

Colonial Days in Charleston and Savannah



BROAD STREET



CHARLESTOWNE



KING STREET



MAZYCK WRAGGBOROUGH



ANSONBOROUGH



MARKET HALL



FRENCH QUARTER



GATEWAY WALK



HARLESTON VILLAGE



RADCLIFFEBOROUGH



Charleston SC

Finding colonial ancestors in Georgia and South Carolina can seem rather bleak but actually they left more detailed information in their documents than any other time. The history of colonial territories speaks for itself. The colonials who established Savannah also had relatives in Beaufort and Charleston and even the New England states.

The reason is that colonial days in the South meant networking with friends and relatives in agricultural pursuits in the business of growing a stable economy. Although many of the first settlers received land grants, they also purchased large tracts of land and expanded their operations.

Colonialism was not a sleepy venture, rather a hard-working society of agriculturists who risked their lives and fortunes in unexplored territories. It was the colonials who created a busy hive of activity in the building of towns and villages and constructing an economy.

When tracing in Georgia or South Carolina, one should also examine records in Charleston, the landing place for all adventurers. do not forget Beaufort as it was one of the largest harbors along the east coast having attracted the Spanish and pirates during the early 16th century. However it was the Europeans who established the first permanent settlement at Albemarle Point near the present-day Charleston in 1670. About ten years later, a group of Scottish settlers made Beaufort their home. This settlement was along the Ashley River.

The William Gibbons family established a network of plantations along the Frederica River and in the village of Nowington near Matthew Loudermilk and James Baillou. His sons, James and Joseph, had plantations on the Great Satilla River in South Carolina, near the bluff on the bank of the Savannah River and had town homes in Savannah. Another son, Josiah

Gibbons, lived on about a thousand acres on the Newport River. Sarah Gibbons had a grandson, Noble Wimberly Jones of Savannah. They intermarried with Telfairs, Jones, Halls and McAllisters of Liberty and Chatham Counties and all of these families also prospered on their lands in South Carolina. Pierce Mease Butler was probably the wealthiest colonial planter in the South. His plantations spanned thousands of acres along the waterways of both states. His wife was Fanny Kemble, the actress who wrote spitefully about her life on a Georgia plantation. It is noteworthy to say that (for that era) she was doubtless cared for with a large entourage of servants and the finest of possessions.

The Butlers were friends with the wealthiest of people like the Coupers of St. Simons Island and Noble Jones of Wormsloe plantation in Savannah. The way to learn more about the past days is to read the old colonial wills in Savannah and Charleston. The reason is for the detailed inventories of plantations as well as the naming and mentioning of relatives who resided in England, the Barbadoes and the New England states. For example, John Gibbons of Savannah named his Miller nephews of Natchez.

Too, the old colonial wills in Virginia also bequeath property and persons to relatives in Great Britain. I not only read the wills and estates of my direct line, but read those of the spouses of their children. Sometimes even the slightest mention of a person indicates some sort of relationship. Of course, land grants denoting surveys (and neighbors) and deeds frequently help to further clarify relationships. The detail in wills is the main reason that I continue to add the original documents or typescripts to the websites.

I know, this is a forever project, but we cannot really get our teeth into family history without such documents. Every little bit helps!