The Houstouns of Georgia

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Chapter X

SIR GEORGE HOUSTOUN, BARONET,
MAN OF AFFAIRS

CHARACTERISTICS, interests, and talents dissimilar to those of his brothers made the life of George Houstoun diverge to entirely different pursuits. Early in life he chose business rather than politics, although the latter had been the particular interest of his father and elder brother, Patrick. Later in life George Houstoun had conferred upon him honors that proved him to be a man with a strong urge for leadership, and the ability to put that urge into effect. On reviewing his history one may conclude that George Houstoun led a well-balanced life. He was a likable person, as shown by his election to the highest office in nearly every enterprise in which he had membership. His versatility expressed itself in the spheres of commercial, philanthropic, fraternal, civic, and social occupations.

When the younger Patrick Houstoun returned to Georgia, he and George soon must have revived their brotherly friendship which had been interrupted in childhood, and when renewed, existed until the end of the former's life. In 1768 and 1769 Patrick Houstoun was taking a leading part in the Commons House of Assembly, and while living at the home plantation no doubt made his daily horseback ride to town to attend its sessions. One can picture the two brothers discussing the affairs of the colony, the political questions of the day, and private matters in regard to Rosdue. What was most important to the younger brother probably was the advice he received from the elder on his future career.

In the year 1773 George Houstoun acquired through a deed from his mother five hundred acres of land in St. David's Parish. The deed was witnessed and signed by his two brothers, John and William.¹ Through the years George Houstoun became the owner of considerably more property.

¹ Copy of deed in possession of the heirs of the late Mrs. Macartan C. Kollock of Atlanta.
When quite a young man George Houstoun was interested in military affairs. On April 7, 1774, he received his commission as second lieutenant in Captain Thomas Netherclift's company of Foot Militia and on June 4 he took the oath of allegiance and supremacy. Savannah was a military colony from its inception; so it is natural to conclude that George Houstoun's connection with the militia of the province did not begin with the receipt of his commission, but that probably he was promoted from the ranks.

Before George Houstoun entered upon a business vocation, he had had some preparation for a profession. The first hint that has been found to his adult life reveals that when he was twenty-four years of age he was called in as an attorney by the members of the firm of Kelsall, Darling, and Munro, who advertised in the *Georgia Gazette* of March 16, 1768, that their efforts to collect funds due them had proved entirely futile and they had retained George Houstoun as their attorney to begin suit "without respect to persons, to collect bonds, notes and accounts due."

In the colonial period indigo became one of the staple commodities produced on many plantations in coastal Georgia, and its cultivation continued into the next century, before it became profitable to produce that article. In January, 1774, George Houstoun was sufficiently established financially to own a plantation; his advertisement appears in the *Georgia Gazette* for an overseer "who understands the management of an Indigo plantation; he must be well recommended for his honesty, sobriety and knowledge of his business; such a one will meet with encouragement by applying to Geo. Houstoun."

Serving as attorney could not have sustained the interest of George Houstoun very long as he soon became one of "the leading merchants in Savannah." Just when he changed professions has not been ascertained. By 1774 he was established in a business which prospered well over ten years. If he had not started his business partnership before 1769, he at least must have taken a lively interest in the attitude of the Savannah merchants, who,
on September 19, 1769*, had a meeting at which they passed unanimously resolutions to "import no articles that could be manufactured or produced at home."

It is quite likely that George Houstoun had formed a business connection before 1774, for the partnership of George Houstoun and Company was one of several firms engaged in mercantile business in Savannah at the same time. There was, too, noticeable rivalry, judging from the advertisements of the various concerns. Houstoun's firm was a regular advertiser in the weekly newspaper announcing for sale early in 1774 a quantity of "Indico seed," Lisbon and Port Wines "by the dozen," and a "fresh supply of goods" to be sold on "reasonable terms." Later in the same year the Georgia Gazette carried the following announcement for George Houstoun and Company: "Have just imported from Boston by way of Charlestown white, blue, green and drab colored plains, striped duffels, white, scarlet and striped flannels; saddlery; window glass; white lead, Spanish, brown and yellow oker ground in oil; linseed oil and white wine, vinegar in jugs, an assortment of nails, iron pots, skillets, frying pots, grid irons, etc."

One of the rival merchants, John Foullis, made an alluring appeal to the ladies of the town, offering "a neat and Genteel Assortment of European Goods, suitable for present and approaching season [spring]. Also an assortment of Glasgow goods." Later in the month, Foullis notified his customers that he could offer them "linens, dowals, checks, check handkershiefs, and check hollands, figured dimities, printed linens, and cotton." As both firms advertised foreign goods for sale, it is evident an agreement had been reached among the Savannah merchants and the embargo on foreign goods had been lifted.

Sometime before or during 1774 George Houstoun and Ann Moodie became engaged, as their marriage occurred in that year. Both Ann Moodie's father and mother were from Scotland and were born in Fifeshire. Their marriage was a romantic one. "When about twenty-one years of age, Thomas Moodie who was of the

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5 Ibid., February 2, 9, 16; March 23, 1774.
6. Ibid., March 2, 23; August 31, 1774.
Laird of Cocklaw, Parish of Beath, Fifeshire, ran away with a beautiful girl, Miss [Jean] McKenzie, and later they emigrated to America. Their daughter, Ann, was born in 1749 before they left Scotland. Miss McKenzie's mother was a Miss Crawford, of the Rhodes, an estate near New Berwick within twenty miles of Edinburgh.”7 Thomas Moodie was Deputy Secretary to Governor Wright, and on August 14, 1774, signed “By His Excellency's Command,” a proclamation, prohibiting the people of Savannah “to assemble or hold meetings under colour of pretense of consulting together for the Redress of Grievances or imaginary Grievances.”8

It is not difficult to imagine the preparations made by Ann Moodie for her wedding and to picture her purchasing the cloth for her trousseau from Houstoun and Company. One even gets a fairly intimate glimpse of Ann Moodie's trousseau. It is known where she may have bought some of her hats and gowns. A Mrs. Parker, a Savannah dressmaker, in the spring of 1774 notified her patrons through the columns of the *Georgia Gazette* that she had taken part of Miss Molly Bowley's house “opposite the church” for the purpose of making “Sacks and Coats, Brunswicks, Fiscuits, Corsican Hats and Bonnets.” Her garments, she announced, were to be offered “at most reasonable prices.”9

While the bride was busy with her wedding plans, the groom found himself in trouble with the Court, but he had company in his predicament, and good company, too. The trouble was caused by failure to answer a jury summons on October 11. As a result His Majesty's General Court notified Houstoun, George Brown, Archibald Bulloch, James Habersham, Jr., and John Martin that they had been fined a sum not to exceed four pounds. The fine was to be waived in case the defaulters “do shew good & sufficient cause” within thirty days.10

The Moodie-Houstoun wedding took place on December 14, and the Bible record indicates the ceremony was performed in

7. Family paper, unsigned and undated, in the possession of the heirs of Mrs. Macartan C. Kollock of Atlanta.
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Christ Church by the Reverend Haddon Smith. At the time of their marriage George Houstoun was thirty years old and Ann Moodie was twenty-six. The newspaper notice of their marriage was brief. “Thursday last,” it read, “was married in this place Mr. George Houstoun, Merchant, son of the late Sir Patrick Houstoun, Baronet, to Miss Ann Moodie, daughter of Thomas Moodie, Esq.”

The partnership known as George Houstoun and Company had been a success, but Houstoun was anxious to go it “on his own.” Consequently when the terms of partnership expired, they were not renewed. Instead Houstoun went into business by himself. Within a month after his marriage he had invited the customers of the late partnership to do business with him. That Houstoun was called on to assist with community affairs is shown by the files of the Georgia Gazette. For example, in April, 1775, he served with James Habersham and Dr. John Irvine as an assignee of the estate of Timothy Lowton. He carried on his thriving business, and he continued his advertisements in the newspaper announcing in one issue the arrival from London of “an assortment of goods . . . suitable to the season . . . on reasonable terms.”

While Houstoun was carrying on his business enterprise, he was drawn into the political arena. Resentment against Great Britain was waxing warmer and warmer everywhere, and Savannah, where the Provincial Council met, of course felt the reverberation. An association was formed in January, 1775, by forty-five of the deputies to choose delegates to the Continental Congress. George Houstoun was among those who signed the twelve provisions, the signers agreeing to associate themselves “under the sacred ties of virtue, honour and love of country.”

11. The first item in George Houstoun’s Bible is the record of his marriage. The missing words, impossible to decipher, were supplied by the newspaper: “George Houstoun was married to Ann Moodie, daughter of Thomas Moodie on Thursday [sic] 1774 in Savannah [sic] in [sic] by the rector of Christ Church.” The Bible is in the possession of the heirs of his lineal descendants, the children of the late Mrs. Macartan C. Kollock of Atlanta. The Bible is hereafter cited Houstoun Family Bible.


13. Ibid., January 11, April 19, May 17, 1775.
Amid his newfound happiness, business success, and the turbulence existing in Savannah, George Houstoun lost his mother. She died in February, 1775. Shortly afterward he was called upon to act with his brother John as executor of her estate. The month following her death, the executors, pursuant to her will, advertised for sale the house she had lately occupied, all the household furniture, and other effects. The George Houstouns' first child was born the following September, and was named Jean, and in January, 1777, a son, whom they called Patrick, was born, both in their Savannah home.

For three years George Houstoun was allied with those who later were termed "rebels," and apparently he was carried along with the enthusiasts of the Patriot cause; but after the Revolution he suffered the experience of having his estates confiscated by the victors. George Houstoun's attitude resembled, in its uncertainty, that of his brother Patrick. Whether or not he was heart and soul for the Patriot cause at first, when many were declaring themselves in open rebellion, is difficult to determine. He certainly attended the meeting at Mrs. Cuyler's on Friday, June 13, 1775. Men were present then who, in the ensuing years, were so divided that they were avowed enemies of each other. When the Council of Safety was formed later in the month, on June 22, George Houstoun was one of the fourteen members. By July a Provincial Congress had been formed. It held its first meeting on July 4th in the Long Room of Tondee's Tavern, and George Houstoun was one of the elected representatives from the town and district of Savannah. After the organization of the Congress, the members adjourned to the Presbyterian meeting house on Ellis Square, where the Reverend John Joachim Zubly preached a sermon on the "alarmig state of American affairs." Upon the re-convening of the Congress at Tondee's Tavern, the members passed a resolution of thanks to Dr. Zubly for his excellent sermon and a committee composed of five members, two of whom were the brothers George and John Houstoun, was appointed to convey the message to the Reverend Mr. Zubly. The next day George Houstoun again served on a committee of the Congress

15. Revolutionary Records of Georgia, I, 232. Mrs. Jeremiah Cuyler's home was on the southeast corner of Broughton and Bull streets.
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to act with seven other members to carry a message to Governor Wright requesting him to “appoint a day of Fasting and Prayer throughout the Province on account of the disputes subsisting between America and the parent state.”

A week later the Provincial Congress adopted the Association, which had resolved that the rights and liberties of America depended “under God, on the firm union of the inhabitants in preparing for their safety, expressing alarm at the design of the Ministry to raise revenue in America, and shocked by the bloody scene now acting in the Massachusetts Bay, and associating themselves to carry out the recommendations of the Continental Congress and the Provincial Convention until a reconciliation could be obtained between Great Britain and America.” By resolution fourteen members, one of whom was George Houstoun, were appointed to present the Association to the inhabitants to be signed. The Congress imposed expediency on its committee, directing it to give an account to the general committee of all who declined to sign. George Houstoun continued a member of the Council of Safety at least through November, 1775, when his name is recorded in the minutes of the meeting on the third day of the month, affixed with an asterisk referring to a note which states, “afterwards joined the Royalists.” Another member, however, Basil Cowper, who had frequently served on committees of the Provincial Congress with George Houstoun, was placed in the same category. Later in the month, George Houstoun declined taking his seat in the Provincial Congress, although he had been formerly elected one of the Representatives of the Town and District of Savannah. Lachlan McGillivray was chosen the member “in his room.” George Houstoun’s political desertion did not come for some time. Following the Declaration of Independence his name appeared on the bills of credit in the form of certificates issued to raise funds to equip the province of Georgia with arms and ammunition.

16. Revolutionary Records of Georgia, I, 231.
17. Ibid., 72, 253.
18. Georgia—1776—No. 5991

This certificate entitles the bearer to Four Spanish Milled Dollars, or the value thereof, according to Resolution of Congress.

Jas Habersham
E. Telfair
Geo Houstoun

Wm. Ewen
Wm OBryan
Seal.

On July 19, George Houstoun, his brother John, and three others, were chosen by the Council of Safety as commissioners for the White Bluff Road. If that appointment was not the motive for George Houstoun's acquiring a plantation at White Bluff, something else influenced him, for in less than two years he was possessed of five hundred acres there situated on a creek which empties into the Vernon River. The plantation was named Retreat. The house on high land, visible from the road, was built in the simple style of the period, a story and a half. A piazza on high brick pillars was across the front of the house and partly on the sides. The hall extended through the house with large rooms on each side. In the rear of the house was a flower garden with beds bordered in large sweet boxwood, and massive live oak trees grew back of the garden. There on January 24, 1778, Ann Marion, the third child of the George Houstouns, was born.

In the early part of January, 1778, the Houstoun family had the distinction of having one of its members, John Houstoun, elected Governor of the newly formed state. His brother George was still associated with the rebel cause. On February 23, the executive council ordered a special watch for the protection of the town naming "twenty respectable inhabitants" to serve for that purpose and George Houstoun was listed with the score of citizens appointed to that trustworthy post of duty; "two of them were to meet and sit by rotation in some convenient house in Town every night from nine o'clock . . . until Day Break." After nine o'clock every person passing the street was to be led by the several sentinels in the town to the two specially appointed inhabitants if the countersign could not be given. If the person was not a soldier, he was to be discharged at the discretion of the committee, or committed to the guard until morning when a report was to be made to the Governor. Each morning the Town Major was required to inform the two men who were to be on duty that night of the countersign issued by the Governor.20

From what transpired later it seems to have been in 1779 that George Houstoun showed a leaning toward the views of the Loyalists. In that summer he was living with his family at White

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19. Description from the late Mrs. Macartan C. Kollock of Atlanta, a lineal descendant, who lived there in her childhood.
20. Revolutionary Records of Georgia, I, 324; II, 42, 43.
Bluff, as his fourth child, George, was born at Retreat on July 8th. By the end of the year Savannah was in the hands of the British, and it must have been from that time on that George Houstoun was in favor with the Crown adherents. Many have tried to analyze that inexplicable situation, but one writer succeeded in arousing sympathy for those throughout the thirteen states who were guilty of vacillation. He expresses it most aptly: “To change from one side to the other, both during the controversy which preceded the shedding of blood and at various periods of the war was not uncommon. . . . There was the absence of fixed principles, not only among people in the common walks of life, but in many of the prominent personages of the day.”

The hour of retribution came to those who wavered in their loyalties. George Houstoun felt the power of the law when on May 4, 1782, the State Assembly, sitting in Augusta, passed the Confiscation and Banishment Act, listing two hundred and seventy-eight men and decreeing their banishment from the state forever. His name, with that of Patrick Houstoun, was found thereon. On June 13, his brother William bought one of George’s confiscated estates of 500 acres on the Great Ogeechee River for seven hundred and fifty pounds. The White Bluff Plantation, fortunately for posterity’s sake, escaped confiscation. A petition was sent by George Houstoun on July 24, 1782, to the House of Assembly. He asked to be restored to the rights of citizenship, and the Assembly appointed John Houstoun and John Wereat to prepare a bill for that provision. Apparently the bill was passed, since on August 3 George Houstoun was listed among those amerced eight per cent on all of their property. With the war over rancor and hate gradually subsided, and “the children of the winners and the children of the expatriated losers . . . lived again in the newly formed state . . . and all helped in the up-building of the commonwealth.”

22. Revolutionary Records of Georgia, I, 375, 456; III, 141, 142, 178.
Life certainly began anew for George Houstoun. After his restoration to citizenship his interests extended, his business continued to flourish, and he showed himself once more a man of spirit. The psychological effect was decidedly marked, and his unusual gift for leadership is discernible in numerous activities for the development of Savannah.

In the years intervening between the birth of George and Ann Houstoun's fourth child and the day of George's freedom from the accusation of disloyalty to his state, two more children were added to the family circle. A son, Thomas, was born on January 15, 1781, but for the first time sorrow came to the household at Retreat, as the infant died five months later, on June 16. The birth, on October 12, 1782, of the sixth child, named John, is recorded as those above in the family Bible. He lived only three years.\(^{24}\)

Besides his other accomplishments, George Houstoun had acquired the skill of horsemanship, as attested by his well-filled stable and membership in a hunt club. His advertisements in the weekly newspapers often referred to his horses. One advertisement concerned a dun-colored horse which had strayed from the "subscriber's pasture at White Bluff" and was described as being "13 hands high, white tail and mane, with brand," and for the return of which a reward of four dollars was offered. Later a reward of twenty guineas was offered by George Houstoun for the return of a "gray mare, a strawberry Roan, a Black Horse and a Sorrel Horse" which had been stolen from his stable at White Bluff.\(^{25}\)

The little suburban resort "on the salts"\(^{26}\) had a social life all its own. In 1783 it boasted a club house, frequented by surrounding plantation owners and by residents of Savannah, and used by both communities. Plans for a society were outlined in the newspaper of December 18, 1783, and the announcement offers

\(^{24}\) In a collection of mourning rings in the Baltimore Museum of Art is one that presumably belonged to Ann, Lady Houstoun. On the outside rim is inscribed: "Robert Moodie [her brother] ob. 9 March 1789, AE 36," and engraved underneath is "J. Houstoun ob. 6 Sepr 1785 AE 3 years."

\(^{25}\) *Gazette of the State of Georgia*, August 28, 1783; May 5, 1794.

\(^{26}\) A term used by Savannahians indicating residence on a salt river.
PRISCILLA HOUSTOUN
1784-1837

ROBERT JAMES MOSSMAN HOUSTOUN
1785-1818

From the miniatures by David Boudon owned by Miss Edith Duncan Johnston, of Savannah, Georgia
a glimpse of men's social and recreational activities during the years following the Revolution. The members were to be “Men of Intelligence and good Character,” and by meeting together and “joyously joining in the Sports of the Chase,” they would “probably set an Example of Benevolence and improvement in society. The society,” the notice continued, “would encourage an improvement in the breed of horses and beagles”; and those members “who from the Professions are compelled to a sedentary life” would “experience the greatest possible Advantages from the Exercise.” Twenty-one sportsmen, including George Houstoun and his two brothers, James and William, “upon Principles of Honor and Benevolence” announced that they were forming themselves into a society to be “Styled the HUNTING CLUB,” and they agreed on a set of rules which were: meetings to be held every second Saturday, beginning that week at the White Bluff Club House, when “a Place would be fixed for a House”; every member had to furnish a beagle for the use of the club; persons wishing to become members were to apply in writing, their names to be balloted for at the next meeting, “and admitted, if there shall be no negative.” There would always be a president for the day to be taken in rotation, and refreshments would be “only Bread, a Round of Beef, Beefsteaks or a Ham and a Case of Liquors to consist of Rum Brandy and Geneva.”

In 1784 while still engaged in his mercantile business George Houstoun was again beginning to evince an interest in civic affairs. The State Legislature’s act of February, 1785, permitting the erection of a hospital for sick seamen, included George Houstoun in its appointment of commissioners, but the fulfillment of that enterprise was delayed for many years. In the year 1789, Sir George Houstoun resigned the office. It was only a few months after his hospital appointment that he received the news from abroad of the death of his dearly loved brother Patrick, in Bath, England. After acting as the executor of his brother's estate, he lost no time in following the precedent of his father and older brother in notifying the Lyon-King-at-Arms of his

27. Gazette of the State of Georgia, December 18, 1783.
28. George Houstoun was a regular advertiser in the weekly newspaper. In Gazette of the State of Georgia, January 1, 1784, he announced he had for sale a general assortment of European and East India goods.
29. See ante, 129.
claim to the baronetcy, which was officially acknowledged. His name has been recorded thereafter in documents, newspapers, historical writings and some official papers, with the prefixed title. On one occasion his title disqualified him for a municipal appointment.\(^{30}\)

In the years 1784 and 1785, the family circle of the George Houstouns increased by the addition of two more children. Priscilla, their seventh child, named for her paternal grandmother, was born on February 8, 1784, and her younger brother, Robert James Mossman, arrived on April 12, 1785. Both were born in Savannah, and both lived to maturity. When they were eleven and ten years old, respectively, their miniatures were painted by David Boudon, "Linner of Geneva Switzer-land."\(^{31}\) Boudon, who lived a few years in Savannah, was a French refugee, and worked also in Charles Town in 1795 and 1796. The Houstoun miniatures were done in May and June, 1795. Boudon painted miniatures of the James River planters,\(^{32}\) and later went to live in Pittsburgh.

At the age of forty-two, Sir George Houstoun decided to close his business house, the inference being that in addition to achieving success in the commercial field, he had inherited a large share of his brother Patrick’s estate, and could retire and enjoy life in other forms of activity. In March, 1786, he was calling on his creditors to discharge their debts to him, as he intended to close out his business, but his desire in that regard did not become a reality until several years later.

It was the custom in that period of the state’s history for the prominent men of the times to follow in the footsteps of their fathers in becoming owners of many plantations and Sir George Houstoun was no exception to the rule. Among his plantations

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30. See \textit{post}, 144.
31. The miniatures are owned by the author. They were preserved in the family of Mrs. George Jones Kollock, their great-niece. On the back of the frame of the girl’s picture was written in a handwriting, other than Mrs. Kollock’s, “Aunt R. Moodie Houstoun.” As “little Moo” died in 1792 at the age of four, obviously the likeness was not hers. It seemed only reasonable to assume that the miniatures were of the brother and sister who were only fourteen months apart in age.
32. An exhibition of Boudon miniatures was held at the Virginia Museum of Art in Richmond, Virginia, in December, 1941, and among them were many eighteenth-century James River planters.
was one on the eastern end of Hutchinson's Island, on the Savannah River directly opposite the town. Although his father's slaves were exempted in 1755 from working on the roads, there was included in the presentments of the Grand Jury in October, 1786, a recommendation "to the court to order that, in the future, the Negroes belonging to Sir George Houstoun and James Mossman, Esq., on Hutchinson's Island, liable to work on the roads, be employed on the first division of the Southwest road."\(^{34}\) Plantation life as well as business was still occupying the Baronet's attention in 1787. In April he was buying rice seed from Joseph Habersham, who wrote to his brother John on April 9: "Sir George Houstoun is to have 60 or 70 bushels of rice seed as soon as our accots. are settled, I suppose."\(^{35}\) The same month, Sir George Houstoun was advertising the fact that eight Negro men had run away from his plantation on Hutchinson's Island. He gave descriptions as means of identification and offered a reward for their capture.

Sir George Houstoun numbered among his friends and associates the most prominent men of Savannah and of the state. In addition to those previously mentioned, he was frequently associated with William LeConte, elder brother of the two famous scientists, Doctor John LeConte and Doctor Joseph LeConte of Liberty County.

The year 1787 marked the time when Sir George Houstoun first received recognition in Savannah as a leader. Early in the year he was made Chairman of Commissioners of Pilotage. The position was no sinecure, for the commissioners were entrusted with the safeguarding of the shipping of the port of Savannah, with fixing the price of pilots' charge, and the matter of providing incoming vessels with pilots for their safe arrival at the docks. Shortly after mid-February Houstoun notified the members of his commission to meet at the Coffeehouse on February 24 to receive "proposals from those who are inclined to under-

33. A lot marked "Sir George Houstoun's" is shown on a map reproduced in facsimile for J. F. Minis of Savannah, for private circulation, by Stanford's Geographical Establishment, London. (In office of City Engineer, City Hall, Savannah).

34. *Gazette of the State of Georgia*, October 19, 1786.

take the pilotage of the port of Savannah” and “to contract with a proper person to repair the lighthouse on Tybee.”

In 1790, when the Congress voted a sum to repair the Tybee lighthouse, Houstoun and his commissioners informed the public of that action. Sir George was still with the Commissioners of Pilotage in 1791, for early in that year he advertised for bids to undertake the removal of wreckage and other obstructions from the river.

In the year 1787 the George Houstoun family was living in its town residence. On February 26 of that year the ninth child was born and was registered in the family Bible by the name William. The child’s life was destined to be short, as he lived only until the age of five years.

The next year Sir George Houstoun found that his British title was a handicap in civic affairs. Savannah was placed under the authority of seven wardens elected by the proprietors of lots or houses, one warden for each ward, according to an act of the legislature which had met in Augusta the previous month. In March Sir George Houstoun was elected the representative from Derby Ward, but when his name was returned by the clerk with the title “baronet,” he was not commissioned. However, Sir George turned the tables, because at the next annual election for town wardens when he was again chosen from the same ward, he “declined acting,” and Robert Woodhouse was elected “in his room.”

Steadily Sir George Houstoun rose to a position of high command in the town’s activities. In April, 1788, he was elected vice-president of the Union Society, a charitable organization then nearly fifty years old. The Union Society had been incorporated by an act of the legislature in 1786. Its antecedent was the St. George, a club of Scotsmen formed in 1750, for the purpose of supporting orphans, and the Union Society continued as its own the object of the parent club. The election of Sir George Houstoun as an officer of that organization was announced in the Gazette of the State of Georgia on April 24, 1788. The members

37. Ibid., April 15, 1790, March 31, 1791. The other members of the commission were Leonard Cecil, John Wallace, and Robert Bolton.
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met at the Coffeehouse and "celebrated the day with harmony and sociability which has ever distinguished the Society." When Sir George Houstoun was elevated in 1789 to the presidency of the society, the Georgia Gazette, having a few months previously resumed its original name, reported "the members of the UNION SOCIETY met at the Coffeehouse and celebrated their 39th Anniversary. After the business was dispatched the members (among them were several upwards of 60 years of age) enjoyed themselves with an excellent dinner and passed the day with their usual festivity. The following gentlemen were elected officers for the current year: Sir George Houstoun, Bart. President; Hon. Noble Wimberly Jones, Esq. Vice President; David Montaigut, Esq. Secretary; George Basil Spencer, Esq. Assistant Secretary; Mr. Lewden and Mr. Fahm, Stewards."

Sir George continued his membership in the society after his term of office expired, thereafter serving on numerous committees. If a member absented himself from the "Anniversary Meeting," according to the rules he was required to pay a fine of one dollar. At the quarterly meeting of the society held at the Filature on June 3, 1793, Houstoun gave a satisfactory excuse for non-attendance at the previous anniversary meeting and "was admitted." The members also were required to make donations for "schooling the children and other Expenses of the Society." The record shows that on several occasions Sir George Houstoun adhered to the requirements. In 1789 Sir George Houstoun was made a Justice of the Peace for Chatham County. The Georgia Gazette of December 31, 1789, published his appointment for the White Bluff District with "Nathaniel Adams, James Houstoun, and Peter Henry Morel, Esqrs."

The principles and teachings of Freemasonry seem to have appealed more to Sir George Houstoun than to the other Houstoun men, for while his father and his four brothers were all members of Solomon's Lodge, Sir George was the only one who was selected to hold office, according to existing records. At the close

38. Adelaide Wilson, Historic and Picturesque Savannah (1889), 27, 82, 83.
40. Minutes of the Union Society . . . From 1750-1858 . . . . (Savannah, Georgia, 1860), 1-31 passim.
of the year 1789, he was elected to the highest post in the Masonic order, that of Grand Master of the Grand Lodge in Georgia, an office which he held for three years. Mention has already been made of his father's entrance into the Lodge in October, 1734, but it can be added here that the Lodge at one time almost passed out of existence, and was kept alive through the membership and efforts of seven members, one of whom was Sir George's father. The early records were lost; so the time that the Houstoun brothers joined the Lodge is unknown, except that before the Revolution Sir Patrick, sixth baronet, George, John, and James Houstoun were all members, and later on William was initiated. In 1785 Solomon's Lodge was reorganized, the English order was abandoned and the Lodge was reconstituted, at which time Sir George Houstoun was one of the first officers to be installed when he was made Worshipful Master. In that period of its history, the meetings of the Lodge were held at Brown's Coffeehouse. Sir George Houstoun was next elected to the office of Senior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of Georgia, an office he held for two years.

Gradually Sir George Houstoun was being singled out as eligible for positions of higher trust in the Society of Masons in Georgia. He was elected Deputy Grand Master at a "Quarterly Communication of the Grand Lodge of Georgia" held in Savannah in 1788 and "on December 27 that being the day of the General Communication" he was invested with the insignia of his office at Brother Copp's Long Room in Savannah. "He and the other incoming officers were exhorted by the Grand Master in Warm and affectionate terms to a pointed discharge of their respective duties." At last Sir George Houstoun reached the top rung of the ladder in Masonry. On December 5, 1789, he was elected Grand Master of all the Lodges in Georgia, and was presented by the Lodge with the Grand Master's jewel. In December of the following year he was re-elected Grand Master, and then

41. See ante, 29.
42. William Bordley Clarke, Early and Historic Freemasonry in Georgia (Savannah, 1924). (Hereafter cited Freemasonry in Georgia.)
43. Georgia Gazette, December 11, 1788; January 15, 1789; December 10, 1789; and December 9, 1790.
came the great event in his life. In May, 1791, the first President of the United States made a tour of the Southern states, and during the few days General Washington spent in Savannah he was visited by a delegation of the Grand Lodge of Georgia, eight of whom belonged to Solomon's Lodge. On Saturday, May 14, the members gathered at Brown's Coffeehouse and then marched to the Tavern on the northwest corner of State and Barnard streets, which had been given to the President for his use while in the town. It devolved upon Sir George Houstoun, Baronet, as Grand Master of Georgia to deliver the address of welcome to "Brother Washington":

The Grand Master, Officers and Members of the Grand Lodge of Georgia, beg leave to congratulate you on your arrival to this city;

Whilst your exalted character claims the respect and deference of all men, they, from the benevolence of Masonic principles, approach you with the familiar declaration of fraternal affection.

Happy indeed that Society, renowned for its antiquity and pervading influence over the enlightened world, which, having ranked a Frederic at its head, can now boast of a Washington as a brother—a Brother who is justly hailed the Redeemer of his Country, and by his conduct in public and private life has evinced to Monarchs, that true majesty consists not in splendid royalty, but in intrinsic worth.

With these sentiments, they rejoice at your presence in this state, and in common with their fellow citizens, greet you thrice welcome, flattering themselves that your stay will be made agreeable.

May the Great Architect of the Universe preserve you, whilst engaged in the work allotted you on earth, and long continue you the brightest pillar of our temple; and, when the supreme fiat shall summon you hence, they pray the Mighty I am may take you into his holy keeping.

The President neatly "covered the ground" in his very brief reply.

The formal ceremonies being concluded, the Grand Master in-

44. Clarke, Freemasonry in Georgia, 101.
The Houstouns of Georgia

introduced to the President the Right Worshipful Past Grand Master, officers and members.  

In December, 1791, Sir George was re-elected Grand Master for the ensuing year. The next annual election was a memorable occasion. The *Georgia Gazette* gives an interesting report of the event. The meeting was held on Thursday, December 27, "in the great public room" (presumably the Filature) on the anniversary of St. John the Evangelist, and was attended "by all the Lodges of the City and the Free and accepted Ancient York Masons from all parts of the world, in business in town." The Right Worshipful William Stephens was instituted Grand Master of all the Lodges in Georgia as successor to Sir George Houstoun, "who was pleased to resign." All of the officers of the different Lodges were present and after the ceremonies all repaired to Christ Church, where a sermon was preached. They finished the day with a dinner to which one hundred sat down.

A tradition from the older members of Solomon's Lodge is that the Bible presented to the Lodge by General Oglethorpe in "1733/34" was preserved by the Houstoun family during the Revolution. Inasmuch as Sir George was considered an adherent of the Loyalist cause between 1779 and 1783, it seems safe to conjecture that it was at his home at White Bluff that the treasured relic was hidden during that perilous time.

Sir George Houstoun's efforts to retire from business were futile up to the year 1790 when he was still endeavoring to sell plantations. Among his debtors were some who had been under obligation to him since before the Revolutionary War. He was rather peremptory in calling on his creditors whom he notified through the *Georgia Gazette* that unless satisfactory settlement was made he would be "under the disagreeable necessity of placing their bonds or accounts in the hands of an attorney. . . ." In the same issue of the *Georgia Gazette* Sir George urged those


47. *Georgia Gazette*, January 10, 1793.

48. March 4, 1790.
who had not declared their claims against the estate of his late brother, Sir Patrick, to do so at once. The elder Houstoun had been dead five years and his executor was anxious to settle his estate.

In the year 1790, Savannah, which then had a population of 2,300 inhabitants, was a growing town. It had been incorporated the previous year, and in October the city fathers took under consideration a provision for future extension. They appointed commissioners to “lay off into lots certain parts of the Common appurtenant to the city, and for disposing of same.” Included among the nine commissioners was “Sir George Houstoun Bart.”

Part of the Common was the territory south of South Broad Street, which up to 1790 and later, was the town’s limit. Another reason for laying off the Common was to relieve the property owners from taxes, and their consent had to be gained before there could be an enactment. It took some time to obtain permission of the lot holders, and an ordinance was not passed until September 23, 1791. The matter was then put into the hands of the nine commissioners who employed surveyors to establish and fix the wards and to draw a correct plan of the town. Sir George Houstoun’s brother John was the mayor under whom he served as commissioner for a short period.

After reviewing the active part which he took in civic matters, there can be a glimpse into the private life of Sir George Houstoun in the year 1791. He no doubt felt the need of recreation and the revivifying effects of an ocean voyage. He also had ties that drew him to the north. His brother, William, was married and living in New York, and his two sons, Patrick, nearly fifteen years of age, and George, twelve years old, were at school somewhere in the vicinity of that city. He was away from Savannah over two months, so that his vacation on land must have lasted at least five weeks. From the letter that follows it is seen that his journey carried him as far north as Boston. He must have taken the trip alone, for there were too many little children at home for their mother to leave behind and accompany

49. *Georgia Gazette*, October 7, 1790.
50. See post, 277.
him. The letter was written to his second daughter, then thirteen years old. Sir George's eldest child Jean, at that time, was sixteen; Ann, thirteen; Priscilla was seven and a half; Robert, six and a half; William, four and a half; and little "Moo" (Rachel Moodie), the baby of the family, three years and six months. The Miss Bayard referred to was the sister of Mrs. William Houstoun.

The Savannah paper announced the departure of Sir George Houstoun on August 15: "On Monday, sailed for New York, the brig Eliza, Capt. Burham, Sir George Houstoun Bart.," followed by a list of other passengers. After he had been north a week or so, the affectionate father wrote to his daughter Ann Marion:

New York 20th Sept. 1791

My Dear Daughter

I yesterday received your Letter which I assure you gave me great pleasure. I see you remember my orders, I shall by next opp'ty. expect a packet from Jane and also another from you. Tell my Dear pet that I do as she says. I have had several sweet kisses from Miss Bayard, and I shall give you all a good share of them when we meet. I saw a young Lady in Boston who I would have kissed for your sake, she has your exact face but full as tall as Miss Glen. Mrs Houstoun thinks that both you and Jane have made a mistake on your shoe measurements, she thinks them quite too large, yours in particular being as long as Jenny's, she therefore thinks it best to have but one pair of each, then if I can get them in time shall go by this opp'ty. and if they fit you must write to your Aunt & she will have more made for you, kiss my dear Priscilla Robert Will and Moo for me. I wrote a letter to you and Jane before I went to Boston which I hope you will receive. I expect your brothers over today I long much to see them, it being now three weeks since I saw them,

I am my dear Annie
Your affe. Father

Sir George came home the latter part of October and the Georgia Gazette of October 27, 1791, announced "since its last issue," Sir George Houstoun had returned from the north.

51. Georgia Gazette, August 18, 1791.
52. Original owned by Miss Susan M. Kollock of Atlanta, Georgia.
Two months after his return to Savannah, Sir George Houstoun was called upon to assume new duties and responsibilities. Bethesda Orphan House had been under the care of the Reverend George Whitefield, its founder, until his death on September 30, 1770. His will disclosed that he left the estate of Bethesda to his great friend and helper, "that most elect Lady, that Mother in Israel, that mirror of true and undefiled Religion, the Right Honourable Selina Countess of Huntingdon." On accepting the trust Lady Huntingdon placed in charge of the school several superintendents, some of whom were priests of the Church of England. Her selections were generally unfortunate. In 1778 the Georgia Assembly declared the Countess an alien by passing an act making her title legal in Georgia during her life, and at the same time appointed trustees to manage Bethesda. The death of the Countess in June, 1791, concluded the Trust, and a new act was passed by the Assembly in December, making the same trustees a corporate body to do all things "necessary and beneficial for carrying the original intention of the institution into full effect." The Reverend John Johnson was the incumbent at Bethesda at the time of the Countess's death. The original trustees who were reappointed as the Body Corporate were Sir George Houstoun, President; William Stevens, William Gibbons, Sr., Joseph Habersham, Joseph Clay, Jr., William Gibbons, Jr., John Morel, Josiah Tattnall, Jr., John Milledge, James Whitefield, George Jones, Jacob Waldburger and James Jackson. There was considerable friction between the trustees and the last superintendent. The Reverend Mr. Johnson had received instructions from England to continue the work of managing the property, to which plan the trustees objected.

Johnson received a letter from the Speaker of the House of Assembly, William Gibbons, written on December 10, 1791,

53. The account of the Bethesda incident in Sir George Houstoun's life will be found in Bethesda MS. Letter Book, Letter Box, No. 6, in the Georgia Historical Society Library, Savannah. See also, "Bethesda's Crisis in 1791. Disaster to Whitefield's House of Mercy Averted," in The Georgia Historical Quarterly, I, No. 2 (June, 1917), 108-134.

54. [John I. Stoddard] History of the Independent Presbyterian Church and Sunday School (Savannah, 1882), 19. Mr. Johnson was pastor from 1790-1793.
informing him of the passage of the bill, making it plain to him that the Countess of Huntingdon had had only a life interest in the property and that on her death it was vested in certain trustees. The superintendent called on Gibbons and signified his purpose to refuse possession to the trustees, also his intention "of making it a Question of Congress." The minister had been living in Savannah, but, fearing the trustees would outwit him, he decided to "keep close possession by residing day and night and Sundies" at Bethesda to defend the Negroes on the place. For the remainder of December and up to January 9, 1792, matters remained in statu quo. On that date Johnson received a letter from Sir George Houstoun:

We do ourselves the honor to enclose a copy of an act of the General Assembly respecting the Orphan House estate and Bethesda College. The Trustees will be at the Orphan House and Plantation on Tuesday next to take possession of the Estate. It will be necessary that an Inventory of the whole property should be delivered to them on that day. It will naturally strike you that no property ought to be removed from the plantation without instructions from the Trustees.55

Johnson replied to Houstoun the same day with a long, rude letter, still refusing to give up possession "without recourse to law." In the letter Johnson presented what he considered was the claim Lady Huntingdon's heirs had upon Bethesda, and stated he thought it was "both unrighteous and impolitic to the last degree" for the General Assembly of Georgia to claim the property for the State of Georgia. "Be on your guard Sir George," he continued, "the whole world will soon sit in judgment upon your character in particular as president of such a Commission." In further justifying the claim of the late Reverend Mr. Whitefield and the Countess of Huntingdon, he wrote: "We shall not ask leave of thirteen commissioners to promote our appeal to Congress for an explanation of your explanation itself. Till then despair of possession Sir George, but if you attempt it tomorrow I wish you to understand, I would much rather open my breast to your fatal steel than act unworthy of my present trust." Nevertheless, according to another letter written by Johnson

Sir George Houstoun, Baronet, Man of Affairs

to Houstoun on January 13, he informed the latter that the sheriff's officer and two constables, armed by the authority of the Commissioners, had "violently dragged Mrs. Johnson and himself off the premises." The couple was taken to the house of "Mr. Scrimger opposite the burying ground" where they remained prisoners of honor. The above letter was sent to the care of William Stevens, one of the Commissioners, because Johnson, in his letter to the latter wrote "the enclosed comes to your hand in mercy to Sir George's feelings who yesterday experienced a bereaving providence for which I am very sorry."

In describing in his journal the situation in which he was placed, the minister naturally presented a prejudiced point of view, and one that would make his position appear to be the right one. Apparently the reason the Commissioners made no charges against him was that they considered the matter settled when the Act of 1791 was passed, placing them in charge of Bethesda. Johnson, by remaining on the property when he had been notified by Sir George Houstoun to leave the Orphan House, did so illegally. His persistency in doing so raised an issue from which he suffered the consequences. Had he submitted to the orders of the Commissioners and left the Home peaceably, "Bethesda's Crisis in 1791" would not have occurred.

Johnson was kept in custody until January 24, when he was released by Justices of the Peace, they "not finding any charge against him." On his release, he went to Charleston to inquire into some investments relating to the Home. After he returned to Savannah, conditions remained the same between himself and the Commissioners, and finding that a correspondence with certain interested persons in England availed nothing, Johnson and his wife went back to England, and so the matter ended.

56. Bethesda MS. Letter Book quoted from a copy of a note to the "Public Printer", January 16, 1792. The burying ground was then Christ Church cemetery (now Colonial Park). Mr. Scrimger's house was on South Broad Street, as that was the town's limit until 1815, and Abercorn Street was part of the Common. See Chandler's Historical Map, Georgia Historical Quarterly, I, No. 4 (December, 1917).

57. The reference was to the death of little Rachael Moodie Houstoun, the tenth child of Sir George and Lady Houstoun, who died on Thursday January 12, 1792. Houstoun Family Bible.
True to his Scottish heritage, Sir George Houstoun was a member of the St. Andrew’s Society, as were his four brothers. Complete records of the Society seem to be lacking, but from the beginning of the colony, at least as early as 1755, there were numbers of Scotsmen in Savannah and in other parts of the colony. Allusion has been made to the “Nightly Club,” so disturbing to Colonel William Stephens, when men who emigrated to Georgia from Scotland met together to discuss the affairs of the day. Out of that small association grew the St. Andrew’s Society. On November 8, 1769, its president, H. Preston, announced in the Georgia Gazette that a meeting of the St. Andrew’s Society would be held on Monday, November 20, at Alexander Creighton’s Tavern. Rules and regulations governing the Society were passed in 1764, and its purpose, as explained in the preamble, was “to cherish the recollections of our homes and the birthplace of our fathers; to promote good fellowship among Scotchmen and their descendants in this adopted country; and to extend to unfortunate Scotchmen and their families assistance and counsel in case of necessity.”

The Houstoun men joined the Society probably as soon as their ages permitted them to do so, that they might carry on the traditions of their forefathers; but again it was Sir George Houstoun who showed not only the inclination to do more than was required of him in the way of membership, but who demonstrated to his fellow-members that he was capable of becoming their leader. It was in 1792 that he reached his zenith in the St. Andrew’s Society. Whether or not he held office before 1790 is not known, but in that year, at a meeting held in the Filature, General Lachlan McIntosh was elected president, and Sir George Houstoun was chosen vice-president. The next year the same officers were re-elected at Brown’s Coffeehouse, but the routine of election was a mere commonplace to what followed. The annual meet-

58. Information furnished by the President of St. Andrew’s Society of Savannah, Judge Alexander R. MacDonnell (1936).
59. See ante, 37.
60. Adelaide Wilson, Historic and Picturesque Savannah (1889), 139.
61. Ibid., 91.
ings of the Society were always held on the birthday\textsuperscript{92} of the patron saint of the Society, and in 1791 the newspaper account says the company consisted of upwards of seventy, \ldots who after the election sat down to a sumptuous and elegant dinner, after which they spent the remainder of the day with that harmony which has ever distinguished the meetings of the Sons of that Saint.\textsuperscript{63}

It was in the following year that Sir George Houstoun was advanced to president,\textsuperscript{64} and he continued in office for three years. The last year that he was re-elected president of the St. Andrew's Society, which was in 1794, the anniversary came on a Sunday; so according to custom the celebration was held the following day. A brief account of the meeting appeared in the \textit{Georgia Gazette}. Following the elections the members \textquoteleft at 4 P.M. sat down to an elegant dinner \ldots after which many applicable toasts were drank and the evening was spent in harmony and mirth.\textsuperscript{65}

Not unmindful of his religious duties, Sir George Houstoun also took part in the activities of his parish life, and his election as senior warden of Christ Church in 1795 was the culmination of his apparent devotion to his church. It was but natural that he attended the church in which his father worshipped. The elder Houstoun had had some part in planning for its erection,\textsuperscript{66} small as that first building was. After the completion of Christ Church in 1750, the Houstouns, of course, were regular attendants, and owned a pew as was the custom in those days. The first indication that has come down that Sir George Houstoun had any connection with Christ Church was in 1775 when he, James Habersham, Jr., and John Irvine advertised in the newspaper that they had been appointed assignees in the estate of the Reverend Timothy Lowton\textsuperscript{67} who was the rector of Christ Church from 1771 to 1773. The elections for wardens and vestrymen were always held the Monday after Easter at the church.

\textsuperscript{62} November 30, and continue so to this day (1949).
\textsuperscript{63} \textit{Georgia Gazette}, December 1, 1791.
\textsuperscript{64} According to the record furnished by Judge MacDonnell.
\textsuperscript{65} \textit{Georgia Gazette}, December 4, 1794.
\textsuperscript{66} See ante, 54, 55.
\textsuperscript{67} \textit{Georgia Gazette}, April 26, 1775.
On April 8, 1790, Sir George Houstoun's name first appeared in print as a member of the vestry. He was re-elected a vestryman on April 25, 1791, and on April 1, 1793, he was chosen the senior warden.\textsuperscript{68}

Toward the close of his life, Sir George Houstoun was endeavoring to dispose of some of his numerous plantations, and for three years he was offering them for sale through newspaper advertisements. One plantation which was two miles from White Bluff, and contained five hundred acres, was placed before the public in 1790;\textsuperscript{69} another nine miles from Savannah apparently was valuable land, but advertisements appeared three years in succession, and evidently it was finally taken off the market. The first year that particular plantation was offered for sale, it was described as a "Settled plantation containing by original survey in the year 1762, 500 acres, part of which is oak and hickory land."\textsuperscript{70} The following year the advertisement specified that the situation was "high, healthy, and pleasant," that "one hundred and thirty-five acres were cleared about half of which under fence and in order for planting." Further, that it was "well adapted for either cotton, indigo or provisions," and that "on the premises are a small dwelling house, negro houses, corn and pea houses." The owner announced if "the said plantation was not disposed of before the 10th of next February, it will then be rented for the ensuing year." In January, 1794, an advertisement again carried the same information, and in January, 1795, Sir George Houstoun was still possessed of his plantation of "580 acres on Little Ogeechee River."\textsuperscript{71}

Sir George's failing health began in August, 1794, when he made his will declaring "he was very unwell." The following April, at the anniversary meeting of the Union Society held in the Filature on the twenty-third of the month, "the President [Joseph Habersham] on behalf of Sir George Houstoun, stated that since August last he had been sick, and unable to attend the Society, wherefore his fines amounting to eight shillings were

\textsuperscript{68} Ibid., April 8, 1790; April 28, 1791; April 4, 1793.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., June 28, 1790.
\textsuperscript{70} Ibid., February 9, 1792.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid., December 16, 1793; January 2, 1794; January 1, 1795.
remitted."  

A few weeks later Sir George evidently decided that he would be benefited by a trip, as he advertised in the *Georgia Gazette* that he intended to be absent from the state for a few months, asking his creditors and those indebted to him to settle with John Houstoun, James Mossman, or James Johnston, Jr., all legally authorized to handle his business.

But Sir George was destined never to take the trip he had planned. Less than two weeks later, Tuesday, June 9, the seventh Houstoun baronet died. He was buried the following Tuesday. Thirty-seven members of the Union Society by “order, assembled at the house of Mr. Carsans to attend the funeral. . . ” The same day his obituary appeared in the *Georgia Gazette*. It characterized Houstoun as “a gentleman whose virtues, both social and private, endeared him in life, and whose death is now a subject of sincere regret . . . .” In his own Bible, probably in the handwriting of Lady Houstoun, was this entry:

Sir George Houstoun, Bart, died after a long illness on Tuesday the 9th of June 1795 about ten o'clock in the evening, aged 50 years, 7 months and 19 days. His remains were deposited in the family vault on Thursday June.

A man of considerable means, Sir George Houstoun made ample provision for his widow and children. His will, dated August 26, 1794, urged that “strictest economy” be observed in the conduct of his funeral. The first beneficiary named in his will was the Grand Lodge of Georgia, to which he bequeathed twenty-five pounds for the relief of distressed Masons or their families. To his wife, Ann, he bequeathed his post chaise, riding chair, carriage horses, stock of cattle, hogs and sheep, household furniture, plate, china, table and bed linen and kitchen furniture,

72. Minutes of the Union Society, 26, 27.
73. Georgia Gazette, May 28, 1795.
74. Minutes of the Union Society, 33.
75. Georgia Gazette, June 11, 1795. In Charleston, the City Gazette, June 22, 1795, carried in its marriage and death notices, this entry: “Died on Tuesday the 9th Inst. in Savannah, Sir John Houstoun, bart.” (South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine, XXIII, 33). The paper erred, of course, in the first name.
76. Houstoun Family Bible. The family vault was in Christ Church burying ground. When the remains of his father and mother were removed to Bonaventure Cemetery those of their son and his wife were interred also under the large monument. See Ante, 96.
and also the use of the following Negroes, during her life, viz: Garrick, Pollydore, Kate, Beck, Charlotte, Phillis and Die. The executors were ordered to pay an annuity to Lady Houstoun from the proceeds of the estate until the division took place, as much money as she deemed sufficient for the support of herself and his family, including all expenses for board, clothes, education, to be used at her discretion, adding, "having the highest confidence that she will apportion and apply the money, or as much as she may think necessary, among my children, as their situations may severally require."

After providing for his wife, the testator mentioned each of his children, naming the boys first. To his oldest son, Patrick, he left his plantation on Hutchinson's Island, containing about two hundred and five acres, "with all the Buildings and improvements thereon," also thirty-six Negroes employed there. George received the house and lot in Savannah where the family resided, a wharf lot with one hundred and fifty feet frontage together with all the buildings and improvements. Sir George's legacy to the ten year old Robert James Mossman was the plantation called Coffee Bluff, adjoining Rosdue, a tract of land containing two hundred and fifty acres together with ten Negroes, a four hundred and fifty acre tract of land "in Great Ogeechee," and a lot in Hardwick. To Jean was bequeathed four hundred and thirteen acres; and to Ann Marion, a five hundred acre plantation, "The Forrest," and land in Burke County; and to the youngest daughter, Priscilla, went six hundred acres in Burke County, "originally granted to Timothy Lowten," as well as a tract of land containing five hundred acres in Glynn County, "originally granted my late mother." Two lots in Brunswick were included in Priscilla's legacy.

Attached to all of the bequests to his children, Sir George Houstoun made the condition that two years after his death, his executors were to cause a just and true appraisement and valuation of all his property, real and personal, in order that each child might have an equal apportionment.

The valuation placed by Sir George upon his Mason's jewel was shown in the following item in his will:

I Give and Bequeath, to either of my sons who shall first attain the Degree of a Master Mason, my Three Mason's Jewell,
Sir George Houstoun, Baronet, Man of Affairs

marked Br. Houstoun 5751 also the past Grand Masters Jewell, presented me by the Grand Lodge of Georgia trusting, that he who wears them, will ever act to all mankind agreeably to the rules of ‘Square and Compass’ and it is my desire that those Jewels, shall not be included in any inventory of my Estate, but considered by my Executors as sacred deposits in their hands for the above mentioned purpose.

After his just debts were paid, the testator directed that the remainder of his property be divided among his six children, share and share alike, and from his brother Patrick’s estate, which had not been settled, he provided that certain sums of money due from deeds and bonds should be paid to his beloved wife, Ann Houstoun. From his brother’s estate, Sir George directed “in consideration of the great regard I have for Mr. James Johnston Junior, and of the faithful discharge of his duty to me during his apprenticeship, I give and Bequeath to him one hundred pounds Sterling.”

His executors were his wife, his brother John and his friends, Joseph Habersham, Jr., and James Johnston, Jr. As each of his sons became of age, they were to replace the executors, with the exception of his wife. A codicil was added in May, 1795, to the effect that since making his will “some circumstances have happened that seem to make it proper” that his brother, John Houstoun, did not desire to continue as an executor. The latter’s appointment was revoked and in his stead James Mossman and William Stephens were appointed. 77

It is impossible to close the story of Sir George Houstoun with the account of his death and burial; for since he left a large family, necessarily many events of interest occurred after his career had ended. Allowing a brief period of mourning to elapse, Sir George’s widow began informing his debtors of the necessity for a settlement of their obligations. A month after his death Lady Houstoun inserted in the Savannah newspaper an advertisement requesting all those who had any demands against her husband “in his private account or on account of his Mercantile transactions in Company to make payment as soon as

77. Original will in Department of Archives and History, Atlanta.
possible” and to render payment to Mr. James Johnston, Jr.\textsuperscript{78}
Advertisements for the sale of plantations, tracts of land in Chatham, Glynn, Burke, and other counties, city lots in Savannah, Brunswick, and Hardwick, other property, and sale of runaway Negroes,\textsuperscript{79} continued to be printed in the local papers until the early part of 1798, but the estate was not entirely settled until after the opening of the new century. In the year 1815, Lady Houstoun made a gift of a piece of silver to one of the executors, James Johnston, Jr. The inscription reads: “Lady Houstoun presents this pitcher to Colonel Johnston with her grateful thanks for his attention in settling the estate of Sir Patrick and Sir George Houstoun.”\textsuperscript{80}

In March, following Sir George Houstoun’s death, the first marriage occurred among the children when Jean was married to George Woodruff, attorney-at-law, on Wednesday evening, March 30, 1796. The notice of the marriage, published in the \textit{Georgia Gazette} the next day, mentioned the bride as “the eldest daughter of Sir George Houstoun, Bart., deceased.” George Whitefield Woodruff came from a distinguished New Jersey family and some of his ancestors were the founders of Elizabethtown in the middle of the seventeenth century. He was born there in 1765, and his parents were Elias and Mary Joline Woodruff. His brother, Aaron Dickerson Woodruff, was an eminent attorney general of the state for about twenty-eight years. After

\textsuperscript{78.} \textit{Georgia Gazette}, July 9, 1795.
\textsuperscript{79.} \textit{Columbian Museum & Savannah Advertiser}, January 2, February 16 and 23, 1798. \textit{Georgia Gazette}, October 29, 1795; March 17, 1796; December 8, 1797.
\textsuperscript{80.} The pitcher owned by the author until 1947 was presented by her to her nephew James Houstoun Johnston, III, of Atlanta, Georgia. The receipted bill for same from Fletcher and Gardner, Philadelphia, Nov. 15, 1815, is in the possession of the heirs of Mrs. Macartan C. Kollock of Atlanta, who also own a silver coffee pot engraved with the coat-of-arms, bought by Lady Houstoun at the same time. James Patrick Houstoun, Jr., of Houston, Texas, owns a small silver waiter with coat-of-arms, two salt cellars with crest, and a large seal with coat-of-arms, that originally belonged to Sir George and Lady Houstoun. A mourning ring engraved “Lady Houstoun, Priscilla Feb. 26, 1775,” is owned by Miss Minna Alston Warling of Savannah, and a Houstoun tankard, engraved with crest and motto, is in the possession of James Marion Johnston, Jr., of Chevy Chase, Maryland. Mrs. George Pettus Raney (Claudia Bond Houstoun) and Patrick Houstoun Wall of Tampa, Florida, each owns a silver gravy ladle, marked “P.H.” All of the present owners are lineal descendants of Sir George and Lady Houstoun.
COLONEL JAMES JOHNSTON, JR.  
1769-1822  
From the portrait owned by Mrs. Sharon Farr, of Chevy Chase, Maryland

MRS. JAMES JOHNSTON, JR.  
1778-1817  
From the portrait owned by Mr. James Marion Johnston of Chevy Chase, Maryland
graduating from the College of New Jersey (Princeton University) George Woodruff studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1788. Soon afterward he was sent to Savannah by President John Adams who appointed him District Attorney for the State of Georgia. He was a man of retiring manner, but "was possessed of a well-cultivated" and a "well-stored mind." In 1792 he was practising law in Savannah, and two years later he became a member of the Union Society. He was an alderman of the city in 1805. The Woodruffs were the parents of six sons and five daughters; two of the latter died in infancy. All were born in Savannah except the youngest child.

Lady Houstoun's young son, George, a promising youth in his late 'teens, was paying a visit at Sullivan's Island, near Charleston, South Carolina, in the summer of 1796, when he contracted a malignant disease and died suddenly. His death record gives the brief comment, "play actor." An interesting aspect might have been thrown on his short life if further information had been found.

His bereaved mother made a memorandum in her family Bible which is the last in the book following the entry of his father's death: "The fourth child George at Sullivan's Island after a few days illness of a contagious fever Monday 22 August 1796, aged 17 years, one month and fourteen days. His remains were interred on Tuesday 23 August in St. Philips Churchyard in Charleston where a stone is erected to his memory at the desire of a fond mother." The inscription on the tomb-

81. New Jersey State Gazette, September 11, 1846. (Obituary)
82. Houstoun Family Tree, and Woodruff Family Papers. A Sully portrait of the Reverend George Houstoun Woodruff, eldest child, is owned by the Atlanta Art Association, and hangs in the High Museum of Art. He was a deacon in the Episcopal Church and was unmarried. The other Woodruff children who married were: Patrick Houstoun, who married his first cousin, Louisa Caroline Johnston of Savannah; Robert James, who married Belle Swift; Thomas Moodie, who married Eliza Swift; Mary Priscilla, who married Charles Pearson. Aaron Dickerson, the youngest, lived to maturity, but did not marry.
83. From Cemetery Book, No. 2, p. 50. Entry: "Houston, Geo. Play Actor, Number 801 tombstone." Obtained through the late Reverend S. Carey Beckwith, rector of St. Philip's Church. A survey of the Western Cemetery of the churchyard was made in 1835, and a plat by Charles Parker dated June, 1844, shows where the tombstone is located.
84. For an account of Charleston's plays and players of that period see Eola Willis, Charleston Stage in the XVIII Century (State Company, Columbia, South Carolina, 1924).
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stone, presumably written by his mother, is almost an analysis of her son's character: "Sacred to the memory of George Houstoun ... who died ... Aged 17 years," it begins. Then follows the characterization of the youth by a "disconsolate Mother" who perpetuated his memory with the tributes, "a most engaging manner," "a heart as warm as sincere," and one who "obtained many friends."

Saturday afternoon, November 26, 1796, was cold and frosty in Savannah, and a good breeze was blowing from the northwest. Some of the inhabitants, among them probably the Houstoun family, were comfortably warm indoors, when suddenly between six and seven o'clock the city was in flames. The fire had started in the market square. Citizens, officers, and crews from the vessels in port rushed to the scene. Failure to observe certain fire precautions was responsible for the destruction of the greater part of the city that for twenty years had been undergoing material improvements although there were too many frame buildings. The season had been dry for two months, and that afternoon a strong wind came up. Burning shingles, boards, and other light substances were whirled into the air and added confusion to the other terrors of the conflagration which continued until after midnight, and only abated when the flames were stopped by the Common on the southern edge of the town. The inhabitants dragged their possessions into the streets, and some were forced to move their property several times to zones of safety. The Houstoun family evidently was among the latter, but it is not known whether or not their home was burned, although it was in the path of the fire. Sunday morning the devastated city presented a scene of desolation and distress. Two hundred and twenty-nine houses, besides private property, were destroyed, three hundred and seventy-five chimneys were left standing bare, and four hundred families were without homes. Donations of money and provisions poured into Savannah from all over the state.

Two weeks after the fire Lady Houstoun had not found some of her valuable possessions. Hoping to regain them she adver-

tised in the newspaper the loss of "7 old mahogany chairs, 1 new do. 1 mahogany desk with drawers 1 chest of drawers, 1 quarter cask madeira wine, 1 trunk of paper hangings containing 40 pieces." A liberal reward was offered for information about her lost possessions.  

Eleven months after the wedding of her sister Jean, Ann Marion Houstoun was married to James Johnston, Jr., who was born on July 27, 1769, the son of Dr. Andrew and Bellamy Roche Johnston, of Augusta, Georgia. The marriage took place at White Bluff on May 31, 1797, and the ceremony was performed by the Reverend Mr. Monteith. At the time of his marriage, James Johnston was a member of the firm of Johnston and Robertson. His partners were his brother Matthew and his brother-in-law James Robertson. In the spring of 1791, the firm shipped to England, for the account of Francis and Lefett, "ten thousand pounds of black seed cotton grown on Skidaway Island by Major Barnard . . . which established the character of Georgia Sea Island Cotton, and was the first shipment of any consequence." 

From 1795 to 1797, Johnston was the secretary of the St. Andrew's Society; and in 1799 he was secretary of the Golf Club, which had been in existence in Savannah for several years. He was an alderman of the city, 1801-1802, and again in 1817-1818. In 1811 he was a vestryman of Christ Church, and was appointed chairman to receive subscriptions for the completion of the red brick building, the second erected on the original Trust lot set aside for a church in the beginning of the colony. In February, 1812, a campaign was begun for more funds to complete the construction of the new building. In May it was reported in the paper:

The roof of Christ Church is raised ready for covering. The

87. *Columbian Museum & Savannah Advertiser*, December 12, 1796. Further research could not be made in the above paper in the Georgia Historical Society Library. Because of misuse the volume has been withdrawn from the public.

88. Johnston Family Bible, owned by the heirs of Mrs. Macartan C. Kollock of Atlanta; and *Columbian Museum & Savannah Advertiser*, June 2, 1797.

progress in the rebuilding of this place of worship, so ornamental to the city, must give pleasure to all classes of citizens; we regret to learn the funds collected are expended. It is hoped the liberality of the citizens will not allow it to come to a stand. The subscription paper is in the hands of Col. Johnston; those who have not yet contributed their mite, will no doubt make a point of calling and paying up their contributions. It would be more than disgraceful to suffer the thing now to fall through than if nothing had been attempted.\textsuperscript{90}

The next year James Johnston was senior warden of the parish, and with John Lawson advertised the sale of pews in Christ Church. Some had been sold, but more funds were needed, and the wardens and vestrymen announced that a public auction would be held for the sale of all of the pews on the ground floor “for the support of the minister and other expenses of the church.”\textsuperscript{91} In 1814, after undergoing storm, cyclone, and fire the church was finally completed.

James Johnston, with other business men of the city, urged the establishment of another bank, and in December, 1807, the legislature passed an act to incorporate the Planters Bank. Nothing, apparently, was done to forward the plan until December, 1810, when a second act was passed repealing the one of 1807. The following month James Johnston was appointed one of the commissioners to sell subscriptions for the new bank.\textsuperscript{92} The charter, obtained the previous month, stipulated that the capital stock should be one million dollars divided into ten thousand shares of one hundred dollars each, of which one thousand were to be reserved until January 1, 1812, for purchase by the State of Georgia.\textsuperscript{93} By February two thousand shares had been taken up, but the commissioners were not satisfied with the result. They advertised that the bank could not be opened for business until certain provisions of the law and of the charter were adjusted and complied with. An editorial in The Republican; and Savannah Evening Ledger of February 2, 1811, stated that “the necessity of a bank in this city must be obvious to everyone en-

\textsuperscript{90} The American Patriot, May 1, 1812.
\textsuperscript{91} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{92} The Republican; and Savannah Evening Ledger, January 17, 1811.
\textsuperscript{93} Ibid., January 19, 1811.
gaged in business, and we sincerely hope the present institution under the existing charter, may go into operation as speedily as possible, particularly as the tenure of the charter of the branch of the U. States Bank in this city seems held under a very precarious tenure."

Toward the close of the year it was clear that the only way to obtain an acceptable charter was to elect a man to the state senate who could make it possible. A campaign ensued as three candidates were presented for election. During September, 1811, their friends wrote letters to the newspapers defining the qualifications of their favorites. A DEMOCRATIC REPUBLICAN was the signature at the end of a long letter urging the election of James Johnston: "... Many important advantages might ensue from the appointment of at least one mercantile gentleman to represent our interests ... Charters have been twice granted ... The charter granted is partially so inadequate ... arising from the political situation of our country as regards the belligerents in Europe ... A native Georgian, Col. James Johnston has been promised the support of many, judging from his high mercantile character and integrity, that he can promote by just explanation, the desired amendment to the Charter for incorporating the Planters Bank, and being himself a planter, he will be enabled to promote the planting and mercantile interest of his entire state."94

A few days later A GEORGIA REPUBLICAN, vehement in his opposition, declared in print that the other candidates, Proctor, Bryan, Telfair or Cuthbert, would receive better support than Johnston. In the same issue of the paper ALFRED, in his letter, urged the election of Isaac Minis on the grounds that he was better able to adjust the differences in amending the charter between the Legislature and the State Banking Department.95 The next week, TRUE AMERICAN wrote urging the election of Johnston rather than Dr. Proctor, as he believed the former would have more influence; and in the same issue, NO MERELY NOMINAL DEMOCRAT violently opposed Johnston.96 A third appeared in the same copy, signed, ANOTHER OF THE PEOPLE. The writer declared while he was opposed to some of

94. The Republican; and Savannah Evening Ledger, September 14, 1811.
95. Ibid., September 19, 1811.
96. Ibid., September 24, 1811.
James Johnston's creed, he would urge his election to the State Senate because he believed in his integrity, and felt sure he would have more influence than any of the other candidates in adjusting the charter of the Planters Bank. The first column of *The Republican; and Savannah Evening Ledger* of November 12, 1811, carried the news of the election of James Johnston as senator for the ensuing year, and on December 13, the bill incorporating the Planters Bank passed both houses, awaiting the governor's signature. Early in January, Johnston became chairman of the board of commissioners. John Bolton was elected president of the bank which opened for business on January 24. James Johnston continued a member of the board of directors until he was elected president in 1817. The bank was located on the northwestern Trust Lot on Reynolds Square. The building formerly housed the Bank of the State of Georgia and was bought by the Board of the Planters Bank in May, 1812. It remained the bank's property until May, 1820. The release paper on the sale was signed by James Johnston, president, and James Marshall, secretary.

Allusion has been made to James Johnston as a planter. One of his principal plantations was located on St. Catherine's Island. On April 12, 1812, he paid $10,300 for the southern moiety, reputed to contain four thousand acres. The island was a grant from George II to Mary Bosomworth in 1760. It contained six thousand two hundred acres. In 1765 the island was bought by Button Gwinnett. The property passed through the ownership of several persons before it came into the possession of James Johnston who maintained a plantation for raising cotton and rice. There is no evidence that he ever lived on the island. Like other gentlemen planters, he believed it was not

97. *The Republican; and Savannah Evening Ledger,* December 3, 1811; January 2, 1912.
98. The building was first a residence. It was built for James Habersham in 1789, and in 1802 or 1803 it was bought by James Willing. In 1821, the Planters Bank was sold to William Scarbrough and others. The house is now known as "The Pink House." (1949)
100. *Book O, 194,* Liberty County Records.
101. *Register Book B, 274,* Secretary of State's Office (Atlanta); *Book 2, folio 92,* pp. 93, 94, Liberty County Records.
necessary to have a residence on land where commodities were planted, as overseers were placed there to manage the business. The slave quarters of tabby on the Johnston plantation were built according to the Spalding pattern. Colonel Johnston still owned his part of St. Catherine's Island at the time of his death, and it remained the property of his heirs for thirty-five years thereafter.\textsuperscript{103}

James Johnston was active in the War of 1812. Although Savannah at once began to make preparations for the protection of the city, no British attacks were made in Georgia for two years. Savannah's proximity to the sea made it liable to assault at any time, and the inhabitants were kept on the alert. Fort Wayne, which had been built at the eastern end of the city overlooking the river, held the magazine and it was fortified. Fort Oglethorpe\textsuperscript{104} was two miles below the city on the Savannah River. On the south a line of defenses was constructed around the town. Johnston was an officer in the First Georgia Regiment, United States Militia. By 1811 he held the rank of lieutenant colonel, and was in command of the regiment.\textsuperscript{105} He was put in charge of the troops in Savannah, and Council notified him, when, in 1814, British vessels were sighted off the Georgia coast. Governor Stephen Early sent him one thousand dollars for supplies and ammunition, and on February 18, 1814, Colonel Johnston replied to the Governor's letter written from the capital in Milledgeville:

> The supply of one thousand Dollars for defraying the expense of Watch Boats at Tybee & Wassaw, is reasonable and very acceptable. I have written to Gen\textsuperscript{1} McIntosh on the subject of 150 Stand Arms design for my Regiment, as yet I am without a supply.

> With much pleasure I accept the agency for receiving the

\textsuperscript{103} Deeds, 3Q, 62, Chatham County Court House; Deeds O, 278, Liberty County Records.

\textsuperscript{104} Changed to Jackson by the Government, January 24, 1905. War Department, G. O. No. 10. See "War Department Furnishes Data," in Savannah Morning News, January 29, 1928.

\textsuperscript{105} Muster Roll of the Historical Department of the War Department, February 23, 1815. Photostatic copy owned by the Chatham Artillery Association, Savannah.
Powder, Rifles and charge of the Magazine from City Council of this place. I addressed a note on the subject to the Mayor [Dr. George Jones] on the 8th In't.' on the same day they passed a Resolve appointing a Committee to deliver over to me the Powder, Rifles & Key to the Magazine. As yet I have not heard from the Committee, and it is probable it will be some time before I do, as large bodies move slowly. As soon as I am put in possession of the articles, I will do myself the honor of informing you . . . .

Three weeks elapsed before the committee of council discharged its duty. On May 7, Colonel Johnston wrote to Governor Early:

I duly received your letter of 6th. Ult., and have now the pleasure to inform you, that a Committee of the City Council have this moment put me in possession of the Keys of the Magazine and have delivered to me as Agent of the State fourteen Barrels eight half Barrels & thirteen Kegs Tennessee Gun Powder equal to 85 cts. each. The Powder appears of a pretty good quality and the Kegs I opened were dry and in good order. I examined the exterior of the Corks, but did not open them all, as they appeared in such good order.

The twenty one Rifles cost $420- as stated by the Mayor. Any further order you may be pleased to give in this, or any other matter will be promptly attended to with pleasure.

In a few months' time the British had reached the Georgia coast, and on August 23, Colonel Johnston wrote again to the Governor:

I am sorry to inform you that the British are committing depredations on our coasting Trade, between this and Amelia Island. Ten days ago they captured 6 or 8 vessels near St. Catherines, and on Saturday last 3 in Wassaw Sound, one they burnt, and took two off- the force then off Ossabaw was two ships and a Brig'. our last certain accounts are down to Sunday noon when they were standing to the Northward, and as it blew very fresh yesterday from the N.E. they doubtless will stand off until the weather moderates or clears, when they may be expected to return. The Captain of the Lacedemonian informed a Prisoner, since liberated, that he expects a reinforcement of 3
or 4 vessels; should they bring any Troops, we may calculate on an attack on this place, or they will sweep our Islands of the Negroes and stock.

Col. Manning arrived here on Saturday with 400 Troops. On Sunday he manned 5 barges and sent them for Wassaw & Ossabaw inlets, with the remainder of his force he marched to Beaulieu. Should the British send 1500 or 2000 on our Coast, they will be very apt to scratch us. The Rifles you were to send, will be very acceptable.

Savannah was never attacked, but two captured vessels were brought into the harbor. Although the city escaped any encounter with the enemy, when peace came in 1815, the inhabitants celebrated the event with jubilation and their customary military parade. General John Floyd was in Savannah at the time, and in a letter to General David Blackshean, he gave a description of the observance:

Savannah, February 25, 1815

The accounts of peace having been concluded between our country and Great Britain appear to have filled the hearts of the populace here with joy. The accounts were received on the evening of the day which the Mayor [Matthew McAllister] had proclaimed should be celebrated by illumination and music in commemoration of the illustrious Washington's birth, and in celebration of General Jackson's victory over our implacable enemy at Orleans .... Joy gleamed on every countenance. The night was gloomy and calm. The streets were crowded with people of all colors, sorts and denominations, who with lighted candles on foot and on horseback, enlivened the streets.

The crowd led by the military traversed the streets in procession, accompanied by all the music of a material kind the city afforded. The vessels in the harbor were illuminated, and the air resounded with loud huzzas and firing of small arms. The seamen had a small ship which they carried through the streets, decorated, exclaiming, "Don't give up the ship."

Colonel Johnston held another office in 1814, when he was president of the Union Society.

108. Ibid.
109. See post, 382.
Reverting to the period subsequent to the time of the marriage of James Johnston and Ann Marion Houstoun (1797), a sprightly letter written in the last year of the eighteenth century gives a glimpse of the amusements and gaiety of Savannah. Summer and permanent residents on the adjacent sea islands, as well as the families of mainland planters, participated in the city's social life. Lady Houstoun and her married daughters were in the circle of friends that formed the cultured set. The letter was written from The Cottage, January 3, 1799, by Margaret Cowper, the daughter of Basil Cowper, a former member of the Council of Safety, but later a Loyalist, to her cousin, Eliza, the daughter of John McQueen, who was visiting her father in Florida:

... I wrote by the last post to Mr. Seagroves care and then told you everything since yr. departure till that date In our still, circumscribed round... John has not been to Mulberry G.[rove] or have we heard a word of the family there... Tomorrow is the great review of all troops in this district by Colonel Tattnall Yr. Brother to make his appearance for the first time among the Invincibles, alias Colonel Gordons troop of Horse, Mary intends to go in to witness their gallant exploits & dine with Mrs. Woodruff: Aunt Betsy with her to see some wax work now in Town — the figures as large as life & tolerably well executed... we went also with Mama, Dr. Cuthbert & John to the play on Monday night. "Such things are" by Mrs. Inchbald & the entertainment of the Adopted Child a very pretty little piece, & the performance very well... Mrs. Williamson is a very pretty woman sings well & would be a good actress anywhere — & our friend Jones in low comedy has a great deal of humor, the house is always crowded, tho we went before five could get places only in the back row, however saw very well & on the whole were very well entertained... Friday is to be the last night of performing, for Mrs. Williamson's benefit "the Highland Reel"... Lady Houstoun & Mrs. Johnston drank Tea here this afternoon & made kind enquiry after you. A subject that is at least very old with us & cannot be Surprising to you must now take its re-

111. The Cottage was the Cowper home on the bluff at Thunderbolt, near Savannah.
112. Walter Charlton Hartridge, ed., The Letters of Don Juan McQueen to His Family (Columbia, South Carolina, 1943), xxi-xxxiv.
view . . . the man we once thought so highly of is no longer the same . . . his wedding was the 20th of last month, John was there & what I can collect of all particulars as follows — the company consisted of the Brides own family, Mr. & Mrs. Owens, Mr. Bourke, & Misses Elberts Tom Netherclift & James Houstoun . . . the guests all dispersed and gone home by ten o'clock. — from all accounts a most dull evening — the Bride sighing, and the happy man gloomy and downcast without opening his mouth the whole evening — a very elegant supper superintended and set out by Kate M'Credie — but strange to relate this sumptuous table could find room only in the old Generals bedchamber, literally bedchamber and appearing as such for the Bed was not removed — and so it was even so — the same Company were invited also the following day & went but Mrs. having the ague could not, did not make her appearance. Cake was sent round to most of her acquaintances and among others us. . . . Mrs Bourke had a dance at her house the monday following & graced by the presence of the new married Couple . . . the Hunters and Maris Campbell went, from them heard that Mr. was extremely delighted with his new situation, as fond as fond may be, expressing it to his amiable . . . by a Kiss several times — which you may suppose how pleasing to the company in general. and the sweet creature herself all refinement — they have been spending some days at Skidaway — So far now from regretting when I find anything to his disadvantage I rather am gratified that disdain may heal the wound esteem has Received. — On Thursday in the middle of this letter I was interrupted by a note from Town on the back of a play bill Mary having gone in the morning & finding the Highland Reel was to be performed that night instead of the next, and the last time too. Buba was dispatched out on one of Lady Houstouns horses for Aunt Wright and myself. . . . So in a violent hurry and bustle we determined at, once and went. Aunt W. to my uncles, myself to Mr. Woodruffs when I found Mrs. A McQueen and Harriet & in the evening went to see the “Road to Ruin” & the H. Reel. with them Mr. & Mrs. W. Aunts Betsy and Wright, Uncle A. & Mary & at The Theatre were joined by bell Hunter, & tho we could not find room all to sit together our party was also added to by Betsy, & Maria C. Mr. & Mrs. Jackson Mrs. Miller & Nat. Greene113 (who Mary met at Mrs. Steven's seeing the Review & was a constant attendant of hers all the evening, I like him better than I expected

113. Son of General Nathanael Greene.
he is the picture of Mrs. Nightingale) also James Houstoun,\textsuperscript{114} John was not there for the troop was not dismissed till the House was full but J. H. & G Baillie contrived (& sacrificing their dinner) to get in over the stage. — so we spent a pleasant evening tho the Highland Reel did not by any means answer our expectations being much curtail'd and entirely deficient in Scenery & Music. the Cottage bustle on the occasion Revived with former eclat. the laughing and the talking, the \textit{difficulties}, all so enchanting, going and coming out, — we were fully determined to leave Town the next morning but Mrs. Jackson would take no denial to our spending the evening with her and having a hint from bell of a dance to be knocked up quite in a family way without any need of \textit{preparation extraordinary} Could not decline it, & Mrs. Hunter wanted us to dine there this evening We Should also have liked but could not make it out, on account of several little necessary preliminaries to the evenings engagement, she was almost affronted we did not go, when we met at Mrs. Jacksons. Mrs. Miller & Nat & Ray are at present spending a few days there. So [sic] of the party was there Mr. & Mrs. Hunter. Mrs. Glen. the girls Sally Morecock, M. Campbell & ourselves after Tea dropped in quite casually Dr., Kollock,\textsuperscript{115} Robert Watts, George Baillie & James Houstoun. & we had Charming dancing till past two in the morning, a very pretty supper, everything just as it should be, and we really spent a most agreeable evening. Mrs. J. would not permit us to leave her House that night in spite of Lady Houstouns sending the Carriage for us, so we had a Room of Marias & Remained there to Breakfast next morning. — we dined with Mrs. W. next day and afternoon Returned to the Cottage escorted by yr. Brother and George Baillie (James H. set out in the morning for Louis Ville with J. Bryan) it was a drizzling uncomfortable night but yet he would not accept Johns invitation to stay and left us after Tea, & extremely dark. but in less than half an hour after his departure we heard a hasty knock at the door, which yr. Brother opened & Bailie reentered our little parlor as pale as death. and in an agitated manner. — his Horse (a new purchase & a very pretty creature) took fright going over the Causeway & threw him over the ditch and ran away. he was bruised, & for some minutes stunned with the fall. but providentially nothing more. had he been thrown against a tree he must

\textsuperscript{114} James Edmund Houstoun, son of Dr. James Houstoun.

\textsuperscript{115} Dr. Lemuel Kollock who married Maria Campbell, February 10, 1802 (Kollock Family Papers).
have been Kill'd. — A little after he went we heard a Horse tear round the House with great violence (so much as to Knock down a pretty large Lombardy Poplar which John has planted near the end of the piazza). & it proved to be his, for the boys were sent in search & found him. — so, as the agreeable unfortunate soon recovered. & was but little hurt the evening passed very pleasantly & he returned to Town next morning after Breakfast. — this is Monday & the Hunters engaged to spend this week with us, but Miss Wayne gives a dance tomorrow & I fancy they may be at it. — it is dreadful Cold weather & they will find it as pleasant here if they stay till it is warmer . . . . give my best love to Aunt McQueen & Elizabeth & William & to Uncle Mc. — from all the family too. and for my dearest Eliza all that I can feel of the warmest and most Constant Affection, and excuse this horrid writing, inditing, &c. &c. of y' r Margaret Cowper, in great hurry for the alarm is given — Buba is going to Town be sure & burn this, do not suffer the monuments of my Slovenliness to exist, which is in y'r. power to Conceal by demolishness. 116

Two of the sons of Sir George and Lady Houstoun grew to maturity and married; and each one, following the example of his father, his grandfather, and his uncles, used his talents in the interest of his native city for civic betterment. 117 Patrick, who was only eighteen when his father died, claimed the title, and he was recognized in Savannah as a baronet. He was eight years the senior of his brother, Robert James Mossman Houstoun, but he outlived him twenty-one years.

When the third Patrick Houstoun was twenty-five years old and a lawyer, he was married to Eliza Fuller McQueen, who was the daughter of Alexander and Elizabeth (Fuller) McQueen. Alexander McQueen (1755-1805) was the son of John McQueen and his wife, Ann Dalton, of Charles Town, South Carolina, where Alexander was born. His father was from London, and after becoming a resident of Charles Town he entered upon a

116. The letter is in the Cowper Collection of Letters in Colonial Dames House. It was presented in 1937 to the Georgia Society of the Colonial Dames of America by the late Mrs. Franklin Buchanan Sereven and the late Miss Phoebe Herbert Elliott, who were lineal descendants of Mrs. Eliza McQueen Mackay. In 1949 the Mackay-McQueen-Cowper Collection was deposited in the Georgia Historical Society.

117. The only available source material in Savannah on the public life of the two Houstoun men is in the Savannah newspapers in Hodgson Hall.
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mercantile business. Later he was a member of the Commons House of Assembly. His wife was born in Kilkenny, Ireland. After the death of her husband in 1762 his widow took her children abroad to have them educated. Later her two sons, John and Alexander, were put under the guardianship of James Parsons, an attorney of Charles Town. Alexander became a merchant, and John a landowner, both eventually living in Savannah; John some time after his marriage made his home in Florida.

In 1733 Alexander married Elizabeth Fuller, the daughter of Thomas Fuller, of Beaufort, South Carolina. The McQueens had a summer home at Montgomery, near Savannah. Mrs. McQueen died the latter part of 1797.\textsuperscript{118}

Mrs. Houstoun was the first cousin of Eliza McQueen, the recipient of Margaret Cowper's letter. The McQueen-Houstoun marriage was announced in the Georgia Gazette of February 12, 1801. There were nine children from their union.

The activities of young Patrick Houstoun the first few years after his marriage are not known. The death of his wife occurred twenty-three years later. An invitation to her funeral was given in the Georgia Gazette of January 6, 1824:

> The friends and acquaintances of Mr. Patrick Houstoun are requested to attend the funeral of Mrs. Houstoun from his residence in the District of White Bluff at 11 o'clock this day where the funeral service will be performed. The interment will take place in the Old Cemetery at 2 o'clock.

In later years following his wife's death Patrick Houstoun was identified prominently in some of the city's organizations. As he was a planter he joined the "Agricultural Society of Georgia in Savannah" which was in existence as early as 1825. In that year on April 20 the society announced the program of premiums to be awarded at the anniversary meeting which was to be held the following February. Three silver cups valued at twenty-five

\textsuperscript{118} Walter Charlton Hartridge, The Letters of Don Juan McQueen To His Family (Columbia, South Carolina, 1943), xxii, xxii; 38, 42n., 83.

The Houstoun children were: Patrick, unmarried; three children married and two had issue: George Ann Moodie Houstoun married Alexander McDonald; Edward Houstoun married Claudia Wilhelmina Bond; and George Houstoun married Sarah Hazelhurst. The others were James Johnston, Robert James, Jane Harriet, and Moodie, who died either young or without issue.
dollars each were offered in three classes to planters: one cup to the owner who produced by the most approved mode of cultivation from not less than nine acres, an average of not less than 80 bushels of rough rice per acre, weighing not less than 46 pounds per bushel; one to the owner who raised an average of not less than one thousand pounds in the seed of black seed cotton per acre from four acres; and one to the planter who raised the greatest quantity of flint corn and blades from not less than four acres, and averaging not less than 50 bushels an acre.

The land had to be cultivated, the rules stipulated, within Chatham County, or if the planter's estate was in an adjoining county, or was in South Carolina, he had to be a member of the society. Further regulations for the contest were that the ground had to be "laid off by Planter's measurement of 5 poles of 21 feet to a quarter acre, and be rectangular, equilateral and regularly staked. All ditches and chains within the stakes to be included." Every candidate had to furnish the secretary with a detailed statement of the mode of cultivation specifying how the main ground was prepared, distance of rows, time of planting, flowing, hoeing, thinning, number of hoeings and ploughing, and the period of laying the crop, the quantity and kind of manure used, a description of the land and any other information that he thought necessary.

There were a general chairman and four special committees: premiums, rice, seed cotton, and flint corn. Patrick Houstoun was on the latter committee and the men associated with him on all of the committees were Alexander Telfair, James Proctor Screven, B. M. Morel, W. P. Marshall, "Bulloch, Daniel, Wallace, Jackson, Stiles, Habershham, Tim Barnard and S. M. Bond." [119]

Two years later, in 1827, Patrick Houstoun entered politics by offering himself as a candidate for the office of clerk of the Superior and of the Inferior Courts of Chatham County. The election returns were printed in the January 8 issue of The Columbian Museum & Savannah Advertiser. Houstoun lost in the election for clerk, but he was elected receiver of tax returns. The next office he held was a justice of the Inferior Court of the

county, which he held from 1826 to 1831, but he resigned in November of the latter year. As city treasurer, a position to which he was re-elected in 1832, and which he held for several years, he would announce the assize of bread; and in 1833 his report to city council showed that real estate and other assets owned by the city were valued at $412,748. It was also within his province to publish in the local press when tax returns were due, and to publish a list of delinquent tax payers.

Patrick Houstoun was on active duty during the War of 1812-1814, as following that event when the "Savannah Fencibles" was formed he was a member as a private. In 1832, James Hunter, who was the commanding officer, advertised that those men he listed in the newspaper, and who had been discharged at the close of the war by William R. Boote, Inspector General of the Army of the United States, were entitled to "draw one each in the contemplated Land Lottery."

For several years Patrick Houstoun was a director of the Marine and Fire Insurance Bank, at least from 1832 to 1834, and in the latter year he was one of the stockholders owning fifty shares at thirty-five dollars a share. In 1825 the legislature granted banking privileges to the Marine and Fire Insurance Company, and it occupied the handsome building on St. Julian Street which was designed by the architect William Jay for the Branch of the United States Bank.

Savannah, of course, was drawn into the political strife that harassed the nation during the two administrations of President Andrew Jackson, and later. Patrick Houstoun identified himself with the Union and States Rights Party of Chatham County. On Independence Day, 1834, the members of the party announced in the local press to "their fellow-citizens, who, with them cherish

120. *Columbian Museum & Savannah Advertiser*, November 13, 1827; November 1, 1831; January 13, 1832.
122. *Columbian Museum & Savannah Advertiser*, January 28, 1834; March 6, 1834; April 4, 1834.
124. Thomas Gamble Scrap Book, "Savannah Banks, Money and Commerce, 1733-1865." In the main Public Library, Savannah. Later the bank was called the Marine Bank, and in 1866 the building housed the Merchants National Bank. The present Realty Building occupies the site.
Sir George Houstoun, Baronet, Man of Affairs

an equally ardent attachment to the Union and the Rights of the States that a procession would be formed on this day at 11 A.M. in front of the Exchange thence to the Baptist Church on Chippewa Square where the Declaration of Independence would be read by Robert Pooler, Esq. followed by an address to be pronounced by M. Hall McAllister.” The clergy, the officers, civil and military, the different societies of the city and the citizens generally were invited to join in the procession. The pews on the south side of the church were “reserved for the ladies.”

Following the parade a luncheon was to be served at the Exchange at which William B. Bulloch, the president of the society, and the six vice presidents were to preside. The committee on arrangements requested all who joined in the procession to wear the usual badge of mourning on the left arm as a mark of respect to the memory of Lafayette. The Marquis de Lafayette had died on May 20, 1834. Soon after the news of his death was received in Savannah, council called a special meeting of citizens on July 1 when a memorial service was held, and a eulogy was pronounced by the Reverend Dr. Capers, the son of a Revolutionary officer.

The July 7 issue of The Georgian carries three columns on the parade and on the dinner on the “Natal Day of the Republic,” and on July 10 the same paper reported:

“That the procession of the 4th. inst. of the Union and States Rights Party exceeded that of the Nullification Party by a large number is a fact as well known here as that the day we celebrated, and no one except one who has no character for veracity to lose would venture to deny it.”

An important organization in which Patrick Houstoun took a part and one that had far-reaching results, was the Savannah Anti-duelling Association. The frequency of duels in the city had aroused to action a number of representative men, who, on the day after Christmas, 1826, held a preliminary meeting in the Long Room of the City Exchange; and four days later a second largely attended meeting was held and a constitution was adopted. It was brought out in the meeting that the association was formed for the purpose of restraining and, if possible, suppressing the practice of duelling. As set forth in the constitution the members “considered the practise of duelling as a violation of the law,”
and as “destructive to domestic life.” In 1834 Patrick Houstoun became chairman of the standing committee,125 and he presided at the “anniversary” meeting.126 The standing committee reported that in 1834 there was but one duel “without injuries to the parties.” “It was so silently conducted that the Standing Committee had not an opportunity to take the customary measures.”127 In time the vigorous and persistent efforts of the members of the association bore fruit, and after many years “affairs of honor” were a thing of the past in Savannah.

About the same time that the foregoing association was formed prominent men were agitated over the excessive use of intoxicating drinks, and they formed what the members styled the Savannah Temperance Society. In 1833 monthly meetings were held, and one in October took place at the new First Presbyterian Church which was located on the north side of Broughton Street, between Jefferson and Barnard streets. Eighteen months later the members felt the urge to make their organization more effective, and through the newspapers they issued an invitation saying that all persons who “feel a desire to aid in a good cause, and are willing to unite in the formation of a Society on true temperance principles, are invited to attend a meeting to be held at 9 o’clock this morning in the Sabbath School Room of the Independent Presbyterian Church.”128 The meeting was held on Sunday morning, July 8, 1835, and a constitution was adopted. Patrick Houstoun was elected president, and the name selected for the organization was the “Chatham County Temperance Society.” The object, the constitution read, was to

Discountenance and suppress Intemperance in all things particularly the use of ardent spirits- a pledge of entire abstinence from the use of wine not required- yet use of any intoxicating drink shall be declared a violation . . . .

Any person could become a member by subscribing to the constitution, an act tantamount to a pledge to “abstain from the use, manufacture, importing and vending of ardent spirits.” The

125. Gamble, Savannah Duels and Duellists 1733-1877 (Savannah, 1923), 185, 190.
127. Gamble, Savannah Duels and Duellists, 198.
128. The Georgian, July 8, 1835.
meetings were to be held four times a year, and the executive committee was to be elected annually. The other officers who were associated with Patrick Houstoun were James Smith, Noble W. J. Bulloch, John Gardner, first, second, and third vice presidents, respectively; Joseph W. Robarts, recording secretary; J. Y. Chapman, corresponding secretary; and the Reverend Willard Preston, the Reverend Joseph S. Law, and James Smith forming the executive committee. The society no doubt filled a much needed reform in its day, but the question might be asked, Did it succeed any better than the finally repealed Eighteenth Amendment? Perhaps it did, for a time at least, since the prohibition was voluntary as compared with the much abused law of the nation in 1919.

The next episode in Patrick Houstoun's life shows him again as one of the outstanding men of the community, but, also, it typifies that he was a person with interests and activities that were varied in character.

Through the will of Thomas F. Williams, probated in Savannah in December, 1816, a legacy was left to be held in trust for twelve and a half years to be paid to "the first incorporated Body for the Relief and Protection of afflicted and aged Africans." The testator died the same year, but his brother in time carried out the bequest when certain men in Savannah and in the coastal counties of Georgia resolved to found just such an institution. A memorial was presented to the Georgia General Assembly which, on December 24, 1832, passed an act incorporating "the Georgia Infirmary for the relief and protection of aged and afflicted Negroes." Patrick Houstoun was among the first trustees, who were from Chatham, Bryan, Liberty, McIntosh, and Camden counties. It has been alleged, substantiated by accurate sources, that the Georgia Infirmary of Savannah was "the first asylum and hospital founded in the United States solely by whites and solely for Africans."

Quoting from an historical sketch:

To that gracious sentiment that makes men mindful of the suffering and impediment of the aged and afflicted, and prompts them to exert their energies and their resources in relief and protection, may the conception of the Georgia Infirmary be ascribed.

129. Ibid., July 14, 1835.
Far greater becomes the degree of sentiment when men of one race tender relief to those of another, who because of their inabilities which poverty or disease or neglect may have produced are helpless to cope with circumstances to which they have been reduced.

It is not strange in a State where the importation of slaves had been prohibited in its Constitution of 1789 that men of Caucasian blood should interest themselves in the relief and protection of aged and afflicted Africans, for Georgia was a pioneer State in this... 130

The trustees held their first meeting on January 15, 1833, at the Exchange. Richard F. Williams, brother of the testator, was elected president, and Patrick Houstoun was chosen vice president. He later became president, and he held the office until his death.

Included in the legacy of 1816 was a city lot near the Filature, a tract of land on Crooked River near Bethesda Orphanage, and ten thousand dollars. When the act of incorporation was passed the legislature allocated four thousand nine hundred and eighty-five dollars and sixty-two cents. In a few years two buildings were erected in the Bethesda location, which housed the hospital with some additional buildings until 1838 when, because of the distance from the city, the Infirmary was moved near the town, and a building was erected on its present site on Thirty-fifth and Abercorn streets. 131

A few glimpses can be given of the personal life of Patrick Houstoun. One is that he did some traveling. On April 6, 1806, and on April 3, 1807, Columbian Museum & Savannah Advertiser listed his name as having unclaimed letters in the post office; and in the autumn of 1833 he arrived by boat from New York. Three times news was carried in the paper that he had freight arriving by ship from New York. As a property owner he had land in Glynn County, and a house on the corner of Bull and Bay streets which he offered for sale in 1829. A brick house which


Thirty-two years after the charter had been granted General Sherman took possession of Savannah. His army wiped out the existence of the Infirmary and stripped it of everything but the land it owned. *Ibid.*, 23. It was rebuilt in 1871, and today (1949) is a modern hospital.
he occupied in 1833 was offered for sale having been owned by "the late Major John Screven." The house was located on St. James Square.

Robert Houstoun was but twenty-four years old when he was brought before the public eye through an endorsement by a number of citizens who nominated members of the aldermanic board. The election was to be held on the first Monday in September, 1809. In was the custom then, previous to elections, for suggested names to be published in the local press. In July of that year "Republican Citizens" held a meeting and appointed a committee to nominate candidates for the coming election. Accordingly the committee members, who were Peter Deveaux, Alfred Cuthbert, Moses Sheftall, Thomas Burke, Thomas Mendenhall, Philip Box, William Gaston, and John J. Evans published this notice:

Fellow-Citizens- In compliance with your request we have proceeded to nominate and now recommend to your support the following candidates to serve as aldermen for the ensuing twelve months. [Fourteen names followed, among them Robert Houstoun].

We have endeavored [the committee concluded] to chuse from among our fellow citizens men of integrity, who have an interest in the prosperity of our city, and we believe them capable of fulfilling the duties required.

All but two of those nominated were elected at the September polls. The highest number of votes cast was for John Eppinger who received 265, and Robert Houstoun was given 183. The new council members took office on September 14, with William B. Bulloch as mayor.

132. Columbian Museum & Savannah Advertiser, November 2, 1833; November 23, 1833; April 8, 1834; November 3, 1834; March 19, 1812; February 20, 1829; January 22, 1833.
133. The Georgian, November 23, 1830. In the funeral notice of Major Screven, the location of his house was given. Major Screven was buried in the old cemetery on South Broad Street. See Georgia Society of the Colonial Dames of America, comp., Some Early Epitaphs in Georgia (Durham, North Carolina, 1924), 79.
134. The Republican; and Savannah Evening Ledger, July 7, 1809.
When the young Robert Houstoun became one of the city fathers he found he was to be under certain rules in the observance of his duties. Aldermen were fined for non-attendance at meetings, and if they were late there was a fine also of four cents a minute not to exceed two dollars. The fines were given to the hospital.

According to the first official census taken the previous February, Savannah in 1809 had a population of five thousand three hundred and forty-two inhabitants; and of that number there were two thousand seven hundred and two white persons; the balance were Negroes.\(^{136}\)

One of the matters that came before the new board was that of caring for the city's trees. The favorite one in Savannah at that time was the Pride of India which had been planted on the Bay as early as 1795. In the storm of 1804 the public trees on the Bay were blown down, but they were replaced, and others were planted in front of the Court House and the Filature. Fines were imposed on the public for riding under the trees because the branches were broken and the symmetry of the trees was marred. In December, 1809, council ordered all dead Pride of India trees on the Bay replaced, and the next year the same trees were ordered planted in Johnson and in Columbia squares.\(^{137}\)

The Pride of India, colloquially styled "China-berry tree," is a "native of Syria, Persia, and the north of India, and is cultivated in many parts of the world as an ornamental tree. It was highly estimated in Savannah on this account, and also as a shade tree, for it was one of the first trees to put out its leaves in the spring."\(^{138}\) In a few years a double row of the trees was planted down the center of South Broad Street\(^ {139}\) which came to be known as "Under the Trees." Some of them grew to a height of thirty or forty feet.\(^ {140}\)

A strange ordinance that was in effect when Robert Houstoun

\(^{136}\) Gamble, *History of the City Government*, 64, 73, 88.

\(^{137}\) *Ibid.*, 83.


\(^{139}\) Now Oglethorpe Avenue.

\(^{140}\) About fifty years ago the Park and Tree Commission abandoned the planting of Pride of India trees on the streets of Savannah because the wood is brittle, and because "small boys" climbed them and broke the branches. (From William H. Robertson, superintendent, 1948.)
was an alderman was one prohibiting smoking in the streets, in lanes, in the squares, on the wharves, and in other public places!\textsuperscript{141}

"Alderman" Houstoun for some reason did not serve out his term of office, as he resigned on February 8, 1810, after having been on the board only five months. It may have been because of his interest in a personal matter. However, one "Voter" wished him back again in council. When the time came in July to prepare names for the September election a voter who "took the liberty of proposing the following list of names gentlemen as worthy the suffrages of the people of the city," thought "they were all Americans who are generally known to the inhabitants," and he included that of Robert Houstoun,\textsuperscript{142} who was not elected.

The motive that may have actuated young Houstoun’s resignation was his interest in his approaching marriage which took place on July 26, 1810. His bride was Sarah McQueen, the sister of his brother Patrick’s wife.\textsuperscript{143} Their union lasted only five years. She died at Kensington, near Savannah, on December 29, 1815, and she was buried in the family vault, presumably in the Old Burial Ground. There was only one child, a daughter, Sarah Ann Moodie Houstoun.

The newspapers of that day give only one piece of information about Robert Houstoun’s activities during the next two years of his life. On the evening of February 7, 1817, a number of Savannah citizens met at the Exchange to discuss the feasibility of establishing a hospital and infirmary for Negroes. Robert Houstoun was secretary of the meeting, and he was appointed with John Bolton and Thomas Young a committee to consider the advantages of meeting with the “Savannah Poor House and Hospital Society.” Two weeks later the committee published a notice to “the citizens of Savannah & Planters of the neighborhood” advising them of the intended institution, and begging for subscriptions. Undoubtedly the action of the committee was motivated by the will of Thomas M. Williams in which was a legacy for a hospital for Negroes, news of which must have been published about two months previously.\textsuperscript{144}

\textsuperscript{141} Gamble, History of the City Government, 76.
\textsuperscript{142} The Republican; and Savannah Evening Ledger, July 7, 1810.
\textsuperscript{143} Mabel Freeman LaFar, Compiler, Marriage Book No. 1, 1805-1852. Date of License, July 26, 1810.
\textsuperscript{144} See ante, 179.
The mention in the resolution of the Savannah Poor House and Hospital referred to the hospital for white persons which was in existence in 1809. It was situated on the northwest corner of Broughton and East Broad streets, and in 1817 a plan for a new hospital was projected by those in charge. It came into being in 1835 when a charter was obtained.\(^\text{145}\)

Whether or not the proposed Negro hospital came into being before the one on the Bethesda tract it does not concern Robert Houstoun, as he died the following year. His death occurred on February 21, 1818, “at his residence in St. Julian street one door from Lincoln.” He was thirty-three years old. His brother Patrick was the administrator of his estate. As late as 1822 the latter offered through the newspapers various properties for sale: three hundred and fifty-four and a quarter acres of land in Bryan County; one undivided fourth part of fourteen hundred and fifty acres in McIntosh County situated on the Altamaha River; twelve lots in the town of Brunswick; Cedar Grove plantation of twelve hundred acres near White Bluff; a tract of fifty acres near the latter; one hundred acres on May Island on the marshes of the Little Ogeechee River; also between sixty-five and seventy slaves.\(^\text{146}\)

When Lady Houstoun was fifty-two years of age she was asked to become a member of the board of directors of a girls’ orphanage. The Union Society was formed “for the care and education of orphan and destitute children who without distinction of sex enjoyed the benefits of its charitable appropriations.” In 1801, the Reverend Henry Holcombe,\(^\text{147}\) pastor of the Baptist Church, conceived the idea of segregating the girls and the boys, and to carry out his purpose, presumably with the consent of the Union Society, suggested to “several ladies of piety and bene-

\(^{145}\) From the annual report of William Duncan, president, January 26, 1870, in the author’s book of clippings. The work of the present building, the Warren A. Candler Hospital (formerly Savannah), was begun in 1836.

\(^{146}\) The Georgian, May 13, 1822; November 25, 1822.

\(^{147}\) For a sketch of Dr. Holcombe’s life in Savannah see Mabel Freeman LaFar, *Henry Holcombe, D. D. (1762-1824), Minister, Humanitarian, and Man of Letters*, reprint from *The Georgia Historical Quarterly*, XXVIII, No. 3 (September, 1944).
ANN, LADY HOUSTOUN

1749-1821

From the portrait by Thomas Sully owned by Mr. James Marion Johnston, Jr., of Chevy Chase, Maryland
olence the propriety of a separation.” He invited fourteen of the prominent women of the town to meet at his residence on September 17, 1801, to form a board of directors to govern the newly founded institution, the Female Orphan Asylum. The name of Lady Ann Houstoun was numbered among the members. The memory of her husband’s work for the Union Society was kept alive in Lady Houstoun’s mind as she continued in his footsteps, in helping with others to guide the indigent girls of Savannah.

Lady Houstoun was remembered in the will of Dr. Andrew Johnston, the father of her son-in-law, who died November 30, 1801. Dr. Johnston, of limited means, left “small memorials,” and one item in his will read: “Of my friend Lady Ann Houstoun I request the acceptance of my Buchans Domestic Medicine as a small token of my sincere respect.”

In 1808 Mr. and Mrs. George Woodruff gave up their home in Savannah and left later for New Jersey to occupy the house George Woodruff had built in 1793, near Trenton. Their farm was called Oaklands, and was occupied as a summer home until they decided to make it their permanent residence. The many Savannah relatives always found a welcome at Oaklands, and Lady Houstoun, with some of her family, visited her daughter nearly every summer.

It was through the influence of Lady Houstoun and her sons-in-law that Savannahians in 1811 were offered an opportunity for further cultivation of the arts. Lawrence Smith of Trenton, New Jersey, was induced by his patrons to come to Savannah. Smith was an artist and offered to come to Savannah to teach drawing and to give instruction to those interested in “ornamenting ladies dressing boxes, tables, etc.” He also announced that he would do portraits at from five to twenty-five dollars. The Trenton artist listed George Woodruff, Colonel Johnston, and Lady Houstoun as qualified to give information with respect to his training and background. He advertised for a room, suitable

148. Chatham County Court House, Will Book “D.”
149. Shortly after the death in 1808 of the last owner, Colonel Aaron Dickerson Woodruff, United States Army, the place was sold and became the Trenton Country Club. When the membership outgrew the club house the place was sold again. Family papers owned by Miss Susan M. Kollock of Atlanta.
The Houstouns of Georgia

situated, for his drawing school. Those ladies, however, who wished private lessons would be instructed in their own "apartments."¹⁵⁰

On one of her visits north Lady Houstoun had her portrait painted by Thomas Sully,¹⁵¹ who settled in Philadelphia in 1810. His beautiful likeness of Lady Houstoun bears full witness to the comment made by Henry Tuckerman, a contemporary man of letters, who wrote with "just appreciation" of art and the artist's life: "His organism fits him to sympathize with the fair and lovely rather than the grand or comic . . . . Sully's forte is the graceful." It was written of Sully that he was "perhaps most successful in his portraits of women."¹⁵²

The year 1817 brought another bereavement to the Houstoun family when Lady Houstoun's daughter, Mrs. James Johnston, died on August 29 at the age of thirty-nine years and seven months. She was survived by her husband and eleven children, all of whom grew to maturity, and nine of whom married. The care of her brothers and sisters devolved upon the oldest child, Ann Moodie, who had just passed her nineteenth birthday.

Seven weeks after her mother's death Ann Johnston wrote to her grandmother, Lady Houstoun, who was visiting her daughter Mrs. Woodruff, in Trenton. The letter was dated Savannah, October 7, 1817:

In addressing you my dear Grand Mother so many tender feelings are awakened that my hardened heart in vain endeavors to find words to express what I do so much wish to say. I have so much to tell you - the weeks appear so long before I can look for your return. Oh! when will you come back. I so much need your council and advice to instruct me in my path of duty to my God. It is true the Almighty has been pleased to visit us with Affliction and Oh! how severe it is - to be deprived of such a blessing but forbid Heaven that I should raise a murmuring voice at thy gentle chastisements and fatherly corrections . . . .

I wrote my dear Aunt [Priscilla Houstoun] a week ago and am very impatient for an answer to know your plans. I hope your health has been improved. Augusta [six year old sister] too I hope has improved from her voyage. My dear Brothers [George,

¹⁵⁰. The Republican; and Savannah Evening Ledger, November 28, 1811.
¹⁵¹. The portrait is owned by James Marion Johnston, Jr., of Chevy Chase, Maryland.
Sir George Houstoun, Baronet, Man of Affairs

aged fifteen and James, fourteen, evidently off at school] I trust continue in good health. Papa will be much obliged to you if you or Aunt Priscilla will see that they have their flannel stockings, warm clothes etc. before you leave Trenton. Aunt Priscilla was kind enough to offer to get us some Canton Crepe and I wrote for two pieces, it is so difficult to get here I wish she would get 2 & ½ pieces - I will also trouble her to get 2 pr of shoes for Mary [three year old sister] and two pr for Susan [the eleven months old baby] - Mary’s black Morocco, and Susan’s soft black kid, the sole very soft. I will enclose their measures...

We expect Uncle Houstoun and family to spend a little time with us as a change to his children. They are better. Poor uncle has also been visited with afflictions as you have heard by the death of his little son James -

Oh! my dear Grand-Mother were I to write all I have to say and all that my heart dictates - but no: paper cannot contain it. I am ... anxious to see you. We are all as well as usual. I hope Aunt Woodruff has recovered - will she not pay us a visit this winter? Papa, Bell [sister, seventeen years old] and all the family unite in love to yourself and all our dear relatives - particularly our dear brothers and Augusta

Your affct. afflicted Grand daughter

Ann M. Johnston

Bell desires me to say to Aunt Priscilla that she does not want the shoes.

The next summer Colonel Johnston and his two daughters, Ann and Bellamy, went abroad. On July 18, 1818, Ann wrote from Glasgow, Scotland, to her aunt Priscilla, who was then in Trenton, “We have left our good Aunts [Lady Houstoun’s sisters, Rachael Moodie and Mrs. Storr] quite well,” she explained. Aunt Storr was her favorite—“there certainly is something about her which reminds me of my dear Grand Mother.” Ann thought Scotland was a “charming country.”

153. Sir Patrick Houstoun, eighth baronet.
In describing her visit she wrote:

We saw most of the public buildings in Liverpool, the Mansion House is an elegant suite of rooms. We spent three days with Mr. Gray at Craig's near Dumfries - it is a pretty spot. I could have spent a week there - the country round Dumfries is very beautiful and well cultivated . . . . We arrived at Glasgow on Thursday to dinner - it is a beautiful town. Mr. Graham (a Bachelor) took us all over the town yesterday. We saw a fair, in the evening we drank tea with him where he had invited friends to meet us and then walked to the Botanic Garden. It is a beautiful extensive garden, but quite in infancy - a military band was in the garden and played while the company walked. The music was delightful, the finest I have ever heard, I could have staid till morning I was so enchanted. We had a sight of Glasgow beauties and Belles. The Scotch ladies are really what they are represented to be - frank, hospitable and fascinating, though we were not introduced. (it is the fashion not to introduce) they are as familiar as old acquaintances. The lady we met at Mr. Graham's told us she would call this morning, we expect her every moment, she is a real Scotch character. The gentlemen were here this morning and wished us to walk out, but we preferred writing our dear friends - Papa continues much the same as when we landed. - I do not think we will extend our travels to London as the journey is too long for him in his weak state; he will determine before we leave Glasgow and if he does not go to London, we shall travel to the Highlands which I shall like a great deal better.

We shall go to Edinburg and then pay Mr. Hume a visit at Carolside. We often wish for you dear Aunt to enjoy this delightful country with us. Certainly it is a charming country even with the little I have seen of it I may judge, but you would be astonished to see what an American I am. I am as tennacious of my country as ever an English man was - and nothing offends me more than the observation 'Why, are you American.' We are taken for either Scotch or English. I have so many anecdotes to relate it will take over a year to get through them.

. . . . My poor sisters I suppose they are now at Bethlehem

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wish I was there too.) How do they like it. Tell Louisa\footnote{156} Papa says he leaves it entirely to her Aunts whether she had best have her hair cut. I hope Eliza\footnote{157} and Augusta\footnote{158} have recovered from the sea sickness. I am uneasy about Jane\footnote{159}, she looked so bad when we parted. Do when you write again tell me particularly how she is . . . . We have been expecting a letter from my Brothers.\footnote{160} I hope their health is good . . . .\footnote{161}

Returning from abroad, Colonel Johnston and his daughters went directly to the Woodruffs, where Lady Houstoun awaited them. Shortly after Christmas the Johnstons, the Woodruffs, and Lady Houstoun began the two weeks' voyage to Savannah.\footnote{162}

The Woodruffs returned home before summer, and, although nearing the end of her life, Lady Houstoun still braved sea voyages to visit her daughter in New Jersey. In the summer of 1820 the Houstouns and Johnstons again left for Oaklands, and that was Lady Houstoun's last visit to her oldest child. While in Trenton Lady Houstoun bought George Woodruff's share of a pew in Christ Church, Savannah. She agreed to pay Woodruff two hundred and fifteen dollars for his moiety.\footnote{163} The Savannah family returned from the north in mid-December, making the voyage in nine days.

Ann Moodie Houstoun had only a few more weeks to live. Her life came to a close at Retreat early in February when she

\footnote{156} Louisa Caroline Johnston married Patrick Houstoun, her first cousin, of Oaklands.
\footnote{157} Eliza Herriot Johnston married Edmund Molyneux, British Consul in Savannah, 1831-1859.
\footnote{158} Priscilla Augusta Johnston married George Jones Kollock, son of Dr. Lemuel Kollock of Savannah.
\footnote{159} Jane Priscilla Johnston married Dr. Phineas Miller Kollock, brother of George.
\footnote{160} George Houstoun Johnston married Emily Greene Turner, granddaughter of General Nathanael Green; James Robertson married Elizabeth Catherine Dowers, daughter of John Dowers, II, of Philadelphia, and Elizabeth Vergerean Woodruff Dowers (sister of George W. Woodruff); William Patrick Johnston, the youngest son, married Mary Elizabeth Hooe of Alexandria, Virginia, and Susan Marion Johnston, the youngest child, was the second wife of George Jones Kollock. Bellamy Roche and Mary Helen Johnston remained unmarried.
\footnote{161} Original letter owned by Miss Susan M. Kollock of Atlanta.
\footnote{162} \textit{Columbian Museum} \& \textit{Savannah Daily Gazette}, January 19, 1819.
\footnote{163} Receipt in possession of the heirs of Mrs. Macartan C. Kollock, Atlanta. Another receipt shows that in 1812 Lady Houstoun owned a pew with James Johnston, Jr.
was seventy-two years of age. She was buried on February 10, and, presumably, the burial service was read by the Reverend Walter Cranston, rector of Christ Church and friend of the family. She was interred in the Houstoun vault in the burying ground on South Broad Street. Three children survived her, Mrs. George Woodruff, Sir Patrick (eighth baronet), and Priscilla Houstoun, who outlived her mother fifteen years. Lady Houstoun’s will was not probated until January, 1822. Her estate was a large one, and she bequeathed legacies not only to her son and daughters, but to her many grandchildren as well.

Her son-in-law, Colonel James Johnston, died five months after Lady Houstoun. The family was paying its annual visit to the Woodruffs at Oaklands when he died on July 2, 1822, in his fifty-third year. His obituary in The Georgian declared him “a most respectable inhabitant of this city.” His friendship, continued the account, was “never failing and disinterested.” Eleven children survived Colonel Johnston. He was buried in a vault in the old burying ground on South Broad Street, where lay the remains of his wife. Legacies amounting to nearly ninety-five thousand dollars, besides real estate and Negroes, were left to his children.

Priscilla Houstoun continued to live at Retreat where the garden was one of her chief pleasures. Large stone jars kept filled with rain water furnished the only means of watering her garden. She died of scarlet fever on February 19, 1837, at the home of her nieces, the Johnston sisters, on Reynolds Square, in the house built by her uncle, Governor John Houstoun. She was fifty-three years old. Her will was probated on February 20, 184.


165. On the Houstoun monument in Bonaventure Cemetery is inscribed:

SIR GEORGE HOUSTOUN
1744-1796

LADY ANN HOUSTOUN
1749-1821

166. Some years later the remains of both were removed to Bonaventure Cemetery and were reinterred in the Kollock Lot where a monument stands to their memory. See Some Early Epitaphs in Georgia, 28.

167. One of the jars is at Woodlands, the summer home of the Kollock family.
JOHN HOUSTOUN
17[?]-1796

From the portrait owned by Miss Edith Duncan Johnston,
of Savannah, Georgia
1837. A few months before her death she deeded Retreat to her little grandniece, Augusta Johnston Kollock, who was born on November 23, 1836, the only child of her niece Priscilla Augusta Johnston Kollock, who had died at the baby's birth. Legacies were left to the following: her sister, Jean Woodruff, and her brother Patrick; her nieces, eight daughters of her sister, Mrs. James Johnston, Jr.; two daughters of her brother Patrick, one daughter of her sister Jean, and the daughter of her brother, Robert James Mossman Houstoun; ten nephews; two aunts, sisters of her mother; one grandniece, two grandnephews; six friends; Doctor William R. Waring, "Friend"; the Episcopal Missionary Society; the wardens and vestry of Christ Church, Savannah, and the Female Orphan Asylum. Priscilla Houstoun mentioned also in her will her farm and plantations in White Bluff District and Coffee Bluff; lands on Green Creek, Glynn County, "now in possession of my nephews James R. and George H. Johnston"; her stock in the Marine and Fire Insurance Bank, the Bank of the State of Georgia, the Planters Bank, and the Bank of The United States. Three years after the death of his sister, Priscilla, Sir Patrick Houstoun, planter, died at his residence in Broughton Street, Reynolds Ward, on November 30, 1839, at the age of sixty-three. His will was probated January 11, 1840. The heirs were his two daughters and his three sons.168

Strangely, the oldest child of Sir Patrick and Lady Houstoun, Jean, was the last to survive her father and mother. Her husband, George Whitefield Woodruff, died in New Jersey in 1846.169 At his death he owned property in Chatham County, Georgia, known as "Monteith"; lands in Bulloch and McIntosh counties; and the "farm" on which he resided, Oaklands, in Ewing Township, Mercer County, New Jersey. His heirs were his wife, his three sons, one daughter, and his sister, Mrs. Susan V. Dowers,170 who outlived him twenty-eight years. His obituary, published in the New Jersey State Gazette, paid high tribute to him as "an estimable citizen" who had been a member of the community where he had "been living a blameless life." Notwithstanding "his retiring manner, the influence which wealth and intelligence con-

168. Will Book "H", Chatham County Court House, Savannah. The title was left unclaimed after the eighth baronet's death.
169. From a family letter owned by Miss Susan M. Kollock of Atlanta.
170. Chatham County Court House, Will Book "H".
fer," he exercised his influence "on the side of right and usefulness." At the time of his death he was the oldest member of the New Jersey bar. The Mercer (county) Courts and Bar passed a resolution in which they expressed appreciation of his "virtues and acts of charity and kindness," and "his abiding interest in everything that pertained to the honor of his profession." His funeral was held on Saturday morning, September 5, at Oaklands. His wife, who survived him only two years, also died at Oaklands, in 1848, at the age of seventy-three. Her will was probated both in Trenton and in Savannah. Her heirs were her four sons, her daughter, a daughter-in-law, a son-in-law, and her niece, Eliza McQueen Houstoun, daughter of her brother Patrick. Mentioned in her will were her "images of Milton and Shakespeare," miniature paintings of her father and mother, and the "Houstoun coat-of-arms."171

171. From the four married children of Sir George and Lady Houstoun there are many descendants living today (1949).