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## The Life of Edward Jenkins Harden

Susan Welch

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The Life of Edward Jenkins Harden

by

Susan Welch

History 300

Dr. Warlick

November 18, 1987

## ABSTRACT

Edward Jenkins Harden was born November 19, 1813, in Bryan County, Georgia. He was married to Sophia Maxwell Harden and had seven children. While teaching at Chatham Academy, he studied law and was licensed to practice in 1834. He became Judge of the City Court in 1845. From 1861-1865, he served as Judge of the Confederate District Court of Georgia. At the conclusion of the war, he was appointed Corporation Lawyer for the city of Savannah, a position he retained until his death. In addition to his professional duties, he was the author of the notable work, The Life of George M. Troup. He served as President of the Georgia Historical Society, President of the Board of Trustees of the Oglethorpe Medical College and a ruling elder of First Presbyterian Church. He died at Indian Springs, Georgia, April 19, 1873. He was buried the following day at Laurel Grove Cemetery, Savannah.

## The Life of Edward Jenkins Harden

Edward Jenkins Harden was "a man of warm and sincere heart of high integrity and personal honor, of tender affection and true friendship, of generous impulses and freedom from harshness and as a man of trained intellect, quickness of perception, large culture and with a wealth- alike of critical knowledge and general information." Thus was Edward Harden eulogized by his friend, Mr. Bogart.<sup>1</sup> He spent his life in service to others as an educator, lawyer, judge and author.

Edward J. Harden came from a family of prominent and distinguished citizens, dedicated to others and their country. His paternal grandfather, Colonel William Harden (1742-1785) had a distinguished career as a Revolutionary War Officer under General Francis Marion. He also served as a South Carolina State Senator.<sup>2</sup> His maternal grandfather, Colonel John Baker (died 1792) was a committee member appointed by the Savannah Convention of July 20, 1774 to prepare resolutions regarding the Boston Port Bill. He served in the Provincial Congress of Georgia from 1775-1777. During the Revolution, he commanded a regiment of Liberty County militia.<sup>3</sup> Baker County was named in his honor.<sup>4</sup>

Edward's father, Thomas Hutson Harden, (1786-1821) was orphaned early in life. His father's former slave, Bess, brought him from South Carolina to Savannah to be raised by his uncle, Edward Harden. Later, he moved to Bryan County where he studied law. He was admitted to the Bar, but never practiced law.<sup>5</sup> Instead, he became a planter at Bluff Plantation on the Medway River at Republican Hall.<sup>1</sup>



He was married to Matilda Amanda Baker<sup>7</sup> (1790-1862) and had six children.<sup>8</sup> At the time of Edward's birth on November 19, 1813, he was serving as a Colonel on General McIntosh's staff during the War of 1812. Thomas Hutson died in the prime of life, at the age of 34, when Edward was only seven years of age.<sup>9</sup> He was buried at Tivoli Cemetery and later reinterred at the Presbyterian Cemetery at Bryan Neck.<sup>10</sup> After his death, Matilda, a fine business woman, managed the plantation and 58 negro slaves with great ability and kindness.<sup>11</sup>

Edward's early education was under a home tutor.<sup>12</sup> Later, he received much of his education under the noted European educator, the Reverend William McWhir, D.D. at Sunbury Academy<sup>13</sup> located on King's Square.<sup>14</sup> Sunbury held a high and influential position among schools in South Georgia. Reverend McWhir was associated with it during its most successful period. He required scholarship, study and discipline that was unusual for that time. He demanded a great deal from his students. At Sunbury, Edward studied Latin, Greek, English and higher math.<sup>15</sup> Dr. McWhir laid a deep foundation in Edward's education. His favorite subject, Latin, taught him an appreciation of beauty and value. Neither the struggles throughout his lifetime, nor his absorption in his career, made him forget his early education under Dr. McWhir, nor his interest in classical studies.<sup>16</sup>

This interest in education remained with him as a young man when he traveled to Savannah. He accepted a teaching position at the Chatham Academy, one of Savannah's oldest schools.<sup>17</sup> He directed the Inferior (elementary) Department for Boys, under the supervision of Professor George White from 1831-1832. He taught the fundamentals of the "3-R's"- reading, writing and arithmetic.

Grammar, Latin and Greek were also included in the curriculum. He was responsible for the progress of 30-50 students.<sup>18</sup> One of his students later remembered him as being one of his favorite teachers, as "his rule contrasted with others, he was all love and gentleness."<sup>19</sup> After leaving Chatham Academy, he taught in Bryan and Glynn Counties.<sup>20</sup>

While teaching school, Edward began the study of law.<sup>21</sup> His brilliant mind was to bring him great success.<sup>22</sup> Few surpassed him in legal knowledge and learning.<sup>23</sup> As a lawyer, he was "earnest, zealous, faithful, and stern in integrity."<sup>24</sup> In 1834, he opened his first law office at the present site of the Custom House.<sup>25</sup> He had the fortunate experience of becoming the junior partner in the law firm of Jackson and Harden.<sup>26</sup> Joseph W. Jackson was to become a Congressman and Mayor of Savannah.<sup>27</sup> Under Jackson's tutelage he was to become one of the ablest lawyers in Savannah. He then became senior partner in the law firm of Harden and Lawton. In 1837, he was licensed to practice in Superior Court. He became the judge of the Court Oyer and Terminer (City Court) of Savannah from November 1845-October 1947.<sup>28</sup> In the 1850's he became the senior partner of the law firm of Harden and Guerard.<sup>29</sup> Their office was located at 175 Bay Street.<sup>30</sup> After the war, he returned to his law practice with S.Y. Levy.<sup>31</sup> Their office was located at 99 (101) Bay Street.<sup>32</sup> This law firm became the most prestigious in Savannah and as prominent as any in Georgia.<sup>33</sup> In January 1866, he was elected City Attorney for Savannah, a position he retained until his death.<sup>34</sup> The code of Georgia in the middle to late nineteenth century was a testament to his knowledge and dedication. All the laws relating to the city of Savannah at that time were written by him.<sup>35</sup> In 1871, he submitted a revised city code and

ordinance that were adopted by the city commissioners.<sup>36</sup> In his law practice, as in his teaching career, he showed a special ability and fairness in dealing with people. In March 1866, he was appointed by the mayor to examine the testimony of Henry Tow in the shooting death of Robert A. Clune. He refused to ask the justices to return a bill for murder since he felt there was no evidence of malice. Instead, he asked only for a charge of manslaughter.<sup>37</sup>

In the 1830's, during Edward's early years in Savannah, prosperity was returning. Savannahians were enjoying an improved cultural and social life. Architects Jay, Norris and Cluskey had replaced wooden tenements with elegant homes such as the Telfair Mansion. The great achievement of the Davenport House led to Greek Revival buildings appearing all over the city. Imported crystal, china and silver began to adorn the tables of many homes as Savannah emerged as a city of gracious entertainment, rivaling Charleston and New Orleans.<sup>38</sup> Theatrical productions and concerts were performed. The actor, Tyrone Power, performed in Savannah in 1835.<sup>39</sup> New York productions which could have toured Savannah during this time included, "The Magic Flute", with Mr. Horn, Mr. Placide and Mrs. Austin; "Murder at the Roadside Inn", starring Mr. Hamblin and Mrs. McClure; and the ever popular "The Last Days of Pompeii" with Mr. Wallack and Mrs. Sefton. Edward would have had special interest in some of the Shakespearian plays in production at that time, such as "Romeo and Juliet", "Otello" and "Richard III".<sup>40</sup> In all likelihood he attended many of these events with his first cousin, Sophia Helen Maxwell. They had grown up together in Bryan County, he at Eluff Plantation and she at Belfast Plantation.<sup>41</sup> As they spent more and more time together, they began to fall in love.

Edward and Sophia were married on May 21, 1840, by Reverend William McWhir, Edward's former teacher.<sup>42</sup> He was also their step-grandfather and regarded them as his own grandchildren.<sup>43</sup> They were to have a happy marriage which sustained them through many difficult years. After their wedding, they lived with Sophia's father in a house located on the south-west corner of Bay and West Broad Streets. There, Sophia gave birth to their first three children, Anna Matilda, Ellen S. and William.<sup>44</sup> Later, they would be blessed with four more children, John Maxwell, Elizabeth Jane, Edward T. and Mary E.<sup>45</sup> In 1845, a year after William was born, they moved to Number 5, Cassel Row, owned by Mr. Heineman, a German immigrant from Hesse-Cassel. The residents in that section of town were some of Savannah's most prominent and influential citizens, including: Israel E. Tefft, founder of the Georgia Historical Society; Dr. James Screven, planter and mayor; William P. Hunter, banker; Judge John Berrien and Judge William F. Fleming, a United States Senator.<sup>46</sup>

The Hurdens were fond and indulgent parents who worked diligently to instill in their children religious and educational values. The children were raised in a strictly religious home. Edward and Sophia became members of the First Presbyterian Church in 1845. Two years later, Edward was elected, ordained and installed one of 3 or 4 ruling elders, the highest honor in the church. He was elected clerk (secretary) of the Session. He also served as teacher and superintendent of the Sunday School.<sup>47</sup> True Christianity controlled his actions. Few men outside the ministry had a greater knowledge of the Bible or of theological issues.<sup>48</sup> Sophia was also active in the church, becoming the first President of the Ladies Aid and Missionary Society, the Women's Auxiliary and the Women of the

Church in 1867.<sup>49</sup> They attended every Sunday and the children soon learned that no excuse was accepted for absences. A family tradition was established on Sunday afternoon as Edward read the following Sunday's lesson to the children. They were greatly pleased when they could answer his questions correctly.<sup>50</sup>

In addition to their religious values, Edward was also concerned with his children's education. Since he received such an excellent education, he desired the same for his own children. When William was 5 years old, Edward considered it time for him to learn Latin and Greek. He began his studies at Chatham Academy under Miss Elizabeth Church, neice of Isaiah Davenport. Even though he received a valuable education at this school, he confessed that he learned more from his father than he did from his teachers.<sup>51</sup>

Edward insisted his children use correct grammar and encouraged them to read some of the best literature. Edward was a voracious reader of Shakespeare, Addison and Irving. He was a classical scholar with a remarkable knowledge of Latin. His library was filled with books such as The Aeneid and The Iliad, which he knew as well as Shakespeare.<sup>52</sup> Although he read mostly classical works, William remembered into his adulthood his father laughing over Judge A.B. Longstreet's, Georgia Scenes.<sup>53</sup>

With such a special interest in education and literature, it is not surprising that Edward turned his attention to writing. He became the author of the notable work, The Life of George M. Troup. He wrote the book at the request of friends, whose opinions he considered worthy, notably Thomas H. Foreman, to whom the book is dedicated along with Dr. D.H.B. Troup. The book grew to greater proportions than he at first realized. In the Preface, he admitted

that "little merit is claimed for the work beyond the labor of a compilation. Governor Troup is generally permitted to speak for himself. Documents are interwoven within the body of the work and they constitute its principal value."<sup>54</sup> The book was published in 1859 by E.J. Purse, Number 6 Whitaker Street.<sup>55</sup> Although the book made a valuable contribution to the records of the South, it received little attention at the time, since it was published during such a critical period in history.<sup>56</sup> It comes as little surprise that a book published in the South at this time would concern the States Rights Governor who spoke more forcefully on this issue than any other man of his time.<sup>57</sup>

In the years before the Civil War, Savannahians experienced a sense of freedom and liberty, while their lawyers, including Edward Harden, argued states rights.<sup>58</sup> In 1839, he was elected Secretary of the States Rights Party. At a Party meeting in March, a Reduction Conference was promoted aimed at reducing the number of legislators in order to secure a more enlightened and impartial legislature. They also nominated Joseph McPherson Berrien, and Joseph Jackson, Edward's law partner for the upcoming elections.<sup>59</sup> In August 1850, at a meeting of Chatham County citizens, Edward was elected a delegate to attend the Mass Meeting on Southern Rights in Macon. There, the delegates approved the resolutions of the Nashville Convention, and recommended they be supported by the citizens of Georgia.<sup>60</sup> The resolutions included the right of United States citizens to relocate to the territories with their slaves. Acts of Congress to denationalize property were in violation of the law. Territories should be divided between North and South, but Southerners were willing to make grave concessions regarding

the Missouri Compromise Line. Slavery existed independently of the Constitution, first as property, second as domestic relations of labor under state law and third as political power. In view of these, they believed that Congress had no power to create or destroy slavery, nor to regulate or prohibit the slave trade between states. Furthermore, Congressional abolition of slavery had become an abuse of the right of petition, and if continued could lead to dangerous consequences.<sup>61</sup>

The decades of the 1850's and 1860's were a very disturbing time in Savannah history. The yellow fever returned to Savannah in 1854, striking first on August 12, in Washington Ward near St. Julian and Houston Streets. Out of a population of 18,000, nearly 12,000 evacuated the city. Those remaining were gravely ill. The mortality rate climbed to 1040.<sup>62</sup> The fever claimed the lives of 10 doctors, 3 medical students and 3 ministers.<sup>63</sup> One of the first victims was Eliza Jane Harden, age 5, who died August 27. The family buried little Eliza at her grandparents' Belfast Plantation, where the family remained until the epidemic ended in late autumn.<sup>64</sup> During the peak of the epidemic on September 2, a hurricane flooded the city drowning many people.<sup>65</sup>

Savannah pulled itself out of mourning and returned to the business of cotton and slavery. Ironically, Savannah, a city in the only colony of the original thirteen to outlaw slavery, became the capital of the cotton kingdom with the invention of the cotton gin, and therefore a primary center of the slave trade. A Savannahian C.A.L. Lamar, brought the last load of slaves into the United States on the slaveship, "Wanderer", 50 years after the abolition of the slave trade.<sup>66</sup> Slavery had come to involve life and prosperity,

safety and security for Savannahians. Nehemiah Adams, a Congregationalist minister from Massachusetts who came to Savannah in 1854, reported to a friend that, "Southerners are humane and reasonable, trying to make the best of a clumsy and anachronistic system of labor. A visitor to Savannah is made to feel that good and kind treatment of slaves is the common law."<sup>67</sup>

It is doubtful that all Savannahians treated their slaves this well, but the statement seems to have applied to the Hardens. William remembered his father treating his slaves with great kindness, and his mother caring for the slaves when they were ill.<sup>68</sup> According to the deed records, Edward bought and sold a number of slaves before emancipation. He bought four slaves, Joe, Fatima, Binal, Nelly and all future issue, from Thomas Harden for \$700.00 in 1852.<sup>69</sup> Four years later, he sold a slave named Doll, her daughter, Silvy and her two infant twins to John Stoddard for \$1200.00.<sup>70</sup> Sophia brought her slave, Diana, to her marriage. She became part of Edward and Sophia's marriage settlement. Edward agreed to relinquish any rights to Diana or any of her profits if the marriage did not take place as planned.<sup>71</sup> They also owned Matilda, a wonderful cook. Edward allowed her to host a banquet for the Macedonian Society of which she was a member. He also served as the legal guardian of Hannah Pray, a free woman of color.<sup>72</sup>

Differences between the North and South continued to worsen during the 1850's. By 1860, most of Savannah's 13,875 whites favored secession. After Lincoln's election on November 8, more than 5,000 Savannahians met at Masonic Hall to support secession. When South Carolina seceded from the Union, Savannahians celebrated.<sup>73</sup> On January 2, 1861, Governor Brown decided to take Fort Pulaski to



prevent Union troops from occupying it as they had Fort Sumter in Charleston.<sup>74</sup> On January 3, the Savannah Volunteer Guards, the Oglethorpe Light Infantry and the Chatham Artillery, under the command of Colonel A.R. Lawton took possession of Fort Pulaski with little resistance.<sup>75</sup> William Dearing Harden, Edward's nephew, was one of three men who raised the Georgia flag over the fort.<sup>76</sup> On January 19, an ordinance of secession passed by a vote of 208-89. Savannahians greeted this news with much enthusiasm and celebrating.<sup>77</sup> In March, the Georgia Secession Convention, meeting in Savannah, ratified the Constitution of the Confederate States of America.<sup>78</sup>

The Civil War had come to Savannah. Seven Savannahians were killed at the first battle in Manassas, Virginia.<sup>79</sup> The Civil War was to affect every family in the South; the Hardens were no exception. William became one of the original members of the Savannah Cadets, which was organized in the Spring of 1861. He was a signal corp member, serving as a telegraph operator and flag signaller.<sup>80</sup> Edward had been accorded the rank of Colonel and appointed aid-de-camp in 1838.<sup>81</sup> Early in 1861, he joined the Pulaski Guards, but was to serve for only a short time.<sup>82</sup> On February 9, 1861, he received a telegraph from Governor Brown: "Come here by train starting tonight to be sworn in as Judge of the (U.S.) District Court. If you will accept, answer now." Edward replied: "Your dispatch received. As immediate answer is required, I decline your kind offer, but with many thanks." Two days later he wrote to Governor Brown explaining that the salary was inadequate.<sup>83</sup> He was also expecting to receive a commission to command a regiment from President Davis. This apparently never materialized.<sup>84</sup>

The first judge of the Confederate District Court of Georgia, Henry Jackson, resigned after only a few weeks to enter the army. The Bar of the state was generally united behind Judge Harden for the position. This information was sent to Secretary of State, Robert Toombs, with the request he present the appointing power.<sup>85</sup> Edward was appointed Judge of the District Court on August 12, 1861. According to the article in The Daily Morning News, he was a "sound jurist, liberal scholar, gentleman and true Southerner. He possessed all the requisites of character and attainment to fit him to fill the judgeship with honor to himself and satisfaction to his country."<sup>86</sup> For all his efforts as District Court Judge, his annual salary was only \$3500.00. For this reason, he often considered resigning.<sup>87</sup>

Judge Harden served in both the Northern District in Marietta, which met at the County Court House and the Southern District in Savannah, which met at the Customs House. Much of the business of the Confederate Court had to do with the Sequestration Act. Every country at war must have some method of reaching the property of their enemies within their territory. However, civilized countries wish to take care in this, just as Judge Harden did in guarding these rights. The case of "The Confederate States vs. Lawshe and Putrell" tried by Judge Harden illustrated this point well. The decision in this case was possibly his most carefully considered and his best legal work.<sup>88</sup> In his decision reasoned with much knowledge and learning, Judge Harden said, in part:

...two obvious considerations, as applicable to the American law would be presented: the first involving the power of the Congress to pass an Act of Sequestration... It will be seen that Congress has not only power

to grant letters of marque and reprisal, but also to make rules concerning captures on land and on water... Yet the very effect it must have in provoking hostilities shows that the war making power only has the right to authorize the capture... For all the purposes of this argument, it might be admitted that judges and publicists were not entirely agreed as to whether this right of capture flows from the law of nations, so called, or whether it appertains to that inherent political right which every nation possesses for itself to declare its own policy in dealings with the rest of the world... Nor is it necessary to examine minutely the ground on which rests the moral jurisdiction of the Confederate States in passing a Sequestration Act against the property of the citizens of the United States in retaliation as the Act says, for wrongs inflicted on our citizens by the Government and people of the United States, and as a departure from the usages of civilized warfare. Sitting as an interpreter of the Confederate Act, I cannot say its recitals are untrue; on the contrary, I am judicially to notice that the whole system of warfare, practiced against us by the Federal Government, is barbarious and shocking to a degree for which modern history exhibits no precedent. Against such a people anything not absolutely immoral in itself is perfectly justifiable... The point now at hand is not whether a judgement of Sequestration is or ought to be enforced but whether a judgement of Sequestration will protect the garnishee at the end of the war... In state of war, mistakes are made, or injustice is done to innocent parties, there is consolation in reflecting that, not only is the faith of the Confederacy pledged to that true and proper disposition of the sequestered fund but that its honor is involved in seeing that injustice be corrected... 89

One of the more important sequestration cases that was to have long range consequences for Judge Harden and also demonstrated his concern for justice was that of "The Confederate States of America vs. James M. Wayne". Justice Wayne did not resign his position with the United States Supreme Court when Georgia seceded from the Union. His Savannah property was confiscated by the Confederate Court since he was considered a foreign enemy. Judge Harden judged the case in such a way that the property was not actually confiscated, but was to be held by his son, General Henry C. Wayne, Adjutant General of Georgia and Confederate sympathizer until the

end of the war.<sup>90</sup>

The Civil War was devastating Savannah. By February, 1862, Fort Pulaski was surrounded by Federal Gunboats. During the next two months, both Union and Confederate troops fought to control the fort. On April 10, Union troops finally triumphed as their modern cannon nearly destroyed the fort that General Robert E. Lee had insisted was indestructible. The defeat of the Confederate troops at Pulaski brought disaster to Savannah. Once blockaded, Savannah quickly declined. Scarcity and inflation wreaked havoc upon the city. During the next three years, Savannahians gradually starved. Few Confederate troops remained to defend the city; its citizens realized they were being abandoned.<sup>91</sup>

General Sherman began his march across Georgia in the late summer of 1864. By December, Union troops were stationed on the outskirts of Savannah.<sup>92</sup> The few remaining military authorities decided to abandon the city so the city authorities could negotiate terms with Sherman that would be advantageous to the people. Once the leading citizens decided to surrender the city, William Harden helped in the evacuation. He was one of the last military personnel to leave the city. Judge Harden left Savannah with court officials shortly before the Confederate army departed. He had been notified by General McLaws that he had only a few days to gather the Court Records for removal to another city.<sup>93</sup> After the fall of Atlanta and Savannah, he held court in Macon and Augusta.<sup>94</sup> While holding Court in Augusta, his library was seized by the Union troops.<sup>95</sup>

At the close of the war, Judge Harden returned to Savannah where he was arrested by military authorities. They were ready to

send him to Fort Pulaski when a friend intervened to post bail. A bond with good security for the amount of \$100,000 was demanded. Friends prepared the bond and the names were signed, but several were refused the opportunity because there was simply no space left for additional signatures. When the bond was presented to the authorities, it represented an amount in excess of \$300,000.<sup>96</sup>

On May 29, 1865, President Johnson issued a Proclamation of Amnesty and Pardon to the citizens of the Confederate States, but the pardon excluded many groups of people including civil officers. For this reason, Judge Harden could not be pardoned under the proclamation. The end of the proclamation, however, provided, "that special application may be made to the President for pardon by any such person belonging to the excepted classes, and such clemency will be literally extended as may be consistent with the facts of the case and the peace and dignity of the United States."<sup>97</sup> Supreme Court Justice, James H. Wayne, of the sequestration trial, interceded with Washington officials on behalf of many ex-Confederates. Through Justice Wayne's efforts, Judge Harden was able to receive his pardon.<sup>98</sup>

After the war, the Hardens settled back into their routine as before the war. They resided temporarily in a house on Congress Street before moving into a house at 72 Taylor Street.<sup>99</sup> Judge Harden resumed his partnership with S.V. Levy and returned to the practice of law. In November 1866, he submitted the first motion made before Judge John Erskine who opened the First Circuit Court of the United States for the District of Georgia since the bench was vacated in 1861.<sup>100</sup> In July 1867, he argued a case for a Mrs. A.E. Cullen who was suing the city for \$2,000. Mrs. Cullen

had been walking through Market Street when she tripped over a hole, fell and broke her hip. She was awarded the \$2,000.<sup>101</sup>

In addition to his busy professional life, Judge Harden kept active in social and community affairs, especially those involving education. When Dr. Harvey Byrd founded the Oglethorpe Medical College in 1855, he insisted that Judge Harden accept the position of President of the Board of Trustees. In presenting diplomas to the first graduating class, he made a brief speech in Latin.<sup>102</sup> He delivered diplomas to the graduates again in 1859, 1860 and 1861.<sup>103</sup> The College ceased functioning during the war.<sup>104</sup> After the war, he was a member of the Board of Trustees at the Savannah Medical College from 1867-1872.<sup>105</sup>

Judge Harden was also involved in the development of public education in Savannah. In 1866, the state legislature passed an Enactment of Public Schools for Savannah. This act established a permanent Board of Education. Judge Harden was a charter member of the Board of Education.<sup>106</sup> However, at the first meeting he resigned, supposedly over his personal disappointment at not being elected President of the Board. He was succeeded by the Reverend Alexander M. Wynn.<sup>107</sup>

Among the institutions of higher education in Savannah, the Georgia Historical Society has been an important influence in literature and original research.<sup>108</sup> Edward became a member of the Society, and in 1850, and again in 1852, was elected Treasurer.<sup>109</sup> In 1866, he was elected Librarian.<sup>110</sup> The following year he was elected second Vice President.<sup>111</sup> In 1868, The Society elected him President, a position he kept until his death.<sup>112</sup> The Historical Society flourished under his leadership. By 1869

membership increased to over 200, and volumes numbered over 7500, many of them rare books.<sup>113</sup> He made General Robert E. Lee an honorary member in 1870.<sup>114</sup> In 1871, the Historical Society merged with the Savannah Library Association.<sup>115</sup> His most valuable contribution to the Society, however, was his production of the volume written by Mr. Antony Barclay on "Wilde's Summer Rose". He made a reproduction of the volume to gratify a new generation of readers. He wrote a Preface to the volume and it was dedicated to him as President of the Society. With his taste and scholarship, the Society secured a volume to be treasured.<sup>116</sup> In addition to this volume, he translated into accurate and eloquent English the sixty lines of the Latin Preface to Livy's History, with his characteristic care and neatness.<sup>117</sup> He was also a frequent contributor to various periodicals.<sup>118</sup>

On November 17, 1872, Judge Harden was attacked by a carbuncle on his neck, an extensive, deep seated, stubborn infection which causes pain, fever and malaise. It is usually staphylococcal in nature, with possible leukocytosis.<sup>119</sup> As there were no antibiotics, few surgical procedures and microscopic analysis were rare, there was little in the way of accurate diagnosis or treatment. He could have possibly been in the final stages of leukemia, or the infection could have spread to his heart or kidneys.<sup>120</sup> He was confined to his bed until March. Upon rising, he discovered that he lacked energy and his nervous system was shattered. Few of his friends recognized him.<sup>121</sup> On April 12, he traveled to Indian Springs, Georgia in search of health. He died there one week later on April 19, 1873.<sup>122</sup>

His funeral was held on April 20 at the First Presbyterian Church in Savannah.<sup>123</sup> A few weeks earlier, he had requested that Reverend D.H. Porter read "Psalm 90".<sup>124</sup> "Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to another... All our days have passed away in your indignation; we have spent our years like a sigh... Teach us to number our days aright that we may gain wisdom of heart..." And also from "I Corinthians 15": "...For since by a man came death, by a man also comes resurrection of the dead... For the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall rise incorruptible, and we shall be changed... O death, where is thy victory? O death where is thy sting?..."<sup>125</sup> Rev. Porter then spoke a few words of comfort. Judge Harden was then interred at Laurel Grove Cemetery, Lot 1261. A memorial plaque was erected by the members of the First Presbyterian Church in thanksgiving for Judge Harden's service to their church. It can still be seen at the present church building located on Washington Avenue.<sup>126</sup>

Edward Jenkins Harden accomplished much during his 59 years. He left behind a widow, 5 children and many friends. On May 4, Rev. Porter preached a memorial sermon. "... the will of God, the law of God, was the rule by which he conducted his life and molded his character, and the glory of God was the motive which prompted him to the service of his generation."<sup>128</sup>



## EPILOGUE

Several questions regarding Edward J. Harden remain unanswered. The subject of his role in the formation of Savannah Public Schools remains a mystery, not only to myself, but also to the secretary of the present School Board and a former superintendent of schools. Further inquiries at the School Board may provide some answers.

In the course of my research, I have consulted the Will Books in Chatham and Butts Counties, but to no avail. It seems unlikely that a lawyer would not leave a will. I could find no evidence that he owned property other than slaves, which also seems unlikely, but may explain the lack of a will.

Edward Harden's grandson noted that the family records—letters, diaries and other memorabilia were misplaced by a relative several years ago and have yet to be recovered. This loss in conjunction with the family papers burned during the Civil War may prevent many questions from ever being answered.

Another source of information that needs to be consulted is the Georgia Historical Society (when it reopens). Two other sources of information include:

Mrs. Richard (Alice) Harden  
5512 Chenault Avenue  
Orlando, FL 32809

Miss Tomlinson  
1890 Shadowlawn Street  
Jacksonville, FL 32205

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>The Georgia Historical Society, Proceedings, Resolutions, and Communications, Commemorative of the Honorable Edward J. Harden (Savannah, Ga.: The Morning News Office, 1873), p. 30.

<sup>2</sup>William Harden, A History of Savannah and South Georgia (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1913; reprint ed. Atlanta: Cherokee Publishing Co., 1981) p. 1085; Allen Candler and Clement Evans, ed. Cyclopedia of Georgia, v.2, (Atlanta: State Historical Association, 1906) p. 205, s.v.Harden, William

<sup>3</sup>William Harden, A History of Savannah and South Georgia (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1913; reprint ed. Atlanta: Cherokee Publishing Co., 1981) p. 1086-1087

<sup>4</sup>Robert Hanson Myers, The Children of Pride (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972) p. 1540

<sup>5</sup>William Harden, A History of Savannah and South Georgia (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1913; reprint ed. Atlanta: Cherokee Publishing Co., 1981) p. 1085

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