

Preface

In the summer of 1977, I attended the annual reunion of the Lawton and Allied Families Association. I was very much thrilled and interested in the reunion and bought for myself one of the few remaining copies of Our Family Circle, by Annie Elizabeth Miller, compiled in 1931. I was disappointed to find that the record of my grandfather's family ended with his name. I determined at that moment to bring our family record up to date.

I am deeply grateful for the information furnished me by the Patterson family. Their mother, Josephine Barksdale Lawton Patterson, was my grandfather's only family member who survived to live a long and fruitful life. Their parents and four brothers and sisters died in a typhoid epidemic when they were small children. I am also grateful for the information furnished by my aunts and cousins.

My Aunt, Rosa T. Lawton, has written a tribute to her parents, and something of their family life as she remembers it and I have included it as an introduction to this Supplement. It is of great interest to my generation and will be to those that follow.

Catherine Elizabeth Lawton Godbold

20 May 1978

Introduction

My six brothers and sisters and I were privileged to be brought up in a fine Christian home by sweet and loving parents. We had the advantages of a good name and adequate resources to meet our needs. Our father was strict; our mother was sweet and gentle. Both loved their children and this we never doubted.

My father, Joseph Maner Lawton, born September 22, 1875, descended from Joseph Lawton and Sarah Robert; by Joseph J. Lawton and Phoebe Mosse; Dr. Benjamin W. Lawton and Josephine Polhill; and his parents, Edmund Milo Lawton and Catherine Elizabeth Lawton. It is interesting to note that Catherine Elizabeth descended by Joseph Lawton's son, William Henry, who married Catherine Maner, and their son, Joseph Maner Lawton, who married Elizabeth Thompson. Edmund Milo and Catherine Lawton died when my father was six years old, and he was raised by his mother's brother, Thomas Oregon Lawton. He attended the Morrison Academy at Lawtonville and received a good education.

We were brought up on tales my father told us of his life on the plantation of "my uncle who raised me." Unquestionably, Mr. Thomas Oregon Lawton and his first wife, Mary Phoebe Willingham, had a lasting influence on my father. They were good and kind Christian people and generous with their hospitality and love. My father had little remembrance of his parents and called his adopted parents Mâ and Pâ. He loved his uncle's eight sons and daughters and always considered them his brothers and sisters. We always considered them our aunts and uncles. They, in turn, loved my father, 'Black Joe' as he was affectionately called. One little story we loved was told in a delightful book called Jockey and Other Stories, written by one of these uncles,

Thomas Oregon Lawton of Greenville, S. C., about his boyhood. Unfortunately, this book has long been out of circulation.

It seems the boys had a white mouse in a cage. One day the boys were watching the mouse and someone wondered aloud if he would bite. One of the boys said, "Stick your tongue in, Joe, and see if he will!" My father promptly stuck his tongue in the cage and the mouse latched on! This tale was never told to us by my father. I believe it is true because he always looked chagrined when we asked about it.

When my father was fifteen years old, he had apparently received all of the schooling available at the Morrison Academy. The education he received was far superior to that obtained today by age 15. He was a mathematician; he could add a column of figures faster than anyone I've ever known. He spoke grammatically, had a wide vocabulary, and was a good speller. He was well read in literature and had a good background in history. He remembered all of his life some Latin and German language he learned in school. He wrote a beautiful script which never wavered during his life. His uncle decided not to send him to college -- preferred he remain at home and work on the plantation. This did not suit my father, and he left home to seek employment in Savannah, Georgia. He had a cousin in Savannah who got him a job in a Guano factory. He liked the work. He had a good place to live with a Mrs. Habersham of Savannah. The only draw-back was that he had to work on Sunday. After awhile, the word drifted back to the plantation that Maner was working on Sunday. Aunt Phoebe was deeply religious, known far and wide for her goodness and works of charity among black and white persons. She was heart-sick when she heard that my father was working on Sunday. She took the river boat to Savannah immediately to see him. She said

to my father, "Son, I don't want you to work on Sunday." He quit his job and returned home. He rarely worked on Sunday during his long life and never fished, the sport he loved, on Sunday. He did not remain at home. He went to Hartsville, S. C., to live and work with his father's brothers. His uncle, Joseph J. Lawton, was especially fond of him and good to him throughout his life.

When living in Savannah, my father was introduced to a beautiful young lady, Maude Constance Tilton, whose mother was a close friend of Mrs. Habersham. He did not forget her while living and working in Hartsville and eventually returned to Savannah to work and to marry her when he was 22 years old -- 1897.

A few months after my parents were married, my father became ill with appendicitis. This was before the days of removal of the appendix -- and most people died when stricken. He was critically ill for over six weeks. His only sister, Josephine Lawton (Auntie) Patterson, went to Savannah to help care for him. Fortunately, before he married, he had saved about \$3000 and this money was on deposit in a local bank. My mother was a timid person and never in her life attended to financial affairs. In this emergency situation, when her cash on hand was exhausted, she bravely went to the bank to make a withdrawal. She was accompanied by my aunt. The cashier explained to my mother that she would have to have someone identify her. Mama was indignant and assured him the lady with her -- Auntie -- could identify her! This story is particularly amusing to me -- in my work we ask our clients for what we call a collateral contact. They simply walk out into the hall, explain their problem to the first person they see, and that person quite willingly swears to the information fed to them!

After my father's miraculous recovery from a ruptured appendix, he and my mother moved to Hartsville, S. C. He worked for J. L. Coker and Company and later had a store of his own. Edward Maner Lawton, Catherine Elizabeth Lawton, and, I believe, Lewis Turner Lawton, were born in Hartsville. My father never lost his love for country life and was a firm believer that children were better off in the country -- so, back to Lena, his old home place, he went, and he tried his hand at farming for two years.

Charles Alfred Lawton (Bunt) was born in Lena in 1906. Bunt was a frail baby and my sister, Catherine, told me they thought he would die. Uncle Oregon Lawton took Mama and Bunt home with him to Greenville, S. C., with hopes that the higher altitude would be beneficial. They stayed with Uncle Oregon for two months and Bunt's health improved. In the meantime, my father, who was never successful as a farmer, decided to go to Abbeville, S. C., and start a building supply company. He immediately built a home to accommodate his growing family. Mama and the children went to Savannah and stayed with her mother while the house was being built. The day finally arrived for their departure by train for Abbeville. A carriage had been ordered to take them and their trunks to the railway station. Bunt was a baby in arms, and Mama was giving him a bottle, prior to departure. The bottle exploded and Bunt was severely cut across his forehead. Fortunately, the carriage awaited -- and Mama rushed Bunt to the doctor to have his head sewed up. Catherine said they delayed the trip to Abbeville until the next day. What she vividly remembers is a tiny lap baby with his head swathed in white bandages.

The Abbeville years were happy years for the family. My father's business was successful, he participated in local city government, and he was a founder of the

Abbeville Building and Loan Association. I had the pleasure of serving as Director, Abbeville County Department of Social Services in 1973-74. It was most interesting to me to meet members of the old Abbeville families who had known my family fifty years previously and still remembered them with affection. Maude Constance Lawton was born in Abbeville on March 11, 1909. Bunt continued to involve himself and Mama in harrowing experiences. One day, he got a hand full of flowers and stuffed them up his nose. Mama went flying down the street, about three blocks, to the doctor's office to have them removed. There was no harm done, so home they went. As soon as she turned her back, Bunt did the same thing again -- and back they flew to the doctor's office.

The next baby arrived in Abbeville on December 25, 1911. Lewis was eight years old. When the children were told by my father early on Christmas morning that they had a baby brother, Lewis asked: "Daddy, will we name him Jesus?" He was given instead the cherished family name of Joseph Maner Lawton.

My sister, Constance, known to all as Conk, had typhoid fever while the family lived in Abbeville. She was a pretty little girl with golden curls. She lost every hair on her head because of the high fever -- and it came back straight. There was a happy ending, however. Fortunately for her -- and for me -- we spent two months at Wrightsville Beach when she was ten and I was five years old. We both had perfectly straight hair when we went. We returned home with very curly hair.

During these good years --1907-1914-- Daddy got a crew of men together and built a number of homes in Abbeville. When Coker College was to be built in Hartsville,

encouraged by Mr. J. J. Lawton, he submitted a bid for the job and was awarded the contract. This venture was successful, and he moved the family in 1914 to Darlington, South Carolina, where I was born. He became a business partner with Mr. T. Baker Haynesworth, Sr., in Florence, S. C., and they had a very successful general contracting construction company. After a few years, the partnership was dissolved and each continued as individual builders. They remained lifelong friends.

We moved to Florence in 1916 and settled in the country again on a 21 acre piece of property my father purchased. In July 1918, my brother, Lewis Turner Lawton, died at the age of fifteen. Lewis was the third child and second son -- a charming young man with many friends among the young and old. Lewis had what was diagnosed as flu and later determined to be spinal meningitis. This was in 1918 --World War I was being fought in Europe. Lewis was athletic, full of life and love of adventure, and had a very out-going personality. He really wanted to be involved in the war in some way. A group of Florence men was going to Virginia for a short encampment. Lewis wanted to go and they wanted him with them. After much persuasion, my father agreed to let Lewis go. He had a grand time -- we had, at one time, a letter he wrote to Mama while he was away. He inquired about the health of the horses and cows, by name, and also each of us. It seems that on the trip home, by train, he slept most of the way with his head pillowed on some newspaper comics. It was believed he picked up the germ in this way. Lewis' death was a terrible shock to my parents and all of the children. After the diagnosis, the household was quarantined -- and the quarantine continued for some weeks after his death. After this traumatic experience, my father rented a large cottage at Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina, and Mama and the children went there in the summer of 1919 for a two months stay. My

father came each weekend from Florence. The following summer we returned to Wrightsville. We had a grand time. The Patterson family visited us for two weeks. Lula Mae Patterson was one year older than I -- and when the family was boarding the trolley to take them to the mainland, I burst into tears. I could not stand the idea that Lula Mae was leaving me. My aunt turned to me and said something I have never forgotten -- and have found to be only too true. "Don't cry, Rosa. The best of friends must part."

I loved the ocean -- and we had long cases made from pillow ticking which could be filled with air. We played in the ocean by the hour and loved floating about on these cushions. I was six -- and one day I floated out to sea. Conk was eleven and valiantly began swimming to my rescue. Wrightsville Beach had a very strong undertow and I was quickly swept beyond her reach. There was a part of an old pier some distance out. It had been separated from shore by a storm some years past. Fishermen would sometimes go out to this abandoned pier in a boat and fish from the pier. Fortunately for me, there were three men on the pier that day. The tide took me to the pier and I was hooked in my bathing suit by one of the fishermen. He held me in place until a companion could bring a boat for my rescue. The beach was lined with people when we got ashore. My sister, Conk, was acclaimed a hero by all for her efforts to save me. The next day, I broke out with chicken pox -- there was no connection, of course, but Joe caught it from me and that ended our summer fun. This was also the summer that Sister (Catherine) had ten of her high school friends, girls and boys, visit her for two weeks. They were all sitting on the banister of the front porch one day when it collapsed. All ten fell over backwards into a bed of oyster shells which were around the front of the house. There were no injuries

except to their high school dignity.

My father loved the ocean and the strand, he hated the long trip to Wilmington and on to Wrightsville Beach by trolley and decided he would find a place in the sun closer to Florence. In 1921, he and Mr. W. J. Wilkins, a Florence architect, drove to Conway, South Carolina, and were directed to Mr. Jim Bryan, General Manager of the Myrtle Beach Farms Company. Mr. Bryan took them to Myrtle Beach to look around. This is what they found. There was a dirt road from Conway to Myrtle Beach. There was also a railroad to Myrtle Beach and a small freight depot at the end of the line. There was no passenger service. The Myrtle Beach Farms Company operated a large country store that sold just about everything, just as Chapin Company Store does today. The Company also owned and operated a large, comfortable, old-fashioned hotel, which served three meals a day. Attached by boardwalk to the hotel was a small, round, pavillion, where dances were occasionally held. There was a boardwalk extending from the hotel to a bathhouse which was located on the strand. Also, on the ocean front, were seven small cottages, owned by Conway residents. This was Myrtle Beach -- no lights, no water system. My father and Mr. Wilkins thought the ocean and strand were the most beautiful they had seen. They were impressed by Mr. Bryan as a business man and gentleman. They discussed their ideas and vision with him and he was willing to do business with them. They returned to Florence and interested several prominent Florence and Hartsville businessmen in buying lots at Myrtle Beach. My father, of course, contracted to build their cottages. The Horry County Court House records show that the Myrtle Beach Farms Company sold four or five lots at Myrtle Beach each year from 1915 to 1921. Lots at that time sold for \$400 and \$500 each. Lots were sold continuously after August, 1921. During the summer of 1921, my father

built thirty cottages. He put in a water system, two windmills, and an electric system, a Lally Plant. These projects were paid for by Myrtle Beach Farms Company. My brother, Edward, operated the light and water system for the Myrtle Beach Farms Company. The next year, my father built fifty cottages. Demand was greater than the supply. My father built a large pavillion on the ocean front for Myrtle Beach Farms Company. He and Mr. Wilkins organized a group of men to form a yacht club. A clubhouse, the first new hotel at Myrtle Beach, with a pier extending into the ocean, was built.

My family had a new house every year for several years. We stayed in each house for one summer; then my father would sell and build another before the next summer season.

In March, 1926, Mr. Jno. T. Woodside of Greenville bought 64,488 acres of land (75 tracts) from Myrtle Beach Farms Company, for the development of Myrtle Beach. Giant strides were made in the development. My father worked closely with the Woodsides and was the only general contractor in the area for a number of years. In 1928, the Woodsides sold their holdings to Chapin Company. The history of Myrtle Beach is well documented from that time.

I claim my father and Mr. Wilkins found Myrtle Beach. It was their vision and hard work which began the development of the Grand Strand as we know it today.

We had a good family life. Mama was the center of our life. She lived for us and my father. She was first up in the morning; she was always fully dressed and beautifully groomed when we saw her first each day at the breakfast table. My father, too, was fastidious about personal appearance. He always wore a coat and tie at the table. I never recall seeing him need a shave or

hair-cut -- and he shined his shoes every day. He was a rather formal man. No child was allowed at the table unless fully dressed and properly groomed. He insisted on politeness from us, even among ourselves. For example -- we all called my oldest brother 'Bubber' except my oldest sister, who called him 'Ed.' Once I was angry with him, probably because he had teased me, which he loved to do. I called him 'Ed' at the table. My father was furious -- and told me that if I couldn't show the proper respect for my brother by calling him 'Bubber,' I could call him 'Mr. Lawton.' I never heard my father, or my three brothers, use profanity or tell an off-color story when we were growing up. None of us ever talked back to our father and the sure way to incur his wrath was for one of us to "sass" our mother. This he would not tolerate.

My oldest brother and sister were out of the home before my time for remembrance began -- either in college, away working, or married. Bunt, Conk, Joe, and I were the four in the home that I remember best. We lived, as usual, in the country, about two miles from the Florence City Schools. Actually, we had a beautiful home on the Cherokee Road in Florence -- now totally built up and a very exclusive residential area. Then, there was only one house nearby, and one at each end of the four mile road. The four of us rode to school together, came home for lunch and returned together, and came home again in the afternoon together. Bunt went away to college, then Conk, and Joe and I were finally left alone to squabble over who would have the car on Friday night. Joe always had the preference!

When the four of us were at home -- I remember most clearly the many times we were sent from the table, one by one, and would all end up in the kitchen. My father would tolerate no foolishness from his

children and as soon as one of us started cutting up, my mother would send us from the room. Mostly, we got the giggles. Joe was a very serious little fellow who loved to hunt and fool around with his horse and dogs. My father encouraged him in all that he enjoyed -- and if Joe killed a squirrel or rabbit, it was prepared and served to Joe and Daddy. Remember, this was long ago, and at that time, we would occasionally have a mouse in the house. We generally had a mouse trap set, out of sight, behind a radiator in the dining room. Whenever a squirrel or rabbit appeared on the table, Bunt delighted in turning around to glance under the radiator. He would then attract my attention or Conk's, and just point to the radiator. This, of course, started the giggles, infuriated Joe and my father, and we would all end up in the kitchen. We all had an exaggerated sense of humor -- and it never took much to set us off. Conk learned from my mother's only sister how to make faces -- unbelievable faces -- and nothing ever amused my father more. Bunt, too, loved to see her go into her act. Whenever anyone was getting the best of her, she would contort her face -- and she had Daddy in the palm of her hand. She does this occasionally now for the amusement of her grandchildren.

My brothers and sisters were very popular in school and in town among the older people. They were all good looking and had attractive personalities. My oldest brother was always a "ladies man" until he married and settled down. Fortunately he was the oldest, and the most money was available when he was growing up. He always had a girl friend, and I have been told he never had a date that he didn't take her flowers or a box of candy. Also, he loved to give expensive gifts. My father adored him, and Bubber always had what he

wanted. Actually, my father had high expectations of each of us. He was contented with my two sisters. To him, they were perfect -- and total successes. Both married fine, Christian gentlemen who were successful in their chosen careers. To my father, this was the ultimate to expect from a daughter. He loved me and his sons and he was proud of us -- but he did not think we lived up to our potential. I think his expectations were too high! I work in the Conway-Myrtle Beach area -- and frequently I meet people who have known and worked with my father and brothers. It fills me with pleasure when I hear of the love their friends and employees had for them. My brother, Edward, worked in the Myrtle Beach area most of his adult life. He was greatly loved by the men who worked under his supervision, business men in the community, and the many people he built houses for.

Our mother died in 1937, when I was 22 years old. This was a tremendous loss to me -- because I was a mama's baby. Our parents had celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary in March before she died in April.

My father married a second time -- Mrs. Kloo Glen Chase of Florence, S. C. He was happily married to her for twenty-five years. After her death, he lived in his home at Murrells Inlet, South Carolina, and enjoyed fishing for the rest of his life. He was a familiar sight in his boat, with a roof, trolling in the Inlet, dressed, as the gentleman he was, in a white dress shirt with a bow tie. He died after a very short illness at age 89.