

June 22, 1980

"LAWTON REUNION" June 28, 1980

"LETTER FROM: REV. DR. PEEPLES (GENEALOGIST)  
ON LAWTON'S"

Dear Mrs. Durham,

Thank you for your letter of the 16th which I received today upon my return to the Island from the Annual Reunion of the Lawton & Allied Families Association in Atlanta, Georgia on June 20-21. While our family does have extensive records of our ancient heritage here in South Carolina, we did suffer massive losses of plantation journals and records, along with fine plantation homes, barns, gins, livestock and property of every kind. Since your ancestor, Erisler Lawton, was the coachman for ROBERT THEMISTOCLES LAWTON of "Blockade House Plantation" near Sylvania, Screven County, Georgia, there are some things that are definitely known and knowable which will add to your understanding of him.

Robert Themistocles Lawton was born Feb. 15, 1807 at Robertville, in St. Peter's Parish, Beaufort District, South Carolina, third child but eldest son of wealthy planter Benjamin Themistocles D'Ion Lawton who was born at Mulberry Grove Plantation, Robertville Dec. 22, 1782 (a younger son of Revolutionary War Lieutenant Joseph Lawton (1753-1815) and his wife Sarah Robert who was a great-granddaughter of the Rev. Pierre Robert, a French Huguenot minister who arrived in S.C. 1686 & founded the Parish of St. James, Jamestown, French Santee.) B.T.D. Lawton married in Savannah, Ga. June 16, 1803 Jane Mosse (1783-1857 daughter of Dr. George Mosse (1742-1808) & his wife, Dorothy Phoebe Norton of the ancient planter families of Norton, Chaplin, Ladson, Fitch & Stanyarne, all dating back into the 17th century here. In late 1810 B.T.D. Lawton decided to emigrate with his family to Mississippi; they crossed Georgia & Mississippi aboard ox-drawn wagons (there were no mules in those days!), settling in the vicinity of present Vicksburg, Mississippi where they planted a crop that spring. But they were dissatisfied with their situation there and returned to Robertville in early 1812. B.T.D. then bought plantation lands some ten miles north of Robertville on the Orangeburg Road and there founded the Town of Lawtonville in 1812 when his son Robert was 5 years old. (Robert's younger brother Alexander Benjamin Lawton & their 3 sisters; Anna, Phoebe Sarah & Martha, also made the trip to Mississippi; their next sister, Charlotte Ester was not born until Nov. 2, 1813, well after the family was settled at Lawtonville; she married in 1830 Captain Edward Harden Peoples (1811-1892) & they are my great-grandparents.) on Feb. 23, 1831 Robert T. Lawton married at Robertville HARRIET CHARLOTTE SINGLETON, born Dec. 10, 1807 at Robertville, daughter of planter Thomas Benjamin Singleton (who had died circa 1808, wealthy slaveholder at the time of his 1788 marriage) & his wife Elizabeth Anne Robert whose father John Robert, wealthy planter, founded Robertville in 1775. Mrs Robert T. Lawton had an older brother: Charles Thomas John Singleton born Jan. 1, 1804 who had married Feb 12, 1824 Robert's first cousin, Miss Sarah Caroline Lawton (1805-1825) & they had an only son: Joseph Lawton Singleton, brilliant orator & lawyer, Colonel in the Confederate States Army, whose son Joseph L. Singleton, Jr. was Lieutenant in the Screven County Guards and in 1880 member of the Georgia House of Representatives. Mrs Lawton's brother Charles T.J. Singleton married (2) Rachel Mary Polhill and had a son Charles T.J. Jr. who married Feb. 3, 1853 Rebecca Rogers (1834-1872), daughter of Ransome Rogers, Sheriff of Screven Co. 1850.) Robert T. & Harriet C. (Singleton) Lawton had 10 children; that the family probably moved to Blockade House circa 1836:

1. Anna Lawton, born July 6, 1832 married Robert Oswald
2. Rosa Lawton, born Feb. 24, 1834 at Lawtonville, married (1) Walter Livingston & (2) Dr. George Baskerville Douglas
3. Benjamin Charles Lawton, born Dec. 1835, died 1844.
4. Willingham Lawton, born 21 March 1838, died Aug. 1839
5. Ella Lawton, born 3 May 1840, died Sept. 1841
6. Thomas Robert Lawton, born Dec. 6, 1842, died 1844
7. Georgia Lawton, born March 31, 1845, married Alexander Eakin Morgan