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POST OFFICE BOX 646

May 30, 1973

Mr. Coy K. Johnston  
4785 Cherrywood Lane, N.E.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30342

Dear Coy:

I am remiss in being so tardy in replying to your letter of March 17, but my mother fell and broke her hip, and there have been a number of other problems that have kept me busy.

I am certainly happy that you are writing the history of the Lawtonville Church. With you as the author, I am sure that the result will be noteworthy, interesting and well done.

Attached is a sketch on Joseph Lawton which contains information that Inez Watson needed in doing sketches on the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives. Some of it may not be proper for your purposes, but you can discard whatever you feel is not of interest. By 1976 I hope to do a fuller account of his life; and when I have, I will certainly send copies of it to you and Bob.

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Also enclosed is a sketch on Colonel Alexander James Lawton which comes from the South Carolina Senate biographies. He was a very interesting and fine old gentleman according to many records that have survived.

You also asked some questions about Dr. James Stoney Lawton, and I am sending you a sketch of him with sources noted.

I also have some data on the Reverend Joseph Alexander Lawton that I will send to you shortly, and I also have further data about John Grimball which may be of interest.

Please excuse my hurried letter, but I wanted to get this data to you as soon as possible.

With all good wishes, I am

Sincerely,

Thomas O. Lawton, Jr.

TOLjr/sby

CC: The Reverend Robert E. H. Peoples

Joseph Lawton, Esq.

Joseph Lawton was born on Oct. 18, 1753, at his father's plantation on Edisto Island. He died on March 5, 1815, at his residence, Mulberry Grove Plantation, St. Peter's Parish, Beaufort District, and is buried in the Lawton Plot at what is now the Robertville Baptist Church, formerly the Black Swamp Baptist Church. Service in three wars are represented in this plot through Joseph Lawton in the Revolution, his son, Col. Alexander J. Lawton in the War of 1812, and his grandson, Capt. Edward P. Lawton in the Confederate War.

He was the son of Captain William Lawton (St. John's Colleton Regiment of Foot, Edisto Island Company) and his third wife, Mary Sams, widow of Paul Grimball, and after Captain Lawton's death wife of Samuel Fickling.

Joseph Lawton married Sarah Robert, daughter of Jacques Robert and Sarah Jaudon Robert on March 18, 1773, at Indian Land. Sarah was the great granddaughter of The Rev. Pierre Robert, first Huguenot minister at St. James Santee in 1686. The Robertville village was named for her family. She was born at St. James Santee on February 6, 1755, and died at the family's summer residence, Transpine, on Oct. 5 1839. She is also buried at Robertville.

During the Revolution Joseph Lawton was Lieutenant of the Black Swamp Company of Foot, in the Regiment of Col. Stephen Bull. In the 1895 minutes of the Savannah River Baptist Association The Rev. Fred Jones states "During the Revolutionary War Joseph Lawton owed his life to a British officer, who was once befriended by him. The officer lost his horse near Mr. Lawton's, and to his surprise the Whig Lawton furnished him one, with the remark ' I am not fighting men, but for principles.' When the Tories betrayed Mr. Lawton, and he was about to be executed by the British, the officer went to the execution through curiosity, and on discovering his benefactor saved his life, with the expression, 'Such a man must not be executed.'"

Records show that Joseph Lawton was a Justice of the Peace for Beaufort District in 1791 and also in 1797; that he was Commissioner of Roads in 1792. He was a member of the South Carolina House of Representatives from St. Peter's Parish Beaufort District in \_\_\_\_\_.

Descendants of Lt. Lawton who have served in the South Carolina Legislature include his son, Col. Alexander J. Lawton, his grandson, Joseph Maner Lawton, his great-grandson, Joseph Maner Lawton, Jr., Dr. Benjamin William Lawton, signer of the Ordinance of Secession; Winston A. Lawton and others including his nephew, Winborn Lawton of Charleston.

Joseph's father was mentioned in the Episcopal and Presbyterian church records of Edisto, and a family record states that he was an Episcopalian before he joined the Black Swamp Baptist Church, where he was a deacon and many times a messenger to the association.

At Mulberry Grove, Joseph Lawton planted rice, indigo and apparently attempted to produce silk. At his death beside the Mulberry Grove Plantation his will, a copy of which is in the Caroliniana Library, mentions planting lands in Mississippi. When the property was sold after the Civil War to the Goethe family, it contained over 5400 acres. It is now two plantations, one called Mimora, owned by R. B. Kirby of Charleston, and the other called Pineland, owned by the John Morel family of Savannah.

Perhaps Joseph Lawton's most distinguished descendants were his grandson, General Alexander Robert Lawton, Quartermaster General of The Confederate States, and subsequently minister to Austria, and his great grandson, General Henry Martyn Robert, author of Rules of Order.

Sketch by Thomas O. Lawton, Jr.

From records and authorities in possession of compiler.

Allendale, S. C.

May 29, 1973

