each other and would have come to blows had it not been prevented in contending for the choice, which gave the Seller excellent opportunity to make them pay what price he pleased.45

Slave prices varied greatly in response to a multitude of factors: staple prices, droughts which decreased staple and food crops, war which raised freight and insurance rates, inflation, duties and regulations, quantities of Negroes available in the colony, and demand caused by territorial expansion. A slave was a great

investment, and from the 1750's to 1770's, prime male Negroes ranged from £250 to £350 (£35-50 sterling) apiece. The tremendous amount of capital tied up in slavery is exemplified by the estate inventory of Joseph Saunders, a St. Bartholomew's planter, who died in the mid-1760's.

TABLE 5
JOSEPH SAUNDERS ESTATE INVENTORY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>% of Total Estate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56 slaves</td>
<td>£13,630 (£ 245 average)</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock &amp; horses</td>
<td>£1,341 10s.</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce on plantation at death</td>
<td>£2,441 5s.</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding equipage &amp; carriages</td>
<td>£200 10s.</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm tools</td>
<td>£146 1s.</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household goods</td>
<td>£767 11s.</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Estate</strong></td>
<td>£18,526 17s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Land was not included in inventories, but indications are that a good plantation in recently settled areas could

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47 Totals arrived at from the Estate Inventory of Joseph Saunders, St. Barts., Saunders-Broughton Papers (1703-1836), Mss., South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston.
be purchased for less than the price of five good slaves throughout the colonial period. Inventories for the large and small slaveholders often show over 80-90% investment in Negroes. With such intense interest in purchasing large quantities of slaves, merchants could virtually depend on quick sale at high prices. The economy generally absorbed as many Negroes as were offered for sale. At one time in May, 1773, there were twelve cargoes riding at anchor in Charleston harbor, and between May 1 and June 1, 3,514 slaves were sold at consistently high prices.

Hired labor was also out of the question because of high prices. In the 1720's, Mr. Thomason, "the Carpenter of the Free School at Childsury," came to Comingtee plantation with six journeymen for four days to mend and put locks on the furniture, and presented Mr. Ball with a 13 10s. bill upon completion of the task.

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48 See Sellers, Charleston Business, 59-60. In an estimate of the initial costs of establishing a rice plantation of two hundred acres, William de Brahm in the 1760's allotted but 4% for land and 72% for slaves. Charles Woodmason, in his 1755 Gentleman's Magazine article (see footnote 22 on page 32), estimated that 55% of the expense of setting up a plantation in the Charleston area (i.e. 7,500 currency) was for the procurement of slaves.

49 Hirsch, Musuemote of Colonial South Carolina, 177-78.

"glewing" daughter Sarah's base viol, Mr. Thompson was paid 2 6s.

The presence of a numerically superior and "uncivilized" work force in a colony where absentee plantation ownership was quite common also required a sizable managerial force. That somewhat elusive personality, the overseer, was present from the earliest days, and every large plantation, whether run in absentia or not, possessed such an individual. There were two major varieties. One type, familiar to the slave owner until the Civil War, was the shiftless, lazy, irresponsible character who rarely stayed for as much as a year. In 1720-21, Andrew Sangster and his wife moved into the Comingtee house with the Ball family, but was dismissed in less than a year for "neglect of your business, and not bringing up the rice from the warf." John Netman, who succeeded him in 1722, was retained for only two months because of drinking and being sick for seven days. Thomas Dyer, in 1725-26, "left my Employ and gave me no notis," leaving behind a sizable debt in corn, beef, sugar, and rum. Although possessing good English names, they apparently also had a dose of

51 Deas, Recollections of the Ball Family, 41-43.
52 Deas, Recollections of the Ball Family, 41-43.
bad English character. In a period from 1767 to the Revolution, Isaac Hayne employed eleven different overseers on his Hynne Hall plantation: four Germans and a Dutchman, three Carolinians, two Englishmen, and one Pennsylvanian. Over half of these were turned away in a matter of months. Local help was apparently hard to get or useless as early as 1738, when Edward Hynne had suggested to his sister that "it will be necessary to have a Northward man that's used to that business planting corn and peas." Thomas Dyer, the runaway overseer of Elias Ball's memorandum, briefly enters the pages of history again in Governor Robert Johnson's 1734 will which mentions "1500 acres more purchased from my overseer Thomas Dyer," but it is hard to tell whether this is a sign raising or lowering fortunes.

There is no indication that social mobility in South Carolina was great enough to allow an individual of this group to ascend to the upper ranks of society, although Henry Laurens did at one point note that an old overseer "having grown rich...set up for himself."

54 Edward Hynne to Mrs. Thomas Smith, Hynneham, August 1, 1738, in [Mrs. Elizabeth Anne Poyas] The Olden Time of Carolina (Charleston, 1855), 88.
There was a rather permanent class of these white employees throughout the period, most of whom probably moved on to the newer settlements to the west.

Another variety of overseer was in evidence as well: the son, relative, or son of a friend who shouldered the responsibilities as a favor or as a sort of apprenticeship program for later ownership. In the Ball family, young sons were frequently put in charge of the distant plantations. Henry Laurens even described brother-in-law John Coming Ball, a rich planter in his own right, as "my best friend & Overseer." Thomas Ferguson's rise from the lowly position of overseer to being one of the great planters of the eighteenth century has been pointed out as an example of rags to riches, but as Fergusons had been politically prominent from the earliest years of the colony's history, it is probable that he had advantages that the average overseer of the first variety did not have.

Colonial South Carolina planters seem to have paid fixed wages. In 1720-21, Elias Ball paid £ 80 for a year. In 1776, Mrs. Mary Colleton's estate manager and lawyer paid "Thos. Egan overseer years Wages due

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57 Deas, Recollections of the Ball Family, and Joseph W. Barnwell and Mabel L. Webber, eds., "Correspondence of Henry Laurens," South Carolina Hist. Mag., XXX (1929), 162.

58 Harriette K. Leiding, Historic Houses of South Carolina (Philadelphia, Penna., 1921), 51-54.

59 Deas, Recollections of the Ball Family, 41.
4 dect. next £ 262.  

Under a system where overseers rarely stayed on the job, the payment of percentage wages would have been an impossibility.

Among the slaves themselves, a hierarchy of responsibility and occupation was firmly established at quite an early date, and Edward Hyrne in the 1738 letter suggested that "Cooper Andrew" be given command if a white overseer was not available. A 1759 *Gazette* advertisement was typical in describing the fifty Negroes offered for sale,

*among which is a very good driver who understands the management of a plantation, and planting perfectly well; Two cooperers, one that makes tight casks, the other has served three years to the trade; two men cooks, one of which is a professed cook, and fit for any person in the province, and the other a very good one; several seamstresses that are also good housewomens, washer women, housewomens, and waiting men; plantation slaves and handy boys and girls.*

On any plantation, there were specialized tasks which required semi-skilled and skilled labor, and in the short period from 1773 to 1777, Col. Isaac Hayne hired the services of thirteen different white individuals for such varied tasks as construction, carpenter work, gardening, housekeeping, and to

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62 *South Carolina Gaz.*, (Charleston), January 5, 1759.
"Suckle the twins." Although artisans seem to have performed their tasks well at exorbitant rates, every resident worker, whether indentured or not, proved to be unsatisfactory. Dutchman Jacob Myers and his wife, who came to set up a weaving shop on Hayne's plantation, were typical. He ran away in one month; she in three.

As some of the Negroes became assimilated into the English system, they also began to compete with whites as skilled laborers. Charles Pinckney owned seventeen such trained laborers, including a bricklayer, three carpenters, a seamstress, and washerwomen. They not only performed tasks on his three plantations, four town dwellings, and warehouses but were rented out. Gazette advertisements for slaves sales and rentals list at least twenty-eight skills for which Negroes had been trained. Racial antagonisms developed as the Negroes slowly pushed the whites out of the low-country economic system.

The muscle for the plantation system was provided by the Negro slave, and the planter was kept constantly aware of the institution by the problems it engendered.

63 "Records Kept by Colonel Isaac Hayne," 19-23.
64 Charles Pinckney Rent Roll and Estate Book, 1753, Papers of Benjamin Huger Rutledge, Nna. fol. 3, South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston.
From the earliest days of South Carolinian slavery, owners complained of thievery, laziness, and running away by slaves. Advertisements for runaways in the Gazette and notices of capture describe the same pathetic situations with about the same regularity as any southern paper of the 1840's or 1850's.

As in the early nineteenth century, slave revolts and fears of such revolts were constantly in the minds of the white society. When Josiah Quincy, Jr., was inquiring as to the number of Negroes, he was told by some who knew better that the ratio was 3 to 1, they being "afraid that the slaves should by some means discover their superiority," and he frequently heard "people express great fears of an insurrection...." There were occasional instances of slave brutality, rape, killing of overseers, and poisoning of masters. A few actual revolts were discovered. The Carolina equivalent to the Turner Rebellion was the 1739 Stono Rebellion in which twenty-one whites were killed. Incidents were frequent enough to maintain a low-keyed hysteria smoldering throughout the colonial period which resulted in recurring outcries against slave gatherings and the periodic passage of repressive laws.  

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66 See Deas, Recollections of the Bell Family, 44-45.
To avert trouble, slave patrols were required to make weekly inspections of every road and slave cabin, and an armed patrol of thirty-six men kept watch over Charleston nightly. Considering the high percentage of African-born Negroes, as witnessed by the frequency of notices for lost and found slaves who spoke no English and who were covered with symbolic tribal scars, it is miraculous that order was maintained so completely.

By twentieth-century standards, treatment of Negro slaves could be very brutal indeed as the following 1752 advertisement for Negroes shows:

all this country born, and well known in Charleston-Town, and at Happle, where they have several relations, and supposed to be harboured thereabouts; a reward of Six Pounds for each of the three fellows, if taken alive; Four Pounds if their heads are produced, and Three Pounds for the Wench....

Two pounds, not a great deal of money in 1752, was not much of a margin between life and death. It was likewise fairly common to brand the owners initials on the slaves breasts, cheeks, arms, or buttocks. But decapitation, branding, and similar brutality were as much a part of the English environment from which the settlers had come as were the political and religious forms which were brought over.

69 Sellers, Charleston Business, 12-14.
71 South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), February 22, 1752.
White servants received approximately the same treatment as Negroes in the first decades of settlement.

The profit motive was the decisive factor in determining the treatment of slaves, and to some extent it was working to the Negroes' favor. Negro slaves were legally considered to be property and they were treated as such. But they were such valuable property, that planters went to some lengths to protect their investments. Included in a bill of Dr. Henry Ravenel is a £ 4 10s. charge for treating one Negro for one day. Richard Baker was charged £ 58 16s. for treatment of "plural disease" among eleven Negroes at his Jack Savannah Plantation in 1761, £ 15 for daily dressing of an ulcer on a Negro boy's ankle for a period of a week or two in 1762, and £ 10 for "Extracting Splinters at Sundry times" in the same year.

Such lengths were taken to protect Negro life by the import merchants, that often slave ships were quarantined to protect the cargoes from the diseased South Carolinians. A planter, whether large or small, could not afford to lose a £ 2-300 investment from over-exhaustion, malnutrition, or punishment, and there is

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72 Smith, White Servitude, 74-81.
little solid evidence that Negro life was not generally protected. South Carolina Negroes do not seem to have been sexually deprived or to have practiced abstinence in protest. Negro birth rates seem to have been very high.

The greatest planters generally took paternalistic attitudes toward their chattels. Henry Laurens, although a slave dealer himself, was very particular about the care of infirm slaves on his plantations and would countenance no cruelty nor immorality on the part of his overseers. Thomas Boone advised Margaret Colleton against taking an offer for Mepshaw plantation, for by selling an estate in this manner, you would convey away a parcel of old Family Negroes, who being past labour, are supported by you, but would probably be required to work by a less indulgent owner.

C. The Planter Within the Commercial System

The development of a commercial system to market the produce and provide necessities and capital for the planter was a prerequisite for the development of the plantation system. In the early years of

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75 See the Charles Pinckney Estate Book, Ms., of footnote 64, in which children and their mothers are listed. Of his 116 slaves in 1753, 3 were "old and not Profitable," and 52 were thirteen years old and younger. Such percentages seem to have been common.

76 Wallace, Henry Laurens, 63-66.

77 Easterby, Wadood Barony, 1.
economic diversity and of close family ties with the West Indies and Great Britain, occupational specialization was rare. Planters with brothers or fathers in Barbados or New England not only produced the timber, staves, and foodstuffs, but carried on the duties of small import and export merchants. Most of the Huguenot and London immigrants seem to have used intercolonial family ties to great advantage in the first generation of settlement. Although data on occupations of immigrants and their European and other-colonial relatives is scanty, the patterns described in Bernard Bailyn's *The New England Merchants in the Seventeenth Century* (1955) (where settlers with family ties among the merchant and artisan classes in London and the other British colonies made use of such connections in establishing themselves as traders) fit in South Carolina equally well. As the economy became more complex (with the development of the staples), occupational specialization increased among the merchants and storekeepers as well as among the planters and was a continuing trend throughout the colonial period. By mid-century, the Charleston commercial community was divided into two major groups: the great import merchants, who had intercolonial ties.

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78 See Chapter V on the origins of the aristocracy's progenitor ancestors.
and access to London capital, and the retail merchants who operated the Charleston and outlying stores.

After harvesting and preparing his rice or indigo for market, the planter would have the option of disposing of his crops to the great import merchants in return for credit or slaves or to the retail merchants in return for goods or credit. Where the debts had accumulated often was the decisive factor in determining with whom the planter dealt.

In an era of poor communications, the marketing of a crop could be a war of wits between merchants and planters and within each group. Henry Laurens reported in 1767 that

our Planters since the price (rice) fell to 50 percent send down their crops very slowly, hoping thereby to pinch the early Ships & raise the Price again; their Success or disappointment will depend wholly upon the Number of Ships that shall arrive ....

On the other hand, merchants naturally tried to pick up the desirable crops at the lowest prices. The Gazette shows that there was always a certain amount of friction between producers and middlemen in the European trade. "Agricola" complained in 1751 that the parasitic merchants purposely manipulated prices

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79 Seller, Charleston Business, 49-96.
80 Henry Laurens to John Pagan, Alexander Brown & Co. (Glasgow), December 17, 1767, in Barnwell and Webber, "Correspondence of Henry Laurens," XXXI (1930), 221-22.
to the unfair advantage of the planter. He proposed the establishment of a central board composed of ten Charleston factors who would be granted a rice and indigo monopoly by each participating planter. The board would meet every week to collect and regularly disseminate information on the forthcoming crops and world market conditions to corresponding parish planter clubs. Planters dealing on their own were to promise not to undersell. Such attempts at collective action, price fixing, elimination of the hostile middle man, and the collection and utilization of statistics in attempting to control world markets never seem to have been translated into a working system. But they symbolize the economic sophistication which was developing in at least a few minds in eighteenth-century South Carolina. In the mid-1750’s, the Winyah Indigo Society was founded for the dissemination of useful information about indigo production and for social and benevolent purposes. It established a free school for indigent children and a library of some importance.

81 Agricola to Mr. Timothy, St. James Parish, South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), December 25, 1751. For similar schemes involving Maryland and Virginia tobacco see Charles A. Barker, The Background of the Revolution in Maryland (New Haven, 1940), chapter IV, and Lewis C. Gray, "The Market Surplus Problem of Colonial Tobacco," Ag. Hist., II (1928), 1-34.

82 See South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), February 6, 1755.
As customers, planters did the majority of their business with the Charleston retail merchants from whom they could buy necessary tools, cloth, household items, and luxury goods. These were supplied the shopkeepers at "vendues" by the great importing wholesale factors. By the late colonial period, the diversity and volume of manufactured goods available was astounding. Merchants such as John Paul Grimké, who specialized in beautiful watches, gold headed canes, diamond rings, necklaces, earrings, "toilet cases with gold instruments," and jewel studded "bosom-hearts," made fortunes. If the planter had a good credit rating, he could purchase almost any item in Charleston that formerly he might have sent for directly to London. Only in one very important area, the slave trade, did the import merchants deal directly with the planter.

In a currency-short agricultural colony, credit supported the entire economic system in its every branch. Slaves, goods, and services were sold on credit, and produce served as currency in many of the economic dealings throughout the colonial period. Capital was the key to the expansion of the entire staple based economy. As producers of the rice and indigo and purchasers of slaves (and indirectly of

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83 See South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), throughout the 1760's and 1770's.
84 Sellers, Charleston Business, 49-96.
manufactured goods), the planters were the major customers of the great Charleston import merchants. It was to the merchant's advantage to encourage the expansion of the plantation system. Functioning as bankers and creditors, the great London merchants borrowed large sums at 5% and made it available through Charleston associates to respectable planters at 8 to 12%. The planters would then plow the credit back into the total economy through purchases of slaves and goods.

The profitability of the plantation or of the plantation economy as a whole is difficult to ascertain, although certain contemporary estimates are available. William DeBrahm, in his analysis of the economics of settling a plantation of two hundred employed acres, forty slaves, an overseer, and necessary tools and buildings, estimated an initial yearly outlay of £2,476 16s. sterling. With 130 acres in rice and 70 acres in provisions, he calculated a £700 profit on rice, or 28% return, with a saving the following year from plantation grown provisions. His estimates seem to be perfectly reasonable, and such profits would enable the well run production unit to have paid for itself in three or four years. Dr.

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85 Sellers, Charleston Business, 55.
David Ramsay stated that indigo was so profitable after the imposition of the bounty that planters doubled their capital every three or four years.

The London merchant-creditors, the wholesale commission factors in Charleston, the retailers, the planters, and the dependent groups such as the lawyers and manufacturers (boat-builders, makers of plantation tools, saddlers) were vital links in the economic chain. Exactly which segment reaped the greatest profits is open to debate. For a number of reasons, the question is not a particularly valid one for South Carolina.

For one thing, the South Carolina aristocrats managed to cross occupational lines with such frequency that antagonistic economic groups did not really exist. Many of the great merchants (such as Henry Laurens and Gabriel Manigault) were also great planters. Sons of planters were introduced to the mysteries of commerce in the Charleston mercantile houses, and sons of both as well as those of the professional and artisan groups were increasingly trained as lawyers. With the social and

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87 "Early Crops and Commerce," *Centennial of Incorporation*, 83-84.

88 See "Records Kept by Col. Isaac Hayne," and A. S. Salley, *Death Notices in the South Carolina Gazette*, 1732-75 (Columbia, S. C., 1917) for occupations. Draytons, Fenwicks, Rutledges, Bull's, Heywards, Lynches, etc., all had family members concerned in trade at one time or another, and they married into the Brewton, Laurens, Manigault, and Godin families as well as others.
family ties further binding the elite of each occupational group, the advantages of one were to a degree being made available to all. The planter who had an import merchant for a brother-in-law or the merchant who doubled as a planter could not only get choice slaves and easy credit but also inside information on market conditions. In return, the merchant could count on receiving high quality produce from related planters and could count on a certain market for his slaves and goods.

The presence of a city and of a local merchant elite also served to lessen occupational antagonisms. In 1738, an article appeared in the Gazette advocating a three year cessation of Negro importation, as

the only Means to relieve us from the Load of Debts we are now owing to Great Britain, which I believe is equal to the Amount of 3 Years Produce. 89

Yet British debts never were as serious a problem for the planter as in the tobacco and sugar colonies. Debts which were often shouldered directly on the planter in Virginia were shared by each occupational group in South Carolina, and the merchant to whom the individual planter was indebted was often a native of the colony if not a relative.

89 South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), March 9, 1738.
Richard Pares, in *Merchants and Planters* (1960), pointed out that the tobacco or sugar plantation, although the result of heavy capital investment, was of illusory value because there were simply no available purchasers with sufficient wealth who were not already planters themselves. Even in South Carolina, plantation sales generally involved dispersion of property by auction, but the colony was unique in having a great number of wealthy merchants and lawyers who were very much interested in purchasing plantations. Blessed with a diversified and fairly complex economy, South Carolinians avoided many of the problems which beset the Virginia or West Indian planter. The merchants, lawyers, and planters who made up the elite shared equally in the prosperity.

D. Life on the Plantation

Despite the wealth and sophistication of many of the planters, life in the country for the majority of even the well-to-do was characterized by hard work, monotony, and isolation. The plantation buildings were essentially constructed for useability and not beauty.
The estate of James Deveaux which he advertised in 1753 had

a good large dwelling house, with a piazza, hall and six rooms, all well furnished; a garden at the south front, and yard lately put in; a new kitchen and dairy, a brick chimney with two fireplaces and an oven; a brick well with a pump; a large barn 45 feet by 24, with two floors; and other out-houses etc....

As historian David Duncan Wallace described it, the average plantation house "was easily built, airy, inconvenient and excessively plain." A northern visitor described merchant Thomas Loughton Smith's country "Seat" as having

a neat outside appearance, but a better inward appearance, being comfortably and neatly furnished with all conveniences.

Estate inventories show that utilitarian exteriors and design and very well furnished interiors characterized the average country home of the wealthy planter. A very good description of one of the fancier estates in the Charleston vicinity, Richard Lake's Wappoo plantation, is worth quoting at length as an example of the gentleman's plantation at its best.

Also, a plantation on Ashley river and Wappoo creek, where the subscriber formerly lived, containing Four Hundred and Twenty-nine acres and an Half, exceeding good land

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91 South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), August 20, 1753.
92 Wallace, History of South Carolina, I, 396.
for corn or indico. Sixty acres of which is
under good fence: There is on the said
plantation a very large brick house, Two
brick out houses, a good oven, Two sets of
large white oak indico vats, a lime vat,
and a large pump, (all set up in May last)
Two sets of brick vats, a great many bear-
ing orange trees, a fine reserve of water
sufficient to work a great many sets of
vats, several pleasant walks, and a vari-
ety of exceeding fine live oaks. The
plantation is delightfully situated; from
the house you may see Charles-Town, Sulli-
vant's Island, a part of James-Island, and
up Ashley-river, it is but 4 miles from
town, and is quite convenient for the
market....

Household Furniture, consisting of ma-
hogany tables, chairs, a book-case, sever-
al chests of drawers, variety of good pieces
of painting, several fine cuts, several
large scone glasses, a large chimney glass,
several dressing glasses, an 8-day clock,
a screen, a marble table, chints curtains,
beds, and bedsteads, fire dogs, all sorts
of kitchen furniture, and a great variety
of all sorts of furniture; a good collection
of books, a large quantity of very fine
china, drinking glasses, cut glass cruets,
a pair of glass shades, & c. A Parcel of
fine Sterling Plate, consisting of Two
pair of candlesticks, snuffers, and snuff-
dish; Two coffee pots, a teapot and stand,
Two Tankards, Three waiters, a large
wrought cup and cover, 3 salvers, Four mugs,
Two porringer, Three small dishes, Twelve
knives and forks, and Twelve spoons, in a
shag green case; Two Domen knives and forks
in shag green cases; a set of decanters,
Six salt sellers, Two soup ladles, a punch
ladle, Two marrow spoons, Two pepper boxes,
a large old-fashioned sugar dish, a sauce
cup, Fourteen large spoons, Twelve tea-
spoons with tongs and strainer, & c. a
chased good gold watch, chain, and seal;
a plain gold watch, and seal set in gold;
a large pair of gold shoe buckles, two
sets of men's silver buckles, Two diamond
and several other rings; a silver snuff-box,
a pair of silver spurs, Two silver hilted
swords, gilt with gold and a pair of pis-
tols mounted with silver.

A Pair of pocket pistols, and Four guns;
some curious shells, foreign insects in
spirits, and several branches of fine coral; a large garden roller, five handsome garden benches, and a water-stone and stand; several orange and lemon trees in tubs, and exotic plant in pots; a charriot, and harness for 4 horses; and a single horse chair; an ox cart, and two horse carts; plantation tools, horses, cattle, hogs, indigo seed, corn pease; potato seed, & c. &c.

By the standards of the English country gentleman, this was solid comfort. By American standards, this was opulence.

James Ellerton, English tutor and overseer on Mrs. Thomas Smith's plantation, kept a brief diary for a period of ten years (1740-50) which gives some insight into the daily routine on the plantation. He and the slave labor force were continually occupied in raising, harvesting, and marketing the crops, in herding, branding, and slaughtering the livestock, and in cutting bark and timber for the Charleston market. Horses were purchased and "broken" for farm use, and maintenance and construction of farm buildings and fences was carried out continually. The male heads of the households were constantly employed in supervising the labor force, keeping accounts, and attempting to market their produce on the most favorable terms; the women kept busy with sewing and making clothes, supervising the

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95 Poyas, Olden Time, 78-79, 162-69, 171-75, 181-86.
domestic help, and taking care of the children and the slaves; children enjoyed themselves, went to school, and prepared themselves for later economic independence.

A very important part of the routine centered around birth and death, and the frequency of each occurrence was appalling. As in every colony, married women usually produced a child every year or two, and, as a result of maternal mortality, men usually averaged two or three wives. Death struck among young children most severely, and few couples saw 50% of their children reach maturity. Malaria was a particular danger in the low-country, and tornadoes and hurricanes occasionally devastated plantations and destroyed life.

There were also hazards in going to town. Yellow fever and small pox were frequently raging in Charleston, and there are a number of recorded Gazette notices of travellers from the country drowning or "providing a good Breakfast" for hungry alligators.

Life in the country was not entirely isolated.

For one thing, there was much more of a sense of community in the eighteenth-century rural parishes than

96 See any of the good genealogical articles in the South Carolina Hist. Mag.

historians to date have suggested. The churchwardens and vestries, militia units, slave patrols, road commissioners, justices of the peace, and tax collectors were all appointed to serve limited geographical areas, and such local government required coordination and participation on the part of the local population. The marketing of staple crops and purchase of manufactured goods necessitated Charleston connections, but local parishes were surprisingly self-sufficient in many ways. To provide schooling and even dancing and "Bass Violl" lessons for his younger children, Elias Ball only had to send them to the nearby village of Childsberry. Schools of one sort or another could be found in most parishes. Although St. Helena's was a very rural parish until the late colonial period, the vestry book shows that artisans and manufacturers (carpenters, painters, brick makers, and glaziers) could be found among the local inhabitants and that most building supplies were of local origin. Country stores and fairs such as the following were fairly common.

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98 See Chapter IV.
99 Deas, Recollections of the Ball Family, 40-42.
The Fair at Ashley-River, will begin the first Tuesday in May: There will be many curious diversions; four horses to run for a silver watch, the hindmost to win the race; bear-bating, and two old women to grin for a plum pudding; some curious fireworks the like never was seen in Carolina; and many other diversions too tedious to mention.

The parish church not only served as meeting place for the local governing bodies and as the polling place for electing local and colonial officials but as a social center. A very critical S. P. G. minister reported in 1746 that in St. Bartholomew's parish,

It seems that the best people used there to go thro' and fro' continually out of the chapel, and made punch in time of sermon or Prayer, and they used to bring water in the chapel to give drink to the people in the time of worship.

The monotony could also be broken by the entertainment of visitors. Wealthy Charleston merchants regularly invited business associates and gentlemanly strangers to spend a few days at their country seats. A visiting merchant from Philadelphia who spent two days viewing local sights and enjoying the rural comforts of Thomas Smith's plantation gave a charming picture of plain but generous hospitality.

101 South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), April 27, 1752.

Thomas Smith and Son returne'd to Dinner after which we walked little less than 5 or 6 Miles--partly on the Road to Dorchester and thro' his Farm and return'd to good Tea or Coffee and weather continuing fresh to a comfortable Fire Side rendered much more agreeable by the pleasant conversable Mood in which we spent another Evening....

On his way north, Josiah Quincy, Jr., was not only put up for the evening and given the usual grand tour of the plantation by Joseph Alston and family, but

his good lady filled a wallet with bread, biscuit, wine, fowl, and tongue, and presented it to me next morning...Mr. Alston sent his servant as our guide between thirty and forty miles....

Southern hospitality was very much a way of life in South Carolina as in Virginia. Contemporary diaries show that, by the 1730's and 1740's, wealthier females were liberated from much of the drudgery of plantation life. Extended visits to town and to neighboring plantations occupied a great deal of the average year's time.

But frivolity was never dominant in the schedule of the successful planter. Mrs. Manigault's husband was both merchant and planter and Mrs. Pinckney's was a lawyer and a planter, so that frequent excursions

104 Quincy, Life of Josiah Quincy, Jr., 85-86.
with husbands from town to country and back again do not necessarily represent leisurely visits. An occasional country house party and the pleasures of town life were welcome relief for women and the delight of young people but only a brief break in the very busy routine for the planters themselves. Running several estates, often in conjunction with law or medical practice, mercantile business, and political activity, was time consuming and provided little extended free time.

Current health notions often motivated the planter to migrate to or from the plantation. Unlike in the nineteenth century, when all the planters considered it tantamount to suicide to stay in the low-country during the summer, eighteenth-century Carolinians were unable to agree on where and when to go to avoid disease and death. West Indians occasionally migrated to Charleston to regain their health, some Charlestonians to the country, some planters to town, and some of each to Newport or to London. Death notices indicate that they could die easily in any of the places. The trend in the late colonial period was to desert Charleston in the summer for the back country or for Newport, Rhode Island. But the majority of those who migrated were merchants and politicians who were avoiding the summer heat and the slow trading season between harvests. Planters generally remained in the country throughout the summer and frequented town in
the slow winter months to attend to political business and enjoy social affairs.

Charleston served as the focal point of low-country society, where older sons were sent for business apprenticeship, where significant business was carried out, and where the culture bloomed in a variety of institutions. But the parish locality, the land, and local society were important forces in the South Carolina planter's life, as their somewhat similar counterparts in the English county were important in shaping the lives of the British aristocracy.

E. Notable Trends

The foregoing section has been an attempt to describe and analyze the plantation and the plantation system which supported the South Carolina aristocracy. As such, it has not been primarily concerned with placing the system within the dimension of time. A few important long-range patterns in the developing plantation system warrant particular attention.

One of the significant trends was agricultural specialization in the Charleston vicinity. The majority of the original grants on the Ashley and

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Cooper rivers had been for four to five hundred acres, and as the plantation system spread throughout the colony, the five hundred acre, thirty to forty slave plantation seems to have been considered the most efficient unit for staple production. Whether this represented the truly efficient plantation or was simply a superstition carried to neighboring river basins is debatable, but even the great Georgia rice plantations of the 1760's were organized along patterns developing town and the realization that finer lands developing town and the realization that finer lands lay in outlying areas slowly brought a change to the Ashley-Cooper area where the land system had originated. One result of the population growth was the division of estates along the two rivers and on neighboring James Island. Plantations of even less than one hundred acres frequently were offered for sale by the 1760's and 1770's. With division and rising land values also came more intensive farming, and the plantations in the vicinity of the town were increasingly geared to producing for the Charleston market.

When William Hopton in 1764 advertised his Christ Church Parish plantation, situated twelve miles from

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town, he noted that it was

good for rice and corn, but most conveniently
adapted for stock and other produce for the
Charles Town market...a good garden, with a
large quantity of sweet and sour Oranges, and
a great variety of chosen English Fruit-trees

At the same time, foreign born merchants, govern-
ment officials, and wealthy retiring persons, with an
interest in agriculture and a desire to penetrate the
native planting society, began buying plantations along
the Ashley and Cooper rivers and often created elegant
estates. Charleston Neck and the shores of the Ashley
and Cooper became one of the earliest exclusive suburbs
in America. With less emphasis on staple crops and
more on vegetables, dairy farming, fruit trees, fancy
gardens, and beautiful houses, the Charleston vicinity
was becoming something of an equivalent to the Home
Counties around London (where there was a heavy con-
centration of country houses on relatively small estates
producing for the London market). As with their English
counterparts, the South Carolinians maintained and
improved such estates for social purposes and for their
convenient locations near town while depending on

108 South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), February 4, 1764.
109 See Henry A. M. Smith, "Charleston and Charleston
Neck: The Original Grantees and the Settlements along
the Ashley and Cooper Rivers," South Carolina Hist.
Mag., XIX (1918), 3-76.
outlying lands for the real agricultural profits.
When an executor offered Dr. Charles Hill's Ashley
River plantation in a 1758 advertisement, profitability
is only offered as one of a number of inducements.

From this house you have the agreeable
Prospect of the Honorable John Drayton
Esqs's Palace and Gardens, a view of
several other Mansion-Houses....To be
short, any Person that loves Profit,
mixed with Pleasure, may make it the
Garden of the Province at a trifling
Expense. 

A sign of the rising economic sophistication in
eighteenth-century South Carolina was the changing
attitude of the wealthy aristocracy toward planting
and all form of business, i. e., an increasing tendency
to view the plantation as one of a number of investments
rather than as simply an agricultural production unit.
As noted before, a surprising number of planters
occasionally invested in the slave trade or rented out
artisan slaves. Wills and inventories show that a
number of the planters were involved in the speculation
in and sale of Charleston lots. The Gazette is full
of schemes by wealthy landowners to develop new towns
and to encourage and profit from such settlements.
Beaufort was chartered by the Proprietors in 1710-11.

See Leiding, Historic Houses of South Carolina, and
G. E. Mingay, English Landed Society in the Eight-

South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), December 22, 1758.
and, although not beginning to prosper for half a century, it and surrounding lands were heavily invested in by planters from throughout the colony. The second Landgrave Thomas Smith (d. 1738) continually attempted to organize a town on his Winyah lands to the north of Charleston. In the 1730's, Elisha Screven projected the future town of Georgetown, even making provisions for a court house, jail, school, and Anglican, Presbyterian, and Baptist churches in the midst of imagined lines of houses. Similar plans were laid for Jamestown at French Santee, Childsburry, and other locations, but the towns primarily served to satisfy the speculative appetite of other planters and merchants rather than to have actually encouraged settlement. An inventory of lawyer-planter Charles Pinckney, made in 1753, shows the wide range of investments. Pinckney's estate included:

### TABLE 6
CHARLES PINCKNEY ESTATE INVENTORY

1. Belmont Plantation--175 acres, 4 miles from Charleston, 8 slaves

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2.) Pinckney's Plain, Beech Hill--483 acres rice land, 113 acres Pine, 45 slaves

3.) Auckland Plantation, St. Barts.--1,117 acres, 46 slaves, "in tenure of Burrell M. Hynse" for 100 Guineas per year

4.) 17 Negro tradesmen

5.) 4 Charleston houses

6.) Charleston warehouses

7.) 15 or more Charleston plots

8.) Unimproved land in St. James, Goose Creek, St. Philip's, St. Barts', St. Helena's, St. Paul's, St. George's Dorchester, Prince William, Christ Church parishes (more than one plot in many of them).

The most conspicuous and far reaching effect of this changing attitude toward the plantation was the increasing dependence upon a system of absentee management. To an extent, absenteeism had been inherent in the original plan for colonization, with English Proprietors underwriting settlement in hopes of financial return from quitrents and shares of the colonies' trade. Early Barbadian investors, primarily concerned with obtaining food and timber products, often did send agents or relatives to develop the early plantations while remaining on the island themselves.

113

Charles Pinckney Estate Book, Ms., Papers of Benjamin Huger Rutledge.
John Lucas, Antigua planter and Speaker of the Assembly there, purchased South Carolina lands in absentia in 1714-15 which his son George Lucas was planting in the 1730's (while retaining Antigua estates) before acceding to the Governorship of the island. A large grant in the area of Georgetown was made by the Proprietors to another Antiguan, John Ferrie, in 1705. Ferrie sent an Antigua merchant, John Abraham Motte, as his agent with twenty-five slaves and supplies to plant the later "Youghal" plantation. Absenting himself from the West Indies as well in 1708, Ferrie returned to Britain and died in 1712, leaving the estate to an infant daughter in trust. The trustees (an elder daughter and her husband who was a councillor of Jamaica) appointed two Carolinians as agents (Thomas Gadsden and Benjamin Whitaker), and the estate was not occupied by an owner until 1735, thirty years after initial planting.

The fact that West Indians were involved in the early absenteeism is significant. In the Caribbean colonies, planters had begun soon after settlement to accumulate holdings on separate islands which naturally demanded individual managers and labor forces. It was not illogical to extend settlement to the American

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continent as Mr. Perrie and Mr. Lucas did. Richard Fares has labelled the inter-colonial practice "local absenteeism." With firmly established and somewhat self-sufficient management, West Indians found it possible to leave the islands altogether, and trips to England for educational and social purposes could easily be extended into residence.

In the early period in South Carolina, labor was just not so abundant as to make possible the planting of many separated tracts. By the early 1700's, individual slaveholdings had become much greater. As more distant lands opened for settlement, this "local absenteeism" became increasingly important to the very wealthy. Of the 108 plantations recorded in the 1724 St. George's Parish census, only three seem to have been run by overseers alone, but these three were particularly large concentrations of slaves and were owned by leaders of the colony.

In the vicinity of the home plantation or town residence, a single overseer with or without his family was considered sufficient. But as the Winyah Bay area, the Sampit, Santee, Waccamaw, Black, and Pedee lands to the north, and the Beaufort-Peort Royal, Combahee, and Savannah areas to the south were settled, the system of management became more complex.

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Gabriel Manigault regularly made only two weekly visits to his Silk Hope plantation, at planting and at harvest season, and relied on overseers to manage the estate for the rest of the year. Mary Colleton, resident in England, was employing Charleston lawyer-merchant Robert Roper in 1776 to supervise the Wadboo Barony plantation and forward the proceeds. Arthur Middleton (1742-87) who, like a number of wealthy Carolinians, took an extended tour of continental Europe, left his three plantations in the charge of "Managers" who received occasional supervision from his father and friends. Ralph Izard (1741-1804), when absent from the colony for long periods in the 1770's, employed the usual overseers and a Mr. Farr to manage them. Social equals Edward Rutledge and Henry Laurens were asked to keep a check on Mr. Farr.

Incomes from rents also seem to have been rising as an important part of the planter's revenue. Certain planters invested in houses as well as town lots, and wills and inventories frequently refer to two or three Charleston houses in a single individual's possession. The frequency with which newspaper notices

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118 Webber, "Extracts of the Manigault Journal."
119 Easterby, Wadboo Barony, 1.
121 "Izard-Laurens Correspondence," South Carolina Hist. Mag., XXII (1921), 1-6.
refer to a person living in so-and-so's house indicate that house rentals were a more important source of in-
come than has been realized. Land prices in the out-
lying areas remained too low to make plantation renting feasible, but the estates nearest to Charleston or having particular advantages were in enough demand to attract paying tenants. A 1764 advertisement offered to rent a Daniel's Island plantation, six miles from town, with a "great number of Seville and China orange trees, with quince, apple, peach and other fruit trees" and "Saw-Pit" Plantation in St. Thomas parish having "a good shade for making bricks; very good clay, and plenty of wood to burn them for many years...." During a visit of some years in England, Charles Pinckney realized a yearly income of £ 744 19s. 4d. from rentals.

Economic regionalism, absenteeism, and the possible rise in rental incomes are signs of the overall expan-
sion of South Carolina, but they are something more than that. In increasingly turning to absentee ownership, South Carolinians were following the pattern set by the West Indian planters of a generation or two before.

122 See Barnwell and Webber, "Correspondence of Henry Laurens," XXIX (1928), 198, and Salley, Death Notices, South Carolina Gazette.

123 South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), January 7, 1764.

124 Charles Pinckney Estate Book, Mss., Papers of Ben-
jamin Huger Rutledge.
It might seem logical to predict that a mass exodus of the Carolina aristocracy to London would have occurred had it not been for the Revolution. The increasing number of Carolina students at British schools and the frequency of visits to the metropolis point in this direction. The few times that planters did attempt to leave the colony and run estates by absentee management, however, seem to have proven disastrous, probably because of the impossibility of getting good managers and overseers.

In contrast to the West Indies, South Carolina did not quickly provide the great incomes necessary for buying into British landed society (within the first or even the second generations of settlement, 1670-1730). A cultural, economic, and social system native to the province was given time to develop. When wealth had become plentiful, the possessors were native Americans without the close family ties in England which had drawn their West Indian counterparts back. Local political and social institutions had been developed on the parish and colony level, family ties had been developing within the colony, and Charleston had developed into a fairly elegant and lively city with many of the advantages of London. Economically, the planter was in a very similar position in South

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125 See works cited in footnotes 115, 121, 122.
Carolina to that of the country gentleman in Britain. As mentioned, the home plantation was often in the Charleston vicinity or on rivers giving easy access to town. South Carolinians received income from slave-operated plantations unlike the Englishman who lived primarily off rents of tenant farmers. But with a growing system of estate managers, with incomes from a diversity of investments including rentals of houses, slaves, and even land, the divergence between the two groups was one of degree. Unlike the West Indian islands, South Carolina offered too many of the advantages of England and too congenial an environment to tempt many of the native leaders to leave.
IV

THE NATURE OF RURAL LEADERSHIP

In the previous chapters, the phrases "elite" and "aristocracy" have been employed frequently and rather freely with the assumption that such an exclusive social entity did exist. Josiah Quincy, Jr., noted in his diary that "the inhabitants may well be divided into opulent and lordly planters, poor and spiritless peasants and slaves," and other contemporaries often attested to the social stratification.

What is most impressive in looking over a census list or an issue of the Gazette is the overwhelming number of white families in the rural parishes who never were entrusted with even the slightest position of influence and who never achieved affluence despite long settlement and large families. Although South Carolina contained approximately 50,000 whites or perhaps 10-20,000 families in 1770, probably half of whom lived in the low-country parishes and Charleston, a guess would place the number of politically, socially.

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1 Quincy, Life of Josiah Quincy, Jr., 86-87.
and economically important families throughout the colonial period at less than three hundred. The existence of this elite social group is to a degree confirmable by empirical testing, and the following section is an attempt to prove their existence and to show the pervasive nature of planter leadership in rural South Carolina.

In the materialistic colonial world of the eighteenth century, simple tabulations of the wealthiest inhabitants of the colony would themselves comprehend the majority of the leaders of society in far more than the economic sphere alone. Until the voluminous land and estate records are explored systematically, a total picture of the economic stratification will be unobtainable. Yet it is possible to reconstruct at least a small segment of the population.

Certain colonial South Carolinians were census-conscious: the parish vestryman, the road commissioner, and the public treasurer (for tax purposes and for exacting labor for highway maintenance), and the S. P. G. missionary for recording his progress in the saving of souls. Although the majority of such existing returns are brief, they are of value. The Reverend Francis Varnod compiled a census report for St. George’s

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parish in 1724 which is most revealing. A totalling
of the Reverend Mr. Varnod's figures show that St.
George's parish contained in 1724:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ST. GEORGE'S PARISH CENSUS, 1724</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>White Families</strong></td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>White Males</strong></td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>White Females</strong></td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>White Children</strong></td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indians</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Free Negroes</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Free Negro or Indian</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male Slaves</strong></td>
<td>487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female Slaves</strong></td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children Slaves</strong></td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Totals:**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whites</strong></td>
<td>537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>White Owned Slaves</strong></td>
<td>1,301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Free Negroes</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negro Owned Slaves</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indians</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unknown</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1,882

**Average no. of slaves per white family 12.0**

The following numbers and names of St. George's parish residents were enclosed in the Reverend Francis Varnod's letter to David Humphreys, January 21, 1725, S. F. G. Mass. (Library of Congress Transcripts), A 19, 104-8, and are printed in Klingberg, *An Appraisal of the Negro*, 58-60. For interesting comparison with stratification in Barbados in the previous century, see Richard S. Dunn, "The Barbados Census of 1680: Profile of the Richest Colony in English America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser., XXVI (1969), 3-30.
Although close to the western fringes of settlement in 1724, the parish had certainly become part of the plantation economy and was typical of the parishes within the Charleston orbit at that time as to density and composition of the population. Slavery was widespread, but a disproportionate number of the slaves were held by a few individuals.

**TABLE 8**

**LARGE SLAVEHOLDERS, ST. GEORGE'S PARISH, 1724**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>John Williams</th>
<th>94</th>
<th>Jane Canty</th>
<th>25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walter Izard</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>Richard Beadon</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Skene</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>George Burnet</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Distan</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>Jos. &amp; Jos. Waring</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Baker</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>Richard Baker</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Wragg</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Gilson Clapp</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Blake</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>William Elliot</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Boone</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Richard Waring</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Waring</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>James Postell</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Child</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Abigail Stew</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Saunders</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Robert Millerston</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Cattle</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>James Postell, Jr.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Postell, Sr.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>James Rawlins</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilia Hague</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Malachi Glaze</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Wallace</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Peter Goulding</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Baker</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>John Chamberlain</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Cater</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Lawrence Sanders</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Canty</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Thomas Elms</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rebecca Simons</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The number of the 108 white families owning the following numbers of slaves were:

TABLE 9
SLAVERY, ST. GEORGE'S PARISH, 1724

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Slaves</th>
<th>Owners</th>
<th>Total % of Slaves Owned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50 to 100 slaves</td>
<td>7 or 6.5% of the pop.</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 50 slaves</td>
<td>11 or 10% of the pop.</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 25 slaves</td>
<td>19 or 18% of the pop.</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 10 slaves</td>
<td>50 or 46% of the pop.</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No slaves</td>
<td>21 or 19.5% of the pop.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As noted in Chapter III, slaves were the most valuable item in the planter's estate, and the fact that 16.5% of the heads of families owned 66% of the slaves emphasizes the great economic inequality within the plantation society. Thomas Waring, who in 1724 possessed 39 slaves, had 4,098 acres of land at his death. Alexander Skene (77 slaves in 1724) had 1,590 acres and 102 slaves when he died. Joseph Blake (53 slaves in 1724) left 283 slaves, 29,085 acres, and personal property (slaves but not land) valued at £8,334 sterling at his decease in 1751. Those few plantation homes of note in St. George's parish were "Newington" (of the Blake family), "Mount Boone" (of the Boone family), "Archdale" (of the

---

Bakers) and a number of Waring and Izard homes. If complete records were available for landholdings, personal property, and annual incomes of all these same individuals, the hierarchical scale would be very similar to that based on slaveholding alone.

Leadership in colonial South Carolina society meant more than just being on top of the economic ladder. Where obtaining choice lands or credit for purchasing additional slaves necessitated close association with the political leaders and merchant creditors, political influence within the colony was virtually a prerequisite. On the parish level, the churchwardens and vestry (after 1716) supervised elections for the Assembly, administered the poor relief, levied taxes to cover parochial expenses, and were in charge of local education. Justices of the peace, although possessing limited judicial powers, were an important stabilizing force in settling petty disputes in the parishes. After 1721, local road commissioners were empowered to requisition labor for maintaining roads, levy taxes, and determine the routes and sites of new thoroughfares and river crossings. Even the great planter could appreciate a contract for supplying

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materials or rented labor for the construction of a new
church steeple or bridge, and it was just good sense to
be on the inside when the decisions were made on any
level. Inseparable from the economic motive was the
feeling of communal responsibility which had been a
part of the inheritance from rural England. Wealth
created political power and respect, and respect and
power facilitated the accumulation of more wealth: a
circle, but a very pleasant and profitable one.

Although contemporary records are scarce for St.
George's parish, those few available graphically illus-
trate the self-generating nature of the local elite and
the dominance of the few in every field of public con-
trol. To some extent this was the result of deliber-
ate policy. The election law of 1721 established
qualifications for representatives to the Assembly which
included British citizenship, the age of twenty-one,
twelve months residence, and possession of either a
five hundred acre plantation with ten slaves or, land,
town houses, and lots valued at £1,000 currency. Al-
though a few of the 34% of St. George's parish resi-
dents who possessed less than ten slaves would have met
the real property qualification, such a law would have
excluded the transient and many of the small farmers.

Cooper, Statutes, III, 135-40.
Further separating the representative from his electorate was the fact that in practice parishes were frequently represented by residents of other areas or even of Charleston. Membership on the Council would have been out of the question for anyone not having very close political contacts with the Governor or British colonial officials. Few St. George's residents at any time before the Revolution could boast an estate of £ 9,022 sterling, landholdings of 7,750 acres, or possession of 172 slaves, which was the average for members of this body from 1720 through 1763.

Although membership on the peace commissions was not a particularly remunerative nor sought after position, the fact that they and the militia commissions were appointees of the Governor tended to restrict membership to those who were known or who had connections in Charleston. Road commissioners, tax collectors, and the assortment of colonial officers likewise had to possess at least the respect of assemblymen if not actual political power.

Of the 108 heads of white families on Reverend Mr. Varnod's list, six were to serve in the Commons House.

8 Sirmans, Colonial South Carolina, 237.
from 1736 to 1749, and three (including one of the six)
served on the Council. The eight individuals were:

TABLE 10
LEGISLATIVE OFFICIALS FROM ST. GEORGE'S PARISH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Officials</th>
<th>Slaves-1724</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walter Izard</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Skene (Council)</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Blake (Commons, Council)</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Waring (Council)</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Postell</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Bedon</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Waring</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence Saunders</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average Slaveholdings per Representative: 35.0

Average Slaveholdings per Councillor: 56.3

At least thirteen of the 108 men were justices of the peace as is shown by two surviving Berkeley County peace commission lists for 1734 and 1737. With an average slaveholding of 41.7, they were:

### TABLE II

**JUSTICES OF THE PEACE, ST. GEORGE'S PARISH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Slaves</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Slaves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Williams</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>John Postell</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walter Izard</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>John Baker</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Skene</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>Richard Waring</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Blake</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Gilson Clapp</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Boone</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Malachi Glaze</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Waring</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Nathaniel Wickham</td>
<td>6*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Saunders</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

William Saunders (36 slaves) commanded the militia company for the parish in 1734, and John Williams (94), Richard Waring (14), and Richard Baker (14) were 1737 appointees as commissioners in charge of patrols. Thomas Waring (39) and Gilson Clapp (14) were appointed collectors for the General Tax in 1723, 1724, and 1725, and Joseph Blake (53), and John Williams (94) served in the same capacity in 1731. Although church records no longer exist for St. George's parish, the statute establishing the parish in 1717 enumerated the church commissioners.

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*The Varner list includes "Nathaniel Wickham Plantation" with only six slaves and no whites, indicating that the figure in no way represents his true worth. No other plantation was without at least one white male.*


TABLE 12
CHURCH COMMISSIONERS, ST. GEORGE'S PARISH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commissioner</th>
<th>Slaves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walter Izard</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Skene</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Diston*</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Wragg</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Waring</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Canty</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Satur</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average: 58.2 slaves

When viewed together, such lists emphasize the remarkably intimate connection between wealth and political leadership in the rural parishes. Seen within the perspective of the family, the pattern is accentuated. The Izards had similar influence in St. Andrews and St. James, Goose Creek, and had plantations in virtually every area of the colony. A Joseph and a William Wragg, with estates valued at £ 6,910 and £ 36,359 sterling respectively, served on the Council; and Blakes, Boones, Warings, Cattels, Cantys, Saunders, and Elliots could be found in the Assembly.

* Thomas Diston had apparently died by 1724, and the slaveholding figure is that for his widow, Elizabeth Diston.

** Proprietary government. See Sirmans, Colonial South Carolina, 126.
and in positions of leadership throughout the century.

When the question is asked, who were the real leaders of South Carolina planter society, there is no direct and simple answer to be found. Partially this is due to the irreplaceable loss of records of a personal nature. An occasional glimpse into the minds of contemporaries is afforded by the charming diary of Eliza Lucas Pinckney, the outline of that of Mrs. Gabrial Manigault, or an occasional letter or a rare personal note concealed within a column of the Gazette, but the picture is pitifully fragmented. There is no sure way of telling exactly who was admired and who was not. As the St. George's parish record indicates, wealth and political leadership were closely related, and the one served to reinforce the other. The leaders in the Assembly and the members of the Council, whether merchants or planters or both, were leaders of the whole society. They were leaders by virtue of their positions, they were almost unanimously wealthy, and they served as the social leaders whether as owners of the fastest race horses or as public benefactors. They owned the largest houses in town and in the country, and they made valiant efforts to copy the style of

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14 Ravenel, Eliza Lucas Pinckney, and Webber, "Extracts from the Journal of Mrs. Ann Manigault."
life in England which they saw and of which they heard so much. Family ties served to unite the members of the elite and were infrequent enough with the less fortunate to make the term "class" applicable.

But the historian can all too easily forget that they were also individuals. The more specific the generalization about the planter oligarchy, the less applicable it is to the group as a whole. In the rural parishes, a fairly closed society and self-perpetuating elite dominated. Social mobility was not unheard of but rare. But Charleston provided a route to social advancement and a door to the plantation society which could not be closed. In the succeeding chapter, the nature of the aristocratic society and the forces encouraging and discouraging elitism are dealt with in detail. In Appendix A are presented a number of lists which include most of the families of importance within the planter society.
CHAPTER V
ARISTOCRATIC SOCIETY IN SOUTH CAROLINA

A. Within the British Hold

In the discussion of economic expansion of the colony in Chapter II, the importance of direct trade with the mother country was emphasized. Intellectually more significant than the manufactured goods were the English ideas imported by means of printed materials, immigrants, and wealthy South Carolinians returning from frequent visits to Great Britain. The same cargo found its way to every major colonial port as well but nowhere else in such volume and in such an undiluted form. Although the total tonnage of ships clearing Charleston harbor was rising rapidly in the late colonial period, it was only one half to two-thirds that of Philadelphia, New York, or Boston. Yet the number of British and colonial ships plying directly between Great Britain and South Carolina exceeded that of any other colony.

TABLE 13
TOTAL NUMBER OF VESSELS IN DIRECT BRITISH-AMERICAN TRADE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From Great Britain to:</th>
<th>1766</th>
<th>1769</th>
<th>1770</th>
<th>1771</th>
<th>1772</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charleston</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>69</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To Great Britain from:</th>
<th>1766</th>
<th>1769</th>
<th>1770</th>
<th>1771</th>
<th>1772</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charleston</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As important in the formation of a South Carolina "character" as the frequency of intercourse with Britain was the comparative infrequency of contact between Charleston and the other American ports on the mainland and among the West Indies. The fact that the majority of the ships involved in the Carolina trade were owned and manned by Britons accentuated the pattern.

Mail service from the northern colonies and the West Indies proved to be so unmanageable that a third colonial route was established directly from London to Charleston.

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2 Sellers, Charleston Business.
in 1764 (besides London to New York and London to the West Indies), and the fastest means of communication between New York and Charleston was via London.

An indication of the directness of London-Charleston contacts can be found in the numerous book dealers' advertisements in the Gazette. Samuel Johnson's Dictionary and his editions of Shakespeare appeared within months of publication. Fielding's Tom Jones and Amelia, Smollett's Roderick Random and Peregrine Pickle, and similar light reading materials gained popularity within the first year. Even weighty Parliamentary debates were available and found immediate purchasers.

In the quarter century before the Revolution, London Magazine, Gentleman's Magazine, Martin's Magazine, and the Critical Review were so popular that South Carolina subscriptions were regularly taken. The South Carolina Gazette contained a great deal of London gossip and political news and little on the colonies. Only an occasional Poor Richard's Almanac (and this because of business ties between Franklin and Charleston printers Phillips and Timothy) seems to have been received from the north.

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4 Henning Cohen, The South Carolina Gazette, 1732-1775 (Columbia, S. C., 1933), 121-56.
The great number of South Carolinians who were sent to England for their education has been noted by historians and will be dealt with later in this chapter. But the infrequency with which Carolinians were sent to any other institutions is equally striking. The sixty-seven South Carolinians known to have attended college and the Inns of Court in the colonial period (nine to two institutions) studied at the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inns of Court</th>
<th>37</th>
<th>Leyden</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edinburgh</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Harvard</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

As in every colony, the clergy represented the educated elite of the population. The seventy-four college graduates of all denominations had attended the following institutions:

### Table 15

**Education of Clergy in South Carolina**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oxford</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princeton</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yale</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aberdeen</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edinburgh</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geneva</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamburg</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensa</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the last decades of the colonial period, South Carolina's white population exceeded only that of Delaware and Georgia among the future thirteen states. Yet British colonial culture flourished in Charleston as in no other areas on the American continent. By the 1760's, it was very much the big city with many of the diversions, the advantages, and the problems of any urban center. *Gazette* editor Peter Timothy proudly stated that, within the five years previous to 1774, two great wharves, a "grand Assembly Room," a theatre, and over three

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Frederick L. Weis, *The Colonial Clergy of Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina* (Boston, Mass., 1955). Only a few of these were native South Carolinians.
hundred private homes had been constructed.

With the mushrooming magnificence and refinement came also the coarser elements which make up a port city: the amusements, the sewer problems, the poverty, and the violence. When in 1767 the "Body of apprentice boy James Riggs, floated up into Col. Beale's Dock, being cut under his Chin from Ear to Ear," or when a sailor drowned, little notice seems to have been given. Probably the best indication that Charleston had come of age was the fact that poor relief costs had jumped from £ 1,200 in 1747, £ 1,500 in 1750, to £ 3,000 in 1755 and £ 6,515 in 1766.

In the eighteenth century, class distinctions implied differences in appearance and manners as well as in wealth. Rich South Carolinians did their utmost to reproduce the British society which they occasionally saw and which they read about so avidly.

Josiah Quincy, Jr., found that, "in loftiness of head-dress" and in "richness of dress," the Charleston
ladies far outdid their Boston counterparts. Even the gentlemen "dresses with richness and elegance, uncommon with us; many with swords on," and he was awe-struck at the St. Cecelia concert to find "two macaronis present, just arrived from London."

Meals among the wealthy were quite sumptuous and formal, with visitors frequently present. In general, the fare consisted of a meat course followed by a host of puddings and pies and afterwards "nuts, almonds, raisins, ...olives, apples, oranges." Jellies, preserves, and sweetmeats as well as wines were constantly on the table, and etiquette was at such an advanced stage at the home of David Deas that "glasses were changed every time a different wine was filled." If guests were present, dinner was followed by a formal series of toasts, the withdrawal of the ladies, further drinking, and then tea and coffee in the sitting room.

"Porter from England at 9 Shillings per dozen Bottles" or Rum Punch were commonly drunk "by most People of Property at Meals," but very fine French wines were not uncommon. Henry Laurens reported to a merchant correspondent that "had it been [offered for sale] fine burgundy or nearly deserving that character... a few people..." in town would "have caught it up

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10 Quincy, *Life of Josiah Quincy, Jr.*, 74.
at almost any price." At Miles Brewton's, "a very fine bird kept familiarity playing over the room, under... chairs and the table, picking up the crumbs etc., and perching on the window, side board, and chairs...."

In public, the "reform" in manners could be seen in the increasing pomp and ceremony at funerals and assemblies. Mr. Quincy was shocked at the formality of his entrance to the 1773 St. Cecelia concert.

I was met by a Constable with his staff. I offered him my ticket which was subscribed by the name of the person giving it, and directing admission of me by name, the officer told me to proceed. I did and was next met by a white waiter, who directs me to a third to whom I delivered my ticket and was conducted in.

Blessed with a flat country and a fairly good network of roads, all South Carolinians of property kept at least one four wheeled carriage. In the decade before the Revolution, a traveller noted that "several Carry their luxury so far as to have Carriages, Horses, Coachmen and all imported from England."

A further manifestation of the very English-like character of South Carolina society was the indifference to religion which so bothered northern visitors.

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12 "Charleston in 1774, as Described by an English Traveler," Historical Magazine, IX (1865), 341-47; and Barnwell and Webber, "Correspondence of Henry Laurens," 161.


14 Quincy, "Journal," 441.

15 "Charleston in 1774," 341-47.
Historians have tended to portray this as the result of Anglican negligence, and the utter failure of the Great Awakening in the colony has been attributed to fear of Negro conversions. There is truth in each assertion. But possibly a better explanation is that religious indifference was simply a mirror image of the same indifference in England itself. By the 1740's, the Anglican church was well established in the colony, and the clergy was of fairly high quality although compared to the clergy was of fairly high quality although compared to the high percentage of Dissenters and non-churchgoers in the colony, but even this group was not greatly affected by Whitefield and his followers. Rather than the efforts of Commissary Alexander Garden or the antics of fanatical Hugh Bryan, the failure of the Awakening is probably due to the isolation from the intellectual currents to the north.

Although a number of the early leaders of society were Dissenters, with establishment of the English Church in 1706 as a branch of the colonial government and imposition of certain religious disabilities for non-Anglicans, nominal support was given by everyone of importance. By the time of the 1724 St. George's

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16 See for example, Wallace, *Short History*, 184, 211-12.
17 Frederick Dalcho, *An Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina* (Charleston, S. C., 1820).
Parish census, Anglicanism was definitely something of a social distinction. Dissenters averaged only 6.9 slaves as opposed to 16.6 for non-Dissenters. For those aristocrats who firmly supported the church, the general attitude was one of paternalistic benevolence rather than religious activity. Vestrymen and churchwardens were social leaders. But religious interest was not a prerequisite and clearly was not often there. Like the English landed gentlemen, the great planter supported the church for mixed motives: from a sense of duty, for the eventual salvation of his soul, and for the more immediate purpose of maintaining the social order. Wills often endowed a pew for transient visitors or an annual sermon, and money was left for the poor. One of the greatest supporters of the church, Stephen Bull of Sheldon

usually invited as his guests on the Sabbath the more respectable part of the congregation who attended divine service; while his overseer, by his direction, and at his expense, liberally entertained the rest....

The British influence also furthered intellectual and artistic endeavors among upper South Carolina society. Although of mediocre quality, literary pieces in the latest English styles appeared regularly in the newspapers. Painters and engravers were constantly at

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18 See Chapter IV.
19 Dalcho, An Historical Account, 383-84.
work in the town. Botanical interests captivated a number of the inhabitants; agricultural improvement was a continual topic of debate in the Gazette. In architecture and furniture design, Charleston surpassed all other American colonies in reproducing the ornate styles of mid-eighteenth century London.

Lessons in all of the arts, from music and painting to architectural drawing, were offered at one time or another.

Musical entertainment was one of the great interests of London society in the eighteenth century, and no colony in America equalled South Carolina in support of this art. Organ music was a conspicuous feature of the Anglican services in Charleston, and orchestral and vocal concerts by professional and amateur musicians were an important part of the Charleston social life. A performance such as the "Concertos On the French Horn and Basoon by Mr. Pike," in "the ORANGE-GARDEN, in Tradd Street" sound appealing indeed.

Equally in keeping with English taste was the great interest in the theatre, and performances were well


21 Cohen, South Carolina Gazette, 92-114. For a picture of the English society which Carolinians copied, see A. S. Tuberville, English Men and Manners in the Eighteenth Century (New York, 1926).
supported whenever they were available. Various theatres were used, and that erected in 1773 on the former site of a church was the finest in colonial America. As might be expected, English pieces prevailed in both theatre and concert hall.

Those symbols of aristocratic society which could not be produced in the colony were imported. Between then, the Izard and Middleton families possessed portraits by West, Copley, Zoffani, and Gainsborough. A 1774 advertisement of Egerton Leigh offered paintings by "Paul Vansèse, Carlodolaci, Jordano, Chisoldi, Corregio, and Guido" as well as a 1574 miniature of Elizabeth I. In 1772, the Gazette carried an advertisement for the sale of a collection of about one thousand ancient and modern brass and silver medals. Personal libraries were often quite extensive and included not only the English classics in every field but learned works in Latin, Hebrew, French, Greek, Dutch, and German. Throughout the eighteenth century, circulating libraries of one sort or another could be found in

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22 Cohen, South Carolina Gazette, 92-114.

Charleston, and the Charleston Library Society, founded in 1748, had 2,956 volumes by 1770. Probably the major failing of colonial Charleston society was in not establishing a college, despite various efforts and even a bequest of £7,000 and a fine library by wealthy planter John MacKenzie in 1771. Primary educational facilities were fairly widespread and available to many of the poor. As in England, education was not considered to be a God-given right, and like their English counterparts, South Carolina planters relied on private tutors and secondary schools and colleges in England itself.

In the realm of politics, besides the many structural similarities between the systems in Carolina and Britain, behavior within the Commons House was a direct imitation of that seen in Britain by many of the members. Business was begun after a mace had been brought in and laid on a table before the speaker, members frequently wore hats except when speaking, and orators were free to walk about. Visitor Quincy naively described as "very unparliamentary" the fact that

the members conversed, lolléd, and chatted, much like a friendly jovial society, when

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24 Cohen, South Carolina Gazette, 121-26, and Wallace, Short History, 250.
25 See McCrady, Education in South Carolina.
nothing of importance was before the House; nay, once or twice, while the Speaker and clerk were busy in writing, the members spoke quite loud across the room to one another.  

For the less intellectually minded males, the Charleston area also offered many of the pleasures and vices so popular in England, from a Smoking Club and the Select Batchelor's Society, to bowling greens, billiard rooms, and cock-fighting pits. Of particular importance in the late years of the colonial era to the sports minded gentlemen was horse racing. Although races were frequent at country fairs and at the York Course near Charleston as early as the 1730's, impetus was given for a more organized sport in the 1750's with the importation by Edward Fenwick, William Middleton, and other aristocratic gentlemen of English thoroughbreds. In 1758, the Jockey Club was organized, and Thomas Nightengale's New Market Course became one of the social centers of the colony. At the annual February meeting, the Charles Town Plate, Colt's Plate, and Sweepstakes provided the greatest excitement, and by the 1770's results and odds were regularly reported in the newspaper. Stakes were as high as £1,000, and to satiate the increasingly horse-minded gentry and the compulsive gamblers, less formal meetings were held at Beaufort, Edmundsbury, Ashopoo, Jacksonborough, and Winyah. The extravagance of

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27 Cohen, South Carolina Gazette, 17-24, 71-91.
thoroughbred importations and breeding restricted participation in the sport to the very wealthy, and control was firmly in the hands of the leaders of society in the colonial period.

There is very little evidence concerning sexual immorality, but there are occasional hints of irregularity. A number of S. P. G. missionaries were dismissed for familiarity with parishioners, and missionaries in the frontier sections often noted moral failings. A Pocahontas planter, Robert McMurdy, disinherited his wife in his will because she "Hath for some time past and still doth Cohabit and Live with Andrew Guerin a School Master in Charles Town." But as an Irish immigrant, McMurdy is not representative of the wealthier planter group. As early as 1725, a resident described Charleston as "the worst place in the world to bring young Men into." Winthrop D. Jordan, in White over Black, presented striking evidence of acceptance of sexual familiarity between white males and Negro women. In condemning a measure of laxity (ignoring

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28 See Fairfax Harrison, The John's Island Stud, 1750-1788 (Richmond, Va., 1931).
the racial factor), South Carolina society mirrored practice in upper class English society.

In the country, notably in the vicinity of Charleston where extravagance earned at least the return of frequent awestruck admirers, British affectation was channeled into attempts at reproducing the English country house. Although a few of the houses built in the first half-century of settlement (such as the Broughton’s 1714 Mulberry plantation house) were imposing in comparison to the average one or two room frame dwelling, they were by English standards little more than farm houses and were notable neither for size nor beauty. Only with the great rice profits beginning in the 1720’s and 1730’s could the select few afford to sink large sums into such profitless forms of investment. But spend they did, and a number of the products were very impressive by American standards: particularly Crowfield (1730) and Middleton Place (1755) of the Middleton family, Fenwick Hall (1730) and Drayton Hall (1738) owned by the Fenwicks and Draytons, and the Colleton’s Fairlawn (1730-40). South Carolinians made full use of the long alleyway of live oaks which was to become a symbol of plantation society, and formal and “natural” gardens became an

essential part of the gentleman's estate. William Middleton of Crowfield was the most ambitious in garden construction, and a visitor thirty years later estimated that there had been as "much money expended in improvements as....anywhere in America...."

The Gardens, Fish Ponds & Walks occupy about 20 acres--which has been well planned--In the Garden is a Mount--raised at great Expense and at the same time a Fish Pond dug very large in Dimensions....

When the Bull family finally got around to keeping up with their social equals, at Ashley Hall in 1770, they saved the expense of the "Mount" and simply perched a statue of Diana on a nearby Indian mound and built an Italian garden around it. Views became an important factor in planning, as James Deveaux's advertisement suggests.

there will shortly be laid open a prospcitive view of Sheldon (the present Seat of the hon. Lieut. Governor Bull) and of the new brick church (which, for its elegance, is justly esteemed the completest piece of building in any country parish in this province). I say, a prospective view of these, and of the three settlements on the opposite side of the savannah (which appear like so many small villages) with their rice fields before them, together exhibit so delightful a scene, that the sight is ravished and the mind charmed therewith....

35 South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), August 20, 1753.
Rural pursuits were also being elevated to a position of social respectability, and the fact that Bernard Elliott in 1764 sent four guineas worth of prints from England to "adorn" Richard B. Baker's "Hunting Hall at Bearfield" suggests that the pastime was becoming somewhat formal. A sign that the great planter considered himself far removed from hoi polloi could be found in advertisements for stud horses to cover mares which were signed only by the "groom" and the plantation name. Historians have generally pictured the militarism of the Revolution as the cause of the nineteenth-century popularity of the duel. There are indications that South Carolinians, because of their frequent English contacts, were increasingly willing to defend their honor with their lives if necessary. The 1735 duel between a sea captain and young man for the "pretensions to the Favours of a certain sable Beauty" and another between a ship carpenter and clock maker were not particularly high-toned affairs. In 1760, Col. Thomas Middleton, commander of the provincial volunteers against the Cherokees, gained life-long popularity for


37 See the South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), 1770's.
a duel with Colonel James Grant of the British forces. In 1770, Charleston's Dr. John Haly shot and killed Mrs. Ralph Izard's brother Peter De Lancey, and in 1775 Henry Laurens and John Grimke fought without issue. With the war, dueling quickly was taken up by South Carolinians in particular.

Naturally enough, the best way to learn the ways of the English aristocracy was to observe them firsthand in Britain itself. For the Broughtons, Middletons, Colletons, Blakes, and Fenwickes, who maintained family ties in England throughout the colonial period, extended visits were frequent. For the merchants, trips were necessary for establishing business contacts in the British port cities. Generally, however, British property had been disposed of and close family ties severed by the colonists of the second generation, and those who did journey to the mother country in the

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late colonial period were very much foreign visitors.

As Appendix B shows, desire for higher education was an important motivation, and the public schools as well as the Inns of Court and the Universities enrolled a very high number of Carolina natives. While in England in the 1750's, Peter Manigault not only pursued legal studies and followed the court circuit but toured the Lowlands and France with fellow students Blake and Drayton, had his portrait painted, and took dancing and fencing lessons. To at least some of the young men, the experiences may have been of questionable intellectual value. William Hasell Gibbes, John Perroneau, Thomas Pinckney, and Jacob Ried, "studying" at Middle Temple in 1763, dedicated their time to getting "Improvement and pleasure from every source," and

the evenings were generally devoted to rambles and sometimes getting into scrapes and trouble from Vanity and

The best sources on Carolinians in Britain are to be found in the letters written home by visiting colonists, in genealogical studies published in the *South Carolina Hist.* *Mag.*, and in the wills. See for example "Six Letters of Peter Manigault," *South Carolina Hist.* *Mag.*, XV (1914), 113-23; Moore, and Simmons, *Abstract of Wills, 1670-1740*; Moore, *Abstract of Wills, 1740-1760*. See also the many wills which are printed in full in the *South Carolina Gleanings in England.*

folly of Youth and an open and unsuspicious character....41

With a few exceptions, South Carolinians remained naive foreigners and were glad to return to America. But familiarity with Britain was an important element in enabling them to recreate British society on a small scale with such remarkable exactness.

Carl Bridenthal, in Myths and Realities (Baton Rouge, 1962), has indicted the low-country planter elite, as the one social group in America with leisure time and wealth, for not making significant contributions toward the advancement of culture in America. Rather than producing fine literary works and shouldering the responsibilities of society in the manner of the Virginia gentleman, the wealthy planters, as pictured in his volume, dedicated their lives to ostentatious consumption of wealth and indulgence. They are characterized as having all the vices of the nouveau riche: as having great wealth and no real knowledge in how to use it constructively.

For a number of reasons, Mr. Bridenthal's picture appears to be misleading. South Carolina's and even Charleston's population was too small to support a very large artistic community. It is only natural that, in a

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society so intellectually oriented to London, the larger
city would dominate. Literature as found in the Gazette
in Charleston was crude but at least equal to that
printed in any of the other colonies. In the more utili-
tarian arts, architecture and furniture design, South
Carolina far surpassed the other colonies by contemporary
standards.

To the New Engander or Pennsylvanian with the
small-family-operated-farm and Calvinist outlook, South
Carolinians did seem extravagant, irreligious, and irrespon-
sible. Charleston residents preferred the ornate styles
in dress, in architecture, and in the decorative arts
rather than the plain styles which had evolved to the
north and which are elevated to such heights by twentieth-
century art historians searching for American originality.
But the ornate was favored in London. It can not be
denied that important intellectual and humanitarian
efforts in Quaker Philadelphia and Puritan Boston sur-
passed those of Charleston. The religious heritage of
these areas made them exceptional, whereas Charleston
followed the London pattern more closely. Very materia-
listic by present standards, South Carolina culture
presented but a modest reflection of British extravagance.
But it was the most faithful and correctly proportioned
image of London society to be found on the continent.
As in Great Britain, there was continually a puritan
element in the colony who objected to the ostentation.
If we observe the behavior of the polite
Part of this Country, we shall see, that
their whole Lives are one continued Race;
in which everyone is endeavouring to dis-
tance all behind him, and to overtake or
pass by, all before him; everyone is fly-
ing from his Inferiors in Pursuit of his
Superiors, who fly from him with equal
Alacrity....

Every Tradesman is a Merchant; every
Merchant is a Gentleman, and every Gentle-
man one of the Nobility. We are a Country
of Gentry, *Pomulous genericorum.* We have
no such thing as common People among us;
Between Vanity and Fashion, the Species
is utterly destroyed. The Sons of our
lowest Mechanics are sent to the Colleges
of Philadelphia, England, or Scotland, and
there acquire, with their Learning, the
laudable Ambition of becoming Gentile-Folks,
despite their paternal Occupations, and
are all solicitous for the more honorable
Employments of Doctors, Lawyers, and Per-
sons; whilst the pretty Misses at Home are
exercised in no Professions at all, except
of Music and Dancing, which it must be
confessed, make them very agreeable Compan-
ions; but will render them very expensive
Wives. Persons of small Fortune, Clerks,
and Apprentices, dress in every Respect
Equal to those of the first Rank and Exi-
ence, keep their sable Mistresses, waste
their Substance in Rioting and Gaming, and
their Constitutions by Drinking. The Mer-
chant leaves his Counting-house for the
Ball-room, and the Country Gentleman his
Affairs for the Amusements of the Turf;
by which, certainly neither of them re-
ceive much Benefit.---Every Planter of
Distinction is impatient for an elegant
carriage, Horses, Equipage, & c. and treads
hard on the Heels of Quality, in Dress, and
Expenses of every Kind.---The better Sort
of Gentry, who can aim no higher, plunge
themselves into Debt and Dependance, to
preserve their Rank. We chuse not our
Companions for their Wit or Learning,
their good Humor and good Sense, but
for their Power of conferring this imaginary
Dignity; as if Greatness was communicable,
like the Powers of the Loadstone, by Friction,
or by Contact, like Electricity. Every young
Gentleman is taught to believe, it is more
eligible, and more honourable, to destroy his Time, his Fortune, his Morals, and his Understanding, at a Tavern with the best company, than to improve them in the Conversation of the most ingenious and entertaining of his Equals. And every self-conceited Girl, in fashionable Life, chooses rather to endure the affected Silence and insolent Head-ach of a Lady two or three Degrees above her, for a whole Evening, than to pass it with Mirth and Jollity with the most amiable of her Acquaintance. But, since it is possible, that some of my Readers, who have not had the Honour of being admitted into the best Company, should imagine, that amongst such is the best Conversation, the most lively wit, the most profound Judgement, the most engaging Affability and Politeness; it may be necessary to inform them, that this is by no means always the Case, but that frequently, in such Company, little is said, and less attended to; no Disposition appears either to please others or to be pleased themselves; but that in the Room of all the before-mentioned agreeable Qualifications,Cards are introduced, endowed with the convenient Power of reducing all Men's Understandings, as well as their Fortunes, to an Equality.42

In contrast to the northern colonies but as in the mother country, the puritan dissenters remained in the minority in South Carolina.

B. The Social Structure

As in Great Britain, there was some stratification among the social elite along town-country lines. Charleston did provide opportunities for rapid accumulation of wealth through trade, the professions, and politics. It

42 South Carolina Gaz. (Charleston), March 1, 1773, in Rutledge, "Artists in the Life of Charleston," 117.
served as the home of the more recent immigrants, the resident Scottish and English merchants, the lawyers, and the doctors. In contrast to the rural parishes, where plantation size, length of settlement, and family ties were the measures of social position, the society in the town was forced to remain fairly open to men of ability and wealth regardless of origins. Planting families of long standing dominated the country parishes and thus were numerically superior in the Assembly. But in the town, they were on a forced position of equality with the wealthy but new merchants, the doctors, the lawyers, and the patronage politicians. It is true that few planter families were without ties within the professional and merchant groups, but many merchants and politicians had no ties with the older landed families.

As brought out in the preceding chapters, the gentlemen of South Carolina not involved in trade centered their lives around the country houses, and gardens, local politics, supervision of estates, hunting and the raising of fine horses. They went to town to sit in the Assembly, to take care of business, and to enjoy the winter social life. Like British landowners, they often invested excess capital in
Bank of England stock or bonds. They supported the churches and patronized local artists and craftsmen. But they were not particularly intellectual, and they served as patrons rather than creators of art.

In South Carolina, as in Scotland or England, intellectual leadership was centered in the urban aristocracy which was tied but not synonymous with the country leadership. These were the men who dominated the membership list of the Charles Town Library Society, who subscribed the most money for the new college in Philadelphia, who dominated the clubs, and who most actively debated political and religious issues in the pages of the Gazette. They, rather than the planters, put more emphasis on education, and sent more sons to

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A number of wills mention money invested in Great Britain. See Moore, Abstract of Wills, 1740-1760. Money lending and investing was apparently a very important source of income for those well established planters who had enough slaves. For example, Ralph Izard (1688-1746) had £ 14,824 of his £ 44,107 estate in "bonds" and "notes" at death, Walter Izard (1713-14-1759), £ 49,939 of £ 110,385 total, and Ralph Izard (1717-61), £ 69,084 of £ 134,411 total (provincial currency). Langston Cheaves, "Izard of South Carolina," South Carolina Hist. Mag., II (1901), 205-40.

England. Of the sixty-five individuals who went to Europe (nine to two institutions), occupational data on the fathers of fifty-seven shows that merchants, lawyers, doctors, and clergymen sent twice as many individuals as did planters.

**Table 16**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fathers' Occupations—Fifty-Seven European-Educated Carolinians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Edinburgh</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clergy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The titular head of society and colonial counterpart to the King was of course the Governor. Although increasingly dependent on the Assembly, the Governor's limited control of patronage, his power of dismissal (of the Assembly), and his leadership position at state functions of all sorts made him a power which had to be reckoned with throughout the colonial period. In South Carolina, the majority of the heads of state were actual leaders of society as well, having family ties with the aristocratic

See Appendix B.
element within the colony. Among the Proprietary Governors were members of the Morton, Colleton, Smith, Blake, Johnston, Gibbs, Daniel, and Moore families, all of whose descendants were leading individuals down to the Revolution. A surprising number of acting Royal Governors had previous South Carolina ties as well. They were:

**TABLE 17**

**HEADS OF STATE WITH SOUTH CAROLINA BACKGROUNDS**

Robert Johnson—1730-35.
Thomas Broughton—1735-37. (Lieutenant Governor).
William Bull—1737-43. (Lieutenant Governor).
William Bull, Jr.—1760-61, 1764-66, 1768, 1769-71, 1773-75. (Lieutenant Governor).
Thomas Boone—1761-65.
Lord William Campbell—1775.

Governors Middleton, Johnson, Broughton, and Bull were members of planter families who had settled in the colony in the 1670's and 1680's. Thomas Boone, although a native of England, moved to South Carolina in 1752 to take control of the estates left by his uncle and married a South Carolinian before being

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46 For a list of the Governors, see Wallace, *Short History*, 703-04. The best political history of the colony is M. Eugene Simmons* Colonial South Carolina.

47 See Appendix D.
appointed Governor of New Jersey and then of South Carolina. Lord William Campbell, son of the fourth Duke of Argyll, had married an Isard in 1763 while doing military service in America. He later became Governor of Nova Scotia and the last Royal Governor of South Carolina. There is also a possibility that Governor James Glen (1743-56) was related to the merchant family of that name which had been in Charleston since the early part of the century.

Beneath the executive in the ideal British system was the nobility, the lack of which was the most obvious deficiency in the American social structure. South Carolinians did have a number of ties with the British nobility and landed gentry. Sir Edmund Bellenger and Sir Nathaniel Johnson founded important planter families, and a number of other knights, baronets, and younger sons resided within the colony at one time or another. Because Charleston was the one civilised urban center visited by the Caribbean fleets and the armies stationed on the

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49 See Appendix C.

50 According to an editorial note in Harrison, "Journal of a Voyage to Charleston," 137, William Glen, a Charleston merchant, was the later Governor's brother. Governor Glen supposedly got his position through the influence of a sister who was "wife" (actually mistress until 1768) of the Earl of Dalhousie.

51 See Appendix C.
southern frontier, South Carolina damsels were given the opportunity to trap eligible young aristocrats while in the British service. In 1734, Elizabeth Fenwicke married naval captain Henry Scott, second son of James, Duke of Monmouth, and grandson of Charles II, and became Countess of Beloraine in 1740. In 1734, Sarah Rhett married naval hero, Thomas Frankland, great-great-grandson of Oliver Cromwell and later fifth Baronet of Thirkelby. In 1771, Mary Middleton married army officer Pierce Butler, younger son of an Irish baronet. The complete listing of such contacts with the British aristocracy can be found in Appendix C. Giving the wealthy South Carolinians a very real sense of belonging within the larger British social system, such contacts were, however, of little significance within the colony itself.

South Carolin's aristocracy did surprisingly well in recreating not only the British environment but the British social structure, in spite of the absence of a legally recognized aristocracy. As among landed society in the home country, considerable emphasis was placed on the family. Making his will in 1733, wealthy St. James Goose Creek planter John Lloyd of "Sharphley" provided that, if he died without a son, his "eldest daughter...take surname of Lloyd to perpetuate the same."
Among the possessions to be inherited were "the family pictures in front parlour [six in number] to remain with Surphley." A similar interest in perpetuation of the family is evident in former Lieutenant Governor William Bull's 1790 will.

my plantation on Ashley River in Carolina, being about Eleven hundred and seventy Acres including Harsh where my Grandfather lived, Died, and lies Buried, where my Father and all his children were born, I wish to remain in the possession of one of his posterity...

Family crests were frequently employed in decorating coaches, rings, and tombstones, and one of Thomas Heyward's first duties while studying in England in 1768 was to register the family arms and crest with the College of Arms.

The key to the perpetuation of the family was the abundant distribution of wealth among heirs. Primogeniture was not necessary in America where land was so

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55 The following generalizations are made after a thorough study of those wills which have been printed. See "South Carolina Gleanings in England," *South Carolina Hist. Mag.*, IV-IX (1903-08); Cheeves, "Izard of South Carolina"; Moore and Simmons, *Abstract of Wills, 1670-1740*; Moore, *Abstract of Wills, 1740-1760*. 
abundant, but eldest sons were regularly given the choice estates and largest amounts of money. Because most planters distributed slaves and gave over control of certain estates before death, wills do not serve as very accurate records of proportional distribution of property. But the estate evaluations show that being a younger son was no serious disability. As the home plantations became more valuable and took on some of the aura of the ancient family estate in Britain, real estate was occasionally entailed. Possessions of family importance, such as family portraits and old family silver, likewise went with the family seat.

The position of the daughter in South Carolina was closely akin to that of her British counterpart, and marriage settlements of one sort or another were frequently mentioned in wills. John Izard, in his 1754 will, left his wife all her marriage settlement and £1,000 sterling; Charles Izard, in 1744, £7,000 besides the £1,000 sterling settled on her; Benjamin Smith, in 1768, £14,000 "in lieu of her fortune"; Henry Peronneau, in 1753, "£10,000 money of South Carolina, releasing dower etc."; Hugh Hext, in 1744, "a Jointure made to her afore marriage." Essentially, marriage settlements were a means of insuring the economic wellbeing of

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female descendants and heirs under a system where property would otherwise revert to the husband. Inflation and the expansive nature of the economy lessened the importance of such agreements over the years. In contrast to Britain or the West Indies, estates were never seriously encumbered with debt by these provisions. Unmarried daughters were generally provided a handsome sum of money to be paid at twenty-one or marriage (when a marriage settlement would be drawn up). Widows were generally given the use of one dwelling, certain personal possessions, any previous settled moneys, and a fixed yearly income derived from a certain plantation. Upon death or remarriage of the widow, property reverted to specified heirs.

With the dangers of early parental deaths and long minorities for children, executors were chosen carefully, and wills often contained long sections on management of estates during such periods. Quite frequently, the executors were ordered to sell certain estates and put the money "out at interest" to provide income for later cash settlements. The frequency of such early deaths and the extended nature of wills meant that a good number of estates in every parish were being run by executors throughout the colonial period.

The extended family was often well remembered in wills. An extreme example is that of Mrs. Arthur Middleton who died in 1765. Born Sarah Wilkinson, she
had already been widowed by Landgrave Joseph Morton before her 1723 marriage. In all, she bequeathed a great deal of personal property, £66,200 currency, £4,000 sterling, and Bank of England stock to a total of fifty-three friends and relatives; among the beneficiaries were nineteen Middletons, six Wilkinsons, six Slanns, six Drailsfords, six Warings, two Moultries, a Drayton, a Sanders, and a Dart.

With emphasis on the extended family and on the economic position of all members, marriage was as all-important to the South Carolina aristocrat as to the British landed family. Because Charleston was the social center of the colony and most wealthy families maintained a residence in the city or within the vicinity, eligible males and females had the opportunity to become acquainted and to make alliances with any of their social equals from the low-country. Despite the fairly short period of settlement, family ties united virtually every wealthy family to ten or fifteen others. The twenty-three Izard marriages in the colonial period united them with the following families.

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58 Cheeves, "Izard of South Carolina."
**TABLE 18**

IZARD FAMILY MARRIAGE TIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Izard (3)</th>
<th>Johnson</th>
<th>Bull</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gibbes (3)</td>
<td>Wright</td>
<td>Brewton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middleton (3)</td>
<td>Hume</td>
<td>Chastaigner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Droughton (2)</td>
<td>Turgis</td>
<td>Fenwicks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Izard</td>
<td>DeLancey (of New York)</td>
<td>Stead</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Middletons married the following:

**TABLE 19**

MIDDLETON FAMILY MARRIAGE TIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Izard (3)</th>
<th>Butler*</th>
<th>Rutledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bull (2)</td>
<td>Gibbes</td>
<td>Drayton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilkinson</td>
<td>Williams</td>
<td>Pinckney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saythe</td>
<td>MacKenzie*</td>
<td>Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amory</td>
<td>Manigault</td>
<td>Barnwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guerard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twenty or thirty such lists would include the entire South Carolina aristocracy.

After a series of comparisons with British landed society, a direct parallel should be made. In 1759, Joseph Nasse revisited the 1688 Gregory King estimates of the English social structure and wealth. Although obviously

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*See Appendix C.

59 Cheaves, "Middleton of South Carolina."
guesses, the figures do represent the calculations of a very competent contemporary. For the upper income brackets, being 1.2% of the population having 14.3% of the wealth, they were:

**TABLE 20**

WEALTH OF THE ENGLISH ARISTOCRACY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Annual Income &amp; Expenses (£)</th>
<th>Number of Families</th>
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<tr>
<td>Temporal Lords</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual Lords</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baronets</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knights</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esquires</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentlemen</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Records of Carolina incomes do not exist, but it is possible to make some estimates. According to Henry Laurens, his Georgia estates alone would have soon been producing £10,000 sterling a year had the Revolution not come along, and Joseph Alston told Josiah Quincy, Jr., that his income "was but about five or six thousand pounds sterling a year." Such figures would have been very respectable by English standards indeed, but they could hardly have been typical. The average estate value of a member of the Council from

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1720 to 1763 was £ 9,022 sterling. Had the usual 80% been represented by income producing plantations (i.e. 7,218) and had this been producing the 28% return predicted by DeBrahm, an income of £ 1,721 would have resulted. Such an estimate is not unrealistic. Henry Laurens consistently made about £ 500 sterling from his Mepkin plantation, and £ 300 to £ 500 sterling was probably the average for the standard forty slave, five hundred acre estate. Since the wealthy planters generally owned three or four working plantations, incomes of from £ 1,000 to £ 2,500 sterling per year seem reasonable.

Of course an Edward Fenwicke with over five hundred slaves, a Henry Middleton with over eight hundred slaves and close to twenty settled plantations, and those individuals who combined planting with mercantile or legal pursuits reaped much larger profits. Although written thirty years after the close of the colonial period, William Blake's 1803 will, which mentions £ 83,000 sterling in bequests (obviously only a portion of his total wealth), shows that great fortunes were indeed made in South Carolina.

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62 Sirmans, Colonial South Carolina, 237.
63 Sellers, Charleston Business, 61. See Chapter III of this paper.
By English standards, the average wealthy South Carolina planter would have been classed with the lower gentry. Their houses, their general pattern of life, and their economic position were similar. But unlike the British gentry, the South Carolinians had no group above them. They were in complete control in the parishes, they dominated the Commons House and Council, and they had provided the executive officer for about seventy of the one hundred years. They were the aristocrats of the colony.

C. Social Mobility

South Carolina has been spared a counterpart of Virginia's cavalier myth. The earliest settlers in Carolina, as throughout the American colonies, were generally products of the "middle class" in England. They were without aristocratic family connections, and it is nonsense to think that settlement in the Carolina wilderness would have any attraction for the Englishman of wealth and title. The few men of moderate social standing who did emigrate in the early period, Sir Nathaniel Johnson, Joseph Boone, Benjamin Blake, Edward Middleton, and a few others, were only attracted by previous settlement in the West Indies or ties with the Proprietors. Even they were of insignificant rank
within British society. The early wills show that most of the progenitors of the future aristocrats were possessed of very humble estates in the first generation.

South Carolina's social structure did not, however, evolve from a state of nature. With the first and each succeeding shipload came individuals thoroughly indoctrinated with the concept of a hierarchical social structure, with the idea that society must be dominated by the rich and the well born. The ultimate basis was wealth, from which refinement of manners, political power, and high family connections devolved. From the social point of view, the intense political disputes in the earliest period of settlement might reasonably be viewed as partially the result of a psychological reaction to the comparative economic equality which made choice of natural leaders difficult. Gradual economic improvement combined with the arrival of new groups of poor settlers soon recreated the economic inequalities so dear to the eighteenth-century British heart, and wealth, political power, and social leadership resumed the virtually synonymous positions they

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67 See Moore and Simons, Abstract of Wills, 1670-1740.
held in Britain.

In colonial society, where titles and high birth were so infrequent, wealth was elevated to a particularly high position, and the route to social advancement lay in its accumulation. Naturally, the easiest method of penetrating the social elite was to immigrate with wealth in hand, and the route seems to have been used in a number of instances. Among the earliest settlers who did bring a fair amount of property were Sir Nathaniel Johnson, Benjamin Blake, and James Colleton, and each served as Governor and was immigrant ancestor of a number of leading colonial figures. Isaac Nasyck came to Charleston in 1686 with £1,500 in London goods and thereby laid the foundation of a sizable personal fortune which enabled his descendants to become important in the colony's political and social life.

Occasionally, a resident of the West Indies, a naval or army officer, or an English gentleman, with previous wealth, would retire to "gentleman planting" in the colony. If wealthy enough, they seem to have been accepted by the elite immediately. Former absentee owners such as the Lucas, Colleton, and Cleland families likewise had considerable wealth from exterior sources before arrival. During the eighteenth century, a number of incoming politicians and professional men brought

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For example, Sir Alexander Nisbett of Dean Hall. See Appendix C.
sufficient wealth and polish to be accepted fairly rapidly by the existing society. The Moultrie and Rutledge families were both founded in the colony after 1720 but became important in a relatively short period of time.

The same factors which ruled out the immigration of many titled Englishmen also served to limit the number of wealthy individuals who would leave previous positions of security and comfort. The vast majority of the South Carolina fortunes were simply the result of slow accumulation of wealth from very modest beginnings over a period of two or three generations. Because it was a gradual process, time of settlement was important. Most of the original Goose Creek settlers, who dominated the political and social life in the colony throughout the era, had started out with comparatively little wealth. But they managed to obtain ever important political power and slowly accumulate real fortunes, always staying a step ahead of later arrivals. If an individual was fortunate enough to have started out with extra capital, the process was that much quicker.

Indian trading was a particularly lucrative business, and the Fewkes, Bull, and Barnwell family fortunes, among others, were founded on this. The vast

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69 Sirman, Colonial South Carolina, 27-29, 40-53.
See Richard S. Dunn, "The Barbados Census of 1680,"
26-30.
majority of the political and social leaders, whether
planters or merchants, owed their positions to a father
or grandfather involved in trade in one form or another.

The Draytons, Lynches, Heywards, and Alstons do
seem to have risen through planting, but significant
mobility along this road was rare. The great barrier
to advancement through agriculture was the very high
initial expense of the thirty or forty slaves which
would make the planting unit profitable. When capital
became available, the merchants usually did then invest
became available, the merchants usually did then invest
in plantations, often retiring to planting in later
life.

Charleston, as the center of mercantile activity,
served as the funnel through which aspiring planter
magnates were forced to travel. It is only natural
that the urban elite might have been looked down upon
by the long settled country gentlemen. But contrary
to David Duncan Wallace, it was their newness rather
than their occupations per se which provoked the
snobbery. Planters showed no hesitation about marry-
ing a daughter to the son of a merchant if he were
wealthy enough. When it became apparent that great

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70 See for example the death notice of William Mac-
Kenzie: "after acquiring a competent Estate, he
gave off Business in Trade, and retired to said
Plantation in the Country." South Carolina Gaz.
(Charleston), September 28, 1738.

71 Wallace, Short History, 190.
fortunes could be made in the legal profession, planters as well as merchants and professional men gladly enrolled their sons at the Inns of Court.

Some substance can be given to the concept of America as the land of opportunity through looking at the experience of colonial South Carolina, but not as commonly defined. There were simply no instances of an individual ascending from poverty to great wealth, and those individuals who are often cited as examples of such mobility seem to have had certain advantages which have been overlooked. There is no known instance of an indentured servant gaining a single political position. If anything, the process of climbing the social ladder was slower than in the nineteenth century. The primary difference between South Carolina and Great Britain was in the scope of the opportunities open. The vast quantities of unimproved land and the exceptional economic growth rate naturally opened the door to entrepreneurial advancement. Participation within the aristocratic political and social system might be out of the question for the lowly, but land ownership was not. James Thompson, Charleston butcher, willed four small plantations in 1745, and Charleston

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72 The most commonly cited examples are Alston, Ferguson, Heyward, Laurens, and Manigault.
73 Smith, *White Servitude*, 89.
bricklayer James Withers, in 1756, left heirs five or six (probably mostly unimproved tracts). While land purchase would not produce dramatic social change, cheapness and availability enabled a family to slowly rise within the plantation society as well as on the outside.

In contrast to eighteenth-century British society, marriage does not seem to have been significant in promoting social advancement. Undoubtedly, Benjamin Huger was pleased to attach himself to Poly Golightly "with a Fortune of Ten Thousand Pounds Sterling" or Alexander Wright to Elizabeth Izard and her "Thirty Thousand Pounds Sterling," as the newspapers proudly announced, but these and most such matches were with social and economic equals.

Mobility could also be downward, and occasionally a great merchant such as Thomas Middleton (1719-66) would shock the community with his bankruptcy. But the great economic expansion kept such occurrences to an absolute minimum.

What sort of elite social group had been created

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74 Moore, Abstract of Wills, 1740-1769, 43-44, 214-15.
76 Henry Laurens to William Rieve, October 2, 1767, in Barnwell and Webber, Correspondence of Henry Laurens, XXXI, 212-17.
by 1775 in South Carolina? In outlook, in appearance, in habits, and in tastes, the aristocratic element of society was more thoroughly English at that date than any other American group. Yet ironically, at the same time that British affectations were on the increase, there were counteracting forces pulling the society away from the model at home. As in Virginia, local Anglican parishes increasingly insisted upon control over the calling and dismissal of the clergy. The Reverend Charles Boschi reported, in 1745, that parishioners told me that they would rather to not Elect by saying that they do not behave themselves well after the Election, and would not preforme his duties or else perhaps he would tinnize his Par­ishioners for being sure he would receive his salary of the country without de­pending from the Vestry....I examined some other parishioners of different Parishes...they agree almost everyone in the same opinion. 77

A British visitor in 1774 noted that the Charles­ton ladies "in their Conversation...have a disagreeable drawling way of speaking." 78 Despite the love of every­thing English, South Carolinians were amazingly un­comfortable while visiting London itself. South

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77 Reverend Charles Boschi to the Secretary, Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, St. Bartholo­mew's, April 7, 1745, in Geiger, "St. Bartholo­mew's Parish," 188-91.
78 "Charleston in 1774," 341-47.
Carolinians were developing a truly American character.

In the colony's first one hundred years, a very English social, political, and economic system had been created in the American wilderness. But it had been forged not by Englishmen but by English-minded Americans. The social structure was closely modeled after that in Britain, but it was constructed on this side of the Atlantic and was made up of resident Americans. It was a British style aristocratic society, but it was dominated by a true American aristocracy.
APPENDIX A

LEADING FAMILIES OF SOUTH CAROLINA

One of the very hardest tasks in studying a social group which was not set apart by title and which was composed of individuals of various family and occupational backgrounds is to identify precisely who was important and who was not. Records of political office, land holding, and personal property are not available for the entire period, precluding a thorough identification. By restricting the following lists to surnames, families with few males are certainly discriminated against. The limited nature of the sample (imposed on the author by the limited number of printed sources) allows for the omission of such an important individual as Henry Laurens. Taken with reservations, however, the lists do comprehend a surprisingly high percentage of those planter families who were important in the last half century of the colonial era.

List #1--Commons House Members, 1736-48 (family names represented three or more times)--As the planters often allowed merchants and Charleston-based politicians to dominate the House, a tabulation which takes numerical superiority into consideration brings out a few of the country families who specialized in "back bench" participation. The number of individuals filling the seats is not recorded, but it ranged from one to four. The names are from J. Harold Easterby and Ruth S. Green, eds., The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, 1736-1750, 9 vols., (Columbia, S. C., 1951-62).

List #2--Commons House Leaders, 1689-1776--Taken from the appendix of Jack P. Greene's The Quest for Power, The Lower Houses of Assembly in the Southern Royal Colonies, 1689-1776 (Chapel Hill, 1963), the following is a compilation of surnames which appear twice or more in his enumeration of legislative leaders.

List #3--Council, 1720-63--The list found in Eugene M. Sirmans' "The South Carolina Royal Council, 1720-1763," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd. Ser., XVIII (1961), 393, is presented in full.

List #4--Plantation Owners--The following are names which appear twice or more on James Cook's "A Map of the Province of South Carolina...[London, 1773. Duplicate of Clements Library copy in possession of the author]." Although restricted to the low-country parishes, the listing includes many individuals from the hindmost sections and the far north who were not low-country families' representatives. As Cook was selective in placing names, particularly in the more densely populated section near Charleston, the list gives a somewhat distorted picture. First initials were not printed,
so there is no distinction between one planter whose name
appears twice and two related planters who appear once each.
Original spelling is retained, although it is in a few cases
obviously wrong. Spot testing, however, indicates that what
is there is very accurate.

**List #1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Austin</th>
<th>Crawford</th>
<th>Masyock</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barnwell</td>
<td>Dart</td>
<td>Middleton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bond</td>
<td>Drayton</td>
<td>Pinckney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brevton</td>
<td>Elliot</td>
<td>Prioleau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Golightly</td>
<td>Roche</td>
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<td>Bull</td>
<td>Harleston</td>
<td>Rutledge</td>
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<td>Butler</td>
<td>Hext</td>
<td>Smith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cattel</td>
<td>Izard</td>
<td>Vander Dussen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook</td>
<td>Matthes</td>
<td>Whitaker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cordes</td>
<td>Maxwell</td>
<td>Wright</td>
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**List #2**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Brevton</th>
<th>Graeme</th>
<th>Moore</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broughton</td>
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**List #3**

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List 5 4

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Branford
Brisbane
Brown
Bryan
Buffa
Butler
Canty
Cattoel
Cattle
Caws
Coachman
Colleton
Cook
Darvia ?
Davis
Devaux
Dears
Dean
Drayton
Dupont
Durant
Elliot
Elvis
Evans
Fenwick
Ferguson
Flowers
Ford
Fulworth
Gaillard
Garden
Giles
Glaze
Godhold
Godin
Graves
Green
Hamilton
Harleston
Heyward
Horry
Huger
Izard
Jenkins
Johnston
Jones
Jordan
Keith
Ladson
Lynch
McCane
McTear
Middleton
Miles
Miller
Mishoes ?
Moore
Morgan
Motte
Morrel
Murrel
Null
North
Parker
Parsons
Pauley
Pinckney
Pitts
Pooser
Porchier
Postell
Price
Rogers
Saunders
Scott
Simmons
Singleton
Smith
Snow
Stanyarne
Taylor
Termain
Thomas
Varene
Ward
Waring
Witherspoon
White
Wilson
Windham
Wood
Wragg
Wright
APPENDIX B

SOUTH CAROLINA STUDENTS AT EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS


Student's name, institution and date, father's name and occupation are presented in that order.

James Air--Edinburgh, Leyden, 1775--William Air

Richard Beresford--Mid. Temple, 1773--Richard Beresford

William Bull--Leyden, 1734--William Bull, planter

William Ward Burrows--Mid. Temple, 1772--William Burrows, lawyer

Thomas Cay--Edinburgh, 1769--Lewis Cay, doctor

Isaac Chanler--Edinburgh, 1768--Isaac Chanler, clergyman

James Clitheroe--Edinburgh, 1760-61

Thomas Dale--Edinburgh, 1775--prob. Thomas Dale, doctor

William Drayton--Mid. Temple, 1750-55--Thomas Drayton, planter
Charles Drayton—Oxford—Balliol, 1761, Edinburgh, 1770—
John Drayton, planter

William Drayton—Oxford—Balliol, 1761—John Drayton, planter

Thomas Evans—Oxford—Christ Ch., 1767—Branfil Evans, prob. 
merchant

Nicholas Eveleigh—Edinburgh, 1763-64

Samuel Eveleigh—Edinburgh, 1763-64

Peter Fayssoux—Edinburgh, 1769

Francis Garden—Edinburgh, 1768

David Graeme—Mid. Temple, 1753—William Graeme, doctor

John Faucherand Griské—Camb.—Trinity, Mid. Temple, 1769—
John Paul Griské, merchant

Tucker Harris—Edinburgh, 1771

Alexander Harvey—Mid. Temple, 1765—William Harvey, prob. 
merchant

Thomas Heyward—Mid. Temple, 1765-70—Daniel Heyward, planter

William Heyward—Oxford—Christ Ch., 1772—Daniel Heyward, 
planter

Charles Hill—Oxford—Balliol, 1736—Charles Hill, planter

William Huger—Camb.—Caius, 1768—Daniel Huger, planter

Ralph Izard—Camb.—Trinity, 1773—Ralph Izard, planter

Walter Izard—Camb.—Trinity, 1773—Ralph Izard, planter

Robert Johnston—Mid. Temple, 1719-24—Gideon Johnston, 
clergyman

Francis Kinlock—Lincoln's Inn, 1774—Francis Kinlock, planter

John Laurens—Mid. Temple, 1772—Henry Laurens, merchant

George Logan—Edinburgh, 1773

Thomas Lynch—Camb.—Caius, Mid. Temple, 1769—Thomas Lynch, 
planter

Hext McCall—Mid. Temple, 1776—John McCall, merchant

John Mackenzie—Mid. Temple, 1754-59—William Mackenzie, 
merchant
John Matthews—Mid. Temple, 1764—John Matthews, prob. planter
Isaac Mazyck—Dublin-Trinity, 1719—Isaac Mazyck, merchant
James Michie—Mid. Temple, 1753—John Michie
Arthur Middleton—Mid. Temple, 1757—Henry Middleton, planter
Alexander Moultrie—Mid. Temple, 1768—John Moultrie, doctor
James Moultrie—Edinburgh, 1749—John Moultrie, doctor
Philip Neyle—Camb.-Caius, Mid. Temple, 1768-73—Sampson Neyle, merchant
William Oliphant—Mid. Temple, 1769—David Oliphant, doctor
John Parker—Mid. Temple, 1775—John Parker, planter
James Peronneau—Mid. Temple, 1768—Henry Peronneau, prob. planter
John Peronneau—Inner Temple, 1772
Robert Peronneau—Edinburgh, 1775
Charles Pinckney—Mid. Temple, 1773—(Col.) Charles Pinckney, lawyer (enrolled, although may never have attended)
Charles C. Pinckney—Oxford-Christ Ch., 1764, Mid. Temple, 1764-69—Charles Pinckney, lawyer
Thomas Pinckney—Oxford-Christ Ch., 1768, Mid. Temple, 1768-72—Charles Pinckney, lawyer
John Pringle—Mid. Temple, 1773—Robert Pringle, merchant
Edward Rutledge—Mid. Temple, 1767-72—John Rutledge, doctor
Hugh Rutledge—Mid. Temple, 1765—John Rutledge, doctor
John Rutledge—Mid. Temple, 1754-60—John Rutledge, doctor
Richard Shubrick—Mid. Temple, 1768, Camb.-Trinity Hall, 1769—James Shubrick
Thomas Shubrick—Mid. Temple, 1773—Thomas Shubrick, merchant
William Simpson—Mid. Temple, 1775—James Simpson, lawyer
Benjamin Smith—Mid. Temple, 1774—Thomas Smith, merchant
George Smith—Edinburgh, 1700—Thomas Smith, doctor, planter
William L. Smith—Mid. Temple, 1774—Benjamin Smith, merchant
Benjamin Stead—Camb.-Trinity, 1773—Benjamin Stead, merchant
William Stewart--Oxford-Merton, 1769--William Stewart?

Paul Trapier--Camb.-St. Johns, 1766, Mid. Temple, 1767--
Paul Trapier, Georgetown merchant

William Walton--Lincoln's Inn, 1775

Joshua Ward--Mid. Temple, 1759--John Ward?

William Wragg--Oxford-St. Johns, 1729--Samuel Wragg, merchant, planter

Joseph Yeomans--Oxford-University, 1745--William Yeomans, merchant

SOUTH CAROLINA STUDENTS AT AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS

From "Josiah Smith," Biographical Sketches of Those Who
Attended Harvard College in the Classes 1722-1723, ed., Clifford
K. Shipton, Sibley's Harvard Graduates, VII (Boston, Mass., 1945),
569-85; "George Eveleigh," Biographical Sketches of Those Who
Attended Harvard...1741-1745, ed., Clifford K. Shipton, Sibley's
Harvard Graduates, XI (Boston, Mass., 1960), 143-44.

George Eveleigh--Harvard, 1742-43--Samuel Eveleigh, merchant

Josiah Smith--Harvard, 1725--George Smith, doctor
**APPENDIX C**

**SOUTH CAROLINA CONNECTIONS WITH THE BRITISH ARISTOCRACY**

Bellinger, Sir. Edmund— to South Carolina from Westmoreland, Co., Eng., in 1674. Landgrave.1

Butler, Pierce—(1744-1822)—third son of Sir Richard Butler, Bart., M. P. for County Carlow, 1729-61. Major in H. M. 29th Regiment, he married in 1771 Mary, dau. of Thomas Middleton. Resigned commission in 1773 and became a planter and politician.2

Campbell, Lord William—married in 1763 Sarah Izard (1748- ), dau. of Ralph Izard, St. George's planter. He was the son of the fourth Duke of Argyll, and later became Governor of Nova Scotia and South Carolina. His younger brother, Col. Colin Campbell, married in 1768 in London her younger sister, Rebecca Izard (174 -,1778).3

Colleton, Sir John—( -1777)—first resident Colleton with a title. One of the greatest planters, he resided at his Fairlawn Barony. His family had been leaders in Barbados and in the settlement of Carolina.4

Everard, Sir Richard—( -1742)—Bart., "late of Broomfield, Essex," and "now of St. Philip's Parish, Charleston." He made a will and died there in 1742.5

Frankland, Sir Thomas—(1717-1784)—great-great-grandson of Oliver Cromwell. A naval captain, he personally captured the Spanish officer who cut off Jenkin's ear and also a fabulously valuable Spanish treasure ship. He married in 1743 Sarah Rhett (1722-1808), dau. of William Rhett. He later became fifth Bart. of Thirkelby, an admiral, and M. P. His eldest brother, Sir Charles Henry Frankland, from whom the title descended, had married a former Massachusetts servant girl.6

Home, Sir James—In a 1746 letter, Robert Pringle noted that a James Home had just sailed from Charleston to accept his title (Bart.) and take possession of his estate.7

Johnson, Sir Nathaniel—(1644-1712)—Son of a M. P. for Newcastle, Eng., he was a knight, Governor of the Leeward Isds., to 1689, and of South Carolina, 1703-09. He helped establish the Anglican church in 1706, and his son was a Proprietary and later Royal Governor.8

Kinlock, James—younger son of Sir Francis Kinlock, Bart., of Gilmerton, Scotland. President of the Royal Council.9
Leigh, Sir Egerton--Son of Peter Leigh, patronage politician, who had been given the South Carolina Chief Justiceship in place of Charles Pinckney in 1753. The son served as Vice-Admiralty Judge, Attorney General, Surveyor-General, and member of the Council. He was involved in disputes with Henry Laurens in the late 1760's, of notorious moral character. Conferred title of Bart. in 1752.10

MacKenzie, Ann--(1768)--dau. of Jacobite third Earl of Cromartie. She was married to Edmund Atkin, first Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Southern Dept., and later she married South Carolina doctor and judge, John Murray (1774).11

MacKenzie, Mary--sister of the above, she married three South Carolinians: Thomas Drayton, John Ainslie, and Henry Middleton.12

Nisbett, Sir Alexander--(1753)--Bart., came to South Carolina in 1749 and settled Dean Hall plantation. He died in South Carolina. His second son, Sir John Nisbett, later came to the colony and married an Alston.13

Scott, Henry--(1712-1740)--Captain of H. H. S. Seaford, he married in Charleston in 1734 Elizabeth, daughter of John Fenwicke. A grandson of Charles II, son of James, Duke of Monmouth, he succeeded an elder brother in 1739 as third Earl of Deloraine. She survived him fifty-four years as Countess of Deloraine.14

Stirling, William--(1743)--son of a Sir William Stirling, he died in Charleston in June, 1743.15

Walker, Sir Nivenden--Mentioned in Wallace's Short History as a onetime resident of South Carolina.16

Wright, Robert--Chief Justice of South Carolina, he was the son of Sir Robert Wright (1669), Chief Justice of England and judge presiding over the Seven Bishops Case (a tool of James II). His maternal grandfather was Mathew Wren, Bishop of Ely, and he was first cousin, once removed, of Sir Christopher Wren. Wright's forth son, James Wright, was the last Royal Governor of Georgia and was made Bart. in 1772.17

Sources:


Langston Cheeves, "Isard of South Carolina," *South Carolina Historical Magazine*, II (1901), 233-35.


Mabel L. Webber, ed., "Death Notices from the South Carolina Gazette from September 29, 1766 to December 19, 1774," *South Carolina Hist. Mag.*, XXXIV (1933), 59, 213.


South Carolina Gazette (Charleston, S. C.), June 27, 1743.


APPENDIX D

ORIGINS OF CERTAIN FAMILIES AND THEIR WEALTH

This table presents a limited amount of data on the origins of the families and family fortunes mentioned in Chapter V, Section C. There is no attempt made to present detailed information, but what given does suggest some of the ways in which families did rise to prominence.

Alston--immigrant--John Alston, from Hammersmith, Eng., apprentice to merchant in 1682 and a merchant himself by 1690. Family became very important in the late colonial period--planters in the northeastern parishes.1

Barnwell--immigrant--John Barnwell, from Dublin, Ire., 1701, Indian fighter, politician, agent for the colony in London, 1719. Wealth from Indian trade. Settled in Beaufort area, descendants important Pr. William, St. Helena planters.2

Blake--immigrant--Benjamin Blake (-1689), brother of famed admiral. He brought twenty-one dependents with him. Justice of the Peace, Council. Son Joseph (-1700), Governor and Proprietor. Small but very wealthy planter family.3

Boone--immigrant--Joseph Boone (-1734), merchant, to South Carolina in 1694. Married dau. of Landgrave Axstel and became a planter. His nephew Thomas Boone became Governor in 1761. Another small but very wealthy planter family with high English connections.4

Brewton--immigrant--Miles Brewton--goldsmith and politician, to South Carolina in 1684. Son Robert quite wealthy and respectable by the 1750's. Robert's son, Miles Brewton (1731-75), married an Izard and was a leading Charleston merchant.5

Bull--immigrant--Stephen Bull--to South Carolina in first ship, 1670. He and his son were great explorers, surveyors, and Indian agents. Son William (1685-1753) and his son William (1710-1791) were acting Governors. As the Indians disappeared, planting became more important. One of the great South Carolina families.6

Cleland--immigrant--John Cleland, from London, 1735, to take control of wife's Georgetown area lands (Parie grants) which had been planted by agents.7

Colleton--immigrants--included James Colleton, Governor, 1686-1690. Family was influential in settlement of Barbados and Carolina. Various members of the family in colony from time to time, but usually considered islands or England as home. Estates often run by agents. Political connections in Eng.8
Drayton—immigrant—Thomas Drayton, from Northampton, Eng., to Barbados to South Carolina, 1671. Although early immigrants, the family did not rise to great heights until mid-century. The wealth was made in trade and planting. Thomas Drayton (1660-1760), builder of Drayton Hall, and John Drayton served on the Council. Thomas was a merchant; John a planter. One of the wealthiest families by the Revolution.9

Fenwicke—immigrant—John Fenwicke (1675-1747), younger son of a younger son (of a titled aristocrat), he went to the West Indies and to South Carolina in 1706. Made a fortune in Indian trade and as a rice merchant. Retired to planting and in the 1740's returned to England. His son, Edward (1720-1775), was one of the greatest planters and importers of race horses.10

Heyward—immigrant—Daniel Heyward (1664-1784). Family of small planters holding occasional political offices until Col. Daniel Heyward (1720-1777) concentrated efforts on Granville Co. lands and died with 25,000 acres. His son was the Signer, Thomas Heyward.11

Johnson—immigrant—Sir Nathaniel Johnson (1644-1712), former Governor of the Leeward Is. and Governor of South Carolina. His son was later Governor. Great planters. Their descendants married into other leading families.12

Laurens—immigrant—Andre Laurens, Huguenot, to South Carolina from New York in 1715-16. His son, John, was a saddler and later commission merchant. His son, Henry, was probably the wealthiest merchant and one of the great planters in the colony by the Revolutionary era.13

Lucas—immigrant—George Lucas, to South Carolina in the 1730's to plant lands which had been purchased by his father in 1714-15. He was quite wealthy and was later Governor of Antigua. Estates were merged with those of his daughter's husband (Charles Pinckney).14

Lynch—Another family of long settlement, like the Heywards, who rose to prominence in the late colonial period through gradual accumulation of land and slaves. Thomas Lynch was an important Georgetown area planter by mid-century. His son, Thomas (1749-1779), after an English education and apprenticeship as a merchant, was a Signer of the Declaration of Independence.15

Mazyck—immigrant—Isaac Mazyck (1676-1736), Huguenot, who came to South Carolina in 1686 with a considerable stock of London merchandise and became the wealthiest of the early merchants. Later members of the family were important merchants and planters.16
Middleton--immigrant--Arthur Middleton (1605--1685), London merchant with connections among the gentry. To South Carolina in 1679 from Barbados--member of the Council and a Proprietary Deputy. Received land grants and by 1682 had ten Negroes on one plantation. Edward, his brother, came to the colony in 1678 and was the ancestor of the family which was so important as planters and politicians throughout the colonial period (and an occasional merchant).17

Moultrie--immigrant--Dr. John Moultrie (1702-1771), from Scotland. An Edinburgh graduate, he apparently had connections in Britain, because one son was made Chief Justice of East Florida. Son John Moultrie inherited the English estate of his father-in-law and former Charleston merchant, George Austin. Success of this family seems to have been based on personal charm and connections in Britain rather than on great wealth. They were looked up to however, before the Revolutionary fame.18

Pringle--immigrant--Robert Pringle, to Charleston, c. 1725. Son of a landed gentleman, he declined his inheritance in favor of an elder brother. He became a Charleston merchant and married in 1734 a daughter of Wealthy merchant James Allen and in 1751 married the widow of Stephen Bull. Combination of birth, business acumen, and marriages got him a judgeship in 1760. Leading member of St. Michael's Church.19

Sources:

8. Henry A. M. Smith, "The Colleton Family in South Carolina," South Carolina Hist. Mag., I (1900), 325-41; II (1901), 156-57, 244-49.

10 Fairfax Harrison, *The John's Island Stud., 1750-1788* (Richmond, Va., 1931), 24-46.


18 Gerard Houtric, "The Houtrics," *South Carolina Hist. Mag.* V (1904), 229-60; VI (1905), 42.

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John Christie Dann

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