

Her skin was like parchment and very wrinkled



Eva Young

"My father, your great-grandfather, was a direct descendant on his mother's side of Landgrave Smith, first Colonial Governor of 11 South Carolina, his mother being Landgrave Smith's granddaughter; his

grandfather was Pierre Robert, a Huguenot minister who emigrated to America, after the revocation of the edict of Nantes, and led the Huguenot colony to South Carolina. My father was born in 1791 in the old homestead situated forty miles up the river from Savannah.

He had twelve children, and I was one of the younger members of his large family. His early life was similar to the life of any present-day boy, with school days and holidays. During the holidays he enjoyed the excellent hunting and fishing which our large plantation afforded and which gave him great skill in those sports; later in life he brought up his own sons to enjoy them with him. He used to tell us, to our great entertainment, many incidents of his childhood days. When a little boy he used to drive through the country with his grandmother in a coach and four.

After he left South Carolina College he made a trip through the North on horseback, as this was before the time of railroads. It took him a month to reach Pennsylvania and New York State, and as it was in the year of 1812, he happened to ride out of Baltimore as the British rode in. One episode always greatly shocked us, which was that of his seeing men in the public bakeries in Pennsylvania mixing bread dough with their bare feet. After father returned home he married a cousin, Miss Robert. He had one son by this marriage, at whose birth the young mother died. This son returning from a Northern college on the first steamboat ever run between Charleston and New York, was drowned; for the vessel foundered and was lost off the coast of North Carolina.

Father's second wife was a descendant of the Mays of Virginia, who were descendants of the Earl of Stafford's younger brother. This lady was my own dear mother and your great-grandmother. I must now tell you something about her grandmother, for my mother inherited much of her wonderful character from this stalwart Revolutionary character. My great-grandmother's eldest son, at nineteen, was a captain in the Revolutionary War, and she was left alone, a widow on her plantation. When the British

made a raid on her home, carrying off everything, she remained undaunted, and, mounting a horse, rode in hot haste to where the army was stationed, and asked to see the 14 general in command. Her persistence gained admittance.

She stated her case and the condition in which the British soldiers had left her home, and pleaded her cause with so much eloquence that the general ordered the spoils returned to her. This old lady, who was your great-great-great-grandmother, lived to be a hundred and six years old; her skin was like parchment and very wrinkled; she died at last from an accident. I have heard my mother say that she was a remarkable character, never idle, and her mind perfectly clear until the day of her death. At her advanced age she knitted socks for my eldest brother, a baby then, thus always finding something useful to employ her mind and her hands.

Once there was a great scarcity of corn caused by a drought. Grandfather came to the rescue of the neighborhood. He sent a raft down to Savannah, which was the nearest town, and had brought back, at his expense, two thousand bushels of corn. He then sent out word to the poor of the surrounding country to come to him for what corn they needed, making each applicant give him a note for what he received. When he had thus provided for the immediate wants of the people, he generously tore up the notes; for he had only taken them to prevent fraud."

Source: Old Plantation Days. Being Recollections of Southern Life Before the Civil War by Mrs. N. B. De Saussur.