

Biographical Gazetteer

The following sketches outline the political careers of the principal Georgia leaders. When known, their political positions are indicated (1) in state politics prior to 1787; (2) on the Constitution in 1787; (3) in national politics after 1787.

BALDWIN, ABRAHAM (1754–1807)

Upcountry/Federalist/Democratic-Republican

Born Guilford, Conn. Yale B.A. 1772. Licensed to preach, 1775. Tutor at Yale, 1775–79. Brigade chaplain in Continental Army, 1779–83. Declined professorship of divinity at Yale, 1781. Admitted to Fairfield County, Conn., bar, 1783. Member Connecticut and Georgia Cincinnati. Moved to Georgia and admitted to bar, 1784. Wilkes County delegate to Assembly, 1785. Delegate to Congress, 1785–89 (attended, 1785, 1787–88). Member Augusta board of commissioners, 1787. Delegate to Constitutional Convention, signed Constitution, 1787. Member U. S. House of Representatives, 1789–99. U. S. Senator, 1799–1807 (president pro tempore of Senate, 1801–2). A founder of the University of Georgia.


FEW, WILLIAM (1748–1828)

Upcountry/Federalist/Democratic-Republican?

Born Baltimore County, Md. Moved to North Carolina, 1758. Moved to Richmond County, Ga., 1776. Militia officer. Member provincial congress, 1776–77. Richmond County member of Council, 1777, 1779. Surveyor general, 1778. Commissioner of confiscated estates, 1778. Richmond County assistant justice, 1778–81, 1783–84. Indian commissioner, 1779, 1783. Delegate to Congress, 1780–88 (attended, 1780–82, 1786–88). Richmond County delegate to Assembly, 1782–84, 1786. Admitted to Georgia bar, 1783. Delegate to Constitutional Convention, signed Constitution, 1787. Delegate to state Convention, voted to ratify, 1787–88. Delegate to state constitutional convention, November 1788. U.S. Senator, 1789–93. Columbia County justice of peace, 1795–96. Columbia County delegate to House, 1796. Justice, Georgia Superior Court, Middle Circuit, 1796–99. Moved to New York. Delegate to New York Assembly from the City and County of New York, 1802–5. Inspector of New York prisons, 1802–10. U.S. commissioner of loans, 1804–16. Director of Manhattan Bank, 1804–14. New York City alderman, 1814–15. President of City Bank, 1814–16.

HABERSHAM, JOSEPH (1751–1815)

Lowcountry/Federalist/Federalist

Born Savannah. Member provincial congress, 1775. Member council of safety, 1775–76. Continental Army officer, 1776–83. Chatham County member of Council, 1779. Chatham County justice of peace, 1781. Chatham County delegate to Assembly, 1782, 1784–85, 1786 (declined), 1787–90 (speaker, 1785, 1790). Member Georgia Cincinnati (president, 1794–95). Delegate to Congress, 1783, 1784, but did [309 

Delegate to state Convention, voted to ratify, 1787–88. Savannah alderman, 1790–91. Mayor of Savannah, 1792–93. U. S. Postmaster General, 1795–1801. President Savannah Branch Bank of the United States, 1802–15.

HANDLEY, GEORGE (1752–1793)

Upcountry/Federalist/ ?

Born England. Moved to Savannah, Ga., 1775. Continental Army officer, 1776–82. Member Georgia Cincinnati. Moved to Augusta, 1783. Richmond County justice of peace, 1783–87. Liberty, Glynn, and Camden counties justice of peace, 1784–87. Council secretary, 1785–86. Appointed inspector general of militia, 1787. Glynn County assistant justice, 1787–88. Delegate to state Convention, voted to ratify, 1787–88. Glynn County member of Council, 1788. Governor, 1788–89. Delegate to state constitutional conventions, November 1788, January 1789 (president, 1788). Glynn County delegate to Assembly, 1789. Presidential Elector, 1789. Collector of port of Brunswick, 1789–93. Richmond County sheriff, 1790–93.

HOUSTOUN, WILLIAM, (c. 1757–1812)

Lowcountry/Federalist/?

Born Savannah. Son of Sir Patrick Houston; brother of Governor John Houston. Studied law Inner Temple, London, 1776. Admitted to Georgia bar, 1782. Chatham County delegate to Assembly, 1783, 1787–88. Delegate to Congress, 1783–86 (attended, 1784–86). Delegate to Constitutional Convention, 1787. Married Mary Bayard of New York, 1788, and moved to New York. Admitted to bar of U. S. Supreme Court, 1790.

MATHEWS, GEORGE (1739–1812)

Upcountry/Federalist/Democratic-Republican

Born Augusta County, Va. Augusta County offices (surveyor of roads, justice of peace, tax collector, 1768–75). Continental Army officer, 1776–83. Member Virginia and Georgia Cincinnati. Moved to Georgia, 1785. Became brigadier general of militia. Wilkes County justice of peace, 1785–90. Member town of Washington board of commissioners, 1785. Wilkes County delegate to Assembly, 1787, 1788, 1789, 1793. Governor, 1787–88, 1793–96. Delegate to state Convention, voted to ratify, 1787–88. Indian commissioner, 1788, 1789. Delegate to state constitutional convention, January 1789. Member U. S. House of Representatives, 1789–91. Justice Wilkes County Inferior Court, 1792–93. Moved to Mississippi Territory, 1797. Nominated governor of Mississippi Territory, but nomination withdrawn, 1798. Agent of Madison administration to stir up insurrection in the Floridas, 1810–12. Repudiated by administration for filibustering activities in East Florida, 1812.

OSBORNE, HENRY (1751–1800)

Lowcountry/Federalist/Federalist

Born County Lemardy, Ireland. Glynn and Camden counties justice of peace, 1785–86. Indian commissioner, 1786, 1789. Glynn County delegate to Assembly, 1786. Glynn and Camden counties assistant justice, 1786–87. Delegate to Congress, 1786, but did not attend. Camden County delegate to Assembly, 1787, 1788. Chief Justice, 1787–89.

Delegate to state Convention, voted to ratify, 1787–88. Delegate to state constitutional conventions, November 1788, January 1789 (president, 1789). Camden County member of Senate, 1789. Presidential Elector, 1789. Justice Camden County Inferior Court, 1789. Justice Georgia Court, Eastern Circuit, 1789–91. Impeached for and convicted of election fraud, 1791. Fined \$600, disbarred, and banned from holding public office for thirty years. Civil rights restored, 1798.

PENDLETON, NATHANIEL (1756–1821)
Lowcountry/Federalist/Federalist

Born Virginia. Nephew of Edmund Pendleton. Continental Army officer, 1776–83 (aide-de-camp to General Nathanael Greene). Member Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia (president, 1793–94; vice president, 1795), and New York Cincinnati. Studied law with Charles Cotesworth Pinckney in Charleston. Moved to Georgia, 1785. Glynn County delegate to Assembly, 1786. Attorney general, 1786. Compiled digest of Georgia laws, 1786–88. Elected Chief Justice, 1787, but declined. Delegate to Constitutional Convention, 1787, but did not attend. Delegate to Congress, 1788–89, but did not attend. Chief Justice of Georgia, 1789. U.S. district judge for Georgia, 1789–96. Involved in Yazoo land frauds, 1796. Moved to New York, 1796. Dutchess County delegate to New York Assembly, 1816–17. Judge Dutchess County Court of Common Pleas, c. 1817–21.

PIERCE, WILLIAM (c. 1740–1789)
Lowcountry/Federalist/

Born Virginia. Continental Army officer, 1776–83 (aide-de-camp to generals John Sullivan and Nathanael Greene). Member Georgia Cincinnati (vice president, 1789). Chatham County member of Assembly, 1786. Commissioner of pilotage for Savannah, 1786. Delegate to Congress, 1786–87 (attended, 1787). Delegate to Constitutional Convention, 1787.

TELFAIR, EDWARD (c. 1735–1807)
Upcountry/Federalist/Democratic-Republican

Born Scotland. Emigrated to Virginia, c. 1758. Moved to Savannah, Ga., 1766. Delegate to Assembly, 1768. Member provincial congress, 1775–76. Member council of safety, 1775–76. Delegate to Congress, 1777–83, 1784–86, 1787–89 (attended, 1778, 1780–82); signed Articles of Confederation, 1778. Burke County assistant justice, 1778–83. Indian commissioner, 1783, 1785. Agent to settle boundary with South Carolina, 1783. Burke County delegate to Assembly, 1783, 1785, 1787. Member Waynesborough board of commissioners, 1783. Chatham County justice of peace, 1784. Governor, 1786–87, 1789–93. Member Augusta board of commissioners, 1787. Delegate to state Convention, voted to ratify, 1787–88. Delegate to state constitutional convention, November 1788. Burke County justice of peace, 1788. Richmond County delegate to Assembly, 1789. Received one electoral vote for U. S. President, 1789. Justice Chatham County Inferior Court, 1799–1807. Chatham County member of and president of state Senate, 1806.

WALTON, GEORGE (1741?–1804)

Upcountry/Federalist/Democratic-Republican

Born Prince Edward County, Va. Moved to Savannah, Ga., 1769. Admitted to Georgia bar, 1774. Militia officer. Member and secretary of provincial congress, 1775. Member and president of council of safety, 1775–76. Delegate to Congress, 1776–81, 1787–88 (attended, 1776–77, 1780–81); signed Declaration of Independence, 1776. Governor, 1779–80, 1789. Wilkes County delegate to Assembly, 1781. Indian commissioner, 1783. Chief Justice, 1783–86. Wilkes County member of Council, 1784. Chatham County delegate to Assembly, 1787. Member Augusta board of commissioners, 1787. Delegate to Constitutional Convention, 1787, but did not attend. Delegate to state Convention, 1787–88, but did not attend. Delegate to state constitutional convention, November 1788. Presidential Elector, 1789. Justice Georgia Court, Western Circuit, 1789–92, 1793–95. U. S. Senator, 1795–96. Justice Georgia Court, Middle Circuit, 1799–1804.

WEREAT, JOHN (c. 1730–1799)

Lowcountry/Federalist/?

Born England. Member provincial congresses, 1775–76 (speaker, 1776). Member council of safety, 1776. Commissioner of confiscated estates, 1776–77. Commissioner of public trade, 1778. President of Council (acting governor), 1779–80. Chief Justice, 1781–82. Chatham County assistant justice, 1782. Commissioner of pilotage for Savannah, 1782. Elected Chatham County member of Assembly, 1782, but denied seat. Richmond County member of Assembly, 1782. Auditor general, 1782–92. President of state Convention, voted to ratify, 1787–88. Delegate to state constitutional convention, January 1789. Agent to adjust and advocate claims of state against Union, 1790. Delegate to state constitutional convention, 1795.

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