ROBERT HABERSHAM
(1783-1870)

FOR
HISTORY 500

CHEMRI SHELNUUTT
27 May 1986

[From Savannah Biographies, Volume 14.
Armstrong Atlantic State University
Lane Library.] Savannah GA 31419
ROBERT HABERSHAM

Robert Habersham (1783-1870) was a Georgia planter and merchant who lived from the time of the Revolution until the days of Reconstruction. He was part of the Habersham clan which had so much to do with the founding and growth of Georgia. Robert's grandfather, James, came to Georgia with George Whitfield. Robert's father, Joseph, was active in the Revolution and the early Republic, serving in the Provisional Congress and as this country's first Postmaster General.

Robert Habersham added to the family honor during his own life in Savannah. He was a merchant for some sixty years, owned several well-known Savannah plantations (Causton's Bluff, Deptford, etc.), and was a faithful, long-time vestryman for Christ Episcopal Church. He was also Treasurer for Chatham County.

Robert Habersham was extremely successful in his business, leaving an estate valued at over $164,000 (despite his loses during and following the Civil War). He was also a family man, Marrying three times. He married Mary O'Brien of Beaufort, South Carolina; Elizabeth Neyle; and his first cousin, Mary Butler Habersham. He had several children. Robert lived a full life and died of old age. He is buried in the Habersham family section of Laurel Grove Cemetery.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Man</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businessman</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planter</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Leader and Humanitarian</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ILLUSTRATIONS

Chart # 1
Genealogy of Joseph Habersham

Chart # 2
Genealogy of Robert Habersham

Chart # 3
Marriages and children of Robert Habersham

Chart # 4
Habersham Company Names

Chart # 5
Goods Received by Habersham Company in 1830

Chart # 6
Map of Plantations along the Savannah River

Chart # 7
Map of Plantations of Robert Habersham's
Robert Habersham, wealthy Savannah merchant and planter, was born 25 December 1783 to Joseph and Isabella (Rae) Habersham. Robert’s father and paternal grandfather were both involved in the establishment of Georgia. James Habersham, Robert’s grandfather, came over to the Colony with George Whitfield and worked at the Bethesda orphanage near Savannah until 1774. That year, he opened a commercial house, one of the first in Georgia. It became very profitable and successful. James Habersham was also a planter and was one of the largest land owners and rice cultivators in Georgia between 1750 and 1775. James married Mary Bolton on 26 December 1740 in a ceremony performed by Whitfield. They had ten children, and three sons survived.

---


3Ibid., p. 97.


6Ibid.
James Habersham was extensively involved in political affairs in the Georgia Colony, setting an example for his children and grandchildren. He was one of the assistants to the President of Georgia Province, Secretary of the Province, one of the Councillors in 1754, President of the Upper House of the Assembly in 1767, and served as a substitute for Royal Governor Wright when the latter was on a trip to England. 7

Although James Habersham himself remained loyal to England, his sons, Joseph, John, and James, Junior, served on the side of the Colonists during the Revolution. 8 James Habersham, Senior, traveled to New Brunswick, New Jersey, for his health and died there on 28 August 1775. 9 He thus did not have to make the painful decision about returning to England without his children during or after the Revolution.

Joseph Habersham, Robert's father, was born in Savannah in 1751. 10 As events in the Colonies began to turn toward rebellion, Joseph played an active part. On 11 December

7 Ibid.


9 Harden, History of Savannah, p. 97.

10 McCall, Roster of Soldiers, p. 98.
1775, Joseph was appointed a member of the Council of Safety. By 7 January 1776, he was appointed a Major in the Continental Batallion. Indeed, it was Joseph Habersham who arrested the Royal Governor of Georgia, Sir James Wright (probably a family friend) in 1776.

Also early in 1776, Joseph married Isabella Rae, the daughter of another wealthy merchant and plantation owner, Captain John Rae. (John Rae was an Indian trader and owned a grist mill/trading post in Augusta that was one of the best-known places in early Georgia.) The wedding took place in May at 'Brampton,' an estate along the Savannah River near the city of Savannah. Joseph and Isabella had at least nine children. They were James, John, Mary, Isabella, Joseph, Robert, William, Eliza A., and Susan Ann.

---

11 Harden, History of Savannah, p. 187.
12 Ibid., p. 188.
13 Ibid., p. 190.
15 Granger, Savannah Plantations, p. 352.
16 D.A.B., p. 70.
17 Ibid., p. 70 says that there were ten children; McCall in Roster of Soldiers, p. 98 says there were nine.
18 McCall, Roster of Soldiers, p. 98.
Robert Habersham was the sixth child and fourth son of Joseph and Isabella. Robert may have been named in honor of his great-grandfather, Robert Bolton. (Robert Bolton was a Warden of Christ Episcopal Church and was himself an eminent merchant.)

Little is known of Robert Habersham's childhood days, but it is important to remember what his father was doing at the time. The power and influence Joseph Habersham had in Georgia and national affairs certainly affected his own children.

In 1785-86, Joseph Habersham was a delegate to the Continental Congress. Robert was about two years old at that time. In 1788, when Robert was five, his father was a member of the Convention that ratified the Federal Constitution in Georgia. On 12 March 1792, Joseph was appointed Major of Savannah by the Board of Aldermen.

Just three years later, when Robert was about eleven, President George Washington appointed Joseph Habersham as

---

19 Bulloch, History and Genealogy, p. 4.
20 D. A. B., p. 70.
21 Ibid.
the first Postmaster General of the United States. In 1801, President Thomas Jefferson asked Joseph Habersham to become the U. S. Treasurer, but Joseph declined. Robert was about eighteen when his father left national politics and devoted himself to business in Savannah.

Robert Habersham was obviously a member of the Southern elite. His ancestors were prominent in local, state, and national affairs. The men were well-educated, with both Robert's father and his Habersham uncles attending Princeton University. Most branches of the family were also quite wealthy. Robert's Grandfather Habersham owned nearly two hundred slaves prior to the Revolution, and his Grandfather Rae probably also had a good many. Much of Robert Habersham's adult life is a reflection of this heritage.

---

23 D. A. B., p. 70.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid., p. 68; see also the Registrar's Office at Princeton University.

26 Ibid., p. 68.

26 Ibid.
James Habersham, Jr.
John Habersham
Joseph Habersham

Mary Bolton

John Curtis

Robert Bolton m.

James Habersham (1712-1775)

(1723-1784)

Robert, Jr.

Robert's father

Genealogy of Joseph Habersham

Chart #1
Genealogy of Robert Hakeishmon

CHART # 2

Susan Ann
Elija A.
William
Robert
Joseph
Isabella
Mary
John
James

Isabella Rae

Joseph Hakeishmon (1751 - 1815)

James Hakeishmon (1712 - 1775)

Capt. Robert Rae
Mary Bolton
Family Man

Robert Habersham was married three times. First, he married Mary O'Brien of Beaufort, South Carolina. They were wed in Beaufort on 22 November 1809. 27 Robert was almost twenty-six. Robert and Mary had at least three children before her death. Robert named their first son in honor of his father, Joseph. 28

A second child, Robert, Junior, was born in 1812. 29 This son later attended and graduated from Harvard University. 30 The last child born to Robert and Mary was named Mary O'Brien Habersham in honor of her mother. She was born on 22 May 1813. 31 Apparently soon after this child's birth, Mary Habersham herself died.

Robert Habersham next married Elizabeth Matilda Neyle,

27 The Republican and Savannah Evening Ledger, 28 November 1809, page 3, column 3; see also The Colonial Museum and Savannah Advertiser, 30 November 1809, page 3, column 3; on microfilm at Georgia Historical Society (GHS).

28 Bulloch, History and Genealogy, p. 19.

29 The Georgian, 1 September 1832, page 3, column 1; on microfilm at GHS; see also Parish Registry, Christ Church; on microfilm at GHS.


31 Bulloch, History and Genealogy, p. 21; see also the Habersham Genealogy File, GHS.
daughter of William Neyle of Savannah. 32 Their marriage contract was dated 21 January 1815, with the wedding to take place shortly. 33 Robert and Elizabeth had two children. Isabella Charlotte Habersham (perhaps named for her grandmother) was born in November, 1815. 34 Robert's fifth child (and his second with Elizabeth) was born 25 July 1817 and named William Neyle Habersham, in honor of his grandfather. 35 This son also later graduated from Harvard. 36 Unfortunately, Robert's wife, Elizabeth, died the same day that "Neyle" was born, apparently during childbirth. 37

On 10 June 1819, Robert Habersham married for the third and final time. His new wife was Mary Butler Habersham, his first cousin and the daughter of Major John Habersham, Robert's uncle. 38 They were still married when Robert died

32 Bulloch, History and Genealogy, p. 19.
33 Marriage Contract, Jones Family Papers, file 58, GHS.
34 Habersham Genealogy File, GHS.
35 Ibid., see also Bulloch, History and Genealogy, p. 21.
36 Harvard Graduates, p. 1306.
37 The Colonial Museum and Savannah Gazette, 29 July 1817, page 3, column 2; on microfilm at GHS.
38 Habersham Genealogy File, GHS; also Robert Habersham's Will, Book H, Folio 332, App. 28, Court Records, Chatham County Court House, Savannah, Georgia; for some reason, the newspapers gave her name as "Hannah" (see The Georgian, 15 June 1819, page 3, column 3; see also The Colonial Museum and Savannah Gazette, 17 June 1819, page 3, column 1, on microfilm at GHS).
fifty years later. 39

Robert and Mary had a number of children. Their first (and Robert's sixth) child was John Rae Habersham, born 2 October 1822. 40 The child was probably named in honor of either Robert's maternal grandfather, John Rae, Senior, or for Robert's uncle, John Rae, Junior. Young John Rae Habersham was baptized at Christ Church in Savannah on 17 April 1823, just a few days after his own mother's confirmation. 41 Like his older brothers, John Rae Habersham also graduated from Harvard. 42 John outlived his father, not dying until 1896. 43

A second child, Susan Ann, was born to Robert and Mary Habersham on 17 May 1825. 44 She was Robert's seventh child and was baptized on 9 October 1825 at Christ Church. Her sponsors were her parents, as well as her uncle and aunt,

39 Robert Habersham's Will, Chatham County Court House; see also 1860 Federal Census, Chatham County, Georgia, number 1184.

40 Habersham Genealogy File, GHS.

41 Parish Registry, Christ Church, on microfilm at GHS.

42 Harvard Graduates, p. 1306.

43 Habersham Genealogy File, GHS; see also Index to Laurel Grove Cemetery, 1852-1938 (WPA Project, 1939), s.v.

44 Parish Registry, Christ Church, on microfilm at GHS.
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Habersham. She was probably named for her father's sister. Unfortunately, Susan Ann Habersham died less than two years later and was buried on 10 April 1827.

Another daughter, Marie Elliott Habersham, was the third child born to Robert and Mary Habersham. She was born 13 August 1827 and was Robert's eighth child. Mrs. Susan D. Habersham (wife of Joseph) joined Robert and Mary as sponsors for Marie. Marie Elliott Habersham was probably named in honor of one of her father's Elliott 'cousins.' Marie also outlived her father, dying on 9 June 1898.

Alexander Telfair Habersham was the fourth child born to Robert and Mary Habersham (and Robert's ninth). He was born on 23 April 1830 and was baptized 4 July 1830 at Christ Church. His sponsors were his parents and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Habersham. "Telfair" also graduated from Harvard.

---

45 Ibid.
46 McCall, Roster of Soldiers, p. 98.
47 Parish Registry, Christ Church, on microfilm at GHS.
48 Ibid.; see also Habersham Genealogy File, GHS; see also Bulloch, History and Genealogy, p. 19.
49 Parish Registry, Christ Church, on microfilm at GHS.
51 Ibid.; see also Bulloch, History and Genealogy, p. 19.
52 Harvard Graduates, p. 1306.
He lived almost as long as his father, dying on 19 June 1868.\textsuperscript{53}

The year 1832 brought both sadness and joy to Robert Habersham. His son, Robert, Junior (born to Mary O'Brien Habersham in 1812), died at twenty years of age and was buried on 31 August.\textsuperscript{54} Just three days later, the fifth child of Robert and Mary Habersham was baptized at home, several months after his birth on 4 June 1832. His sponsors were Mrs. Joseph Habersham and Miss Mary Habersham, and the baby was named Robert Habersham, Junior (probably both for his father and for his half-brother who had just died).\textsuperscript{55} Sadly, this new young Robert also died within two years and was buried on 14 June 1834.\textsuperscript{56}

Susan Ellen Habersham was the sixth and last child of Robert and Mary Habersham (and was Robert's tenth child). She was born on 25 July 1835 and was baptized on 20 December 1835.\textsuperscript{57} Her sponsor was 'cousin' Reverend William Habersham Elliott, the son of Bishop Stephen Elliott of Christ Church.

\textsuperscript{53}Habersham Genealogy File, GHS; see also Laurel Grove Index, s.v.
\textsuperscript{54}Parish Registry, Christ Church, on microfilm at GHS.
\textsuperscript{55}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{56}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{57}Ibid.; see also Habersham Genealogy File, GHS; see also Bulloch, History and Genealogy, pp. 19 and 26.
and the husband of Susan Ellen's half-sister, Mary. 58
Susan Ellen may have been name for her father's cousin and
sister-in-law, Susan Dorothy (Habersham) Habersham. Susan
Ellen also outlived her father, dying on 22 April 1892 in
Hyde Park, New York. 59

Robert Habersham had at least seventeen grandchildren,
although not all of them lived to adulthood. His son,
William Neyle Habersham, had a family of twelve children,
seven of whom reached majority. 60 All but two of these
children were baptized by Bishop Stephen Elliott. 61 Robert's
daughter, Susan Ellen (Habersham) Coleman, had at least two
children. 62 Another daughter, Marie Elliott (Habersham)
White had one son. 63 A third daughter of Robert's, Mary
O'Brien (Habersham) Elliott, also had a son. 64 At least
three of Robert's seventeen grandchildren were named after

58 Ibid.

59 Habersham Genealogy File, GHS.

60 Spencer Bidwell King, Jr., Ebb Tide: As Seen Through
the Diary of Josephine Clay Habersham (Athens: University

61 Ibid., p. 7; see also Parish Registry, Christ
Church, on microfilm at GHS.

62 Parish Registry, Christ Church, on microfilm at GHS.

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid.
him.

Mr. Habersham was not only concerned with providing for his immediate family, but he also assisted relatives. When his brother, Joseph, died of consumption in 1831, Robert took his sister-in-law and her three sons into the home and treated them as equals with his own family. In addition, when another of Robert's brothers died (followed soon after by his wife), Robert Habersham assumed some responsibility for their three children.

65 Habersham Genealogy File, GHS; see also Will of Robert Habersham, Chatham County Court House; see also 1860 Federal Census, Chatham County, Georgia, number 1184.

66 Habersham Genealogy File, GHS.
CHART # 3

MARRIAGES AND CHILDREN OF ROBERT HABERSHAM

Marriage one: To Mary O'Brien (on 22 November 1809)
   A. Joseph Habersham
   B. Robert Habersham, Jr. (1812-August, 1832)
   C. Mary O'Brien Habersham (22 May 1813–

Marriage two: To Elizabeth Matilda Neyle (in 1815)
   D. Isabella Charlotte Habersham (November 1815-1864)
   E. William Neyle Habersham (25 July 1817-20 September 1899)

Marriage three: To Mary Butler Habersham (on 10 June 1819)
   F. John Rae Habersham (2 October 1822-27 February 1896)
   G. Susan Ann Habersham (17 May 1825-10 April 1827)
   H. Marie Elliott Habersham (13 August 1827-9 June 1898)
   J. Robert Habersham, Junior (4 June 1832-June 1834)
   K. Susan Ellen Habersham (25 July 1835-22 April 1892)
Businessman

James Habersham, Robert's grandfather, joined with Francis Harris to found one of the first commercial houses in Georgia in 1744.\textsuperscript{67} He was starting a tradition which continued through his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

James sent his son, Joseph (Robert's father) to Princeton University to begin his education. Afterward, he sent Joseph back to England for three years to get some training at a mercantile concern there.\textsuperscript{68} Upon his return to Georgia, Joseph entered business with his brother, James, in 1771.\textsuperscript{69} James, Senior, decided that his sons might both be happier if Joseph went into business separately, so he set Joseph up with his cousin, Joseph Clay, in 1773.\textsuperscript{70} (Please see Chart # 4 for the various names of the Habersham companies.)

When Joseph Habersham returned to Savannah after his national service, he rejoined his cousin, Joseph Clay, in the mercantile business.\textsuperscript{71} Later, Joseph entered the

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{67} Harden, \textit{History of Savannah}, p. 97.
\item\textsuperscript{68} \textit{D. A. B.}, p. 3.
\item\textsuperscript{69} Ibid.
\item\textsuperscript{70} Ibid.
\item\textsuperscript{71} Charles C. Jones, Jr., \textit{Biographic Sketches of the Delegates From Georgia to the Continental Congress} (Spartanburg: Reprint Co., 1972), p. 80.
\end{itemize}
factorage and commission business with his son, Robert, and they had a counting house on Commerce Row in Savannah by 1810.\textsuperscript{72} In March of that year, Joseph Habersham chose to retire from the business, and Robert began to operate alone.\textsuperscript{73}

In his mercantile business, Robert performed all kinds of jobs. One large portion of the company's work was to receive and sell goods. For example, in 1829, Robert processed over 22,000 bushels of rought rice shipped directly to his company.\textsuperscript{74} He also shared portions of a good many shipments with other merchants. Habersham dealt through the years with large amounts of cotton, cleaned rice, corn, bacon, flour, and other food stuffs.\textsuperscript{75} In addition, the company obtained tobacco and various tools and implements needed for plantation life.\textsuperscript{76}

Habersham's company used a variety of ships, sloops, schooners, and steamboats to transport the goods. (Please

\textsuperscript{72}The Republican and Savannah Evening Ledger, 2 January 1810, page 2, column 2; on microfilm at GHS.

\textsuperscript{73}The Columbian Museum and Savannah Advertiser, 26 March 1910, page 2, column 2; see also The Repuglican and Savannah Evening Ledger, 24 March 1810; on microfilm at GHS.

\textsuperscript{74}Multiple newspapers; on microfilm, GHS.

\textsuperscript{75}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{76}The Colonial Museum and Savannah Gazette, 30 August 1817, page 3, column 1; see also The Savannah Gazette, 28 February 1826, page 3, column 1; on microfilm at GHS.
see Chart # 5 for a list of goods Robert received, both individually and with other merchants, on more than one hundred voyages in 1830.77) The schooners generally carried corn and bacon from North Carolina, although a few transported cotton. Cotton and rice were primarily brought in on sloops from plantations around Savannah or Charleston. 79 Additional cotton was often carried by pole or steam boat from Augusta. 80

Ships from New York City and Liverpool, England, brought general merchandise. 81 Some of these vessels were owned by Robert Habersham's company, and others were rented or leased. In 1817, a newspaper notice by R & J Habersham requested a "quantity of cedar for ship building." 82

77 The Georgian, 1 January - 31 December 1830; on microfilm at GHS.

78 The Georgian, 7 April 1823, page 2, column 5; and 10 March 1830, page 2, column 5; see also The Savannah Georgian, 14 March 1826, page 2, column 5; on microfilm at GHS.

79 The Savannah Museum, 12 January 1822, page 3, column 3; see also The Savannah Georgian, 13 January 1826, page 2, column 4, and 13 March 1826, page 2, column 6; on microfilm at GHS.

80 The Savannah Georgian, 18 February 1826, page 2 column 4; on microfilm at GHS.

81 The Georgian, 18 September 1830, page 3, column 1; see also The Savannah Museum, 16 January 1822, page 3, column 4; on microfilm at GHS.

82 The Colonial Museum and Savannah Daily Gazette, 21 April 1817, page 3, column 4; on microfilm at GHS.
According to his daughter-in-law, Josephine Clay Habersham, Robert's firm owned a fleet of ships carrying Georgia goods across the Atlantic and returning with Spanish and Maderia wines.\(^{83}\)

In addition to buying and selling goods, the Habersham company performed other business services. Newspaper ads often mentioned plantations for sale or rent through the company. For example, in 1817, Vallombrosa plantation on the Ogechee River (with 1,100 acres) and three plantations on Dawsinsky Island (totaling 1,900 acres) were available through R & J Habersham.\(^{84}\) Also that year, Cedar Hill plantation (the "well-known one of General Jackson") was offered for rent through the Habershams.\(^{85}\) In 1822, the 2,000 acre Tranquilla plantation in Bryan County was listed for sale by R & J.\(^{86}\)

Houses within Savannah were frequently sold or rented through the Habershams. Robert's brother's house was

\(^{83}\)King, *Ebb Tide*, p. 10.

\(^{84}\)The Colonial Museum and Savannah Daily Gazette, 3 February 1817, page 4, column 2; see also The Colonial Museum and Savannah Gazette, 28 August 1817, page 3, column 2; on microfilm at GHS.

\(^{85}\)The Colonial Museum and Savannah Daily Gazette, 5 February 1817, page 3, column 4; on microfilm at GHS.

\(^{86}\)The Georgian, 24 January 1822, page 3, column 2; on microfilm at GHS.
offered for sale in 1821, as were a "brick dwelling house and lots" in Jackson Ward in 1826. 87 Dwellings and stores were sometimes listed together. In 1820 and 1821, stores and tenements on Jones' upper and lower wharfs were listed for rent. 88 Counting rooms continued to be for rent. 89

In addition to houses and buildings, the Habersham firm sometimes offered slaves for sale. 90 The company also served as a return point for captured runaway slaves, some from plantations near Savannah and others from as far away as Charleston. 91 Other plantation workers such as field hands and an overseer were sought by R & J Habers-

87 The Daily Georgian, 6 February 1821, page 3, column 1; see also The Savannah Georgian, 4 January 1826, page 3 column 5; on microfilm at GHS.

88 The Georgian, 6 July 1820, page 3, column 4; see also 25 October 1821, page 4, columns 2 and 5; on microfilm at GHS.

89 Ibid., 17 July 1821, page 3, column 5; on microfilm at GHS.

90 Ibid., 24 May 1821, page 3, column 2; on microfilm at GHS.

91 The Republican and Savannah Evening Ledger, 5 January 1813, page 4, column 2; see also The Colonial Museum and Savannah Daily Gazette, 25 April 1817, page 3, column 4; see also The Georgian and Evening Advertiser, 11 May 1821, page 3, column 2; on microfilm at GHS.
sham. (It is unclear whether these were for Habersham plantations or for other owners.)

Robert and his company were often used as attorneys for people who had to be absent from Savannah for some reason. Robert Habersham served as agent for such well-known men as George Noble Jones of Savannah and Louis Manigault of Charleston. At times, R & J served as representatives/administrators for estate settlements. In addition, Habersham personally managed the financial affairs of such people as his widowed daughter, Susan Ellen (Habersham) Coleman.

The Habersham company offered various machinery for use by rice and cotton plantations. In 1817, they sold foot

---

92 The Colonial Museum and Savannah Gazette, 10 June 1817, page 3, column 4; see also 18 November 1817, page 2 column 5; on microfilm at GHS.

93 The Georgian, 20 Marcy 1824, page 2, column 6; on microfilm at GHS.

94 Miscellaneous letters, George Noble Jones Papers (1838-41) and Louis Manigault Papers (1840-43), Manuscript Department, William R. Perkins Library, Duke University, Raleigh, North Carolina.

95 The Daily Georgian, 19 March 1821, page 3, column 2; see also The Georgian, 21 January 1822, page 4, column 1; see also The Savannah Georgian, 11 May 1825, page 1, column 1; on microfilm at GHS.

cotton gins "which have been highly approved." A cotton packing machine at Yamacraw could be rented. The Habersham Rice Mill and Flouring Mills served the Savannah in the 1850's and 1860's.

In addition to the work done in Georgia and South Carolina, Robert Habersham undoubtedly conducted business with his various 'cousins.' Alexander Wyly Habersham, another descendant of James Habersham, was part of the Baltimore firm of Habersham and Barrett, importers of tea and East Indian goods. Cousin Joseph Clay continued to operate a business in Savannah.

John R. and William Habersham are listed as commercial merchants in New York City city directories between 1848 and 1857. According to family genealogists, John Rae

---

97 The Colonial Museum and Savannah Gazette, 6 September 1817, page 3, column 4; on microfilm at GHS.

98 The Georgian, 20 November 1822, page 2, column 6; on microfilm at GHS.

99 Savannah City Directory, 1859, page 91; also 1866 issue, page 69; at GHS.

100 D. A. B., p. 68.

101 Miscellaneous newspapers; on microfilm at GHS.

102 Doggett's New York City Directory, Illustrated, 1848-49, s.v. through Trow's New York City Directory, 1857, s.v.; in possession of Franklin M. Garrett of the Atlanta Historical Society.
Habersham (Robert's sixth child) worked in his father's counting room in New York in 1854 and earlier. A nephew of Robert's, William Habersham, Junior, lived with the family after his own father's death, so he may be the William mentioned with John R. in the city directories. Robert Habersham, Junior, mentions in his 1831 diary visiting relatives in New York and may well have meant these two men.

Certainly Robert Habersham's business career was wide-ranging. In his obituary, the Editor of The Morning News notes that Robert was "intelligent, enterprising, and active." Having served for sixty years, Robert was the oldest merchant in Savannah at the time of his death.

103 Habersham Genealogy File, GHS.
104 Ibid.
105 Robert Habersham, Junior, Manuscript File, Index 346, GHS.
106 The Morning News, 31 January 1870, page 2, column 1; on microfilm at GHS.
107 Ibid.
HABERSHAM COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES

1. Harris and Habersham (Robert's grandfather)
2. James and Joseph Habersham (Robert's father and uncle)
3. Joseph Clay & Company (Robert's 'cousin' and father)
4. Joseph and Robert Habersham (Robert and his father)
5. Robert Habersham (alone)
6. R & J Habersham (Robert and his cousin)
7. Robert Habersham & Sons (Robert with various sons)
### GOODS RECEIVED BY HABERSHAM'S COMPANY

**1830**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vessel</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Product</th>
<th>From</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steamboat</td>
<td>William Gaston</td>
<td>cotton</td>
<td>McLaren's Mill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>George Washington</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Ogeechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Swallow</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Ogeechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Wave</td>
<td>rice, cotton</td>
<td>Ogeechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Atlas</td>
<td>rice, cotton, misc.</td>
<td>Augusta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steamboat</td>
<td>Carolina</td>
<td>rice, cotton</td>
<td>South Carolina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Othello</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Ogeechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Excel</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>McLaren's Mill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Excel</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Riceboro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Albert</td>
<td>rice, cotton, hides</td>
<td>Fredericksburg, VA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Good Intent</td>
<td>corn, flour</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brig</td>
<td>Frances</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Newbern, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>corn</td>
<td>Sunbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Ann</td>
<td>cotton</td>
<td>Ogeechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Swallow</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Ogeechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Excel</td>
<td>rice, cotton</td>
<td>McLaren's Mill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>America</td>
<td>rice, cotton</td>
<td>Riceboro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Wave</td>
<td>rice, cotton</td>
<td>Ogeechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Othello</td>
<td>rice, cotton</td>
<td>Combohee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Mill Maid</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Haig's Plantation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>corn</td>
<td>Elizabeth City, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Albert</td>
<td>cotton</td>
<td>Riceboro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Othello</td>
<td>rice, cotton, hides</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>George</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steam packet</td>
<td>George Washington</td>
<td>cotton, rice</td>
<td>Riceboro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>America</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>McLaren's Mill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Jackson</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Ogeechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Swallow</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Ogeechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vessel</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Product</td>
<td>From</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Wave</td>
<td>rice, cotton</td>
<td>Ogeechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Excel</td>
<td>rice, cotton</td>
<td>Ogeechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brig</td>
<td>Cartha</td>
<td>salt, dry goods</td>
<td>Liverpool, England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Othello</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Combahee, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Eliza</td>
<td>cotton, hides</td>
<td>Turtle River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Mary Perry</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>McLaren's Mill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Robert Habersham</td>
<td>cotton, rice</td>
<td>Combahee, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Portsmouth</td>
<td>cotton</td>
<td>Riceboro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Atlas</td>
<td>cotton</td>
<td>Beaufort, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Ann</td>
<td>sugar, cotton</td>
<td>Sunbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Rosetta</td>
<td>cotton, hides</td>
<td>Turtle River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Pilot</td>
<td>cotton</td>
<td>St. John's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Isabella</td>
<td>corn, bacon, misc.</td>
<td>Beaufort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>James Monroe</td>
<td>rice, cotton</td>
<td>Newbern, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Excel</td>
<td>cotton</td>
<td>Ogeechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Wave</td>
<td>cotton, rice</td>
<td>Ogeechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>America</td>
<td>cotton, rice</td>
<td>Riceboro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>John Chevalier</td>
<td>cotton, rice</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Good Intent</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Darien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>cotton, rice</td>
<td>Little River, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Bolivar</td>
<td>corn, bacon</td>
<td>Darien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Albert</td>
<td>cotton</td>
<td>Riceboro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Ann</td>
<td>cotton, rice, hides</td>
<td>Sunbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Isabella</td>
<td>cotton</td>
<td>Beaufort, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Excel</td>
<td>rice, cotton</td>
<td>Ogeechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Robert Habersham</td>
<td>corn, bacon</td>
<td>Combahee, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Newbern, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Wave</td>
<td>cotton, bacon</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>John D. Mongin</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steam packet</td>
<td>Fifield</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vessel</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Product</th>
<th>From</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ship</td>
<td>Macon</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Mary Ann</td>
<td>corn</td>
<td>Edenton, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Excel</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Ogechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brig</td>
<td>Frances</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steamboat</td>
<td>Carolina Malvina</td>
<td>cotton, misc.</td>
<td>Augusta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Albert</td>
<td>corn</td>
<td>Ocracock, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Ann</td>
<td>cotton</td>
<td>Riceboro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Rapid</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Sunbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Excel</td>
<td>rice, cotton</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>America</td>
<td>cotton</td>
<td>Ogechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Little Plandorne</td>
<td>corn</td>
<td>Riceboro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Bolivar</td>
<td>cotton</td>
<td>Plymouth, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Eliza</td>
<td>cotton, hides</td>
<td>St. Catherine's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>James Monroe</td>
<td>corn, bacon, misc.</td>
<td>Turtle River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>John Chevalier</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Plymouth, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>John Chevalier</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Sarah Ann</td>
<td>corn</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Fancy</td>
<td>corn</td>
<td>Ocracock, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>John Chevalier</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Ocracock, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Convoy</td>
<td>corn</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>John Chevalier</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Plymouth, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Excel</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Eliza</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ship</td>
<td>Statira</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Wetree</td>
<td>corn, flour</td>
<td>New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brig</td>
<td>Grand Turk</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Baltimore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ship</td>
<td>Don Quixotte</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Liverpool, England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bark</td>
<td>Pallas</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ship</td>
<td>Douglass</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>John Chevalier</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poleboat</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>cotton</td>
<td>Augusta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vessel</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Product</td>
<td>From</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>John Chevalier</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>John Chevalier</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Fair Trader</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Back River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ship</td>
<td>Satira</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ship</td>
<td>Martha</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ship</td>
<td>Tybee</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brig</td>
<td>Horizon</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Providence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Excel</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Ogechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>John Chevalier</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Othello</td>
<td>misc.</td>
<td>Ogechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ship</td>
<td>Emperor</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>corn</td>
<td>Newbern, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>rice, corn</td>
<td>Ogechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Ware</td>
<td>corn, flour</td>
<td>Fredericksburg, VA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>William &amp; Mary</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Ogechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Excel</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Ogechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Good Intent</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Darien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Pilot</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Combahee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Swallow</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Elizabeth City, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Splendid</td>
<td>corn, peas</td>
<td>South Carolina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>cotton</td>
<td>Ogechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Wave</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Screven’s Plantation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Fair Trader</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Ogechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>Splendid</td>
<td>corn</td>
<td>Ogechee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Excel</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>Othello</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steam packet</td>
<td>John Stoney</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Planter

Another important aspect of Robert Habersham was his work as a planter. Habersham bought several plantations in the Savannah area, especially during the so-called 'Golden Age of Savannah,' 1830-60.108 As part of his marriage contract with Elizabeth Neyle, they were given the use of one-half (about two hundred acres) of a plantation on Hutchinson's Island.109 It is not clear if or for how long they used this plantation. In 1833, Robert also bought Brewton Hill plantation from Dr. Maham Haig for a mortgage of $5,000.110 Robert sold the plantation in February, 1837, to help settle what he owed Dr. Haig's estate.111

In 1849, Robert Habersham bought Lapithowly plantation (next to Brewton Hill) for $40,000.112 He renamed the plantation Deptford.113 A few months later, Habersham

---

108 Granger, Savannah Plantations, p. 7.
109 Marriage Contract, Jones Family Papers, file 58, GHS.
110 Deed Book 2R, Folio 426, App. 70, Chatham County Court House.
111 Estate Accounts, Book F, Folio 69, App. 73; and Deed Book 2V, Folio 513, App. 74; Chatham County Court House.
112 Deed Book 3F, Folios 299 and 300, App. 57 and 58; Chatham County Court House.
113 Granger, Savannah Plantations, p. 37.
began to purchase Causton's Bluff plantation. On 1 March 1850, he paid $4,975 for one hundred ninety-seven acres. In 1851, Robert bought fifty more acres for an additional $500. By January, Habersham added the rest of Causton's Bluff for $20,000. He completed his purchases in the area by buying the fifty acre Mary Cowper tract in 1857 for $750. Robert now owned 1,400 acres. Although some of it was marshland, it was a very valuable property. The location was so strategic that Fort Bartow was built on the Saint Augustine Creek side of Causton's Bluff plantation. Fort Jackson was on the Savannah River side of the Deptford plantation.

In the manner of the Old South at the time, Robert Habersham used slave labor to work the plantations. The 1850 Chatham County Slave Census gives him as the owner of

---

114 Deed Book 3G, Folio 282, App. 22; Chatham County Court House.

115 Deed Book 3I, Folio 26, App. 24; Chatham County Court House.

116 Deed Book 3I, Folio 212, App. 24; Chatham County Court House.

117 Deed Book 3Q, Folio 386, App. 26; Chatham County Court House.

118 Granger, Savannah Plantations, p. 18.

119 Ibid., unpaged map.
two hundred eighty-one slaves. 120 (In addition, some of his children also owned slaves.) Some of Robert's slaves worked on Plantation # 1, but we do not know which of his plantations that was. About one hundred twenty-eight served there, ranging in age from one year to eighty years. 121 The Census states that Plantation # 2 had one hundred slaves, varying from one year to seventy years old. 122 (One might assume that the greater number of slaves served on the larger plantation, Causton's Bluff, but this is not proven.)

Apart from the plantation slaves, Robert Habersham also owned fifty-three slaves in 1850, falling between six months and sixty-eight years. 123 At least some of those probably served at the Habersham house in Savannah itself. Owning some three hundred thirty-four slaves in 1850 certainly made Habersham one of the large owners in the area. In addition, he had partial interest in the Upper Steam Rice Mill which reported sixty-six slaves in 1850. 124 The 1850 Federal

120 Slave Census, Chatham County, Georgia, 1850, District 13; on microfilm at GHS.

121 Ibid.

122 Ibid.

123 Ibid.

124 Ibid.
Census listed Robert Habersham's property as worth about $80,000.\textsuperscript{125} It is difficult to know whether this amount was just for land or if it included land and slaves.

By the 1860 Federal Census, Robert listed his personal value at $150,000 and his property value at $100,000.\textsuperscript{126} Others in his household had an additional personal property value over $80,000.\textsuperscript{127} In the Second District of Savannah, the 1860 Slave Census showed that Mr. Habersham owned fifty-five slaves, ranging from three months to seventy-five years in age.\textsuperscript{128} His daughters and sister living in his home also owned a total of forty-nine slaves.\textsuperscript{129} Again, some of these undoubtedly served at the house in Savannah, but the number is uncertain.

In the White Bluff Sixth District that year, Robert owned an additional two hundred twenty-three slaves.\textsuperscript{130}

\textsuperscript{125}\textit{Federal Census, Chatham County, Georgia, 1850, Entry # 162; on microfilm at GHS.}

\textsuperscript{126}\textit{Federal Census, Chatham County, Georgia, 1860, Entry # 1184; on microfilm at GHS.}

\textsuperscript{127}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{128}\textit{Slave Census, Chatham County, Georgia, 1860, District 2, page 23; on microfilm at GHS.}

\textsuperscript{129}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{130}\textit{Ibid.}
These slaves were between one year and sixty-five years.\textsuperscript{131} Since this Slave Census is not divided between various plantations, there is little indication of how many served where. The Census does note that there were sixty slave houses.\textsuperscript{132} There is no breakdown of which quarters were where.

It is uncertain where Robert Habersham obtained all of these slaves. He probably inherited some of the. The use of others came through his marriage agreement with Elizabeth Matilda Neyle in 1815.\textsuperscript{133} In 1851, Habersham bought eighty-nine slaves from Herman M. Blodget, the same man who had sold him Causton's Bluff plantation.\textsuperscript{134}

In addition to the house in Savannah and plantations in Chatham County, Robert also owned four hundred and five acres in Monroe County, two hundred and two acres in Dooley County, and two hundred and two acres in Cherokee County.\textsuperscript{135} He also had an unstated amount of land in Habersham County,

\textsuperscript{131} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{132} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{133} Jones Family Papers, file 58, GHS.

\textsuperscript{134} Deed Book 31, Folio 391; Chatham County Court House.

\textsuperscript{135} Will of Robert Habersham, File Box H, Folio 332, App. 59; Chatham County Court House.
Clearly, Robert Habersham was as involved and successful in the plantation system as he was in the mercantile one.

Ibid.
CHART # 5

One-time home of Capt. John Rae, Robert's Grandfather

Robert's parents, Joseph and Isabella (Rae) were married here.

Elizabeth Neyle, Robert's third wife owned about 200 acres on this island.

Robert owned all three of these plantations at various times.
Civic Leader and Humanitarian

Another important part of Robert Habersham's life was his civic work. For example, in 1810, he was appointed as Commissioner of Loans for the state. In 1811, the President nominated and the United States Senate confirmed Robert in that job for another year.

Mr. Habersham served on the Chatham County Grand Jury several times. He was suggested as a candidate for Alderman several different years, but he generally declined that honor. According to his obituary, Robert was the Treasurer of Chatham County for many years.

When President Monroe visited Savannah in 1819, Mr.

---

137 The Republican and Savannah Evening Ledger, 16 June 1810, page 3, column 2; see also 12 July 1810, page 3, column 3; on microfilm at GHS.

138 The Colonial Museum and Savannah Advertiser, 11 February 1811, page 3, column 3; see also The Republican and Savannah Evening Ledger, 12 February 1811, page 3, column 2; on microfilm at GHS.

139 The Colonial Museum and Savannah Advertiser, 19 January 1818, page 2, column 2; see also The Daily Georgian, 23 January 1819, page 3, column 1; see also 3 March 1821, page 2, column 5; on microfilm at GHS.

140 The Colonial Museum and Savannah Gazette, 12 August 1819, page 2, column 4; see also The Georgian, 12 August 1819, page 3, column 2; see also 17 August 1819, page 3, column 2; on microfilm at GHS.

141 The Morning News, 31 January 1870, page 2, column 1; on microfilm at GHS.
Habersham was on the committee to plan the event. Several times, Robert was chosen one of the directors of the bank of Georgia. In 1822, he was on the committee to plan the Independence Day celebration and gave one of the toasts at the dinner.

In 1824, a committee asked General Lafayette to visit Savannah. The General arrived on 19 March 1825. Habersham and the other members planned a dinner at the Council Chamber, a service at Christ Church on Sunday, and the laying of a cornerstone to commemorate the Revolutionary soldiers. That same year, Robert served on another committee which led public discussions at the Exchange about what to do with the newly acquired Creek Indian land.

---

142 The Daily Georgian, 17 March 1819, page 2, column 5; see also The Colonial Museum and Savannah Daily Gazette, 17 March 1819, page 2, column 4; on microfilm at GHS; see also Gamble, History of City Government, p. 128.

143 The Colonial Museum and Savannah Daily Gazette, 11 February 1817, page 2, column 1; see also The Georgian and Evening Advertiser, 8 May 1821, page 3, column 1; see also The Savannah Museum, 7 May 1822, page 3, column 1; see also The Georgian, 7 May 1822, page 2, column 1; on microfilm at GHS.

144 The Georgian, 6 June 1822, page 2, column 1; see also The Savannah Georgian, 6 July 1822, page 3, column 1; on microfilm at GHS.


146 The Savannah Georgian, 10 May 1825, page 2, column 1; see also The Savannah Republican, 10 May 1825, page 2, column 2; on microfilm at GHS.
In 1825, Robert Habersham served on the Savannah Board of Health for Jackson War.\textsuperscript{147} By 1833, Robert was one of the representatives from Georgia to the Anti-tariff Convention in Philadelphia.\textsuperscript{148} Habersham was a member of the 1836 committee that formed the Central Railroad.\textsuperscript{149} He also served on the Board of Directors for the railroad.\textsuperscript{150} In 1850, Mr. Habersham was one of the citizens who planned a commemoration for Zachary Taylor.\textsuperscript{151} Sometimes, civic activities also had a humanitarian side, as when Robert joined with other citizens and merchants to form the Insurance Company of Savannah.\textsuperscript{152}

Habersham also took part in other humanitarian groups. About 1806, Robert joined the Union Society and remained active until his death sixty-four years later.\textsuperscript{153}

\textsuperscript{147} The Savannah Republican, 14 May 1825, page 2, column 5; see also The Savannah Georgian, 16 May 1825, page 2, column 4; on microfilm at GHS.

\textsuperscript{148} The Morning News, 31 January 1870, page 2, column 1; on microfilm at GHS.

\textsuperscript{149} Gamble, History of City Government, p. 175.

\textsuperscript{150} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{151} Jones, History of Savannah, p. 352.

\textsuperscript{152} The Republican and Savannah Evening Ledger, 24 December 1812, page 2, column 2; on microfilm at GHS.

\textsuperscript{153} F. D. Lee and J. L. Agnew, Historical Record of the City of Savannah (Savannah: J. H. Estill, 1869), pl 185.
Habersham was one of the committee to collect and distribute money and provisions for "the relief of the distressed from Cuba now in this city."\textsuperscript{154} By 1817, Robert was in a group chosen to erect a hospital for Negroes.\textsuperscript{155} Two years later, both Robert and Joseph Habersham were commissioners for a lottery for the Savannah Poor-house and Hospital.\textsuperscript{156}

Robert Habersham was one of the incorporators of the Georgia Historical Society (known then as 'Library') in 1839.\textsuperscript{157} He was chosen as an arbitrator in a duel between William H. Bullock, Editor of "The Georgian," and S. T. Chapman, Editor of "The Republican" in 1844.\textsuperscript{158} Robert and the other arbitrator, George Sibley, were able to settle the dispute before the actual duel took place.\textsuperscript{159}

Mr. Habersham was also a longtime vestryman at Christ Episcopal Church.\textsuperscript{160} In 1838, he was on the building

\textsuperscript{154} The Colonial Museum and Savannah Advertiser, 17 August 1809, page 2, column 5; on microfilm at GHS.

\textsuperscript{155} The Colonial Museum and Savannah Daily Gazette, 19 February 1817, page 2, column 1; on microfilm at GHS.

\textsuperscript{156} Ibid., 6 April 1819, page 3, columns 2 and 3; see also The Daily Georgian, 6 April 1819, page 3, column 1; on microfilm at GHS.

\textsuperscript{157} Jones, History of Savannah, p. 529.


\textsuperscript{159} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{160} Vestry Records, Christ Church; on microfilm at GHS.
committee for the new church. 161 Robert gave $500 toward
the construction of that new building. 162 When Stephen
Elliott (a 'cousin') was asked to serve at Christ Church,
Mr. Habersham pledged $100 a year for life toward his
support. 163 As both a vestryman and as a businessman,
Habersham was sometimes called upon to sign legal documents
for Christ Church. 164 Not long before his death, he was
chosen to serve as a warden for Christ Church, but he declined due to
165 his advanced age.

161
Jones, History of Savannah, p. 495.

162
Vestry Records, Christ Church, 24 January 1838; on microfilm
at Georgia Historical Society.

163
Ibid., April 1840 and 26 November 1840; on microfilm at GHS.

164
Ibid., 10 April 1841 and 23 September 1866; on microfilm at
GHS.

165
Ibid., 1868; on microfilm at GHS.
In summary, Robert Habersham was an important part of Savannah, Georgia, in the 1800's. In many ways, he is representative of the antebellum Southern elite, reflecting the dichotomy between slave holding and genuine concern for his fellow man. I would like to have met him.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Court Records, Chatham County Court House, Savannah, Georgia.


Federal Census, Chatham County, Georgia, 1850.

Federal Census, Chatham County, Georgia, 1860.


Granger, Mary, ed. *Savannah River Plantations* (Federal Writers Project, reprinted in Spartanburg, South Carolina: Reprint Co.).

Habersham Family Genealogical File, Georgia Historical Society.


*History of the St. Andrew's Society of the City of Savannah* (Savannah: Kennickel, 1950).


Jones Family Papers, Manuscript Collection, Georgia Historical Society.


Malone, Henry Thomas. The Episcopal Church in Georgia (Atlanta: The Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Atlanta, 1960).


Newspapers, miscellaneous; an excellent collection with the WPA index is available on microfilm at both Georgia Historical Society and Chatham County Public Library.

O’Hara, Arthur J. Hibernian Society, 1812-1912 (Savannah: Braid and Hutton, Inc.)


Parish Records, Christ Episcopal Church; on microfilm at Georgia Historical Society.

Parish Registry, Christ Episcopal Church; on microfilm at Georgia Historical Society.

Registrar’s Office, Princeton University.

Savannah News Press, 2 January 1972, unsigned article; in verticle file 'H' at Chatham County Public Library.

Slave Census, Chatham County, Georgia, 1850.

Slave Census, Chatham County, Georgia, 1860.

Trow’s New York City Directory, 1857; in possession of Franklin Garrett at the Atlanta Historical Society.
