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## Book Review: The Allstons of Chicora Wood

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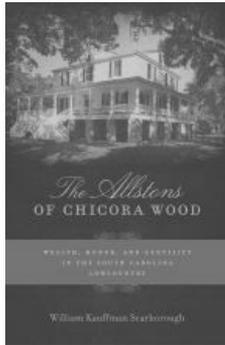
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Scarborough, William Kauffman. *The Allstons of Chicora Wood*. Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2011. 224 p. ISBN 9-780-8071-3843-4. \$35.00.

The *Allstons of Chicora Wood* by William Kauffman Scarborough is as he describes it “a family biography of one of the most influential families in the South Carolina Lowcountry, the Allstons of Chicora Wood”. The title of this book caught my attention because as the university librarian at Queens University of Charlotte, formerly Queens College of Charlotte, North Carolina, I have collected and preserved many documents about Chicora College (once located in South Carolina), which merged with Queens College in 1930. My hope in asking to preview and read Scarborough’s new book was that I might find more about Chicora College and the merger.

In great detail, author Scarborough chronicled the Allstons’ family history, tracing the planter family from Robert’s birth in 1801 to his death in 1865 and

beyond. Before the Civil War, Robert is shown as a brilliant, determined and highly successful planter, growing his lands and fortune to span seven rice plantations and building an exemplary twenty-eight year career as a state legislator and as governor of South Carolina from 1856 to 1858.

From the interestingly written biography of the Allstons, it was fascinating to learn of Robert’s wife, Adele Allston, who despite Robert’s death in 1864, triumphed in keeping the family plantations producing and sustaining of the family fortune. Following Adele’s example one of their children, Elizabeth “Bessie” Allston, cared for the plantations and the family business while distinguishing herself as a writer and giving readers insights into the life of a woman rice planter.

This entrancing and historical biography is a key reference for anyone studying and researching southern history, especially the South Carolina Lowcountry. The end notes are extensive and well organized for the history scholar.

Sad to say, I found no mention of a connection between Chicora Wood and Chicora College, yet in my additional reading, I ventured off into the Chicora Indians and also learned more about Chicora College from related research. The pleasure of a literature search brings many surprises but can also take the reader down unexpected trails.

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