

AN ELIJAH CLARKE DOCUMENT

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## NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

### AN ELIJAH CLARKE DOCUMENT

The following letter, contributed by Miss Ruth Blair, the State Archivist, relates to the well-known attempt of Elijah Clarke to set up in central Georgia an independent settlement often referred to as the "Trans-Oconee Republic". Thomas Houghton, the writer of the letter, was a resident of Greene County, and a person of some consequence, having served in the Constitutional Convention of 1788. Governor Matthews, to whom the letter was written, was very slow to interfere with Clarke. The bold front assumed by the Federal Government finally put a stop to the scheme. The original of this letter is in the State Department of Archives and History in Atlanta.

Georgia, Greene County

May, ye 20th 1794—

May it please your Excellency—

There has been so much said hear, about a free seperate And Independent State and Government, that I expect you are not Unacquainted therewith, but it may not I hope be amiss to give you some descriptions of the maner of proceedings & Carators by whom it is said to be conducted, and in the first place ten miles in width along the west side of the Appilachy and Oconey Rivers is to compose a line of fortifications at ten miles distance from each other one at the mouth of the Appilachy, one above and four below is to compose the first line, and when this is filed up Another simular there unto to be extended and filed up in the same maner; and so on Ad infinatum, it is also said that man becoming an Adventurer and supporting himself is to have 640 Acres of Land, and if supported the first year, is to have 400, and they have now Actually begun and built a block-house, at the mouth of the Appilachy, that being the first settlement, the cheaf conductors known of hear, is Major General Clark of Wilkes County, and Joseph Phillips of this. And ye greatest number of the adventures at that place are men under bad caractors three of them has been apprehended for crimes & misdomeniors and brock custody. Several others cannot be taken as yet; and no doubt if it is suffered to go it, will soon be settled by a sett of people more Injurious to the Inhabitance of this and the United States; than the Creek Nation, as its a good asylum for evil men of every class, that flys from Justice. These things may Allaram your Excellency,

as it does me, sure to wage us into a war, Infest us with Theaves, weaken if not destroy our Reputation as a people, that we can wink at people violateng, the laws of this and the United States, and I believe the law of Nations, I am informed by two men which we sent over to view their works, that Just at this time they are Idle, weighting as they say for a new constitution to come, which a Colonal Gains, and Griffin is prepairing, and they expect to be brought forward unto them in about ten days, this Information the messengers brought as they say had from Joseph Phillips and others of their party. Now I have given your Execellency, I believe a true state of the business and if you have any Respect for me as a civil officer in this county, I shall Humbly thank you for a letter giving your own sentiments in the businiss, and some directions how I shall conduct mysilf, as they look upon themselves to be from under the Laws of this and I suppose the United States, and Remain your Excellencys Obedient, Humble servt.

THOS HOUGHTON

George Mathews Esquier  
Cheaf Magistrate of Georgia

P. S. I had forgot to tell you that each person furnishing four men with arms & provision is to have an equil Right, and it is said amongst some of them and I believe, Clark that you will Isue your proclamation against it but do nothing more, &c.

T. H.

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### CONFEDERATE NECROLOGY

Departed this life on the 6th day of May, 1862, in the State of Virginia, in the Confederate army, MR. JOHN C. GRANT, JR., of Pneumonia.

The deceased was a son of William and Violet Grant, was born in Habersham county, State of Georgia, on the 12th day of February, 1835, and consequently was something over twenty-seven years of age. Thus has passed from our midst one who, though comparatively young, was ripe in judgment and honorable in principle.

Mr. Grant took a deep interest in the politics of our country for the last three or four years, and did all in his power to remedy and quell the apparent troubles which seemed to be gathering and lowering over us, and became a candidate for the Legislature in 1861, in which he was unsuccessful. But notwithstanding his age, and some other impediments in his way, he ran an honorable race against two of the most prominent gentlemen