RESEARCH PAPER
HISTORY 300
DR. MARLICK
NOVEMBER, 14, 1975

A GENEALOGY OF THOMAS HOLCOMBE
- By, SUSAN DAVIES

Scanned 2011 from The Savannah Biographies Volume 2
Special Collections, Lane Library, Armstrong Atlantic State University, Savannah, GA 31419-1997
Thomas Holcombe was a wholesale grocer, born in 1815, a native of South Carolina. His business was located at 181 Bay Street. He was a respected merchant, attending many conventions and holding many community offices.

Thomas Holcombe served one term as Mayor of Savannah from October, 1862 to October, 1863. He served three separate terms as Alderman. As a Democrat, he took a keen interest in national politics as well as local.

He had several children, however, he has no living descendants in the Savannah area. He was married twice; First, to Miss Eliza C. A. Gale in December of 1834, second to Miss Fannie W. Sometime between 1853 and 1861.

Thomas Holcombe had three sons in the Civil War fighting for the Confederate army. One, Isaac C. Holcombe resigned his commission at the Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland at the outbreak of the Civil War to return to his home in the South.
Thomas Holcombe, a native of South Carolina was born in 1815. He was a wholesale grocer in a company that bore his name, although his partners changed several times.

The firm of Holcombe, Johnson and Company began liquidations in 1858. Thomas Holcombe became indebted due to his business for approximately $15,000 to the Bank of the State of Georgia. Along with debts to him of other people, including Johnson, Thomas Holcombe put up against this debt, his property at Lot No. 28 Chatham Ward (Gaston and Whitaker) also a Lot No. 8, Calhoun Ward, ten of his slaves, and many personal belongings of worth, right down to his four bedsteads and six oak sittees. However, this was fully satisfied and cancelled in 1860.1

In November of 1862, Johnson withdrew from the company and it was to be continued under the name Holcombe, Cope and Company.2 Later in 1865, Thomas Holcombe formed a co-partnership with F. M. Hull under the name of Holcombe and Company for the purpose of transacting a general grocery. The business was located at 181 Bay Street.3 The company seemed to have a rather good name as an Advertisement indicates in 1866 that their "extensive stock of groceries which comprised of everything in their line and may be relied upon as being of the best quality". There were also progressive, as a detailed account of a new invention called a gas bracket and burner seems to show.

Thomas Holcombe was evidently a respected merchant, as he was appointed by the City Council as a delegate to the Commercial Convention held in Savannah in 1856 which had delegates from many of the Southern States.4 He was also appointed a delegate to the Agricultural and Immigration Convention in Macon representing the Mercantile division in 1858.5

All was not work for Thomas Holcombe, however because in an announcement of a regatta, it was noted that Thomas Holcombe along with nine other gentlemen, residents of the island, had entered a sailboat for a race at Skidaway River. "Unhappily, the record does not show which boat won."6
In a letter by Reverend R. Q. Mallard to his wife dated May 13, 1885, he tells of an experience he had in the railroad station of Savannah. Thomas Holcombe and his wife and two children were saying good-bye. Mrs. Holcombe was taking the two interesting little children to visit her mother in Alabama.

Holcombe was a democrat holding many offices in our local government. He was an Alderman for the years 1841-1842, 1852, 1853, 1858-1859, and served one term as Mayor from 1862 to October 1863. As Alderman in 1858, he was placed on several standing committees such as Finance, Dry Culture, Market and City Lots. He served as a grand juror many times. In 1856, Holcombe was named one of the three vice presidents of the "Buchanan and Breckenridge Association of Chatham County". This was a group of citizens desiring to promote the nominees of the democratic party for president and vice-president. In 1855, he had been Chairman of the Democratic party in Savannah.

During his term as Mayor, it seems that he was especially touched by the needs of the poor. For example in December 1862, he made provisions for wood to be made available to the poor. At a special meeting of Council in 1863, a committee was appointed to inquire at several banks for $10,000 without interest to be invested in provisions to be sold to the needy.

Thomas Holcombe's job as Mayor had its rough spots as we see in an advertisement in January of 1863, where he posts a reward for the apprehension of the persons setting fire to the Indian Street property. He also posted a reward for the person who kidnapped Mrs. Landgroft.

Holcombe did not shy away from the fact he was a Mayor during the Civil War. In July of 1863, he issued a proclamation asking all citizens to organize for the defense of the city. He further asked all proprietors to close at 2:00 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday of every week in order that they may be drilled for defense. In August of the year 1863, he called upon the people and Clergy to observe the day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer that the President of the Confederate states had set aside.

Thomas Holcombe retired from office in October 1863, the papers remarked it was the "loss of an efficient chief magistrate and the poor lose a devoted and earnest
for him to return to the office of Mayor but he respectfully declined the honor. 16

In July of 1864, Holcombe and two other men had sent a peace correspondence to Abraham Lincoln and Horace Greeley. We know this because it was rebuked by Richmond newspaper editorial that found its way to the Savannah papers. The editorial hope to hear "no more from southern men of peace propositions or negotiations and diplomacy." 17

He was elected Port Warden in January 1866, but resigned a month later. His activity in the democratic party was not yet over. In 1872, he was elected an alternate to the Atlanta Convention of the Democratic party. Later in October of that year he along with several other Mayors wrote a letter disputing the Republican party's holding that the Greeley election party had control of the polls and had them surrounded. 18

In addition to his involvement in the politics of the community, he was active in other groups of the city. In 1856, he was a member of the Board of Directors of the Bank of Commerce and served in this capacity again in 1857. 19 In 1865, he was elected Chairman by the Port Wardens for the Savannah Port. In 1868, he was elected a director of the stock holders of the St. Mary's Steamer. 20 This same year shows he was a stockholder in the Savannah Sidaway and Seaboard Railroad Co. 21 In 1869, he was a director of the Forest City Mutual Loan Association, but declined re-election to this post in 1870. 22 In 1885, he was elected a resident member of the Georgia Historical society justmonths before his death. 23

In 1871, he was involved in several law suits. The case of United States versus Thomas Holcombe the Debt on the Custom House Bond was for the plaintiff - others such as United States versus Thomas Holcombe showed also for the plaintiff in sums totaling more than $10,000. 24

The following information concerns the family of Thomas Holcombe in-as-much as was possible to find. The research that follows was done before a book was found entitled The Holcombs - a genealogy. This book include Thomas
Holcombe and his family. There are a few offspring in their genealogy that I do not have. I have attached a photcopy of their findings and a picture of Thomas Holcombe. The geneology that follows is as complete as Savannah records would allow.

Thomas Holcombe and Eliza C.A. Gale obtained a marriage license on December 17, 1854, however no record could be found of the actual marriage. In the census of 1850, Thomas Holcombe and his wife Eliza have six children: Mary C., John L., Edward L, Isaac C, Ann H. and Eliza W.

The cemetery records show that Eliza A. Holcombe died on December 7, 1853. There was also a reference to an infant Holcombe that died at the house on Gaston and Whitaker in 1861.

Thomas Holcombe must have remarried but there were no further marriage records on him. The Census of 1860 cleared several things up. His wife and children were listed as Fannie, Mary, Joseph (later records shows his name was really Josiah D, Holcombe - a combination of the Joseph and the John L. of the 1850 census), Edward, Isaac C, Ann H, Eliza G, Julia R. (age 4), Matilda B. (age 2), and Cally S. (age 4).

Mary C. Holcombe married John Cassels on June 30, 1859. There is no record of any children. She married Cormack Hopkins on September 25, 1866 and a check of his will shows he left everything to her and her heirs. There is no mention of any children between them.

There are not records to substantiate that Josiah D. Holcombe was ever married. He served in the Confederate Army as a Major and was killed at Jonesboro, Georgia and buried September 7, 1864. There are no descendents through him.

Edward L. Holcombe was a member of the Oglethorpe Light Infantry. Surely there was a scare in the Holcombe household when on July 24, 1861, he was listed as a private among those dead of the Oglethorpe Light Infantry that had "so nobly sustained the honor of their states and city in the terrible fight at Manassas." However, the
Richmond Dispatch sent a telegram to the Savannah News and on July 30, 1861, it states that E. L. Holcombe was neither killed nor wounded. In 1862, he was made Commissary of the 1st regiment of Georgia by the Secretary of War. He died on December 19, 1875 in Waycross at the age of 35 and was buried in Laurel Grove Cemetery. No marriage records could be found for him in Savannah. He had a record in the Will files for 1882. His estate was worth approximately $100.00 and his heirs could not be found.

Isaac C. Holcombe was commissioned as a midshipman at Annapolis, Maryland in November of 1859. In January of 1861, Isaac Holcombe was one of eighteen midshipmen that resigned from the Naval Academy in Maryland to return to their homes in the south. A native Savannahian, he died in Marietta, Georgia at the age of 28 and was buried in Laurel Grove Cemetery. There were neither marriage records nor Will records relating to Isaac Holcombe.

According to the Census records of 1850 and 1860, there are two children next in the family line-up named Ann H. and Eliza. No further record could be found of either of these two children. There are no references to them in Thomas Holcombe’s Will and no available marriage records.

Julia R. Holcombe, according to the Will of Thomas Holcombe, was the wife of G. Mariwether Bacon. The only Will that was found for G. Bacon did not correspond to this man.

Matilda B. Holcombe became the wife of Edward by marriage, according to the will of Thomas Holcombe. She had three children, Freddie, Callie and Tiscay. There are no marriage records for these children and the only Will record is a trust that was set up for them. Thomas Holcombe had provided for their education in his Will and thus the trust was set up and was finally cleared in 1889.

Callie S. Holcombe married Dewitt Clinton Bacon on February 5, 1880. The Will of the latter shows they had three children, Milton, Holcombe and Dewitt Junior.
P. C. Bacon was worth approximately $260,000 at his death. In letters attached to the Will, D. C. Bacon, Jr. is traced to Atlanta. He wrote a letter on stationary, letterheaded, Souther Illustrated Magazines, Austell Building, Atlanta, Georgia date June 27, 1900. In 1904, Holcombe and Milton sent letters attached to the Will relating to an insurance policy of their father. The letter was signed by the Notary Public of Orleans Parish, Louisiana.

Fanny W. Holcombe became a Tarver by marriage. There are no records for this marriage in Savannah but the married name was found by a letter written by Fanny W. Holcombe Tarver and attached to the Will of Thomas Holcombe.

Douachka P. Holcombe became a Gill in marriage. This information was found in the will of Thomas Holcombe. She had neither a Will nor further record in Savannah.

Two other children were discovered in addition to the infant Holcombe, mentioned previously, by newspaper and cemetery records that were not recorded in the Census of 1850, nor 1860.

Pina Holcombe, daughter of Thomas Holcombe of Savannah married Mr. Daniel Berrey of Mobile, Alabama on December 9, 1868. She returned to Alabama, where she died on March 25, 1872 at the age of 27 and was buried in Laurel Grove Cemetery.

John Castella Holcombe died from dysentery at the age of two on April 13, 1865 in Alabama and was buried in Laurel Grove Cemetery.

Thomas Holcombe died in Albany, Georgia on December 29, 1885 at the age of seventy and was buried on December 31st in Laurel Grove Cemetery.
ENDNOTES

1. Deed Book 3R page 86
2. Ibid
3. Advertisement, Savannah Daily Herald, November 2, 1864
4. Daily Morning News, November 28, 1864
5. Savannah Daily Herald, December 10, 1868
6. Daily Morning News, August 26, 1870
7. Children of Pride, Myers, ppa. 479-480
8. Gamble's History
9. Daily Morning News, November 8, 1858
11. Ibid, July 20, 1856
12. Ibid, December 10, 1862
13. Savannah Daily Herald, March 26, 1863
14. Ibid, July 7, 1863
15. Ibid, August 19, 1863
16. Savannah Daily Herald, October 16, 1864
17. Ibid, July 26, 1864
18. Ibid, October 16, 1872, May 22, 1866
19. Daily Morning News, May 12, 1856
20. Savannah Daily Herald, July 31, 1868
21. Ibid, May 25, 1868
22. Ibid, March 1, 1869, March 11, 1870
23. Ibid, April 7, 1865
24. Ibid, April 18, 1871
25. Savannah Daily Herald, September 7, 1864
26. Daily Morning News, October 5, 1866
29. Ibid
30. Will records, File # 445-43
31. Savannah Daily Herald, January 31, 1861
32. Will Records File # 97
34. Will of Dewitt C. Bacon File # 840
35. Savannah Daily Herald, December 9, 1868
36. Ibid, March 25, 1872
37. Laurel Grove Cemetery Records (1852-1938) Vol. II
38. Ibid

BOOKS CONSULTED - NO INFORMATION

2. Dictionary of National Biography Vol. 9
3. Men of the South published by Southern Biographical Association
5. Georgians in Profile
7. Annals of Georgia Mortuary Schedules by Caroline P. Wilson
D-4-6-7-2-1. Thomas Holcombe was a wholesale grocer living in Savannah, Ga., is recorded as "T. Holcombe," among depositors there of coins in corner stone laid there Oct. 11, 1863 of monument to Count Pulaski entertained in his home in Savannah in 1855 his father's 3rd cousin, Rev. William James Holcombe, M.D., D-4-5-7-6-5, p. 748 and accompanied by the latter's son, John Warwick Holcombe, D-4-5-7-6-5, p. 748 and their infant son, John Walker Holcombe, D-4-5-7-6-5, p. 748; signed a request July 24, 1863 to Department of S.C., Ga. Thomas Holcombe, and Fla., Confederate States of America, "T. Holcombe, Mayor of Savannah, Ga., for more defense for Savannah;" m. 1st, Eliza Cale, d. Savannah, Ga. and was buried in Laurel Grove cemetery there, - in 1853, where inscribed gravestones to her stands. Ch. (b. Savannah) June 1853, 2-Joseph Leo, Aug. 1838, 4-Edward L. ("Fred"), 1841, 4-Issac Cohen, Sept. 6, 1843, 5-Fine, Aug. 1845, 6-Grand, Jan. 1849, 7-Max, 2nd. Barbour Co., N. C. Nov. 12, 1854 Frances Elizabeth Wilson, B. Newman, Coweta Co., Ga. Nov. 14, 1853, S. Albany, Dougherty Co., Ga. Nov. 11, 1918 and is buried in Albany; was remembered by her husband's 3rd cousin, Dr. Henry Holcombe, TUCKER, D.D. LL.D., D-4-6-7-5-2, P. 776.

Ch. (b. Savannah, Ga.) 7-Julie Jeana, Dec. 19

His daughters were charter members of Thomas' Chapter, Albany, Ga. of the Daughters of the American Revolution. 537, 1, (1167), 619(25), 79, 89, 91-13, (191), (191), (b, d, b, h, j, 1), 925, 1(a-d).

D-4-6-7-2-1- Mary Holcombe m. 1st. John Getsell.

m. 2nd. Carmack HEPBURN of Savannah, Ga., Ch. 1-Holcombe, 1891, (11, 11, 215, 14).

D-4-6-7-2-1-2. Joseph Lew Holcombe of Chatham Co., Ga. was a member of Co. B. 8th. Co. Confederate Rest of Inf. and served as sharp-shooter in Co. C of 1st. Ga. Baitts' had advanced to front of Major when he was killed in battle of Jonesboro, Clayton Co., Ga. Aug. 30, 1864 and is buried in Laurel Grove cemetery, Savannah, Ga. He was unmarried. 1849, (11, 1, 1), 215, 1(d).

D-4-6-7-3. Eliza ("Fred") L. Holcombe, Savannah, Chatham Co., Ga. took the oath of allegiance, the state of Georgia. 

Savannah, Ga. and was buried in Laurel Grove cemetery there, - in 1853, where inscribed gravestones to her stands. Ch. (b. Savannah) June 1853, 2-Joseph Leo, Aug. 1838, 4-Edward L. ("Fred"), 1841, 4-Issac Cohen, Sept. 6, 1843, 5-Fine, Aug. 1845, 6-Grand, Jan. 1849, 7-Max, 2nd. Barbour Co., N. C. Nov. 12, 1854 Frances Elizabeth Wilson, B. Newman, Coweta Co., Ga. Nov. 14, 1853, S. Albany, Dougherty Co., Ga. Nov. 11, 1918 and is buried in Albany; was remembered by her husband's 3rd cousin, Dr. Henry Holcombe, TUCKER, D.D. LL.D., D-4-6-7-5-2, P. 776.

Ch. (b. Savannah, Ga.) 7-Julie Jeana, Dec. 19

His daughters were charter members of Thomas' Chapter, Albany, Ga. of the Daughters of the American Revolution. 537, 1, (1167), 619(25), 79, 89, 91-13, (191), (191), (b, d, b, h, j, 1), 925, 1(a-d).

D-4-6-7-2-1- Mary Holcombe m. 1st. John Getsell.

m. 2nd. Carmack HEPBURN of Savannah, Ga., Ch. 1-Holcombe, 1891, (11, 11, 215, 14).

D-4-6-7-2-1-2. Joseph Lew Holcombe of Chatham Co., Ga. was a member of Co. B. 8th. Co. Confederate Rest of Inf. and served as sharp-shooter in Co. C of 1st. Ga. Baitts' had advanced to front of Major when he was killed in battle of Jonesboro, Clayton Co., Ga. Aug. 30, 1864 and is buried in Laurel Grove cemetery, Savannah, Ga. He was unmarried. 1849, (11, 1, 1), 215, 1(d).

D-4-6-7-3. Eliza ("Fred") L. Holcombe, Savannah, Chatham Co., Ga. took the oath of allegiance, the state of Georgia.
to Confederate States of America Feb. 6, 1865. He was commissioned as a major in the army in Northern Virginia in Aug. 1863 and served in the Army of Northern Virginia under Gen. H. Hill. On May 21, 1863, he was captured at the Battle of Chancellorsville, Va.

Confederate States of America. He was captured at the Battle of Chancellorsville, Va.

Confederate States of America. He was captured at the Battle of Chancellorsville, Va.

Confederate States of America. He was captured at the Battle of Chancellorsville, Va.

Confederate States of America. He was captured at the Battle of Chancellorsville, Va.

Confederate States of America. He was captured at the Battle of Chancellorsville, Va.