

PRAG SESSION NUMBER TWO.

by Mrs. Cora McKenzie Peeples,  
Historian and Scrapbook Custodian.

Prag Session Number One about news filed in our Scrapbooks was presented when our Reunion met in Savannah in 1979. Since then we have several authors to add to our list: Carolyn Lawton Harrell published Kith And Kin in 1984. She gave us a preview when we met in Wilmington, NC. Stacy and Gerald Church wrote The Lawtons of Summer Oaks and gave us a program in 1984 on the family of Alexander Benjamin and Narcissa Melissa Lawton. This family is also represented by Dr. Robert James Lawton and his sister and her husband Blaine Mikesell who arranged the tour of England which 35 of us enjoyed in 1989.

We had a speaker in 1986 who told of his life on the James Island plantation of Allison St. John and Wallace Lawton, Dr. Clyde Bresee who wrote Life On A Lawton Plantation Near Charleston. And we have a song composed by Mrs. Thomas Lawton Willingham, harmonized by Laura Lawton Reynolds, The Farmer Man.

In 1983 when Connie Lawton Huntley was President, Michael West Berry spoke on the Life & Death of Sarah Isabella Robert and her nephew, Richard Franklin Bostick, in the 1837 wreck of the steamship Home. Michael was a great speaker who has since gone to his final resting place. Our family lost an outstanding young man, so knowledgeable and capable. Michael was Custodian of the Museum of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Washington for several years and moved up to the National Trust before his untimely death.

Two of our past Presidents have died since 1979: the brothers Benjamin Joseph and Robert Josiah Willingham.

Cousins who have joined us since 1979 include Crystelle Robert Wickett of Fort Worth, Texas who has had a distinguished career as President of the State of Texas Huguenot Society, the Texas State Garden Club, Texas State Mother of the Year, Sponsor for the Children of the American Revolution and in many other positions. Crystelle also plays tennis avidly and often.

Deanna Wagoner, whose Clown Bazaar at 9 Broad St. was founded in Nepal before its reactionary government forced her to leave while she was working for Church World Service, now operates it as a not-for-profit corporation. She offers items handcrafted by physically handicapped and economically disadvantaged Christians from all over the world. Visit Deanna's Clown Bazaar for unusual gifts and collectibles.

Carow Rice's grandson, Clay Rice, follows in his footsteps in cutting silhouettes, playing guitar, composing and singing songs.

Our family has enjoyed special recognition in having Thomas O. Lawton, Jr. as President of the Huguenot Society of South Carolina and of the South Carolina Historical Society for the past several years, while the Rev. Dr. Robert E. H. Peeples has been President of the Society of First Families of South Carolina, 1670-1700. Through their leadership we were able to erect and dedicate with appropriate ceremonies, a bronze plaque in memory of the Rev. Pierre Robert (1656-1715), Founder and First Rector (1706-1710) of the Parish of St. James Santee. In addition, the family contributed in 1989 more than \$800 to the fund for the maintenance of the historic Church on Old Georgetown Road. Our next project is to erect epitaphs for Rev. Pierre and Jeane (Bayer) Robert and their son, Pierre Robert, Jr., at the site of Old Jamestown on Santee River.

Our Secretary, W. Maxwell Lawton, the family's outstanding young artist, is a grandson of the Rev. Samuel and Alice Lawton. The Rev. Sam was founder of the South Carolina State Society for the Blind. Max's brother, Deaver Lawton, represented the family in Desert Storm earlier this year. We are proud of both of them.

There is an article in the Scrapbook about James Lawton of Bluffton, a potter who has won many awards for his work. The family's artistic genes can be traced back to the dynasty of ROBERT artists in France and Switzerland centuries ago.

Lawton O'Cain's Bed and Breakfast, the John Lawton House in Estill, is flourishing, quite popular with the hunting crowd.

Summit Plantation, off Toogoodoo Road, was bought and restored as their home by John and Patricia (Youmans) Boineau. It is shown in Plantations of The Lowcountry by William Baldwin.

Jane and Gerald Church's granddaughter wrote a poem honoring the family the last year we met in Hardeeville. It is preserved in the Scrapbook.

Mrs. Alice Rhodes Rogers (Rt. 3, Box 121, Mullins, SC 29574) has published a RHODES family history which includes the family of the Hon. George Rhodes (1802-1881) of the Hermitage Plantation, Lawtonville, Signer of the 1860 Ordinance of Secession, and his two wives, both daughters of James Jehu and Charlotte Ann (Lawton) Robert of Cotton Hill Plantation, Robertville. Copies may be ordered from Alice.

In looking through the information in our Scrapbook, we can feel blessed in being part of a family which has been honorable and influential in this State since 1693 when Landgrave Thomas Smith was Governor, 1686 when Rev. Pierre Robert was minister to the Huguenots on Santee River, 1691 when John Ladson was a member of the Grand Council, 1698 when Edmund Bohun was 1st Chief Justice. Certainly few have contributed more to society than Gen. Henry Martyn Robert in his Robert's Rules of Order. He was truly a peacemaker. When I look at all the members who have accomplished so much, I can see that they have a personal relationship with our Lord who guides and directs us in the many good works we do.

We have stories of births, marriages and deaths, plus many honors won. We gather them all together in thanksgiving to our heavenly Father in the words of that great old hymn:

"O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,  
Be Thou our Guide while life shall last, and our eternal home."