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Cotton and Compromise: Charles Pinckney and the Political Unification of South Carolina 1788-1808

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Charles Pinckney and the Political Unification of South Carolina
1788—1808

by
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ABSTRACT
HUNTER UPCHURCH: Cotton and Compromise: Charles Pinckney and the Political Unification of South Carolina, 1788-1808
(Under the direction of Sheila Skemp)

This project surveys the life and times of South Carolinian Charles Pinckney after he participated in the Constitutional Convention of 1787. My objective was to discern how Pinckney's political career both mirrored and contributed to South Carolina's gradual shift away from Federalism towards Jeffersonian-Republicanism, as the western "Up-Country" region slowly took power from the more traditional, coastal "Low-Country." To achieve this goal, I examined hundreds of pages of primary sources, including Pinckney's extant speeches, his published articles or pamphlets, and many of his personal letters. To augment my factual and historiographical knowledge of the early national period of United States history, I reviewed dozens of secondary sources. I found that factors in Pinckney's personal life combined with his acute political acumen to push him away from the social class in which he was born, the Federalist-dominated, wealthy elite of Charleston.

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Introduction

"May you live in interesting times." So declares, I have often been told, an ancient Chinese curse that equates "interesting" with "unpleasant" or "dangerous." If the Chinese philosophers were correct, I have come to believe that Charles Pinckney and his contemporaries in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries must have been doubly cursed. During those years, adventurous sailors crisscrossed the oceans in wooden ships, consolidating empires and forging trade routes that stretched from the Spice Islands of the Far East to the silver mines of Mexico and on to the cobblestone streets of Philadelphia. Men argued over the Enlightenment notions of liberty and equality in the drawing rooms and coffeehouses of the Old World. Revolutionaries throughout the New World put these ideas into practice and wrested their independence from distant colonial masters.

This thesis examines the connections between one such revolutionary, Charles Pinckney, and the political developments that took place during the early years of the United States's nationhood in a fertile, roughly triangular patch of land known as South Carolina. Throughout the eighteenth century, wealthy planter-merchants in Charleston dominated South Carolina's economy and state government. By the end of the American Revolution, however, residents of the western, "Up-Country" region of the state began to demand more political participation and greater access to the slave trade. For the next twenty years, Upcountrymen and their elected representatives continued their drive to

break the "Low-Country" elites' monopoly on political power and to find a staple crop on which to base an agricultural economy.

Charles Pinckney serves as a useful lens through which to view the changes that occurred in South Carolina because he himself both reflected and participated in those changes. Pinckney was born into the upper echelon of Low-Country society, but he "betrayed his class" (in the language of his bitter peers) and joined the ranks of Jeffersonian-Republican politicians from the Up-Country. His escalating criticism of Federalist policies during the 1790s, his campaign efforts in South Carolina on behalf of Thomas Jefferson in 1800, and his implementation of republican reforms as governor all demonstrate Pinckney's active role in the political drama of early national South Carolina. Pinckney, along with other Republicans, took advantage of an economic boom in the Up-Country, and the concomitant rise in that region's political capital, to move South Carolina out of the colonial period and into the modern age.

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The Fall Line

South Carolina's Low-Country and Charles Pinckney *circa* 1790

In late May of 1788, Charlestonians and visitors to South Carolina's capital celebrated the state's ratification of the new Federal Constitution. Excitement, a sense of victory, and the warm ocean breezes permeated the atmosphere of Charleston as revelers paraded through the cobblestone streets and feasted on roasted ox.[1] Later in the evening, jubilant residents and guests enjoyed "viewing illuminated ships in the harbor."[2] Certain communities, however, in the western, "Up-Country" area of the state, held quite different public demonstrations. Processioners, dressed in funerary black, filed out of their small towns and villages to gather at makeshift gravesites, where they solemnly lowered symbolic "coffins of liberty" to express their disdain for the Constitution, which they interpreted as an affront upon personal and state autonomy.[3]

Such open displays of contrary opinions visibly embodied the long-standing socioeconomic differences between South Carolina's Low-Country planters and Up-Country farmers. The "Low-Country" centered, culturally and economically, around Charleston and the wealthy rice and indigo plantations of the coastal area. The term "Up-Country" refers to the more rural, less-fertile, western region of South Carolina.[4]

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[1] James W. Ely, Jr., "'The Good Old Cause': The Ratification of the Constitution and Bill of Rights in South Carolina," in The South's Role in the Creation of the Bill of Rights, ed. Robert J. Haws (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1991), 117.
[2] Ibid., 117.
[3] Robert M. Weir, "South Carolina: Slavery and the Structure of the Union," in Ratifying the Constitution, eds. Michael Allen Gillespie and Michael Lienesch (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1989), 201.
[4] The "fall line" refers to the geological distinction between the soils of the two regions.

Economic and agricultural differences formed only a part of the dichotomy between the two regions: the Up-Country was opposed, sometimes just on mere principle, to the political control and governmental policies of the Low-Country. The debate over ratification brought to the forefront the contrasts between the state's contentious halves. By stabilizing national politics and solidifying the Union, however, ratification also marked the beginning of a new period of South Carolina's history: a period in which its two bickering "Countries" would, through the efforts of enterprising politicians, the effects of slavery's expansion, and the vagaries of economic success, reconcile (or at least ignore) their differences and begin to forge a new identity for South Carolina.

Walter Edgar, the eminent historian of South Carolina, has called his beloved state "the colony of a colony," because, he claims, the "powerful local culture" of Barbados "would be re-created...along the South Carolina coast."[5] Indeed, it was an English royalist and former Barbadian planter named John Colleton who, along with seven associates, first obtained a charter for Carolina on 24 March 1663.[6] Several small English outposts on the Carolina coast sputtered and failed during the next six years until one of the original investors, Lord Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, convinced his financial partners to seriously commit to the foundation of a colony in Carolina.[7] Ashley, along with his secretary, political philosopher John Locke, took the initiative of writing the Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina. Edgar notes that "between 1670 and 1690 about 54 percent of the whites who immigrated to South

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[5] Walter Edgar, South Carolina: A History (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 35-36.
[6] Ibid., 38-39.
[7] Ibid., 41.

Carolina came from Barbados."[8] Barbadians brought not only a "cultural model" to their new home, but also an understanding of plantation economics and dreams of a profitable staple crop.[9]

Rice, along with indigo and slaves, would make those dreams of fantastic wealth a reality in the Low-Country of South Carolina. Indeed, historian Peter H. Wood, in his landmark study Black Majority, asserts that "no development had greater impact" on the course of the first century of South Carolina's history than "the successful introduction of rice."[10] Many historians have argued that the cultivation of rice in South Carolina drew heavily on West African techniques.[11] The combination of South Carolina's harsh environment and the need for laborers familiar with the production of rice pushed the number of slaves imported into the state past 1,000 per year after 1730.[12] In fact, Edgar writes that "between 1700 and 1775, 40 percent of the Africans imported into North America came through Charleston."[13]

Despite being torn from their homes and thrust into an unfamiliar world, slaves in South Carolina did not remain passive victims who surrendered to circumstances beyond their control. Slaves found many ways, both creative and violent, to resist the demands of slave-holding societies. Resistance throughout the Americas generally came in two forms: active and passive. On 9 September 1739, a group of slaves, many of Angolan descent, "met on the Stono River about twenty miles southwest of Charleston" and

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[8] Ibid., 48.
[9] Ibid., 48.
[10] Peter H. Wood, Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1974, reissued 1996), 35.
[11] See Daniel C. Littlefield's Rice and Slaves: Ethnicity and the Slave Trade in Colonial South Carolina for a very thorough discussion of the interplay between the importation of slaves and the cultivation of rice in the Low-Country.
[12] Edgar, 66.
[13] Ibid., 67.

launched a bloody rebellion that left around seventy-five blacks and whites dead.[14] The Stono Rebellion is an extreme example of active resistance. Peter H. Wood argues that, although less striking than armed insurrection, running away was actually the most significant "act of self-assertion" that a slave could commit.[15] Resistance to slave owners did not have to be violent or direct; "passive" resistance might manifest itself in the preservation of cultural or linguistic African traditions. For example, "Negroes in South Carolina developed a language," known as Gullah, "in which sounds and constructions comprehensible to the widest number" of recently-arrived African slaves survived.[16] Slaves in South Carolina resisted their masters' imposition of English by creating a pidgin tongue, which whites found incomprehensible and which permitted blacks to communicate freely.

White masters, however, met slave resistance with a steely resolve to manage their "property" and extract riches from the fertile Carolina soil. In truth, they had little choice but to subdue their slaves: as Peter Wood notes, "the recruitment of European settlers never burgeoned, despite offers of free land on the frontier," and the physically exhausting nature of rice cultivation dissuaded white free-wage laborers from working the fields.[17] Planters of the Low-Country consequently put their hopes in black slavery and built an economy on the exploitation of African labor. Because of human bondage, South Carolina became one of the richest of Great Britain's North American colonies: the estates of the Charleston district had a mean aggregate wealth of $194,311 in modern

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[14] Ibid., 74-75.
[15] Wood, 239. Methods of active resistance on plantations also included the poisoning of masters and their families, deliberate destruction of property (such as arson), and conspiracy to run away or foment rebellion. See Wood's Black Majority, Chapter 11, for an in-depth discussion of these and other techniques of black resistance.
[16] Ibid., 185.
[17] Ibid., 325.

currency, which far exceeded any other region in North America.[18] According to Walter Edgar, "by 1774, the lowcountry had more total wealth than many nations of the world today."[19] Thus, on the eve of the American Revolution, forced black labor had helped to create an economic and political elite in Charleston that dominated the rest of the state.

The War for American Independence, however, exposed the weaknesses in the power structure of South Carolina. Early in the conflict, proponents of revolution (based generally in the Low-Country) seriously doubted the loyalty of many inhabitants of the Up-Country.[20] Historian Rachel N. Klein asserts that Low-Country revolutionaries had good reason not to trust the Up-Country: "with the arrival of the British [in 1780], the frontier exploded into a virtual civil war" between supporters of independence and loyalists.[21] Under Cornwallis's onslaught, the situation in South Carolina grew dire for the patriots: Charleston itself fell to the British army in May of 1780. Elite coastal leaders, Klein argues, finally managed to win the Up-Country to the cause of independence by forming alliances with their (admittedly less-wealthy) counterparts in the western parts of the state.[22] Frontier leaders, eager to emulate Low-Country planters, used their influence to mobilize local militia against British forces. After the Revolution ended in 1783, Low-Country politicians slowly realized that they would have to pay a political price for the Up-Country's military support during the war. During the late 1780s, the planter-controlled state legislature conceded to many demands from Up-Country representatives, including the creation of an inland court system, the re-location

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[18] Edgar, 152-153.
[19] Ibid., 153.
[20] Rachel N. Klein, Unification of a Slave State: The Rise of the Planter Class in the South Carolina Backcountry, 1760—1808 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 78.
[21] Ibid., 79.
[22] Ibid., 89.

of the capital from Charleston to a site in the Up-Country, and the implementation of a set of much stricter criminal laws.[23]

In addition to opening the door to political change in South Carolina, the American Revolution severely damaged the state's economy. The Low-Country, where "rice remained the coastline's distinctive crop," faced a vicious cycle of debt, supply, and demand.[24] Planters had to borrow significant sums of money from British credit firms to replace the slaves who ran away during the war or who accepted British protection and offers of freedom.[25] Low-Country plantation owners insisted on continuing the cultivation of rice, despite losing access to markets in the British Caribbean, England itself, and Portugal.[26] When creditors began to call in their loans in the late 1780s, a shortage of currency in South Carolina, coupled with an inability to sell their crops, prevented many Low-Country and Up-Country planters from paying their debts.[27] Under pressure from upper-class coastal debtors, the state government finally passed a relief measure, known as the Sheriff's Sale Act, in 1785.[28] This legislation, also aptly called the Pine Barren Act, allowed debtors to pay their creditors in land instead of cash, which meant that creditors would either have to accept potentially worthless land or extend their clients' deadlines for payment. The Installment Act, which postponed payments on all debts until 1790, replaced the Pine Barren Act in 1787.[29] Thus, in 1790, South Carolina

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[23] Klein, 119-120; Edgar, 248.
[24] Joyce E. Chaplin, An Anxious Pursuit: Agricultural Innovation and Modernity in the Lower South, 1730—1815 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 227.
[25] According to Walter Edgar (South Carolina, 246), Low-Country rice planters accumulated about $103 million worth of debt (in modern currency) in the 1780s.
[26] Edgar, 246; Klein, 114-116.
[27] Klein, 128.
[28] Edgar, 247.
[29] Ibid., 247.

was a state committed (perhaps unwisely) to an agricultural economy, wracked by the destruction or loss of property during the war, and suffering through a severe debt crisis.

Slavery itself, the very basis of South Carolina's debt-ridden economy, was in fact a contentious issue between the state's two regions in the 1780s. By 1790, Low-Country planters owned 73% of all slaves in the state, with the western Up-Country possessing only a meager 13%.[30] Low-Country slaveholders, living in a society whose population had been a black majority for many decades, feared the possibility of another Stono-like revolt. Throughout the eighteenth century, Low-Country politicians actually proposed a number of government-sponsored schemes, such as silk production in the Up-Country, to limit the spread of the "peculiar institution" and to surround the coast of South Carolina with slavery-free zones.[31] During the Philadelphia Convention, a delegate from South Carolina (and a prominent member of Charleston's elite) declared that "if the S[outhern] States were let alone they will probably of themselves stop importations....[and I] would [myself] as a Citizen of S. Carolina vote for it."[32] The state government actually did impose, much to the dissatisfaction of aspiring Up-Country planters, a series of three-year moratoria on the slave trade, beginning in 1787.[33]

Why did many settlers in the Up-Country object so strongly to Low-Country planters' attempts to stem the growth of the state's already-large slave population? The Up-Country was, after all, still a "yeoman area in which small-scale farming and household manufactures predominated."[34] However, a small number of Up-Country

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[30] Klein, 254.
[31] See Chapter 5 of Joyce E. Chaplin's An Anxious Pursuit for a thorough treatment of the Low-Country's attempts to rein in the spread of slavery.
[32] James Madison, Notes of Debates in the Federal Convention of 1787 (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1987), 505.
[33] Edgar, 247.
[34] Klein, 153.

slave owners, who wanted to emulate their wealthier coastal counterparts, were searching for the staple crop that would permit them to build a profitable, slavery-based agricultural economy.[35] These same men were also the representatives of the Up-Country in the state legislature.[36] Therefore, a small group of western slave owners exerted an undue influence in both Up-Country and state politics as they tried to pressure Low-Country politicians to keep the slave trade open, especially after the rise of cotton cultivation. Despite Low-Country hopes to limit the spread of slavery, South Carolina's patrician delegates to the Constitutional Convention clearly understood the Up-Country's insistence on acquiring slave labor when they asserted that "South Carolina can never receive the plan if it prohibits the slave trade."[37]

If slavery intimately affected the economy of the Low-Country, then it certainly profoundly shaped the region's culture as well. Historian Joyce Chaplin, in her impressive study An Anxious Pursuit, argues that their dependence on slave labor made the elite planters of the Lower South fundamentally uneasy about their place in the "modern" world.[38] Chaplin shows that wealthy South Carolinians (almost all of them slaveholders) constantly worried about foreign perception of their fertile strip of earth. To combat unflattering stereotypes in Europe, many proud Low-Country whites "often took to scientific pursuits."[39] To contribute to Europe's prestigious scientific circles was

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[35] Ibid., 246-247.
[36] Rachel Klein notes that "of the more than 350 backcountrymen who served in the state legislature from 1786 to 1808, only 11...were non-slaveholders." p. 153.
[37] Madison, 503.
[38] Chaplin uses the term "modern" to refer not only to a world of increasing mechanization and agricultural innovation, but also to a world in which Enlightenment ideas were threatening the philosophical and moral underpinnings of human bondage. The book actually encompasses South Carolina's Low-Country, Georgia's coastal plantations, and areas of East Florida when they fell under British control. See Chapter 1 of An Anxious Pursuit for Chaplin's introduction to slavery, modernity, and agriculture in the Lower South.
[39] Chaplin, 67.

not enough to allay the fears of many Lower South residents; Chaplin asserts that they continued to worry that they themselves were "exotics—objects to be ogled and categorized like so many magnolias and parakeets."[40] In response to charges from northern and European travelers that slavery promoted extreme laziness in white owners, defensive southerners also crafted "an ethos of directed and productive activity...that established whites' identity through steadfast avoidance of lassitude."[41] According to Chaplin's assessment, then, the slave-owning, elite Low-Country society of the late eighteenth century agonized over modernizing changes to agriculture and technology, and the question which these changes raised of slavery's efficacy and morality.

Family connections and notions of personal honor also deeply concerned the Low-Country elite. Historian Lorri Glover argues that the first generation of white immigrants to South Carolina came from Europe and the West Indies "with the intention of expanding established family empires along the Carolina coast."[42] Indeed, many early settlers in South Carolina simply could not survive without financial support from relatives. A high death rate, due to the semi-tropical environment, and frequent remarriage created a tight-knit network of interrelated "aristocratic" families who controlled the plantations of the Low-Country and the merchant houses of Charleston.[43] Around the middle of the eighteenth century, Glover asserts, Charleston's elite society members consciously began to use strategic marriages and family connections for financial gain and to exclude "outsiders" from joining their emerging aristocratic

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[40] Ibid., 71.
[41] Ibid., 92-93.
[42] Lorri Glover, All Our Relations: Blood Ties and Emotional Bonds among the Early South Carolina Gentry (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 2.
[43] Ibid., 23-24.

society.[44] Bertram Wyatt-Brown, a historian of Southern culture, concludes that honor in the South depended on the "evaluation of the public," in this case, the upper-class, interrelated community of Charleston.[45] A typical male member of the Low-Country gentry, therefore, would have been loyal to his fellow patricians (especially since most of them were his relatives) and deeply concerned about their opinions of his behavior (since his claim to personal honor hinged on the community's appraisal of his actions).

In October of 1757, a healthy baby boy, who would be christened "Charles," was born into the prosperous and respected Pinckney family of Charleston, South Carolina. Like his forebears, who had contributed to the colony's vitality and economic success for over half a century, young Charles would one day play an important role in the political development of his state. Genealogists have determined that Charles, and indeed all Pinckneys, are descendents of le Seigneur de Picquigny, who crossed the English Channel with William of Normandy in 1066.[46] Six hundred years later, the founder of the Pinckney clan in South Carolina, Thomas Pinckney, was born in County Durham, England. Thomas, as the youngest of four brothers who all lived in a small village, had few job prospects in a society based on primogeniture. He decided to try his fortunes in the New World, and he set off for Jamaica in 1688. He quickly learned of the riches to be made serving as a privateer against French vessels. Sailing on the *Free Jamaica*,

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[44] Ibid., 87. In Charleston's white society, the elites' exclusion created clear social classes: wealthy planter/merchants actively worked to make sure that working-class whites would not climb the social ladder.

[45] Bertram Wyatt-Brown, Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 14.

[46] For the following information concerning the Pinckney family's endeavors before the birth of Charles in 1757, I am heavily indebted to the thorough research of Frances Leigh Williams, presented in her book: A Founding Family: The Pinckneys of South Carolina (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), 3-18. In the interests of facilitating easy reading, I will forego footnotes until I use another source.

Thomas arrived in Charleston in April of 1692. Wasting little time, he won the hand of Grace Bedon in one short summer; the young couple, with her parents' blessing, were wed in September 1692.[47] Thomas became a successful export-import merchant and, by 1696, had saved enough money to buy a plantation. Tragedy struck the entrepreneurial colonist in that year when his wife Grace died, leaving him with no children.

Already suffering from the loss of his young wife, Thomas received the news that his parents and oldest brother had also died. During the winter of 1696, he returned to England to visit his remaining relatives. Back in Country Durham, Thomas met Mary Cotesworth, a family friend who comforted the grief-stricken young planter. The two married in January 1697, and shortly thereafter Mary accompanied her new husband to South Carolina. They started a family and Mary soon gave birth to three strong, healthy sons: Thomas, Charles, and William. The latter two, Charles and William, would grow up to found the two distinguished lines of Pinckneys in South Carolina. Thomas died of yellow fever in the spring of 1705, at the age of thirty-nine. His widow, Mary, through two remarriages, managed to provide some material comforts and a solid education to her three sons.

William Pinckney, the youngest son of Thomas and Mary, inherited his father's wharf in Charleston and became a merchant.[48] William married Ruth Brewton, the daughter of a successful local banker named Miles Brewton, on 6 January 1724. Researchers know little about William's life for the next decade, but in December of 1735, he and his brother Charles, along with several associates, founded America's first

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[47] Grace was the daughter of George and Elizabeth Bedon, who had sailed for South Carolina in 1670 with the original group of colonists.

[48] Pinckney men were quite prolific in the eighteenth century and therefore, by necessity, I must focus on the family line that eventually produces the subject of this study: Charles Pinckney (1757—1824). See Appendix A of this study for the Pinckney family tree.

fire insurance company—the Friendly Society. His involvement in the insurance business ultimately came close to financially ruining William; on 18 October 1740, a devastating fire swept through Charleston that destroyed around 300 homes, many of them protected by the Friendly Society. Facing overwhelming fiscal burdens, William allowed his second son, also named Charles, to move into the home of the young boy's uncle and namesake, William's brother Charles.[49]

After the fire of 1740, Charles II spent the next five years in his uncle's home, becoming like Charles's adopted son. In 1745, Charles, following the custom of the Low-Country elite, sent his nephew to England to receive a much better education than any tutor in the colony could provide. Charles II finished school in 1750 and returned to South Carolina to begin studying law under his beloved uncle. On 2 January 1753, Charles II married his cousin Frances Brewton and, having already been admitted to the South Carolina bar, embarked on a prosperous legal career. His law practice flourished during the 1750s and, like many Charleston lawyers, Charles II officially became a planter when he purchased Snee Farm plantation. Like his forefathers, Charles Pinckney II was industrious; by 1757, in addition to his private business ventures, he "was serving in the Commons House of Assembly, on the Committee of Correspondence, and as a justice of the peace."[50] On 26 October of that year, Frances gave birth to the couple's second baby, whom they named Charles.[51]

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[49] Charles Pinckney (I) was by this time a very successful lawyer and had received an education in England. Consequently, he was wealthier than his brother William and was not ruined by the fire of 1740. For clarity, William's second son (born 1731), who was sent to live with his uncle, will hereafter be referred to as Charles II.

[50] Williams, A Founding Family, 15.

[51] I will refer to this Charles as Charles III for the remainder of the first chapter. Charles II and Frances's first baby boy died as an infant.

On 12 July 1758, less than one year after a new Charles Pinckney entered the world, the elder Charles died of malaria. Despite the loss of their patriarch, the Pinckney men continued to prosper financially and to devote themselves to public service. In the same year that his brother died, William, as the commissary general of the province, "had to try to settle the bitter resentments that had risen from the quartering of British troops in South Carolina homes."[52] During the legislative session of 1760 and 1761, Charles Pinckney II became "a leader of the first rank" in the Commons House of Assembly and "one of the province's four leading lawyers."[53] As representatives of the colony, Charles Pinckney II and other members of the Commons later fought a heated political battle with the "extraordinarily high-handed" royal governor, Thomas Boone.[54] Charles II's skirmishes with royal authority continued in late 1765 when he voted to support the Stamp Act Congress's declaration that only colonial assemblies could impose taxes.[55]

Charles II also opposed later British efforts to tax the American colonies. Pinckney historian Marty D. Matthews writes that Charles II "helped draft and signed a letter to colonial agents in England urging repeal of the Townshend duties" in 1768.[56] In 1770, Charles II served as chairman of a group that met under the Liberty Tree in Charleston; these prominent South Carolinians passed resolutions condemning Rhode Island and Georgia for "not acting with sufficient zeal in the 'Preservation of American Rights.'"[57] During Charles Pinckney III's formative years, his family, and especially his

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[52] Ibid., 16.
[53] Ibid., 17.
[54] Ibid., 17.
[55] Marty D. Matthews, Forgotten Founder: The Life and Times of Charles Pinckney (Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 2004), 7.
[56] Ibid., 9.
[57] Ibid., 9-10.

father, were clearly deeply involved in disputes with the colony's mother country. Pro-American sentiments undoubtedly made a strong impression on the young boy.

So little is known about Charles III's early life and education that it is impossible to comment on his childhood and adolescence. Extant evidence reveals that Pinckney received sufficient academic preparation to enable him to enroll in the Middle Temple of London to study law in 1773.[58] The rising tension between the colonies and Great Britain, however, prevented young Charles III from crossing the Atlantic, a disappointment that would burden him for over twenty years. Instead of continuing his schooling in England, Charles III took up studies under Dr. David Oliphant, a Scottish medical doctor who had arrived in South Carolina in the 1740s.[59] Oliphant tutored Charles until he was ready to begin reading law with his father, a course of study which probably lasted only a short time because the American Revolution broke out.

Not yet nineteen years old, Charles Pinckney III enlisted in the Charleston militia early enough to help defend the city against a British assault during the summer of 1776.[60] After the British troops and fleet left the Charleston area, South Carolina enjoyed a two-year period of quiet. Charles III took advantage of this interlude by seeking, and winning, his first public office of state senator.[61] Marty Matthews relates the interesting tale that, due to inclement weather on polling day, "no one except Pinckney and his overseer voted."[62] In the words of Pinckney's fellow state senator Christopher Gadsden,

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[58] Ibid., 11.
[59] Ibid., 11.
[60] Williams, A Founding Family, 95-96.
[61] Matthews, 14.
[62] Ibid., 14.

the "young gentleman of talents and fortune...[had] the unanimous vote of his constituents."[63]

South Carolinians soon discovered that the fragile peace they enjoyed while war raged in the North was temporary. Edmund S. Morgan, a historian of early America, writes that General Henry Clinton decided to change British strategy and "shift the scene of the British offensive to the South and pursue a policy of attrition in the North."[64] In response to the assault on Georgia, South Carolina sent part of its militia, in which twenty-one year old Charles Pinckney III served as a lieutenant, to retake Savannah.[65] British control of the city was simply too strong, however, and the American attempt to reclaim it failed.

Charles III returned disheartened to Charleston to take up his seat in the General Assembly. In early January of 1780, word reached the Assembly that Sir Henry Clinton was sailing towards South Carolina with 8000 men, intent on taking Charleston.[66] The city's militia made what preparations it could in the face of such an overwhelming force. By February, British troops surrounded Charleston and the siege began. Despite a valiant effort, Revolutionary forces could not hold back the British advance; in April, Charles II and several other key government official fled Charleston in anticipation of the city's capture.[67] Charles III, however, as a member of the militia, stayed behind to defend his hometown. On 12 May 1780, Charleston surrendered and Pinckney was taken as a prisoner of war to a holding ship in Charleston harbor.[68]

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[63] Qtd. in Matthews, pgs. 14-15.
[64] Edmund S. Morgan, The Birth of the Republic, 1763—89 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 85.
[65] Matthews, 15-16.
[66] Ibid., 17.
[67] Ibid., 18.
[68] Ibid., 18-19.

The fall of Charleston affected the Pinckney family in a very personal way: to defend himself, his wife, and his possessions, Charles II accepted an offer of protection from the British troops and publicly supported the king of England.[69] Charles III learned of his father's defection shortly before he was paroled and sent to Philadelphia, where he joined many displaced friends and family members, in July of 1780.[70] Over the next several months, as America's "ragged armies" slowly reclaimed South Carolina from the British, many South Carolinians, including Charles III's cousins Thomas and Charles Cotesworth, began to make their way back home. Charles III, however, remained in Philadelphia for more than two years.[71] In June of 1782, Charles Cotesworth wrote to a friend that Charles III should soon return to South Carolina, "where he ought to have been nine or ten months ago."[72] A family friend named Arthur Middleton wrote to Charles III that he wished to "say nothing more to you now upon the Subject of your Projects," but he only wanted to see Charles again in South Carolina "as soon as you have sown a few more of your wild oats."[73]

Why did Charles remain in Philadelphia so long after his friends and family departed? The answer lies in the "Projects" that Middleton mentions. Charles III was actually making plans to take the tour of Europe that he had missed in the early 1770s because of the escalating tensions between the colonies and England.[74] Charles was making these preparations while Americans all along the eastern seaboard were still

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[69] Williams, A Founding Family, 172-173. Given Charles II's active participation in the revolutionary movement, it is unlikely that he experienced a genuine change of heart. With himself and his wife at the mercy of British soldiers, who also seized his Charleston property, Charles II undoubtedly feared for his life and his worldly possessions.
[70] Matthews, 20.
[71] Ibid., 21.
[72] Qtd. in Matthews, pg. 22.
[73] Qtd. in Williams, pg. 188.
[74] Matthews, 23.

fighting a war against an invading army. He clearly did not want to face his father, who, from the patriot perspective, had technically committed treason. Nor did Charles III want to defend his father from the criticism that some Revolutionaries hurled at "traitors" who had accepted British protection. For Charles III, Europe represented an escape from shame. Only Charles II's death on 22 September 1782 managed to draw Charles III away from his flight to the Old World.

To understand Charles III at the end of the American Revolution, it is necessary to briefly revisit Pinckney family history and compare Charles with two of his prominent cousins, Thomas and Charles Cotesworth. The first Charles Pinckney, who had adopted Charles II after the fire of 1740, originally married Elizabeth Lamb, but she died childless in 1743.[75] Within a year, Charles married the young and intelligent Eliza Lucas, who, while managing her father's plantations in South Carolina, had introduced the cultivation of indigo to the colony.[76] On 14 February 1746, Eliza gave birth to her first child, a boy named Charles Cotesworth. A daughter, Harriott, soon followed Charles Cotesworth, and Thomas, the final child, was born in October 1750. Although slightly older than Charles III, Thomas and Charles Cotesworth were near his age and eventually served as model citizens. After the king passed over Charles I for the position of chief justice of the colony in the spring of 1753, Charles moved his family to England.[77]

For several happy years, Charles I and his family lived outside London while he worked as an agent for South Carolina. Even after Charles, Eliza, and Harriott returned

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[75] Williams, 10.
[76] Ibid., 10-11.
[77] Ibid., 13-14. The chief justice of South Caroline died in September 1752, so the royal governor appointed Charles I as a temporary replacement. The king, however, did not make the governor's appointment permanent. Instead, to avoid a public scandal involving tainted election results, the Crown sent Peter Leigh, high bailiff of Westminster, London, to South Carolina to serve as chief justice.

to Charleston, Charles Cotesworth and Thomas remained in England to complete their education.[78] Frances Leigh Williams writes that "in 1761, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney entered Westminster School, which had been operative in the precincts of Westminster Abbey since the 1300s but re-established by Queen Elizabeth I."[79] Charles Cotesworth graduated from Westminster School in 1763, with outstanding marks in Latin, and enrolled at Christ Church at Oxford University; he also officially joined the Middle Temple in London to study law.[80] About the time of his brother's graduation, Thomas entered the Westminster School, from which he would graduate in 1768 as the "top Greek scholar and 'Captain of the Town Boys,' a high honor."[81]

The sons of Charles Pinckney I returned to South Carolina with educations comparable to those of the British nobility. Military accomplishments during the Revolution would soon mirror the brothers' academic success. Even before the Declaration of Independence, Charles Cotesworth was honored with a promotion to major in the South Carolina militia for "his successful role in the capture of Fort Johnson as well as in recruiting, drilling, and training recruits."[82] Charles Cotesworth later served with George Washington at the battles of Brandywine Creek and Germantown, before he returned to the South when the British resumed their attacks on the region in 1778.[83] Both Charles Cotesworth and Thomas took part in the battle to recapture Savannah.[84] By the war's end, Cotesworth Pinckney had achieved the rank of brigadier general and Thomas was an officer in the Continental Army; both were eligible to join the Society of

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[78] Ibid., 15.
[79] Ibid., 16.
[80] Ibid., 21-22.
[81] Ibid., 33.
[82] Ibid., 86.
[83] George C. Rogers, Jr., Charleston in the Age of the Pinckneys (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969), 123.
[84] Ibid., 123.

Cincinnati.[85] In contrast, Charles III never advanced beyond the rank of lieutenant in the state militia, and never received his cousins' excellent education. After the British took Charleston in 1780, Charles III became a prisoner of war and sat out the rest of the conflict.

Upon returning home to Charleston, Charles III threw himself into public and private activity, perhaps because he thought that he needed to "make amends" with his Low-Country peers for his father's "treason," or perhaps to live up to his distinguished cousins' examples. In the spring of 1783, he took up the burden of managing his father's plantations, his estate, and his debt.[86] Charles somehow found the time to author a pamphlet entitled Three Letters Addressed to the Public, which earned him a reputation as an eloquent writer and a gifted thinker.[87] He served briefly in the South Carolina House of Representatives before the assembly elected him to the state's delegation to the Confederation Congress, along with Henry Laurens, Jacob Read, John Bull, and Alexander Gillon.[88] Throughout his three years in Congress, Charles III advocated a strong central government to manage the young nation's affairs.[89] In 1786, after two years in the Congress, Charles realized that the Articles of Confederation were simply too weak to govern the United States effectively. He suggested, in a speech to the New Jersey state legislature, the "calling of a general convention of the states for the purpose

[85] Ibid., 124.
[86] Matthews, Forgotten Founder, 25.
[87] Ibid., 26.
[88] Ibid., 26.
[89] Ibid., 30.

of increasing the powers of the federal government and rendering it more adequate for the ends for which it was instituted."[90]

Charles ultimately could not persuade the Congress to act quickly enough. A "commercial convention," consisting of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Virginia, meeting in Annapolis issued the first successful call for a gathering of the states to discuss the condition of the federal government.[91] The South Carolina General Assembly selected five men to represent the state at the conference in Philadelphia in the summer of 1787: Pierce Butler, Henry Laurens, Charles Pinckney, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, and John Rutledge.[92] All of these representatives were Low-Country planter-lawyers who clearly "favored an aristocratic republic."[93] Charles had the distinction of proposing to the Convention a plan of government of which he was the sole author; he also had the unfortunate timing of presenting his ideas immediately after Edmund Randolph submitted the Virginia Plan.[94] Since a copy of Charles's plan was not recorded in the records of the Convention, its contents have remained a mystery, and a source of great debate among both Pinckney's contemporaries and historians of the early Republic.[95]

Historian Walter Edgar concludes that the South Carolinians contributed greatly to the final product of the Convention. In addition to their ardent defense of slavery,

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[90] Qtd. in Edgar, South Carolina, pg. 248. Pinckney gave a speech to the New Jersey legislature because the Confederation Congress sent three of its members to that state when it threatened to withhold its financial support from the national government.
[91] Carol Berkin, A Brilliant Solution: Inventing the American Constitution (Orlando: Harcourt, Inc., 2002), 25.
[92] Edgar, 248. Due to ill health, Henry Laurens did not make the journey to Philadelphia.
[93] Ibid., 249.
[94] Matthews, 41.
[95] See Matthews, Forgotten Founder, 42-46, for an account of the controversy, which stretches throughout Pinckney's lifetime and into the works of modern historians. Be aware, however, of Matthews' sympathetic bias towards Pinckney.

Edgar lists John Rutledge's service on five committees, Charles Cotesworth's role in crafting the compromise over the slave trade and navigation acts, and Charles Pinckney's successful amendment to Article IV (outlawing religious tests for public office) as the South Carolina delegation's most significant contributions to the new Constitution.[96]

By the late eighteenth century, South Carolina's Low-Country had built an extremely successful economy based on black slavery. Fantastic wealth, generated by the staple crops of rice and indigo, created an elite upper-class in Charleston that dominated the state's politics. Members of this aristocratic society prized honor (evaluation by their peers), used familial bonds secure lucrative business transactions, and excluded most working-class whites from participation in government and from society's upper echelons. Hard-fought independence from Great Britain opened the door to dialogue between the state's two regions, but any concessions that the Low-Country gave to its western counterpart were made grudgingly and only after intense debate.

Charles Pinckney seemed to fit perfectly into the mold of a Low-Country aristocrat. He was born into a world of wealth and privilege. His lineage and his family's achievements shaped his early years, provided him with a sold classical education, reserved for him an officer's rank, and ultimately served as the basis for his political career. Pinckney, however, was not satisfied with what birth had given him. In terms of military prestige, formal schooling, or world travel, he could not equal his more famous cousins, Charles Cotesworth and Thomas. He surely never forgot the embarrassment of his father's defection or the sting of the Low-Country's refusal to

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[96] Edgar, 250.

pardon the elder Charles's transgression. Pinckney set out, in the late 1780s, to satisfy his political ambitions and to prove his intellectual abilities.

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"Blackguard Charlie"

Charles Pinckney, Republicanism, and the Up-Country
1788—1800

Seventeen eighty-eight proved to be one of the most significant years in Charles Pinckney's life. In addition to celebrating South Carolina's ratification of the Federal Constitution, he also married the young and beautiful Mary Eleanor ("Polly") Laurens. Polly, born on 26 April 1770, was the daughter of prominent merchant-planter Henry Laurens.[1] Polly's mother, Eleanor Ball Laurens, died barely a month after giving birth; Henry sought help from his brother and sister-in-law, James and Mary Laurens, to raise his five children.[2] The entire family eventually moved to England, but settled in Vignon, France, when the American Revolution broke out. Polly grew up in France and did not return to Charleston until she was fifteen years old.[3] Pinckney's biographer Marty D. Matthews notes that Polly, the daughter of one of the wealthiest businessmen in the state, certainly had "many young suitors in the Charleston area," but she chose Charles Pinckney.[4] The couple wed on 27 April 1788.[5] The marriage cemented the relationship between two of South Carolina's most powerful families, and undoubtedly helped Charles in his political career.

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[1] Matthews, Forgotten Founder, 60.
[2] Ibid., 60.
[3] Ibid., 60.
[4] Ibid., 61.
[5] Ibid., 61.

Charles Pinckney soon reaped the benefits of his family name and his early political experience. After he helped engineer the ratification of the national Constitution in South Carolina, his supporters considered nominating him as a candidate for the national Senate, a position which he mysteriously declined.[6] Pinckney was instead selected by the state legislature to succeed his cousin Thomas as governor of South Carolina.[7] Charles Pinckney was sworn into office on 26 January 1789. As a governor, Pinckney enjoyed prestige and the respect of the same Low-Country aristocracy that had refused to forgive his father for accepting British protection during the Revolution. On that cold January day, as Pinckney basked in the admiration of his peers, no one could have predicted that he would ultimately help strip the Low-Country of its political power and end the coast's domination of the state's affairs.

Throughout the eighteenth century, Low-Country planters had manipulated apportionment in the state legislature to maintain their political hegemony. In fact, by 1790, although a majority of the state's whites lived in the Up-Country, due to malapportionment, "as little as 20 percent of the white population could elect a majority of the lawmakers."[8] During the 1780s, however, the Up-Country made numerous demands for greater political participation in the state legislature, the creation of an inland court system, and stricter criminal laws.[9] Influential Up-Country "planters," who owned few slaves but desperately sought to imitate their Low-Country counterparts, had

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[6] Ibid., 66.
[7] Matthews, 66; Williams, A Founding Family, 288.
[8] Ely, "'The Good Old Cause,'" 109.
[9] Klein, Unification of a Slave State, 119-120. The Up-Country, as a rural frontier, lacked many of the institutional manifestations of government. Consequently, crimes in the region, ranging from the petty (cattle theft) to the serious (murder), were common, thus explaining the area's desire for a harsher criminal code.

secured the Up-Country's loyalty during the Revolution. Believing, justifiably so, that their military participation had helped advance the quest for independence in South Carolina, by 1790 many Upcountrymen felt entitled to greater political inclusion in the state's government. Low-Country politicians acquiesced to calls for constitutional reform in 1789 and both houses of South Carolina's legislature passed a bill calling for a constitutional convention.[10]

Regional animosities manifested themselves almost immediately, when delegates began to fight over the location of the convention. Low-Country patricians insisted on Charleston, the state's traditional seat of power, as the meeting place while Up-Country representatives hoped for Columbia, the site of the new state capital. Both sides wanted to use distance to minimize the other's power. If the convention were held in Charleston, fewer Up-Country representatives could make the journey, and meeting in the state's interior would prevent some representatives from the Low-Country from attending.[11] Although the legislature eventually settled on Columbia, the Up-Country advocates for reform were still at a disadvantage. They remained numerically weak because apportionment at the conference was based on apportionment in the state legislature.[12] In May of 1790, men from all across the state gathered in Columbia to write a new constitution for South Carolina; as governor, Charles Pinckney presided over the convention.[13]

Up-Country delegates carried optimistic, and ultimately unrealistic, expectations to Columbia. When the Convention finished writing the Constitution of 1790 that

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[10] Ibid., 145.
[11] Edgar, South Carolina, 254.
[12] Edgar, 254; Klein, 145.
[13] Matthews, 67.

summer, Up-Country representatives managed to secure only a few of the numerous concessions they had originally sought from the Low-Country.[14] The major victory for the Up-Country was the permanent relocation of the state capital to Columbia, a provision won by only a four vote margin.[15] Up-Country representatives also succeeded in adjusting the apportionment formula so that the Charleston District's representation declined from 46 percent of the lower house in 1789 to about 38 percent in 1790.[16]

To compensate for their loss of influence in the lower house, Low-Country delegates secured the division of the state into twenty-two counties or parishes with one senator for each county.[17] The city of Charleston, which straddled two parishes, consequently received two senators.[18] Parishes were also much smaller in the Low-Country, which gave that region a disproportionate number of senators.[19] Walter Edgar notes that the Constitution set property qualifications for both lower house members and senators at real estate holdings of £150 sterling for representatives and holdings of £300 sterling for senators.[20] Stricter property qualifications ensured that many representatives from the Up-Country would be slaveholders, thus minimizing any "republican" influence in the legislature. To soften the blow of the capital's relocation, the new constitution required that "there would be two state treasurers, one in Columbia and one in Charleston," and that the secretary of state and the surveyor general would also maintain an office in each city.[21] Finally, the Low-Country contingent "virtually ignored" the Up-

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[14] Klein, 145.
[15] Ibid., 146.
[16] Ibid., 146.
[17] Edgar, 255.
[18] Ibid., 255.
[19] See Edgar's map (reprinted in Appendix C of this thesis) for an excellent drawing of the parishes established by the Constitution of 1790.
[20] Ibid., 255.
[21] Edgar, 255; Matthews, 67.

Country delegates' requests that apportionment be based on population instead of on arbitrary lines drawn on a map.[22]

Whatever his personal opinions of his state's new guiding document, Charles Pinckney was certainly pleased that South Carolinians reelected him governor under the new constitution in 1790.[23] Serving as governor allowed Pinckney to play host to George Washington during his tour of South Carolina in the spring of 1791, a role which Pinckney considered a high point of his political career.[24] On 2 May, a few days after crossing into South Carolina from North Carolina, Washington "was served a lavish breakfast" at Snee Farm, the closest of Charles Pinckney's plantation homes to Charleston.[25] Later that day, a decorated barge ferried Washington across Charleston harbor, where enthusiastic throngs and artillery fire welcomed the President to the great port city of South Carolina.[26] Washington remained in Charleston, in the company of Charles Pinckney, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, and Thomas Pinckney at almost all times, until 9 May, when he set out to tour Georgia.[27]

Unbeknownst to the Pinckneys, or to anyone else in Washington's retinue, the President used his visit to South Carolina as an opportunity to evaluate potential candidates for ambassadorial positions in Europe.[28] Upon returning to Philadelphia, still the nation's capital, in the fall of 1791, Washington decided to appoint Thomas Pinckney as minister to the Court of St. James in London, which was the United States' most

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[22] Edgar, 256.
[23] Matthews, 70.
[24] Ibid., 74.
[25] Williams, A Founding Family, 292-293.
[26] Ibid., 293.
[27] For detailed descriptions of Washington's activities while in South Carolina, see Williams, A Founding Family, 292-295, and Matthews, Forgotten Founder, 73-75.
[28] Williams, 293.

important diplomatic assignment.[29] The Senate did not take long to confirm the President's choice, and in January 1792, Thomas received news of his confirmation as ambassador to England.[30]

That Charles Pinckney desperately hoped to impress Washington and procure a diplomatic assignment is clear. In August of 1791, he wrote a long letter to James Madison in which he spoke of being "far qualified for public business" and having "unremittingly applied [himself] to the studies necessary to form a public man."[31] He explicitly asked Madison to intercede on his behalf with the President. Pinckney was certainly disappointed at not receiving a foreign post; he was perhaps even jealous of his cousin, who had spent virtually all of his adolescent and teenage years in Europe. The traditional pathways to power, at least on the national level, did not seem to be opening for Charles. In the decade to come, however, a burgeoning political faction, led by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, would present Pinckney with a vehicle to satisfy his political ambitions.

Although the United States only began to operate under the Philadelphia Constitution in 1789, divisions emerged in the new government within a year. Alexander Hamilton, who was "distrustful of popular government...and thought that the United States could learn from" Great Britain, and Thomas Jefferson, who loathed "English connections and influence," formed the basis of the young nation's early political factions.[32] Historian Reginald Horsman asserts that fiscal policy, especially the issues of

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[29] Matthews, 76.
[30] Williams, 296.
[31] Charles Pinckney to James Madison, 6 August 1791, The James Madison Papers, *The Library of Congress: American Memory*, http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/madison_papers.
[32] Reginald Horsman, The New Republic: The United States of America, 1789—1815 (Harlow, Essex, England: Pearson Education Ltd, 2000), 24.

tariffs and the national debt, was the first major source of conflict between the two statesmen.[33] Hamilton believed that America's financial prosperity depended on the cultivation of economic ties with England, while Jefferson and his protégé James Madison sought to "free the United States from dependence on British trade."[34] Much to President Washington's displeasure, by the 1792 presidential elections Hamilton and Jefferson had laid the foundations for political parties. Hamilton supported John Adams, who won the election, while Jefferson and Madison sided with New York's George Clinton.[35]

In South Carolina, the early disputes between Jefferson and Hamilton were of little concern to most Up-Country residents. Farmers in the western regions of the state had been searching throughout the eighteenth century for a crop that would allow them to enter the commercial markets in which the Low-Country had always been so successful.[36] A small number of these aspiring "planters" achieved limited success with grain and tobacco, thus establishing an Up-Country "aristocracy" which mirrored, on a much smaller scale, the Low-Country's elite plantation society.[37] Historian Joyce Chaplin argues that these early agricultural endeavors created an essential "commercial infrastructure," onto which Up-Country planters eventually grafted the cultivation and sale of cotton.[38] In the early 1790s, despite a small level of economic stratification, most farmers and planters in the Up-Country shared a single goal: the cultivation of a staple

[33] Ibid., 25. Friction between Hamilton and Jefferson first surfaced around 1790, halfway through Washington's first term as President.
[34] Ibid., 27.
[35] Ibid., 33-34.
[36] Chaplin, An Anxious Pursuit, 279.
[37] Ibid., 291.
[38] Ibid., 303.

crop.[39] Cotton had long seemed promising to Up-Country agriculturalists, but the difficulty in removing the plant's seeds made it viable only for small-scale domestic production.

A young, bright inventor named Eli Whitney forever changed the course of American history, and the fortunes of Up-Country cotton growers, with his invention of the cotton gin in 1793. A graduate of Yale University, Whitney arrived in the South in the early 1790s and became a tutor on the Mulberry Gove plantation in Georgia.[40] Within one year, Whitney produced an "ingenious design" which "ended the planters' dilemma by adding three features to a roller gin: wire teeth on one roller to tear the seeds out of the fiber, a revolving brush on the other roller to sweep the cotton out of the teeth, and a slotted guard along the length of the rollers to sift out the loosened seeds."[41] According to Rachel Klein, pre-Whitney gins could clean about five pounds of cotton every week, whereas "Whitney's earliest roller gin could clean about fifty pounds each day."[42] The phenomenal efficiency of Whitney's gin impressed Phineas Miller, the husband of Mulberry Grove's owner, who agreed to fund Whitney's business operations.[43] Whitney and Miller insisted on exclusive control of their gins and on a levy of 40% of the ginned cotton as the price for using their design.[44] Many Up-Country cotton growers were unwilling, or unable, to pay such exorbitant fees. Consequently, illegal copies of Whitney's gin began to spring up throughout South Carolina and Georgia.[45] Over the next several years, Whitney's model of cotton gin became

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[39] Klein, The Unification of a Slave State, 246-247.
[40] Chaplin, 312.
[41] Ibid., 313.
[42] Klein, 247.
[43] Chaplin, 313-314.
[44] Edgar, South Carolina, 270.
[45] Chaplin, 314; Edgar, 270-271.

extraordinarily successful and, although the state of South Carolina tried to compensate the inventor with a patent and $50,000, Whitney went to his grave bitter about the loss of control over his prized creation.[46]

Over the next twenty-five years, cotton generated enormous wealth for South Carolina, and especially for the Up-Country. According to Rachel Klein, from 1790 to 1800, South Carolina's cotton exports "rose from 9,840 pounds to more than 6,425,000 per year."[47] By 1811, cotton exports from the Up-Country alone amounted to over 30,000,000 pounds per year.[48] In the wake of cotton's success, the cultivation of South Carolina's traditional staple crops, such as indigo and rice, declined.[49] Although Eli Whitney's gin vastly simplified the process of removing cotton's seeds, the harvesting of the plant still required a great deal of manpower. Up-Country cotton growers, like their Low-Country brethren, turned to black slavery to work the fields. Joyce Chaplin writes that "in the 1790s and early 1800s, South Carolina received an estimated four thousand slaves from the Chesapeake and fifteen thousand from Africa."[50] With a fantastically profitable staple crop, many Up-Country planters could finally afford to increase their personal slave holdings. Jacob Wannamaker, for example, owned no slaves in 1790, but by 1830, he had procured 69.[51]

During the early stages of slavery's expansion into the Up-Country, Low-Country patricians feared the growing number of slaves in the region. From the perspective of those who inhabited Charleston's stately mansions and gilded parlors, the Up-Country,

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[46] Chaplin, 317; Edgar, 271.
[47] Klein, 247.
[48] Lacy K. Ford, Jr., Origins of Southern Radicalism: The South Carolina Upcountry, 1800—1860 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 7.
[49] Klein, 247.
[50] Chaplin, 321.
[51] Edgar, 271.

and Upcountrymen, appeared rugged, semi-wild, and incapable of effectively managing their own territory. Not surprisingly, Low-Country planters worried about "maintaining slavery in a new region where few other institutional supports yet existed."[52] Intertwined with the concern that the Up-Country could not control a large slave population was the fear that newly imported "foreign" from the Caribbean slaves would spread dangerous notions of rebellion among South Carolina's slaves.

On 22 August 1791, slaves in a northern province of the French colony of Saint Domingue launched a widespread rebellion, which rebels from numerous plantations had secretly planned for months.[53] Like slave owners in South Carolina's Low-Country, Saint Domingue planters had built an economy around a single, labor-intensive, staple crop (sugar in the case of the French colony).[54] During the earliest years of the French Revolution (1789-1791), white inhabitants of Saint Domingue intensely debated the significance of events in the mother country. Historian Carolyn E. Fick notes that ideas of "liberty, equality, and fraternity" spread throughout the slave population, via domestic slaves who served in the drawing rooms and at the dining tables of their masters.[55]

Most white South Carolinians supported the French Revolution, but the Up-Country was particularly fervent in its pro-Revolution sentiment.[56] As cotton-generated wealth allowed more Upcountrymen to buy slaves, the Low-Country planter elite feared that the Up-Country's enthusiastic support for the French Revolution would promote

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[52] Chaplin, 321-322.
[53] Carolyn E. Fick, The Making of Haiti: The Saint Domingue Revolution from Below (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1990), 91.
[54] Ibid., 15. Carolyn Fick writes that Saint Domingue's devotion to sugar production required "the forced labor of over half a million black slaves."
[55] Ibid., 75.
[56] Klein, 203.

hopes for freedom and equality among slaves similar to the aspirations of Saint Domingue's black rebels.[57]

Walter Edgar asserts that cotton "enriched almost all who" cultivated the new crop.[58] Not only did cotton benefit the few Up-Country residents who already owned slaves, "it also gave landless whites who were tenants the chance to become landowners."[59] In the mid to late-1790s, Up-Country cotton producers began to understand the phenomenal amount of money they could make with their new staple crop. With the new state constitution of 1790, they had made only limited inroads into South Carolina's political power structure. As the Up-Country's wealth and influence grew alongside the green stalks of cotton around the turn of the nineteenth century, the region's residents continued their demands for a greater role in the state's affairs. A popular and enterprising politician could be sure of a successful political career if he took advantage of the increasing economic and political vitality of the Up-Country.

After a two and a half-year hiatus from public life, Charles Pinckney returned to the political stage in July of 1795 to give a speech in protest to John Jay's treaty with England.[60] A year prior to Pinckney's speech, in the spring of 1794, members of Congress considered cutting the United States's commercial ties to Great Britain in retaliation for England's seizure of neutral trading ships.[61] Great Britain and France were at war and the United States hoped to avoid direct involvement in the conflict. To defuse the tension between England and its former colony, Alexander Hamilton convinced

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[57] Ibid., 203.
[58] Edgar, 271.
[59] Ibid., 271.
[60] Matthews, Forgotten Founder, 87-89. After his first term as governor ended, Pinckney took some time away from politics to focus on his family life and his finances. During the winter of 1794-5, Pinckney's wife and his mother died, leaving him to care for his children. Marty Matthews suggests that Pinckney tried to deal with his grief by returning to politics in the summer of 1795.
[61] Horsman, The New Republic, 45.

President Washington to send John Jay, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, to negotiate with Great Britain.[62] Jay spent the summer and fall of 1794 trying to obtain acceptable terms from his British counterparts. "Jay's Treaty" ultimately wrangled only one major concession from the British: the removal of all royal troops from the Northwest Territories by 1 June 1796.[63] The Treaty generally adopted a conciliatory tone towards the British; the United States promised not to enact any tariffs on British manufactures, and the British did not agree to recognize America's maritime neutral rights.[64] Hamilton and his followers were pleased with the Treaty because it guaranteed continued economic relations between the two countries, which Hamiltonians believed were essential for the United States's prosperity. Jefferson, Madison, and their supporters interpreted the Treaty as a desertion of "the old ally France" in favor of the old enemy, England.[65]

South Carolinians held a public meeting to discuss Jay's Treaty on a warm July day in 1795.[66] Charles Pinckney stood up in the crowded sanctuary of Saint Michael's Church in Charleston to protest the proposed Treaty. Part of Pinckney's opposition undoubtedly originated from his personal animosity towards the negotiator, John Jay, whom Pinckney had known, and disliked, since their days in the Confederation Congress.[67] Several years later, while serving as a United States senator, Pinckney threw

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[62] Ibid., 45. Relations between the United States and its former colonial master had deteriorated to the point of requiring immediate negotiations primarily because of the Orders in Council that England had issued during 1793-1794. These Orders instructed British ships to seize all ships carrying goods to France or its colonies, including the trading vessels of the United States, which tried to maintain its neutrality during the Anglo-French conflict.
[63] Ibid., 47.
[64] Ibid., 47-48.
[65] Ibid., 48.
[66] Matthews, 89.
[67] Ibid., 89. By the mid-1790s, Pinckney was probably enough of a Republican to oppose merely on principle the policies of prominent Federalist like John Jay, but his personal dislike of America's negotiator

a veiled insult at Jay for his service as special envoy to England, claiming that judges should be above "those passions and prejudices which too frequently prevail in the adoption and formation of legislative acts and treaties."[68] Pinckney biographer Marty D. Matthews, however, argues that Pinckney's constitutional criticism of Jay's appointment (to negotiate a treaty while also serving as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court), instead of being based on a grudge, rather reveals a Jeffersonian-like, narrow interpretation of the Constitution.[69] Pinckney's reasons for opposing the Treaty, other than his personal sentiments, clearly coincided with nascent Jeffersonian-Republican principles. He disapproved of the deferential tone that the Treaty struck towards Great Britain; in fact, Pinckney declared that the British were "more dependent on us than we are upon them."[70] Pinckney, like Jefferson and Madison, also considered France "the only truly useful and valuable ally we have ever had."[71] Pinckney's speech against Jay's Treaty is significant because it represents his first public alignment with the nascent Jeffersonian-Republican faction.[72]

National and state elections held in 1796 revealed the growing power of Jeffersonian-Republicanism in South Carolina, especially in the Up-Country and among Charleston's working classes. According to historian Reginald Horsman, "as

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with England stemmed from Jay's Treaty with Spain in 1785. Jay had agreed to renounce American rights to navigate the Mississippi River, a position many southerners, including Pinckney, considered untenable.

[68] Charles Pinckney, "Speeches of Charles Pinckney, Esq. in Congress." (Philadelphia[?]: 1800) in Early American Imprints. (First Series; no. 38270)

[69] Matthews, 90.

[70] Qtd. in Henry Tuckniss, ed., "The American Remembrancer; or, An Impartial Collection of Essays, Resolves, Speeches, &c. Relative, or Having Affinity, to the Treaty with Great Britain." (Philadelphia, August 1795), in Early American Imprints. (First Series; no. 28389)

[71] Qtd. in ibid.

[72] Such a public display of Republican values certainly won Pinckney more political influence in the Up-Country because that region almost universally opposed Jay's Treaty. The Low-Country reaction was more tempered, with many traditional, elite Federalists clinging to the "party line" and supporting Jay. Marty Matthews writes that tensions ran so high in South Carolina that Jacob Read, a Low-Country Federalist who cast the deciding vote in the United States Senate to ratify Jay's Treaty, refused to return to his home state for almost six months after the Senate adjourned in fear for his life.

Washington's vice-president, [John] Adams should have been the logical choice" to replace the retiring President in 1796.[73] Adams, however, lacked the full confidence of Alexander Hamilton, who dominated the Federalist Party (as Hamilton's supporters styled themselves).[74] Hamilton decided to promote the candidacy of Thomas Pinckney, Charles's cousin, who had gained nation-wide popularity for his recent negotiation of a valuable treaty with Spain.[75] Republicans generally united behind Jefferson, although some northeastern Republicans supported New Yorker Aaron Burr.[76] The results of the election were extremely close: Adams won with 73 electoral votes, but Jefferson had 68 and Pinckney garnered 59.[77] The Constitution decreed that the runner-up in a presidential election would become the vice-president, meaning that Jefferson, although he was Adams's political rival, would serve in his administration.[78] South Carolina's electoral votes went to Jefferson, even though native son and popular war hero Thomas Pinckney was on the Federalist ticket.[79]

The state's gubernatorial election of 1796 also illustrates the strength of Republicanism in South Carolina. Since the end of his first term as governor in 1793, Charles Pinckney had used his Up-Country plantation home in Greenwich as his political base of operations, from which he built a network of contacts throughout the state.[80] With his words of protest to Jay's Treaty fresh on his lips, Pinckney easily won the 1796 governor's race.[81] In addition to cultivating political alliances throughout the state,

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[73] Horsman, 64.
[74] Ibid., 65.
[75] Ibid., 65.
[76] Ibid., 64.
[77] Ibid., 65.
[78] Article II, Section 1 of the United States Constitution.
[79] Edgar, South Carolina, 254.
[80] Matthews, 92.
[81] Ibid., 92.

Pinckney, in another nod to the Up-Country, began experimenting with planting cotton soon after his election.[82]

Almost immediately after his reelection, Charles had to prepare his native state for a possible war with France. In November of 1796, the French severed diplomatic ties with the United States because of the preferential status that Jay's Treaty afforded to Great Britain.[83] President Adams decided to send three negotiators, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, John Marshall, and Elbridge Gerry, to Paris in an attempt to defuse the tense situation with America's former ally. Talks with the French foreign minister, Charles Maurice de Talleyrand, began in October 1797; the American diplomats soon discovered, however, that their French counterparts, identified only as X, Y, and Z, clearly expected bribes from the United States's delegation. After months of fruitless negotiations, Pinckney and Marshall left Paris to make their way home in March 1798.[84]

As a result of the failed peace talks, anti-French sentiment rose throughout the country and the United States Congress "placed the country on a war footing" during the following summer.[85] War preparations included a prohibition on trade with the French empire, the authorization of merchant ships to act as privateers, and the creation of a Navy Department.[86] In South Carolina, as relations with France deteriorated, Charles Pinckney put the state's militia on alert and oversaw the construction of "gunboats and a new fort on Sullivan's Island."[87] He also called an emergency meeting of legislators to

[82] Ibid., 92.
[83] Horsman, 67.
[84] Ibid., 71.
[85] Ibid., 71.
[86] Ibid., 71.
[87] Matthews, 92.

authorize the allocation of "£7,000 for defense and £2,000 additional for powder, if needed."[88]

In the midst of escalating tension and the rising possibility of military conflict between the United States and France, John Adams's administration also had to deal with intense internal criticism. Opposition writers, such as William Duane and James Callender of Philadelphia's *Aurora* newspaper, regularly "lambasted Federalist policies."[89] To stifle criticism from Republican newspapers, Federalist leaders convinced President Adams to support the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798. The Alien Act gave the president the power to "order all such aliens as he shall judge dangerous to the peace and safety of the United States...to depart out of the [United States's] territory."[90] The Sedition Act provided for fines and imprisonment for anyone convicted of producing "false, scandalous and malicious writing or writings" against the United States government.[91] During the final two years of Adams's term, the government presented a total of 15 indictments under the Sedition Act, and achieved 10 convictions.[92] Over the next several years, Republican legal theorists, notably Thomas Jefferson and James Madison in their Kentucky and Virginia resolutions, condemned the Alien and Sedition Acts.

Charles Pinckney sympathized with the Republican arguments against the Alien and Sedition Acts and wanted to help condemn them. In November of 1798, he gave a

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[88] Ibid., 93.
[89] Horsman, 74. Many of these critics were Scottish and Irish radicals who sought refuge in the United States during the 1790s to escape persecution in England. Overly suspicious of any hint of government oppression, these dissidents sometimes "thought they saw in Hamilton and his friends the same tendencies they had resisted in Europe." (Horsman, 74)
[90] "The Alien Act," 25 June 1798, in Henry Steele Commager, ed., Documents of American History (New York: Appleton, Century, Crofts, Inc., 1948), 176.
[91] "The Sedition Act," 14 July 1798, in ibid., 177-178.
[92] Horsman, 76.

speech in which he proclaimed that he had always considered the "Freedom of the press as among the greatest of our public blessings."[93] With typical eloquence, Pinckney argued that the press's independence was "the only true means of preserving our national Liberty in the world," and demanded that Americans "guard it as a sacred trust received from our ancestors and [deliver] it with its rights undiminished to those who are to succeed us."[94] Probably the result of a mixture of shrewd political opportunism and sincere personal conviction, this speech marks Pinckney's final break with his Low-Country, Federalist roots and the beginning of his full support of Jefferson and the Republican party.

Charles Pinckney's tendency to combine his uncommon political foresight with his private beliefs in some ways defines his public career. Although he certainly wanted to improve the Up-Country, as shown by his decision to live in the region and to make a living from the cultivation of cotton, Pinckney understood before many other Low-Country politicians that the winds of change were blowing through South Carolina. By the late 1790s, Pinckney had both witnessed and helped orchestrate the rising political, not to mention economic, influence of the Up-Country. Republicanism's rise in South Carolina's western frontier was mirrored on the national stage by the growth of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison's burgeoning political faction. Given his openly republican tendencies and his vocal opposition to the Alien and Sedition Acts, Pinckney definitely understood, by 1799, that he had no chance of advancing on the national stage so long as the Federalists were in charge.

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[93] Qtd. in Matthews, Forgotten Founder, 94.
[94] Qtd. in ibid., 94.

To achieve his ambitions, Charles Pinckney set his sights on installing a new presidential administration in 1800. South Carolina had not voted for the Federalist ticket in 1796, so Pinckney had good reason to believe that, if he worked hard enough, he could help deliver the state's electoral votes to Jefferson. Pinckney's biographer, Marty Matthews, argues that "by early 1799 [Pinckney] had become one of the key political players in South Carolina and an ardent supporter of Thomas Jefferson."[95] Pinckney used his existing network of political allies and contacts to advance Jefferson's candidacy in South Carolina; he communicated with Republicans all around the state to promote their party's leader.[96] Just as he began his efforts to support Jefferson, however, the state legislature appointed Pinckney to the United States Senate to fill out the term of John Hunter, who had resigned his post.[97]

During his brief time in Philadelphia, which served as the United States capital until construction was completed on Washington, D.C. early in 1801, Senator Pinckney gave a series of speeches in which he clearly revealed his Republican sympathies. In his first two addresses to the Senate, Pinckney discussed the need for the judiciary's independence from outside concerns. He asserted that the United States "must consider a fair and impartial [jury], as next in point of importance to an uncorrupt or unbiased choice of legislature."[98] In addition to an impartial jury, Pinckney also argued that judges should be free from "those passions and prejudices" which too frequently afflict

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[95] Matthews, 96.
[96] Ibid., 104.
[97] Ibid., 96.
[98] Pinckney, "Speeches." Pinckney was particularly worried because each state individually determined how jurors were selected, which led to varying methods throughout the country. He states that the Framers (implicitly including himself) should have remedied this problem in the Constitutional Convention of 1787. In this speech, Pinckney advocates a constitutional amendment to establish a nation-wide, uniform standard of selecting jurors by lot.

legislators.[99] As a partial means of securing an independent judiciary, Pinckney suggested that judges be forbidden from receiving either private or governmental positions while they served on the bench.[100] Without openly naming his targets, Pinckney subtly used these speeches to criticize both "biased" courts, (ostensibly those that enforced the Alien and Sedition Acts), and his old nemesis John Jay, who was appointed to negotiate a treaty with England while he served as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

Another of Pinckney's major speeches dealt with a Federalist bill that would have created a "grand committee" to resolve disputed presidential elections. According to the proposed legislation, the committee would have the power to override state laws governing the selection of presidential electors, effectively nullifying a state's electoral votes if the committee believed that there were not legitimate.[101] In South Carolina, the Republican-controlled state legislature had recently enacted a law giving the legislature itself, and not the general public, the power to select presidential electors in the election of 1800.[102] As a Republican, and an architect of South Carolina's new election laws, Pinckney naturally worried about the possibility of abuse of the committee's power for partisan purposes. He believed that the members of the proposed committee could never

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[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Matthews, 99-100. In late eighteenth and early nineteenth America, ships were sometimes lost to violent storms at sea and many country roads were little more than muddy trails through isolated woods. Communication was slow and unreliable. Therefore, Congress's concern that election results might be tainted somewhere *en route* to the nation's capital did have a factual basis.
[102] Ibid., 99. The somewhat haughty decision of South Carolina's state legislature to appropriate the public's right to select presidential electors may seem a bit confusing, given that Republicans, who supposedly believed in the wisdom of the common man, controlled the assembly. Republicans in the legislature, confident that they would never lose their majority, did in fact violate their own democratic principles in an attempt to control South Carolina's electoral votes.

extirpate "party spirit" from their ranks.[103] Furthermore, he lectured his fellow senators, "there is not a single word in the constitution which can, by the most tortured construction, be extended to give Congress, or any branch or part of our federal government, a right to make or alter the state legislatures' directions" on the selection of presidential electors.[104] In effect, Pinckney, wary of any threat to a Republican victory in South Carolina, asserted that the proposed bill would not only inject partisan sentiments into elections, but that the "grand committee" was simply unconstitutional.

Charles Pinckney's final speech was in response to Federalist attempts to compel *Philadelphia Aurora* editor William Duane to appear before the Senate to answer for a pro-Republican article that he had published.[105] Pinckney believed that the summons denied Duane's constitutional rights to freedom of the press and trial by jury.[106] Pinckney argued vociferously that the Senate could not make someone appear before it simply because he had offended certain senators.[107] Completely disgusted with what he saw as Federalist infringements on personal liberties, Pinckney made his political expectations for the 1800 election very clear: "However clouded or interrupted this freedom [of the press] has, in my opinion, lately been, I entertain a hope, that in a few months all its shackles will be removed."[108]

Charles Pinckney's speeches to the Senate in the early months of 1800 reveal more about him than simply his political convictions. Finally gaining access to a national forum, Pinckney wanted a glimmer of the recognition for his service that the nation had

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[103] Pinckney, "Speeches."
[104] Ibid.
[105] Matthews, 100.
[106] Pinckney, "Speeches."
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.

bestowed on his more famous cousins. In at least four major addresses during his short senatorial career, he referred either to the Constitutional Convention or the Framers' intent, thereby drawing attention to his own participation in the Philadelphia Convention without explicitly mentioning his own name.

This tendency to subtly emphasize his own signature on the United States's founding document permeated most of Pinckney's public rhetoric for the next twenty years. Pinckney had been the second youngest member of the Convention, and he always believed, ever since his plan of government was relegated to the Committee of Detail, that his contributions to the Constitution had not received sufficient recognition. He perhaps had himself in mind when he asserted to his fellows senators that "there is jealously against young men, or men not much advanced in years, which will forever forbid their being nominated for this office [of president] with much hope of success."[109] Pinckney claimed that "men do not like to see their juniors, or even those of the same age, taking the lead, or being more conspicuous for talents or knowledge than themselves."[110] Some of Pinckney's other comments suggest that he would, by 1800, accept the role of martyr if it would help him achieve his goals: "Abuse is the price that men, and frequently those of the most ability, are obliged to pay."[111] Pinckney's statement that "should [he] succeed even partially [to protect the freedom of the press]...it will amply compensate [him] for all the remarks and odium which the mover

[109] Ibid.
[110] Ibid. Pinckney continued to see himself in 1800 as a young man, partly because (compared to his contemporaries) that was the truth. He was only nineteen when the American Revolution broke out, and he was the second youngest member of the Constitutional Convention. His youth was also a convenient excuse for Pinckney to explain to himself why his plan of government had been slighted at the Convention, and why he had not received the diplomatic appointment that he so long desired.
[111] Ibid.

in so important a reform must naturally expect" reveals his acceptance that working for what he considered the greater good of the nation would necessarily invite persecution.[112]

Pinckney gave the last of his speeches in the spring of 1800, only a few months before voting for the new president began in October. In this election, Alexander Hamilton, still frustrated with John Adams's leadership and angry over the President's dismissal of several Hamiltonians from his Cabinet, openly supported Charles Cotesworth Pinckney's candidacy.[113] As in the election of 1796, Republicans rallied around Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr. The final election results produced a tie between Jefferson and Burr, who both received 73 electoral votes.[114] In the event of a tie, the Constitution required the House of Representatives to select one of the candidates to be president.[115] The United States in 1800 consisted of 16 states; eight voted for Jefferson and eight for Burr. Hamilton desperately tried to convince his Federalist allies in the House to vote for Jefferson as the "lesser evil" of the two men.[116] Federalist representatives, however, intent on blocking Jefferson, whom they despised, consistently voted for Aaron Burr.[117] For 36 votes, Republicans remained steadfastly loyal to Jefferson.[118] Finally, James Bayard, the Federalist representative from Delaware, along with several of his colleagues from Maryland and Vermont, turned in blank ballots, thus making Thomas Jefferson the third President of the United States.[119]

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[112] Ibid.
[113] Horsman, The New Republic, 83-84. Hamilton had secretly, and unsuccessfully, campaigned for Thomas Pinckney in the election of 1796.
[114] Ibid., 84.
[115] Each state delegation in the House received only one vote in the case of a presidential tie, according to Article II, Section 1 of the United States Constitution.
[116] Morton Borden, Parties and Politics in the Early Republic, 1789—1815 (Wheeling, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1967), 55.
[117] Ibid., 55.
[118] Horsman, 85.
[119] Ibid., 85.

Charles Pinckney certainly received his share of "remarks and odium" from the Low-Country gentry for his campaign efforts on Jefferson's behalf in South Carolina and at the national level. Charles had not only broken with the Federalist Low-Country by supporting Jefferson, but he had also, by default, campaigned against his own cousin, Charles Cotesworth. Elite Charleston society derisively labeled Charles "Blackguard Charlie" and considered him a traitor to his class and his region for his actions.[120] Most of Pinckney's family, and especially Charles Cotesworth's branch, stopped speaking to him.[121] Despite the personal repercussions for his political maneuvers, Charles Pinckney emerged from the election of 1800 as the most powerful Republican in South Carolina. He was also on good terms with the president-elect of the United States. By 1800, Pinckney's acute political foresight, his lingering resentment of the Low-Country, and his ambition had compelled him to abandon Low-Country Federalism and help build the Republican party in his native state.

[120] Edgar, South Carolina, 253.
[121] Matthews, Forgotten Founder, 103.

-3-

Balance of Power

Slavery, Cotton, and Compromise in South Carolina
1801-1808

In March of 1801, President Thomas Jefferson, grateful for Charles Pinckney's successful campaign efforts in South Carolina, appointed Pinckney to serve as the United States's minister to Spain, thus fulfilling the South Carolinian's long-standing desire to travel abroad.[1] Indicative of his hope to see as much as possible of Western Europe, Pinckney landed in Holland and charted a leisurely course through Paris and the French countryside before crossing the Pyrenees and taking up his post in Madrid.[2] The newly-arrived ambassador to Spain also wasted little time before planning and taking a visit to Italy in the spring of 1802.[3] When Pinckney's own secretary, John Graham, questioned the necessity of the trip to Italy, the sly South Carolinian pointed out the fact that Rufus King, minister to France, was also touring Switzerland and Robert R. Livingston, the United States's representative in Great Britain, was in Holland. In a letter to James Madison, Jefferson's protégé and Secretary of State, Pinckney dryly expressed his hope that the three ministers' side trips would "be all equally useful."[4]

Despite his early predilection towards touring Europe, Charles Pinckney did face three serious diplomatic issues during his tenure as ambassador to Spain. His first task was to confront the Spanish government about the seizure of American ships by Spanish

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[1] Matthews, Forgotten Founder, 105.
[2] Ibid., 108-109.
[3] Ibid., 109.
[4] Qtd. in ibid., 110.

vessels. Some American investors and ship-owners had financial claims against Spain for their lost cargo and vessels; the Jefferson administration instructed Pinckney to negotiate a settlement for these claims.[5] Pinckney succeeded in wrangling terms from the Spanish foreign minister, Pedro de Cevallos, but the United States Congress delayed so long in ratifying the treaty that Spain rescinded its offer.[6] Some claims against Spain remained outstanding until the Adams-Onís Treaty of 1819.[7]

Charles Pinckney's major endeavor as minister to Spain involved obtaining Spanish recognition for the United States's purchase of the colony of Louisiana from France. Spain had controlled the colony since the end of the Seven Years War in 1763. When the Spanish monarch had agreed to return the colony to France in 1800, Napoleon Bonaparte specifically promised not to sell Louisiana.[8] Pinckney not only had to soothe Spanish anger over France's broken promise, but also allay fears about the United States's designs on Spanish Florida.[9] Jefferson sent James Monroe as a special envoy to help Pinckney with the negotiations; after many long, tense discussions with the Spanish minister, the Americans gained Spanish approval of the Purchase.[10] Pinckney's third diplomatic task in Spain, the simultaneous acquisition of Spain's East and West Florida colonies, was closely related to the Louisiana Purchase. Both Pinckney and Monroe worked hard to include Florida in the Louisiana transaction, but "His Catholic Majesty" simply would not budge on the issue. Spain retained control over Florida for the next 15 years.[11]

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[5] Ibid., 111-112.
[6] Ibid., 112.
[7] Robert V. Remini, The Jacksonian Era (Wheeling, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1997), 7.
[8] Horsman, The New Republic, 156-158.
[9] Ibid., 161.
[10] Matthews, 114-115.
[11] Ibid., 115.

Attacks on Pinckney's record as ambassador emerged from both the general public and the burgeoning diplomatic corps. Pinckney's critics, such as his secretary John Graham, charged that a combination of his unnecessary "short tours" and his mediocre ability, especially compared to the diplomatic talents of his cousins Thomas and Charles Cotesworth, made Pinckney's performance in Spain somewhat lackluster.[12] During Pinckney's years abroad, Jefferson himself noted that the ambassador's "enemies here [in the United States] are perpetually dragging his character in the dirt, and charging it on the administration" and suggested that if Pinckney hoped for "anything further in the career of honor," he should return to America when Monroe arrived in Madrid.[13] In a pamphlet that he wrote in 1816 to support the nomination of Monroe for president, Pinckney was still trying to defend his efforts in Spain. He carefully referred to himself in the third person, writing only of a "minister...appointed to go to Spain."[14] Pinckney argued that Monroe and the unnamed minister were "for near six months...incessantly engaged" in negotiations over Louisiana and Florida, and insisted that the two American ambassadors had done "everything...which was possible" on behalf of their government.[15]

After nearly five years in a foreign country, and under constant pressure to succeed, Charles Pinckney surely missed his home and his family. His biographer, Marty Matthews, writes that "by July of 1805, Pinckney included the subject of his departure in almost every correspondence with Madison."[16] Numerous delays related to diplomatic

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[12] Matthews, 108-110, 115.
[13] Qtd. in Ibid., 107.
[14] Charles Pinckney, "Observations to Shew the Propriety of the Nomination of Colonel James Monroe to the Presidency of the United States by the Caucus at Washington." (Charleston: The Southern Patriot, 1816), 16, in Early American Imprints. (Second Series; no. 38643)
[15] Ibid., 19.
[16] Matthews, 115.

affairs and the selection of a suitable replacement prevented Pinckney from departing until the winter of 1805-1806. Sometime in early January Pinckney finally sailed into Charleston harbor only to find that politics in both Charleston and Washington had changed greatly during his absence.

While Pinckney had been serving abroad, Thomas Jefferson used his first term in office to advance his doctrine of republicanism, attack Federalist policies, and double the size of the young nation's territory. Jefferson's administration and the newly-elected Republican majority in Congress immediately began to dismantle Federalist projects left over from John Adams's presidency. Historian Morton Borden observes that "many laws and customs originated by the Federalists under Washington and Adams were abandoned or transformed according to the Republican tenets of personal liberty, governmental economy, and social simplicity."[17] Jefferson assigned his Secretary of the Treasury, Swiss émigré Albert Gallatin, the task of reversing Hamilton's fiscal policies.[18] In an effort to reduce the financial responsibilities of the national government, Gallatin and Republican lawmakers reduced internal taxes, cut the military's budget, and recalled the ambassadors to Holland, Portugal, and Prussia, who were deemed too expensive to maintain.[19] Congress also allowed the hated Alien and Sedition Acts to lapse.[20]

The Republicans' major legislative strike against Federalist laws, however, was the repeal of the Judiciary Act of 1801, which Federalists had passed just before they left office.[21] To relieve the burden on Supreme Court justices, who had been riding circuit around the country, the Act called for the appointment of 16 federal judges to take over

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[17] Borden, Parties and Politics in the Early Republic, 62.
[18] Horsman, 128.
[19] Borden, 62.
[20] Ibid., 62.
[21] Horsman, 132.

the circuit courts. To the dismay of Republicans, Federalist Congressmen, who knew that their majority in Congress was going to end, arranged for the appointment of known Federalists to the newly-created judgeships.[22] After intense debate in both houses of Congress, Republicans succeeded in repealing the Judiciary Act in 1802.[23] Not content simply to abolish the Federalist-designed courts, House Republicans initiated impeachment trials against many prominent Federalist jurists, especially those who had supported the Alien and Sedition Acts.[24]

While many Republicans in Congress busied themselves with overturning a decade's worth of Federalist policies, Jefferson turned his eyes towards the United States's western frontier and the vast French colony of Louisiana. Spain took over the territory after the Seven Years War in 1763, but promised to return control to France in the secret Treaty of San Ildefonso in 1800 if Napoleon could secure a kingdom in Italy for the Spanish king's son-in-law.[25] During the first few years of the nineteenth century, tensions between England and Napoleonic France increased and many contemporary observers believed that war was imminent. Napoleon's need for troops and cash prompted him to consider selling Louisiana to the United States. Eager to seize the opportunity, the Jefferson's envoys in Paris, including James Monroe, exceeded their instructions and agreed to purchase the entire colony for $15,000,000.[26]

Judged by some later historians to be the most significant accomplishment of Jefferson's first term, the acquisition of Louisiana angered many Federalists. The Louisiana Purchase upset many of Jefferson's opponents because of the doubts

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[22] Ibid., 132.
[23] Ibid., 133.
[24] Ibid., 135.
[25] Ibid., 156.
[26] Ibid., 159.

surrounding the president's constitutional right to purchase new territory (doubts which Jefferson himself acknowledged possessing and ignoring), and the Federalists' understanding that westward expansion diminished the political importance of the northern states, the last significant bastion of Federalism.[27] The Louisiana Purchase also upset Spain, because of both France's broken promise and the United States's subsequent Mobile Act of 1804, which authorized Jefferson to establish a customs district in Mobile (on land which Spain still controlled!).[28] To Charles Pinckney, as ambassador to Spain, fell the unenviable task of soothing the Spanish foreign minister's anger and obtaining Spanish recognition of the transaction.

Thus, by the time Pinckney settled in to the familiar surroundings of his Charleston mansion in early 1806, Thomas Jefferson's first presidential administration had stimulated economic growth and secured America's access to vast tracts of virgin land and water routes to the Gulf of Mexico. The free white population of the United States was generally satisfied with the Virginian's management of the country, so it came as no surprise that Jefferson handily won reelection in 1804. Federalists, hoping to make inroads into the South, nominated South Carolina's Charles Cotesworth Pinckney as their presidential candidate, but the Revolutionary War veteran garnered only 14 electoral votes, from Connecticut, Delaware, and Maryland.[29]

In South Carolina, the Republican Up-Country's ascendance to political and economic equality with the Low-Country mirrored the rise of Jefferson's Republican coalition on the national stage. When Charles Pinckney left his native state in 1801, cotton cultivation and the expansion of black slavery were generating enormous wealth in

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[27] Borden, 70-71.
[28] Horsman, 161.
[29] Ibid., 169.

the Up-Country and were helping the region's representatives gain political influence in state affairs.[30] Much to his satisfaction, these trends continued during Pinckney's service in Spain. Historian Rachel Klein notes that, during the early nineteenth century, warehouses for tobacco, a traditional crop for Up-Country farmers, were converted into cotton warehouses.[31] In 1790, the Up-Country possessed only 13 percent of the state's slave population, but by 1810, that proportion swelled to 22 percent while the Low-Country's overall share of slaves declined from 73 percent to 56 percent in the same period.[32] Up-Country politicians, anxious to ensure a stable supply of slaves to work their newly-tilled cotton fields, succeeded in 1804 and 1805 in blocking the continuation of a state ban on interstate slave trading, thereby opening South Carolina's borders to an influx of slaves from the Chesapeake Bay area.[33]

Concomitant with Up-Country Republicanism's rise to power in South Carolina was the Federalist party's decline to relative unimportance. One reason that Federalists could not remain a viable party in South Carolina was that the state's dwindling number of Low-Country Federalists no longer agreed with the national party leadership on many of the major issues of the day. Klein writes that "South Carolina coastal planters [those most likely to cling to Federalism] resented Federalist tariff policies, and they felt snubbed by the Federalist-dominated Senate that had refused to confirm the appointment of [South Carolinian] John Rutledge to the Supreme Court."[34] Federalist leaders also opposed the Louisiana Purchase, but the transaction was very popular in the South and in

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[30] See Chapter 2 of this study for a full discussion of the changes wrought by cotton and slaves in South Carolina.
[31] Klein, Unification of a Slave State, 248.
[32] Ibid., 254.
[33] Ibid., 254-255.
[34] Ibid., 258.

South Carolina. Finally, the anti-slavery beliefs of some northern Federalists alienated many South Carolinians who clung to Federalism.[35]

Another cause of Federalist weakness in South Carolina was the narrowing ideological gap between the Low-Country Federalist elite and the emerging Up-Country Republican planter class. Low-Country slave owners worried after the American and French Revolutions that republican values, popular among Upcountrymen, would eventually extend to include the abolition of slavery. The growing centrality of slavery to the Up-Country's economy, however, assuaged patrician fears of racial egalitarianism and removed one of the chief sources of Low-Country distrust of the Up-Country. South Carolina historian Walter Edgar also notes that emerging evangelical Christian sects, such as Methodists and Baptists, which were very popular in the Up-Country, gradually began to support slavery during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, thus removing a potential moral obstacle to slavery's continued expansion.[36] Members of committed anti-slavery denominations, such as Presbyterians and Quakers, abandoned the state altogether.[37]

While Charles Pinckney represented the United States in Spain, Up-Country Republican leaders sought to transform their increasing intellectual and economic ties with the Low-Country into political gains. In 1802, to seal the demise of the state's Federalist party, Republicans in the state legislature successfully "gerrymandered" the districts for the United States Congress, making it virtually impossible for a Federalist candidate to be elected.[38] Up-Country representatives ultimately fixed their ambitious

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[35] Ibid., 258.
[36] Walter Edgar, South Carolina: A History, 261.
[37] Ibid., 261.
[38] Klein, 261-262.

eyes on a goal that had eluded them for twenty years: ending the Low-Country's overrepresentation in the state legislature. Republican politicians managed to pass resolutions calling for a constitutional amendment on apportionment in 1801, 1803, 1804, and 1806, but each time lacked the requisite two-thirds majority to amend the state constitution.[39] Although they did not succeed in any of these attempts, Upcountrymen, buoyed by rising cotton prices and a strong national party, clearly believed that constitutional reform would occur in the near future.

As pleased as he surely was to see his family, his home state, and the political developments that had taken place during his absence, Charles Pinckney was certainly very worried about the condition of his own financial affairs. Pinckney, burdened by debts he inherited from his father, his mother, and his uncle, had left his assets in the hands of Daniel D'Oyley, his cousin and a state treasurer.[40] While Pinckney was abroad, D'Oyley sold one of his cousin's Charleston homes and various other properties around the state to pay down Pinckney's ballooning personal debt.[41] When Pinckney returned to Charleston, he discovered that his creditors had filed more than forty suits against him, for unpaid bills ranging from membership dues in the Agricultural Society of South Carolina to a carpenter's fee for the coffin in which Pinckney's mother was buried in 1795.[42] Compounding Pinckney's debt problem was his lavish lifestyle, which included extravagant dinner parties and ownership of elegant mansions and a vast personal library.

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[39] Ibid., 262-265.
[40] Matthews, Forgotten Founder, 119. Pinckney assumed his uncle Miles Brewton's debts when Brewton and his entire family disappeared at sea.
[41] Ibid., 115.
[42] Ibid., 115, 119.

Pinckney decided to file suit against D'Oyley, whom the state legislature was also impeaching for misuse of state funds, for the mismanagement of his financial holdings.[43] In a vicious pamphlet, D'Oyley publicly responded with charges that Pinckney, the state's former governor and one-time United States senator, had tried to coerce him into stealing public funds to pay down Pinckney's personal debt.[44] Pinckney ignored his cousin's scandalous accusations and eventually won the suit. D'Oyley was later convicted of illegal misuse of state money.[45]

Despite his pecuniary troubles and public charges of corruption, Charles Pinckney still commanded great respect and loyalty from South Carolina's Republican lawmakers. The state legislature selected him to serve an unprecedented fourth term as governor, beginning in December 1806.[46] Pinckney continued to advocate Republican principles that would benefit the lower levels of society, from changing the state's penal code to emphasize reform over punishment, to pressuring the legislature to establish a viable public education system.[47] This was Pinckney's last term as governor and, other than one three-year term in the state legislature's lower house, the last time that the delegate to the Philadelphia Convention would serve his state in public office for the next ten years. It is appropriate that Pinckney, a transitional figure in the history of South Carolina, would preside over the most significant transfer of political power in his state's history: the long-awaited (by Up-Country Republicans, at least) reapportionment of the state legislature.

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[43] Ibid., 116.
[44] Ibid., 118-119.
[45] Ibid., 120-121.
[46] Ibid., 117.
[47] Ibid., 121-122.

The leading proponent of constitutional reform was Joseph Alston, ironically not a rustic Up-Country cotton grower, but rather a refined, wealthy rice planter from the coastal district of Georgetown.[48] Perhaps the successful advocate *had* to come from the Low-Country, because the state's elite society could only trust one of its own. In speeches to the state legislature, Alston argued that the expansion of slavery and the phenomenal growth of cotton cultivation had "advanced beyond all calculation, in wealth and number, in information, in every thing which can render a people respectable" the inhabitants of the Up-Country.[49] Alston essentially managed to convince South Carolina's elites that their differences with Upcountrymen had diminished to irrelevance because the state's western region had firmly committed to slavery and had begun to generate great wealth from a staple crop, exactly as the Low-Country had done in the eighteenth century.

The state legislature did not call a special convention to amend the constitution, but in 1808, the House of Representatives, finally swayed by Alston's arguments, passed a bill to change the state's method of apportioning the legislature, an act which became known in South Carolina history as the "Compromise of 1808."[50] Only two members of the House dissented, a symbolic triumph for the state's Republicans.[51] The Compromise initiated a new formula based on the size of the white population and taxable property, and decreed that reapportionment should take place every ten years.[52] Since the white population of the Up-Country was booming and "taxable property" included slaves, many

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[48] Edgar, 261; Klein, 264-265.
[49] Joseph Alston, "Speech of Joseph Alston, Member from Christ Church, in the House of Representatives for Winyaw in a Committee of the Whole to Which Was Referred the Bill for Amending the Third and Seventh Sections of the First Article of the Constitution of This State" (Georgetown, South Carolina: 1808) in Early American Imprints. (Second Series; no. 14335)
[50] Klein, 266.
[51] Edgar, 261.
[52] Ibid., 262; Klein, 266.

of whom were forced to move westward to cotton plantations, Up-Country politicians could expect to become more powerful with every subsequent reapportionment. The Compromise ensured that Up-Country slaveholders would increasingly dominate South Carolina's politics during the course of the nineteenth century.

The "Compromise of 1808" symbolized the economic and political unification of South Carolina. By 1808, both "Countries" depended on slavery and the cultivation of a staple crop to produce their fantastic wealth. The state's elite, confronted with the Up-Country's staunch commitment to cotton, no longer worried that Republicanism would translate into opposition to slavery. Reapportionment, then, was the Low-Country's acknowledgement of its cultural and ideological kinship with the Up-Country.

Up-Country Republicans' slow accretion of political power and economic vitality, at the expense of the tradition-bound Low-Country, stretched back into the years immediately following the Revolutionary War. In the late 1780s, Upcountrymen began demanding greater inclusion in the political process. The 1808 amendment, the culmination of decades of political maneuvering in South Carolina, appropriately occurred during the final term of Governor Charles Pinckney. By "deserting" the social class in which he was born and supporting the Republican party, Pinckney symbolically and literally abandoned the aging colonial splendor of Charleston in favor of the new, rough-hewn plantation homes of the Up-Country. He was an important transitional figure in the history of his state because he both reflected the changes of the early national period and participated in making them.

Epilogue
Charles Pinckney and the Missouri Controversy

During the period from 1808 to *circa* 1820, many of the political trends described in Chapters Two and Three of this study continued. Republican candidates won every presidential election. The national Federalist party completely collapsed by the end of the United States's war with England in 1815. South Carolina's Republican party dominated the state legislature and passed numerous laws to implement Jeffersonian-republican policies. Charles Pinckney, content that his native state was firmly in the hands of the Republican party, tried to settle into semi-retirement, but he ultimately could not resist the urge for one last foray into national politics.

By the end of Jefferson's second term in 1809, the United States's relations with Great Britain had grown tense. England, at war with Napoleonic France, tried to weaken its enemy by blocking American vessels bound for French ports, despite the United States's desire to remain neutral.[1] The British navy added insult to injury by attacking the U.S.S. *Chesapeake*, ostensibly to search for British deserters.[2] Jefferson, provoked by both French and British proclamations against the United States's neutral rights, issued a trade embargo to stop all American ships from landing in foreign ports.[3] The embargo proved basically ineffective. Historian Morton Borden writes that "the undeniable

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[1] Horsman, The New Republic, 184.
[2] Ibid., 184-185.
[3] Ibid., 188.

conclusion is that England suffered less than the United States, and France appeared indifferent to it."[4] Many merchants in the United States simply ignored the prohibition and smuggled their wares from port to port.[5] So unpopular was the embargo that Jefferson's protégé and successor, James Madison, quickly repealed the measure.[6]

During Madison's first term as president, which began in 1809, the British fleet continued to ignore the United States's claims to neutrality. Particularly irksome to American pride, British captains had permission from Parliament to seize anyone they believed to be a British citizen and press them into service on a ship. In Washington, a militant group known as the "War Hawks" successfully pushed the Congress into declaring war on Great Britain in 1812.[7] The War of 1812 was almost a total disaster for the United States until General Andrew Jackson won a great victory against a superior British force at the Battle of New Orleans on 8 January 1815.[8]

New England Federalists, furious over the war with England and the concomitant blow to commercial interests, met in Hartford, Connecticut, from the middle of December until 5 January 1815 to discuss the nation's situation.[9] Some delegates to the Hartford Convention advocated New England's secession from the Union.[10] More moderate members, who thought that secession should be a last resort, formulated a

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[4] Borden, Parties and Politics in the Early Republic, 91.
[5] Horsman, 190.
[6] Madison technically replaced the embargo with the Non-Intercourse Act, which prohibited trade specifically with Great Britain and France instead of outlawing all foreign commerce. Reginald Horsman, however, calls the Non-Intercourse Act an "admission of failure" because everyone knew that once American ships could sail freely again, merchants would trade with England and France despite any pesky laws promulgated in Washington (Horsman 194).
[7] Ibid., 205-207. Prominent War Hawks included Kentucky representative and Speaker of the House Henry Clay, and the rising star of South Carolina politics, John C. Calhoun.
[8] Remini, The Jacksonian Era, 2-3.
[9] Borden, 103.
[10] Ibid., 103.

series of demands and sent them to Washington.[11] Unfortunately for the Federalists, their requests arrived in the capital just as the nation was learning of Jackson's victory and the Treaty of Ghent, which officially ended the war between the United States and Great Britain.[12] A wave of euphoria and nationalism crushed the Federalists' proposals and made their threats of secession look foolish.[13] The ill-fated Hartford Convention crippled the national Federalist party, which never again united behind a presidential candidate.[14]

Reginald Horsman writes that, after the War of 1812 ended on a positive note, "republicanism triumphant not republicanism threatened [became] the dominant theme of the years to mid-century."[15] Like their counterparts on the national stage, Republicans in South Carolina continued to expand their control over the state after Jefferson left office. The state legislature selected John C. Calhoun and Langdon Cheves as Senators, who both became outspoken War Hawks, to represent the state in the United States Congress.[16] South Carolina legislators also implemented a number of clearly republican policies aimed at the lower classes of society, such as universal white manhood suffrage and the creation of free public schools throughout the state.[17]

Charles Pinckney served in the state House of Representatives from 1810 to 1813. As an ardent Republican, he supported white male suffrage, free schools, and President

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[11] Ibid., 103. These Federalists' proposed measures included: a one-term limit for the president (of the four presidents up to that point, three had been Virginians, two were staunch Republicans, and the only clear Federalist, John Adams, had served only one term), an end to the Three-Fifths Clause of the US Constitution (which gave southern states more representatives in the House because slaves counted as three-fifths of a person in the national census), and the requirement of a two-thirds vote of Congress to restrict commerce or declare war (thus making it more difficult for Republican presidents to enact embargoes or make war).
[12] Horsman, 251. The Treaty of Ghent was signed on 24 December 1814, two weeks before Jackson's victory at New Orleans. The United States actually learned of the two events at about the same time because of the delay in communication.
[13] Borden, 104.
[14] Horsman, 250.
[15] Ibid., 255.
[16] Matthew, Forgotten Founder, 125.
[17] Ibid., 125.

Madison's decision to go to war.[18] When his term ended, Pinckney retired from public life to deal with his disastrous personal finances. To show his creditors that he was making an effort to pay his debts, Pinckney and several friends devised a plan to put his assets into a trust, which effectively meant that he ceded control of his own property.[19] The directors of the trust gave Pinckney an allowance of $2,000 per annum and obliged him to move out of his elegant Charleston mansion in favor of more humble surroundings.[20] In addition to his financial worries, Pinckney's beloved youngest daughter, Frances Henrietta, died in October 1816. Pinckney was so distraught over her death that he updated his will in 1817 with a request to be buried not beside his wife, but rather at Frances's side in the cemetery of a church he never attended.[21]

In 1819, despite his advanced age of 61, Charles Pinckney decided to run for public office again, this time for the national House of Representatives.[22] He probably had several reasons for taking on such a burden at his age. Local Federalists were trying to regain power in Charleston, and Pinckney was genuinely concerned that a Federalist might win the election if a strong Republican candidate did not oppose him. Politics, finally, was all that Pinckney knew how to do well. If he was still grieving for his daughter, he might have seen service in Washington as a way to escape his lonely surroundings. What is certain is that Pinckney's friends finally convinced him to run; despite a heated campaign, he won his last office as a public servant.[23]

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[18] Ibid., 125.
[19] Ibid., 127-128.
[20] Ibid., 128.
[21] Ibid., 130.
[22] Ibid., 130.
[23] Ibid., 130.

Pinckney unknowingly chose a very important moment in the country's history to return to national politics. The issue of the Missouri territory's entrance into the Union came before Congress during his term. In February of 1819, Congress took up the question of Missouri's petition to become a state. James Tallmadge, Jr., an abolitionist congressman from New York, proposed two controversial pieces of legislation.[24] The first bill would require the Missouri state constitution to ban any future slaves from entering the state. The second would require the manumission of all slaves born after the state's admission when they turned twenty-five. For opponents of slavery, such as Tallmadge, Missouri was an inviting target to limit the "peculiar institution" because the territory had relatively few blacks, only about 10,000, of whom about 16% were enslaved.[25] Many northern representatives supported Tallmadge's amendments because they were resentful of the extra influence that the three-fifths clause gave the South in the House, and they did not want another slave state to increase that advantage. Most Southerners hated Tallmadge's bills because a free Missouri meant two more senators from a free state in the national Senate.[26] The House narrowly passed both of Tallmadge's amendments, but the Senate voted 22-16 against.[27]

Legislative gridlock prevented action on Missouri for nearly a year. Early in the congressional session of 1820, however, Illinois Senator Jesse B. Thomas, who sympathized with the South, finally proposed a compromise.[28] A bill to admit the territory of Maine without slavery had been linked to a bill to admit Missouri with

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[24] William W. Freehling, The Road to Disunion: Secessionists at Bay, 1776-1854 (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 144. Tallmadge's proposals were actually amendments to the bill to admit Missouri as a state.
[25] Ibid., 144-145.
[26] Southerners were already very concerned about keeping a "balance" between free states and slave states in the Senate.
[27] Ibid., 149.
[28] Ibid., 152.

slavery (to preserve the balance in the Senate).[29] Thomas moved to link yet another bill to outlaw slavery north of the 36°30′ line, which ultimately left only two more states from the Louisiana Purchase territories, Arkansas and Oklahoma, within the legal limits of slavery.[30] Thomas's compromise passed the Senate, but southern representatives in the House did not approve it. Historian William Freehling writes that "a Senate-House conference committee developed an alternate strategy" to split the omnibus bill back into three separate pieces of legislation.[31] The House passed each bill individually; slavery was outlawed above the 36°30′ line and Missouri was allowed to write its constitution without the Tallmadge amendments, thus making it a slave state.[32]

The "Missouri Compromise" sparked fiery debate in the halls of Congress. In a speech to the House of Representatives given in 1820, Pinckney angrily denounced the Compromise.[33] He began by establishing himself as the "only member of the general convention which formed the constitution of the United States, now on this floor."[34] This comment reflects Pinckney's life-long tendency to emphasize his participation in the creation of the constitution, often so that he could offer the "correct" interpretation of the document. Pinckney, the only member of the House able to cite personal experience at the Philadelphia Convention, defended the Three-Fifths Clause, claiming that the South's financial contributions to the nation's coffers justified the region's added representation

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[29] Ibid., 152.
[30] Ibid., 152.
[31] Ibid., 153.
[32] Ibid., 153.
[33] Charles Pinckney, "Missouri Question: Speech of Mr. Pinckney, of S. Carolina, in the House of Representatives" Niles Register, 15 July 1820.
[34] Ibid., 349.

in Congress.[35] He also declared that the southern and western states were simply more valuable to the Union than New England or the Mid-Atlantic states.[36]

Pinckney adopted a nascent states-rights philosophy towards the issue of Missouri's admission to the Union. He wanted all states to join the country in "perfect equality" with the others.[37] "Equality" meant that Missouri should have all of the rights of the original thirteen states, including the right to settle the question of slavery's legality for itself.[38] Pinckney warned that if Congress prohibited slavery in Missouri, then the United States would lose potentially great revenue.[39] The aging South Carolinian neatly ended his protestations against the Compromise where he began, reiterating his role as one of the nation's founders: "...having thus, in the early part of my life, labored with success for the parent [original thirteen states], I cannot but think it a little extraordinary, that I should, at this distant period, be called upon to defend the rights of her children [new states]. My fervent wish is, that I may be able to do it with the same success."[40]

The most interesting aspect of Pinckney's address to the House is his views on the issue of slavery. Pinckney's generation generally believed that slavery was a necessary, burdensome, and possibly dangerous evil.[41] Pinckney argued in 1820, however, that slavery was not evil, but rather that the "peculiar institution" was a "positive good" for

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[35] Ibid., 350-351.
[36] Ibid., 350.
[37] Ibid., 351.
[38] Ibid., 354.
[39] Ibid., 356. Pinckney was quick to remind his fellow congressmen that the United States still owed a large portion of the debt for the Louisiana Purchase.
[40] Ibid., 357.
[41] Consider Jefferson's famous statement that slavery was like a "wolf [caught] by the ears," or the Low-Country's own attempts throughout the eighteenth century to prohibit or stifle the flow of slaves to South Carolina's western regions.

civilization.[42] He cited passages of the Bible that supposedly condoned slavery, and he mentioned great classical civilizations that were built on slave labor.[43] Pinckney asserted that, despite northern grumblings, slavery did not debase masters.[44] He slyly exhorted his listeners to consider that many beloved heroes from both the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 were slaveholders.[45] He also affirmed that slaves' lives were better than those of European peasants or northern free blacks.[46] Proof of slave happiness, he claimed, abounded during the years of the Revolutionary War: "every negro in them [southern states during the conflict] had an opportunity of leaving their owners, few did; proving thereby, not only a most remarkable attachment to their owners, but the mildness of the treatment, from which their affection sprang."[47]

Pinckney's rhetoric about slavery during the Constitutional Convention, some thirty-three years before the Missouri Compromise, hinted at his future beliefs. In Philadelphia, he argued that "if slavery be wrong, it is justified by the example of all the world....in all ages one half of mankind have been slaves."[48] He pointed to the "sanction given by France England, Holland & other modern States" to human bondage.[49] Pinckney did concede that "he [would] himself as a Citizen of S. Carolina vote for" ending the slave trade.[50] Outlawing the international slave trade, however, was a much different proposition than abolishing the institution of slavery. Pinckney gave no

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[42] As a member of the Low-Country elite, Pinckney was, of course, a slave owner his entire life. Financial records indicate that when Pinckney turned his property over to trustees in late 1815, he owned 240 slaves spread throughout his several plantations (Matthews, Forgotten Founder, 128).
[43] Pinckney, "Missouri Question," 355.
[44] Ibid., 357.
[45] Prominent examples include George Washington ("The Father of a Nation") and Andrew Jackson.
[46] Ibid., 355.
[47] Ibid., 350.
[48] Madison, Notes of Debates in the Federal Convention, 505.
[49] Ibid., 505.
[50] Ibid., 505.

indication at the Constitutional Convention that he, like some of his contemporaries, believed that slavery should be allowed to gradually disappear in the United States.

Pinckney's ideas about slavery point the way towards later pro-slavery writers in the years prior to the Civil War. Defenders of slavery in the late antebellum period continued to use the Bible as a justification for the "peculiar institution." Thornton Stringfellow, a Baptist minister from Virginia who wrote a defense of slavery in the 1850s, cited numerous Old Testament passages that condoned slavery or advised slaves to obey their masters.[51] Stringfellow also asserted that Jesus himself "recognized this institution [slavery] as one that was lawful among men....[and he] has not abolished slavery by a prohibitory command."[52] George Fitzhugh, a prominent pro-slavery intellectual, declared that "liberty and equality are new things under the sun. The free states of antiquity abounded with slaves."[53] Fitzhugh's secular arguments for slavery maintained that northern states in the Union and France had tried an alternative form of labor based on "liberty and equality," but that by the 1850s, those experiments had clearly failed, causing poverty, laziness, and social disarray.[54] Therefore, Fitzhugh argued, slaves in the South were better off than northern free-wage laborers.

The parallels between Pinckney's reasoning and that of later proponents of slavery are clear. Both Pinckney and his intellectual successors turned to the Bible to provide support (or at least to not condemn) perpetual black servitude. In 1820 and 1850, slavery's defenders cited the examples of classical Greece and Rome as successful states that depended on human bondage. Southerners of both generations also argued that

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[51] Thornton Stringfellow, "A Scriptural View of Slavery," in Slavery Defended: The Views of the Old South, ed. Eric L. McKitrick (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), 87-94.
[52] Ibid., 94.
[53] George Fitzhugh, "Sociology for the South," in McKitrick, 34.
[54] Ibid., 34-35.

terrible working conditions in the North made poor whites worse off than slaves in the South. Pinckney, however, was only a link in the chain of the South's philosophy of slavery. He did not, like later generations, support secession from the Union to preserve the "peculiar institution."[55] Despite his faults, his petty vanity, and his unabashed ambition, Pinckney was, in the end, a member of the Generation of '76, a patriot loyal to the Union that he had, in some small measure, helped to build.[56]

Charles Pinckney served the rest of his term in the House, which expired in 1821.[57] Pinckney chose not to run for reelection; after a short visit with several friends in New York City, he returned to Charleston in August.[58] He lived the next three years quietly, corresponding with friends and political allies, but giving no major public addresses. His health deteriorated until finally a doctor diagnosed him with edema.[59] Charles Pinckney, signer of the United States Constitution and elder statesman of South Carolina politics, died of complications related to edema (and possibly heart or kidney disease) on 29 October 1824, just three days after his birthday.[60] Contrary to his will's instructions, Pinckney's body was interred in the grounds of St. Philip's Church in

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[55] In the "South Carolina Declaration of Causes of Secession," Pinckney's beloved home state clearly identified widespread northern opposition to slavery, combined with "the election of a man to the high office of President of the United States whose opinions and purposes are hostile to Slavery," as two key reasons why South Carolina wished to dissolve its ties to the Union. See "South Carolina Declaration of Causes of Secession," 24 December 1860, in Henry Steele Commager, Documents of American History, 372-374.

[56] In his speech to Congress on the Missouri Compromise, Pinckney specifically warned of the horrors of a "civil war" over slavery and prayed that no one would ever live to see such a terrible event (Pinckney, "Missouri Question," 357).

[57] Matthews, 137.

[58] Ibid., 137.

[59] Ibid., 138. Edema, called "dropsy" in Pinckney's age, is the abnormal accumulation of fluid in connective tissue.

[60] Ibid., 138.

Charleston, where generations of Pinckneys had worshipped.[61] One month after his death, *Niles Weekly Register* published a simple epitaph that read: "Died, in Charleston, S.C. on the 29th ult. aged 66 years, Charles Pinckney, a distinguished citizen."[62]

[61] Ibid., 138.
[62] Pinckney's given age, sixty-six, is incorrect; he had just turned sixty-seven.

Conclusion

Throughout the eighteenth century, wealthy planter-merchants, a tiny fraction of the state's overall population, crafted a political and economic "vision" for South Carolina. Low-Country society was built on family connections, exemplified by the practice of strategic marriage, and a code of personal honor (defined as evaluation by the public). The coast's economy rested on slavery and the staple crops of rice and indigo. Human bondage was regrettable, but ultimately necessary for "civilization" and the state's financial prosperity. Most residents of the Low-Country during the colonial period considered the "peculiar institution" as possibly dangerous, especially in the wake of violent uprisings such as the Stono Rebellion of 1739. According to the Low-Country's understanding of South Carolina, the Up-Country was a rural backwater whose population could not be trusted to govern itself or to manage large numbers of slaves.

Charles Pinckney, given the circumstances of his birth, should have fit in perfectly with his Low-Country peers. The Pinckney family had been established in South Carolina since the 1690s and Pinckney males were prominent lawyers, planters, merchants, and public officials. Charles Pinckney, however, never seemed to be able to live up to the examples set by his famous cousins, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney and his brother Thomas. Charles's military career, while honorable, was certainly not as exceptional as his cousins'; nor did Charles receive the superb education in Europe that Charles Cotesworth and Thomas enjoyed. Pinckney also found it difficult to face the

shame that his father's acceptance of British protection during the Revolutionary War had caused. Pinckney, then, in the late 1780s, as his political career began in earnest, was very ambitious, but he lived in his cousins' shadows and was probably still resentful of the Low-Country's refusal to pardon his father. He believed that he had to be extraordinarily successful to prove himself.

During the early 1790s, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison began to distance themselves from Alexander Hamilton's fiscal policies. More disagreements, mostly related to foreign policy, gradually emerged among President Washington's top advisors. Jefferson and Madison, unhappy with Hamilton's sway in the new government, began to lay the foundation for a political faction, which their supporters labeled "republicanism." Early Jeffersonian-republican philosophy emphasized the intrinsic goodness of farmers and farming along with social equality for whites, appealed to many inhabitants of South Carolina's Up-Country. After the invention of the cotton gin in 1793, the Up-Country experienced tremendous economic growth due to cotton cultivation and slavery's expansion into the region. Charles Pinckney closely observed both national and local political trends. His personal convictions coincided neatly with many nascent Republican policies; he also understood that economic success in the Up-Country would bring political power. By the election of 1800, when he actively campaigned for Thomas Jefferson in South Carolina (the Low-Country elites supported Hamilton and his Federalist party), Pinckney had consciously thrown his lot in with Up-Country Republicans.

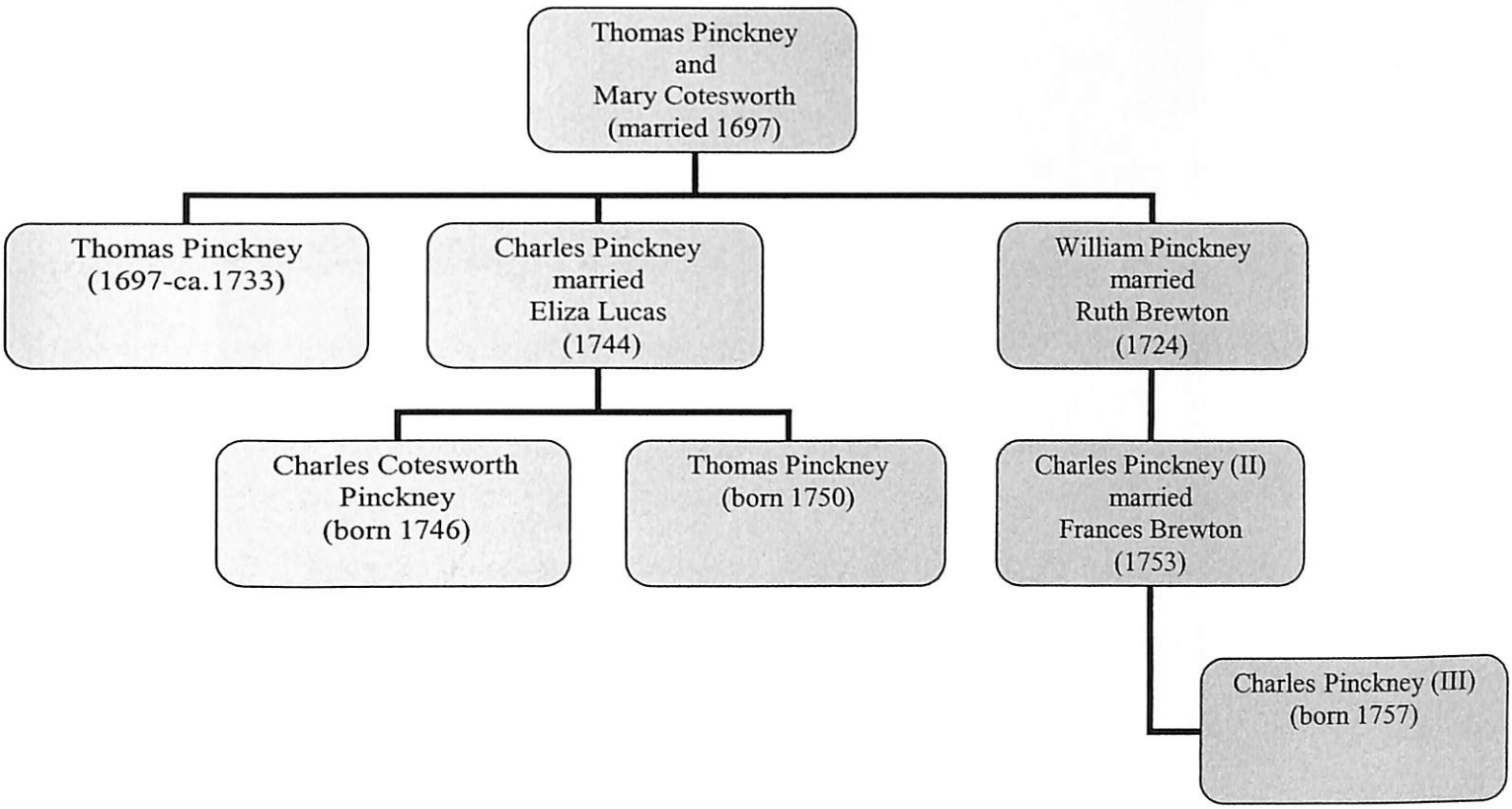
As the nineteenth century dawned, cotton enriched Up-Country farmers, who gradually became "planters" with their acquisition of large numbers of slaves. Low-

Country planters, many of whom remained committed to their traditional crops of rice and indigo despite declining market prices, slowly became less important to the state's overall economy. Up-Country politicians, given the increasing wealth of their region, tried on numerous occasions to implement reforms to guarantee more equitable representation between the Up and Low-Countries in the state legislature. Charles Pinckney, after he spent nearly five years serving as the United States ambassador in Spain, was reelected governor of South Carolina shortly after his return in 1806. During Pinckney's final term as governor, Low-Country politicians, finally convinced that the Up-Country's republican values did not pose a threat to slavery, relinquished control of the state government. The "Compromise of 1808," a bill that changed South Carolina's method of apportionment, ensured the state's political unification.

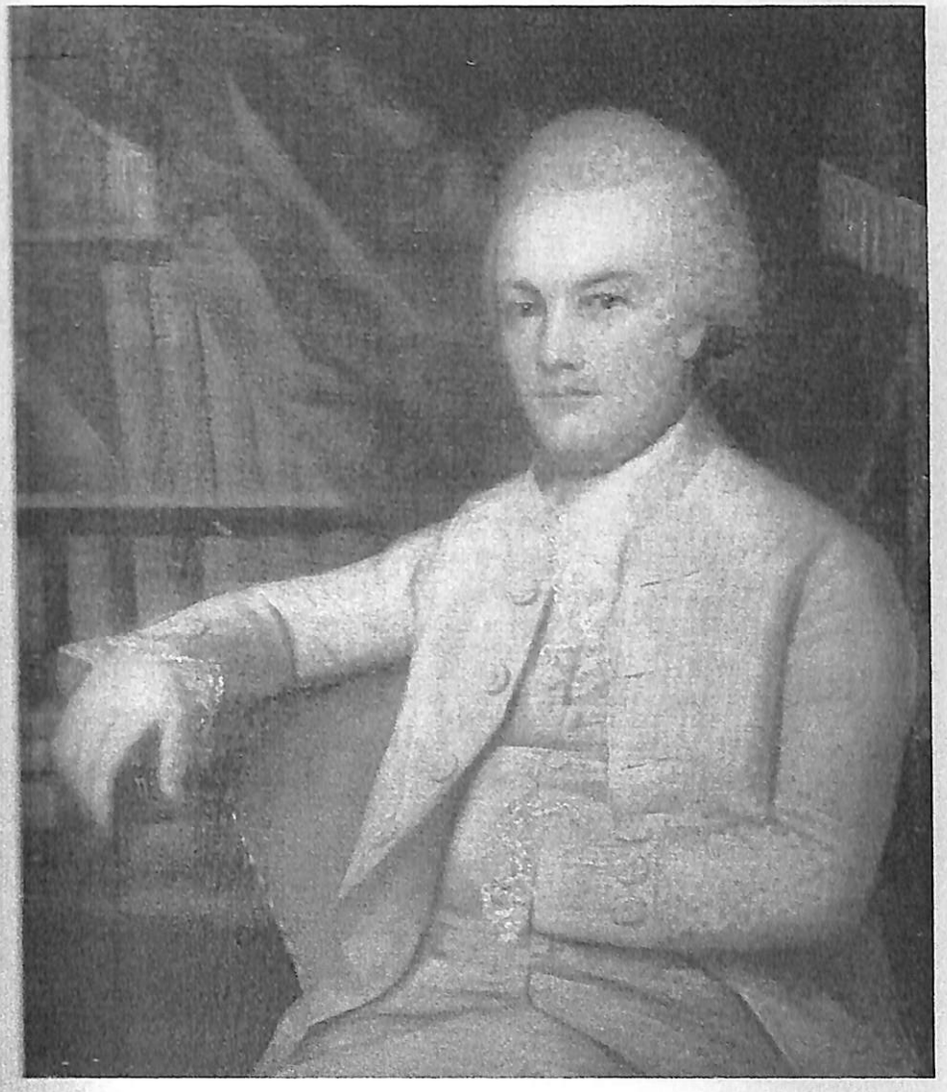
In addition to serving as a transitional figure in South Carolina's political development, Charles Pinckney, near the end of his life, also acted as a harbinger of the South's evolving defense of slavery. With his roots in the colonial period, Pinckney should have considered slavery a "necessary evil." While representing South Carolina in the United States House of Representatives during the Missouri Controversy, however, Pinckney invoked states' rights, examples from antiquity, and biblical precedent to try to prove slavery's positive effects on society. Although he never advocated secession to preserve the "peculiar institution," Pinckney's remarks clearly anticipate the arguments of later pro-slavery authors, such as George Fitzhugh or Thornton Stringfellow, who wrote in the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s. Charles Pinckney's life and political career point towards the "new vision" of South Carolina (and of the South in general) that continued

to develop throughout the antebellum period: a region that was republican in its political philosophy, economically committed to cotton, and ardently defensive of slavery.

APPENDIX A
PINCKNEY FAMILY TREE

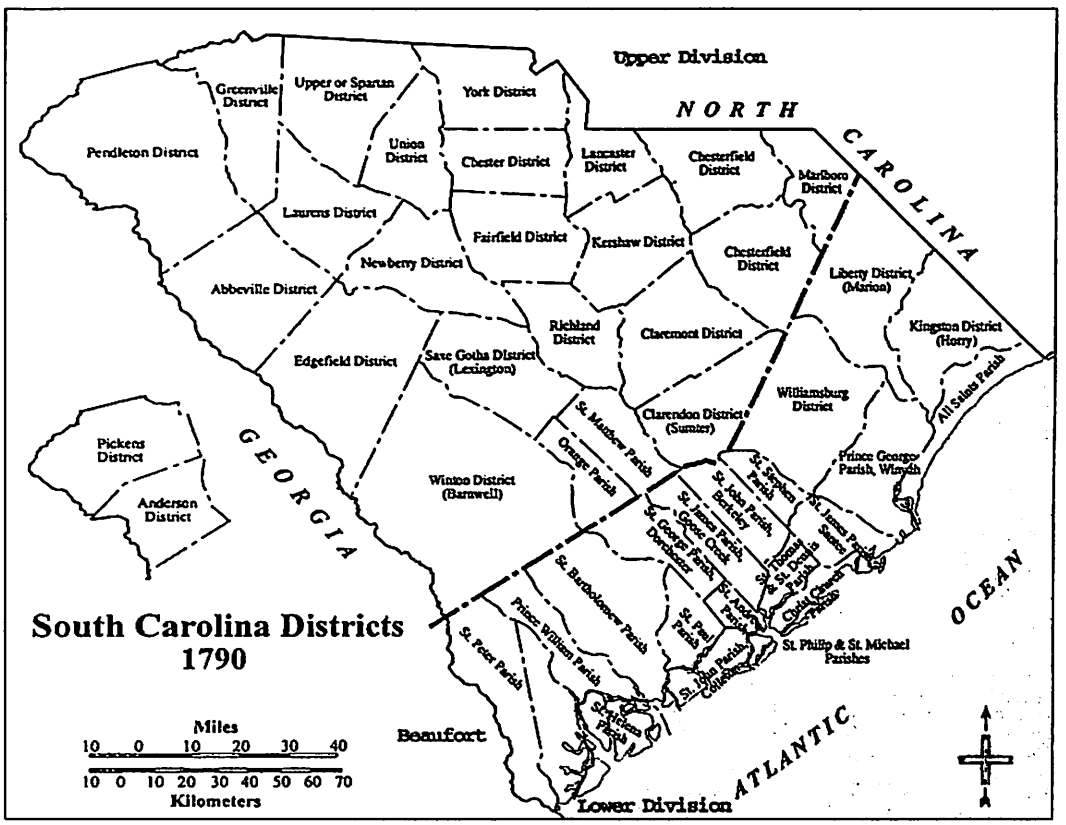


APPENDIX B
PORTRAIT OF CHARLES PINCKNEY



Charles Pinckney, *attributed to Gilbert Stuart. Courtesy of Philipse Manor Hall State Historic Site, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation.*

APPENDIX C
POLITICAL MAP OF SOUTH CAROLINA IN 1790



Map 12: Election districts, 1790. Based on Edgar, *Biographical Directory*

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