



The Floridas In The Revolutionary Era

FLORIDA
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COVER

British East Florida reached from the St. Marys River on the north to the Apalachicola River on the west and its capital stood at St. Augustine. The province of West Florida extended westward to the Mississippi River and to the thirty-first parallel on the north (and after 1764 to thirty-two degrees twenty-eight minutes). Pensacola served as its capital.

Guillaume Delisle published his "Carte du Mexique et de la Floride des Terres Angloises et des Isles Antilles du Cours et des Environs de la Rivière de Mississippi," in his *Atlas Nouveau*, vol. 2, no. 29 (Amsterdam, 1741[?]). The map first appeared in Paris in 1703. This portion of the map is reproduced from a copy (1722 PKY 76) in the P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida, Gainesville.

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Table of Contents

BLACKS IN BRITISH EAST FLORIDA	<i>J. Leitch Wright, Jr.</i>	425
MERMAIDS RIDING ALLIGATORS: DIVIDED COMMAND ON THE SOUTHERN FRONTIER, 1776-1778	<i>W. Calvin Smith</i>	443
EAST FLORIDA AS A LOYALIST HAVEN	<i>Linda K. Williams</i>	465
THE EAST FLORIDA SOCIETY OF LONDON, 1766-1767	<i>George C. Rogers, Jr.</i>	479
GOVERNOR GEORGE JOHNSTONE OF BRITISH WEST FLORIDA	<i>R. F. A. Fabel</i>	497
BRIGADIER FREDERICK HALDIMAND— THE FLORIDA YEARS	<i>Robert R. Rea</i>	512
CAMPBELL TOWN: FRENCH HUGUENOTS IN BRITISH WEST FLORIDA	<i>J. Barton Starr</i>	532
CONTINUITY IN COMMERCE: DEVELOPMENT OF THE PANTON, LESLIE AND COMPANY TRADE MONOPOLY IN WEST FLORIDA	<i>Thomas D. Watson</i>	548

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The Floridas in the Revolutionary Era

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BLACKS IN BRITISH EAST FLORIDA

by J. LEITCH WRIGHT, JR.*

BLACKS BEGAN ARRIVING in Spanish Florida in the early sixteenth century soon after the appearance of Europeans, and from that point on they constituted a significant minority of the population, if not an absolute majority. During the British era, 1763-1784, blacks outnumbered whites. Except for rare instances, scholars interested in Negro history at any time during Florida's lengthy colonial era will search in vain for published books and articles.¹ A stroll 200 years ago through rice and indigo fields and through sugar houses of St. Johns River plantations or a visit to St. Augustine's public market on the plaza and to the slave auction block would provide much information no longer available. Knowledge which was commonplace two centuries ago has been lost. Contemporary historians must utilize the few sources available, and be conscious that, if they are lucky, they may at least see the tip of the iceberg.

It is risky even to speculate concerning what language most East Florida blacks spoke. Qua appeared briefly in 1777 just before he was executed, and at least, his name is recorded for posterity— which is itself a rarity. But even this fragment is meaningful. Africans named their children for the days of the week. "Qua" represented a male child who had been born on Thursday. Considering the African origins of the few other known East Florida slave names, and taking into account the large scale pre-Revolutionary slave importations into all southern colonies di-

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1. Those few authors who have made studies of blacks in colonial Florida are: I. A. [Irene Aloha] Wright, ed., "Dispatches of Spanish Officials Bearing on the Free Negro Settlement of Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose, Florida," *Journal of Negro History*, IX (April 1924), 144-95; Kenneth W. Porter, in his articles "Negroes and the East Florida Annexation Plot, 1811-1813," *Journal of Negro History*, XXX (January 1945), 9-29, and "Negroes and the Seminole War, 1817-1818," *Journal of Negro History*, XXXVI (July 1951), 249-80; and John J. TePaske, "The Fugitive Slave: Intercolonial Rivalry and Spanish Slave Policy, 1687-1764," in Samuel Proctor, ed., *Eighteenth-Century Florida and Its Borderlands* (Gainesville, 1975), 1-12.

rect from Africa, suggest that Qua was a typical East Florida Negro. Presumably he had been born in West Africa, retained a knowledge of his African tongue and culture, but had been forced to develop a pidgin in order to communicate with whites and fellow blacks alike.² The small number of surviving runaway slave notices also shed some light on language, but in no way can these few advertisements be considered a broad statistical sample. Relying on such notices as are available, runaways seemed to be young mulattoes able to speak both French and English.³

The problem of language is closely associated with where blacks were born and where they lived before arriving in East Florida. One can consider three major origins: Africa, the West Indies, and the other southern colonies. Though most native Africans presumably came from West Africa, this vast area encompassed many different peoples and cultures. Some, and probably a considerable number of blacks imported into East Florida, came from Jamaica in the West Indies. But where did the blacks described in the runaway notices learn to speak French? Guadeloupe, Martinique and especially Saint Domingue (Haiti) come to mind.⁴ East Florida planters such as John Moultrie, master of Bella Vista, had moved into the new province from South Carolina. He had brought slaves with him, but the percentage of his slaves— numbering 180 at the end of the Revolution — which had been born in America and were acculturated and the number who were recent arrivals from Africa is unknown.⁵

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2. General acc't. of contingent expenses, East Florida, June 25, 1777-June 24, 1778, Great Britain, Public Record Office, Colonial Office 5/559. Hereinafter cited as CO. J. L. [Joey Lee] Dillard, *Black English: Its History and Usage in the United States* (New York, 1972), 124. Approximately one-half of the fifty names which I was able to discover were clearly of African origin. This, along with the importation of slaves direct from Africa to East Florida and to adjoining colonies by Richard Oswald, Henry Laurens, and similar merchants, helps demonstrate the strength of the African culture in British East Florida.
 3. *Georgia Gazette*, November 15, 1775; *Royal Georgia Gazette*, January 18, March 8, 1781.
 4. Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison, 1969), 75-84.
 5. Memorial of John Moultrie, London, March 24, 1787, Great Britain, Public Record Office, Audit Office 12/3. Hereinafter cited as AO. Most, but not all, of the East Florida loyalist claims are reproduced in Wilbur Henry Siebert, ed., *Loyalists in East Florida, 1774 to 1785: The Most Important Documents Pertaining Thereto, Edited with an Accompanying Narrative*, 2 vols. (DeLand, 1929), II.

There is another possible source of French-speaking slaves. During the Revolution French prizes were brought to St. Augustine, where at least some crewmen exchanged a French for a British master.

Yet after all these considerations the original uncertainty about the dominant language of blacks remains. A visitor to East Florida's slave quarters during the American Revolution might have heard English, French, Mandingo, Fulani, Hausa, and Mende, among other languages. In the Indian country there were black Hitchiti and Muskogee speakers. A pidgin, such as Gullah, was emerging and presumably was spoken with varying degrees of proficiency by a majority of East Florida blacks. Regardless of which were the most important languages, at least some blacks, simultaneously thrust into several cultures, became exceptional linguists. Whites employed them in their dealings with other Negroes and with Indians.

Despite the dearth of shipping and plantation records, more is known about the aggregate number of blacks in Florida. There were just over 2,000 Negroes in 1775, and by the end of the Revolution that number had increased to nearly 10,000. Throughout the British period blacks outnumbered whites approximately two to one.⁶ This ratio was higher than in other southern colonies but considerably lower than the ratio in the British West Indies. In Jamaica there were at least fifteen blacks for every white.⁷ In many respects, including a black majority and numerous absentee planters, East Florida had much in common with the British West Indies.

Population statistics reveal that there were few white yeomen farmers in East Florida. Whites were overseers, civil officials, in the military, or artisans and merchants who catered to their needs. Except for overseers they typically lived in or close by St. Augustine. The largest body of whites were the Minorcan, Greek, and Italian indentured servants at New Smyrna, but this settlement failed early in the Revolution, and the survivors moved to

6. Charles Loch Mowat, *East Florida as a British Province, 1763-1784* (Berkeley, 1943; facsimile edition, Gainesville, 1964), 137; J. Leitch Wright, Jr., *Florida in the American Revolution* (Gainesville, 1975), 13. Population figures are the best estimates available, though they do not include blacks living among the Indians.

7. Alan Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, rev. 2nd ed. (New York, 1965), 511.

St. Augustine. East Florida produced and exported indigo, sugar, rice, timber, naval stores, and barrel staves, and most of these commodities were grown or manufactured on St. Marys and St. Johns river plantations worked by slaves. One reason so little is known about Florida blacks is because little is known about the British plantation system. Surviving records would allow an enterprising scholar to locate those plantations which existed for some period and to discover more about the crops grown. This basic study has not yet been made, and more is known about plantations which failed than about those which did not.⁸

Some large plantations existed for many years. Governor James Grant, East Florida's first governor, left the province in 1771. He employed an overseer to supervise his sizable holdings, and he did not dispose of his numerous slaves until 1784.⁹ The Scottish planter-merchant, Richard Oswald, who helped negotiate the 1783 peace treaty, owned two large East Florida plantations. In 1779 he moved over 100 slaves to his property in Georgia where royal authority had been reestablished, and near the end of the Revolution he returned 170 to Mount Oswald on the Tomoka River.¹⁰ Henry Strachey, an absentee planter who also helped negotiate the 1783 peace, operated his East Florida plantation during the war through an overseer.¹¹ For seventeen years Robert Bisset and his son managed several plantations on the Hillsborough River employing more than 100 slaves.¹² Taking time out from feuding with his political opponents, Governor Patrick Tonyn periodically inspected his plantation on the St. Johns River.¹³ Books have been written about the Minorcans and

8. Three separate books by Epaminondes P. Panagopoulos, Carita Doggett Corse, and Jane Quinn have been written about New Smyrna which survived for a decade. There are no published works about the respectable number of other plantations employing 50 to 200 slaves which lasted much longer. See E. [Epaminondes] P. Panagopoulos, *New Smyrna: An Eighteenth Century Greek Odyssey* (Gainesville, 1966); Carita Doggett [Corse], *Dr. Andrew Turnbull and the New Smyrna Colony of Florida* (n.p., 1919); Jane Quinn, *Minorcans in Florida: Their History and Heritage* (St. Augustine, 1975).

9. Patrick Tonyn to Strachey, St. Augustine, December 7, 1784, Henry Strachey Letters, Bancroft Collection, New York Public Library; New York City.

10. Memorial of Mary Oswald, November 11, 1786, AO 12/3.

11. Strachey to Tonyn, London, March 31, 1783, CO 5/560.

12. Memorial of Robert Bisset, London, March 27, 1787, AO 12/3.

13. J. Leitch Wright, Jr., *British St. Augustine* (St. Augustine, 1975), 15, 17, 39.

other white indentured servants who settled in New Smyrna and about the approximately 500 who survived and in 1777 fled to St. Augustine.

Little is known of the blacks at New Smyrna except that 500 shipped over from Africa were drowned just off the Florida coast and that crews from Spanish privateers occasionally landed and spirited away slaves.¹⁴ There is an absence of data on the plantations of Grant, Oswald, Strachey, Bisset, Tonym, and others who employed 100 or more slaves.

Claims submitted by loyalists after the Revolution to secure compensation for their losses provide the best glimpse of life on an East Florida plantation. These documents reveal that slaves were used extensively in establishing the new British colony to build planters' and overseers' houses, Negro huts, kitchens, barns, fences, and to clear land. Two male field hands were expected to clear one acre every three weeks. Black artisans were in great demand. Perhaps twenty per cent of the slaves were skilled coopers, sawyers, squarers, carpenters, shipwrights, tar burners, and carters, and at times both skilled and unskilled slaves were hired out. Skilled male slaves were valued at between sixty and 100 pounds. Slaves worked in rice, indigo, and sugar cane fields, and operated sugar houses, indigo vats, and rice machines to prepare these crops for export. They boxed many thousands of pine trees to collect turpentine, and upon occasion they picked sweet and sour oranges and prepared juice for sale. Royal bounties for the production of naval stores and indigo served as a stimulus.¹⁵

Typical plantations employed from seventy to over 200 slaves. They lived in small wooden "Negro houses" holding three to four persons each clustered in a village. The overseer's residence was nearby. Though villages frequently had a common kitchen, it is not clear whether it was essentially an African or European one and whether food was prepared in the African, European, or New World style. Better quarters had built-in wooden beds. After the British period Florida slave houses sometimes were constructed of tabby, but archeologists will have to verify if any were built with this material during the British regime.¹⁶ Based on a few

14. Panagopoulos, *New Smyrna*, 58; memorial of Robert Bisset, London, March 27, 1787, AO 12/3.

15. This information is based primarily though not exclusively on the loyalist claims published in Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, II.

16. Charles H. Fairbanks, "The Kingsley Slave Cabins in Duval County,

available samples, fifty-seven per cent of the slaves were male and forty-three per cent, female.¹⁷ Because the colony had so recently been acquired by Britain, and because of wartime disruptions, Negro villages never assumed the stability and permanence of those in the West Indies where many black communities became almost a state within a state.

It is an understatement to assert that little is known about plantation slaves in British East Florida, but relatively speaking a veritable cornucopia of documentation survives as compared to sources about blacks in the Indian country. Blacks had lived among the Indians for many decades—probably well over two centuries—before 1763. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries Carolinians had engaged in a brisk trade in Indian slaves. As a result southern blacks and Indians had labored side by side, intermarried, and sometimes had escaped together to the Indian country. During the Revolution David Black was reimbursed £20 for bringing fugitive Negroes back to St. Augustine.¹⁸ One can only speculate whether the Negroes in question had fled from some harsh East Florida overseer or were homesick and were returning if not to a *zambo* mother at least to *zambo* relatives.

Blacks in the Indian country were either slave or free and lived in separate communities or intimately among the Indians. Two loosely-structured factions seemed to have been evolving: a maroon society and another composed of recent fugitive plantation slaves. Maroons presumably had established themselves at an early date in separate communities and retained much of their African heritage, including agricultural techniques. They adopted some of the Indian culture and perhaps rendered the natives food in return for protection. Because of their superior knowledge of husbandry and ability as interpreters, maroons may have been a far more dominant force in the Indian country than has been generally realized. Maroons partially emerged from their obscurity in the nineteenth century during the course of the

Florida, 1968," *Conference on Historic Site Archeology Papers*, VII (1972), part 1, 62-93.

17. Memorial of John Graham, November 23, 1786, AO 12/3; memorial of Denys Rolle, September 10, 1783, Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, II, 291.

18. General account of contingent expenses, CO 5/559, 66.

Seminole wars. The other group of blacks among the Indians were recent runaways, at least some of whom were looked down upon and enslaved by Indians and maroons alike. *Zambos* were likely to adopt the culture of their mothers and count themselves as either blacks or Indians.¹⁹

In 1778 John Stuart, Britain's southern Indian superintendent, ordered Moses Kirkland, Seminole Indian agent, into the Indian country to help organize the Indians for the forthcoming campaign. Stuart assured Kirkland that Bully and the Black Factor, who lived near the forks of the Apalachicola River, would furnish horses.²⁰ At once one wonders about the origins of Black Factor's name. Was it on account of his pigmentation or for some other cause? Along the southern frontier blacks had been employed at cow pens, horse pens, and in various aspects of the Indian trade. Black Factor may have been a mulatto—possibly one of the numerous progeny of the Georgia Indian trader George Galphin—who for some time had raised horses and cattle and had been an enterprising merchant and land speculator.²¹ Much of this is conjecture, as are Bully's racial origins and the number of other "black factors," if any, among the Indians.

East Florida had no formal slave code until 1782, but through custom and statutes the lives of slaves were regulated in detail. Blacks were outright chattels, and every Negro and mulatto who clearly could not demonstrate that he was free was deemed a slave. When Qua was publicly executed for robbery in St. Augustine, assessors estimated his value, and the state reimbursed his owner for his property loss.²² Slaves in and around St. Augustine had their own garden plots and legally could sell their vegetables, fish, etc. only at stalls in the public market. Thirty-nine lashes

19. The best accounts concerning blacks among the southern Indians in the early nineteenth century are Roderick Brumbaugh, "Black Maroons in Florida, 1800-1830," unpublished paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians, Boston, 1975; Kenneth Wiggins Porter, *The Negro on the American Frontier* (New York, 1971), 182-358. These two scholars, however, do not concern themselves with British Florida.

20. John Stuart to Moses Kirkland, Pensacola, January 30, 1778, AO 13/36A. Bully was also known as Buly or Birl.

21. Tonym to Stuart, September 8, 1778, CO 5/558.

22. General account of contingent expenses, East Florida, June 25, 1777-June 24, 1778, CO 5/559.

were to be meted out to violators and also to blacks who congregated and danced after 10:00 P.M.²³

One searches almost in vain to know what blacks thought about the growing crisis between the American colonies and the mother country concerning taxation and parliamentary sovereignty. Probably these issues, so crucial for white American Whigs, had a low priority among East Florida blacks. Nevertheless, from the very beginning the war was brought home poignantly to East Florida Negroes, and they could not ignore that conflict regardless of what they thought of it.

In 1776, 1777, and again in 1778 Georgians stormed across the St. Marys River in unsuccessful efforts to capture St. Augustine. Exposed plantations on the St. Marys River and Amelia Island were ravaged. Floridians rushed their slaves toward St. Augustine for security, while Georgians captured others and whisked them away to the north. Jermyn Wright hurried his Negroes southward from his several plantations on the St. Marys River. In the ensuing weeks twenty-four slaves roaming about the woods with little to eat died of starvation.²⁴ After Spain came into the war in 1779 crews from her privateers landed above and below St. Augustine and carried off slaves.²⁵ Near the end of the Revolution Elias Ball from South Carolina brought 175 Negroes into East Florida and within one month alone over thirty died.²⁶ These mortality figures help justify the assumption that East Florida was like Jamaica and that the local slave population did not sustain itself in wartime, nor probably at any period.

But one merely has to look at the military sick list in East Florida or at the hundreds of Minorcan deaths at New Smyrna to realize that whites as well as blacks died at an alarming rate in British East Florida. In fact, the "sickle-cell trait," threatening twentieth century black children with anemia, gave Negroes in the eighteenth century a relative advantage over white indentured servants by affording more immunity against malaria.

Despite a high death rate, the scarcity of females, and wartime disruptions, the Negro population in East Florida almost quintupled during the Revolution. This was not due to any ad-

23. *East Florida Gazette*, February 22, 1783.

24. Jermyn and Charles Wright to Lord George Germain, n.d., CO 5/116.

25. Memorial of Bisset, March 27, 1787, AO 12/3.

26. Memorial of Elias Ball, London, August 1, 1784, AO 12/3.

vantages of the "sickle cell trait" nor natural increase, but because of war time immigration. William Panton, a Georgia exile and, Indian trader, Jermyn and Charles Wright, brothers of Georgia's last royal governor, James Spalding from St. Simons Island, and many other Georgians and Carolinians fled to East Florida with their slaves during the early years of the Revolution. Their blacks were immediately set to work building Negro houses, growing indigo, rice, and sugar cane, producing naval stores, and packing deerskins for export. Whether blacks also continued to reach East Florida from the West Indies and Africa in appreciable numbers is uncertain.

One new source of slaves was from the sale of Negroes captured aboard ships flying the United States, French, or Spanish flags. St. Augustine had an admiralty court, for long periods the only one in the South, and condemned slaves were routinely auctioned off in the East Florida capital.²⁷ If any of the admiralty court records ever turn up it may be possible to estimate the numbers and to learn details about the background of the blacks involved and exactly where and how the auction was conducted.

Immediately after the fighting at Lexington and Concord broke out, East Florida lay exposed. Less than 100 untrained militia, neighboring Indians of unpredictable reliability, and a royal navy sloop or two represented the total available force. Minorcans comprised the largest single group of potential white militiamen. But they were Catholics, and it was unclear, particularly after France and Spain came into the war, on whose side they would fight. This made East Florida authorities more aware than ever that blacks were in the majority and that if the province was to be defended Negroes must assist.

One obvious way was by laboring on fortifications. In the neighboring southern colonies pre-Revolutionary laws had stipulated that all able-bodied male slaves between sixteen and sixty years of age must be listed with a local officer. In an emergency they could be called up for service. Owners were paid one shilling a day per slave or were relieved from having to provide labor for construction of public roads.²⁸ East Florida had no militia law

27. East Florida Commons House Journal, St. Augustine, July 20, 1781, CO 5/572.

28. An act for repairing and rebuilding the forts, June 4, 1760, in Allen D. Candler, comp. and ed., *The Colonial Records of the State of Georgia*, 26 vols. (Atlanta, 1904-1916), XVIII, 433-34.

or Negro law until 1781. But even at the beginning of the Revolution it is clear that the governor and council and sometimes individual planters made slaves available to help construct provincial defenses as had been customary in other colonies during the colonial period. The earthen walls surrounding St. Augustine, the parallel lines north of the town, the powder magazine, the redoubts on the St. Johns River, and Fort Tonyn on the St. Marys in part were all constructed by slave labor. Square, wooden Fort Tonyn mounting swivel guns was thrown up in a rush in 1775-1776. Considering the paucity of regular soldiers and militia alike, it is reasonable to assume that blacks provided much of the labor. Tory planters on the exposed St. Marys River likely volunteered their slaves with gusto and did not quibble about prompt reimbursement.

In 1775 white Floridians assumed not only that slaves should be impressed to labor on fortifications but also that if need be they should be armed and employed as ordinary soldiers. Considering the debates during the 1860s in Jefferson Davis's cabinet over arming slaves and the fact that not until a month before Appomattox did the Confederacy agree to enlist slaves as regular soldiers, East Florida's willingness to employ black soldiers at the outset of the Revolution appears surprising. But East Florida's conduct was unique only if it were compared with Confederate policies almost a century later and not with those of Britain's North American colonies earlier in the eighteenth century. South Carolina in the first part of that century had used blacks to fight Indians and Spaniards alike. After slavery became legal in the 1750s, Georgia made provisions for arming slaves in an emergency.²⁹ Florida planters, who frequently had come from South Carolina and Georgia, instinctively looked to slaves for assistance when rebels threatened their property. It would have been strange if Jermyn Wright on the St. Marys River and Lord Egmont's overseer on Amelia Island had not done what limited sources indicate other Florida planters did in similar emergencies: i.e. arm and train slaves to defend their lands.³⁰ At an early date

29. Militia Act, January 24, 1755, *ibid.*, 38-44; Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority, Negroes in Colonial South Carolina, From 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York, 1974), 126-29.

30. When the Americans invaded West Florida Adam Chrystie armed and uniformed twenty-two of his slaves. Memorial of Adam Chrystie, Suffolk St., March 4, 1784, AO 13/99.

blacks enlisted in the East Florida Rangers and helped garrison Fort Tonyn and protect the St. Marys frontier.³¹ When in 1779 Colonel Lewis Fuser counted the number of regular and militia soldiers available to defend the province he found that over one-seventh of the total were black.³²

In 1781 East Florida's first assembly finally met and passed a militia act which generally duplicated earlier militia laws in other American colonies. An unlimited number of slaves could be drafted and used as a labor force or soldiers. Militia captains were to be furnished lists of all able-bodied slaves in their districts, and recalcitrant plantation managers were to be fined fifty pounds. Slave owners received one pound monthly for impressed slaves. For breaches of military discipline slaves were to be whipped rather than fined like their white contemporaries, though for sleeping on duty or betraying the password blacks were treated equally with whites: both were to be executed. For acts of bravery slaves were to be awarded clothing, money, medals, and some relief from service.³³

Except for provisions authorizing enlisting an unlimited number of slaves and for making no specific mention of freeing slaves who performed outstanding acts of bravery, the East Florida militia act contained no unusual features and merely copied earlier codes of Georgia and South Carolina. When East Florida had refused to revolt in 1775, it had followed precedents, because loyalty to the mother country was the colonial norm. It was the thirteen colonies who, by rebelling, had broken with tradition, and it was these same colonies, i.e. Georgia, the Carolinas, and Virginia, who had departed from colonial custom during the Revolution by refusing to arm slaves to any significant degree. The Revolution held many paradoxes. One was that the southern states for the first time considered it dangerous ever to trust slaves with arms. This was another step in dehumanizing the institution of slavery and depriving blacks of a measure of dignity and independence. It was almost inevitable that blacks and whites, fighting side by side against a determined enemy,

31. East Florida council minutes, February 2, 1776, CO 5/571.

32. Lewis Fuser to Henry Clinton, September 11 to October 6, 1779, Sir Henry Clinton Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

33. An act for the establishment and regulation of the militia of this province, St. Augustine, June 7, 1781, CO 5/624.

must have accorded one another a measure of respect. East Florida blacks, fighting for the white man's liberty, despite the omission of a specific provision in the militia act, in a variety of ways had the opportunity of winning their own freedom.

With neighboring Georgia again under royal control in 1779, with the arrival of many loyalist refugees in East Florida, and with the crushing or expulsion of his most vocal political opponents, Governor Patrick Tonyn assumed that it was safe to hold elections for a representative assembly. It, along with the appointed council (the upper house) and the governor, would share authority. The first assembly was seated in the St. Augustine state house in March 1781, and it met intermittently until the end of 1783. The assembly concerned itself with a multitude of routine affairs— regulating markets and public houses, licensing pilots, building roads, collecting small debts, along with framing a militia law and a law authorizing the governor to impress slaves to work on fortifications. But drawing up a slave code took more time and engendered more controversy than any other issue. Governor Tonyn in a huff even dissolved the assembly in November 1781 on account of this quarrel.

Two centuries later this controversy seems puzzling, because in most respects East Florida's slave code was similar to South Carolina's and Georgia's. It provided that all Negroes, mulattos, and mestizos who could not prove they were free were to be regarded as slaves. Children followed the status of their mother. Negroes and mulattos who were not slaves were to wear a silver armband engraved with "free." Slaves needed a ticket from their master to be absent from the plantation or to carry a firearm in peace time, and masters were to be fined for cruelty to slaves. Authorities compensated any owner of a slave who was legally executed. Companion laws provided for white patrols to keep slaves in check.

The East Florida slave code differed from all others in North America concerning trials of slaves in capital offenses. In the other colonies an accused slave customarily could be tried by two justices of the peace and several local freeholders. They were to meet no later than three days after the commission of the felony, and they had the authority to impose the death sentence and to require that it be swiftly carried out. Based on their knowledge of practices in neighboring colonies, East Florida council members

argued that there was no assurance that justices of the peace or freeholders would know much about the law, that torture might be used, and that there was a serious risk of miscarriage of justice. The council demanded that in capital cases the accused slave be brought to St. Augustine and tried before a twelve-man white jury. The presiding judge could properly instruct the jury, and the defendant would be afforded more, but not all, of the protections under the English law.

Members of the lower house, a majority of whom were slave-owners, retorted this was unjust and that nowhere else on the American mainland were slaves afforded such guarantees. Assemblymen complained that the accused, representing a valuable investment, might spend six months or more in jail and that witnesses must make a costly trip to St. Augustine to testify. Whether they were white overseers or Negro slaves, the witnesses would not be able to work for long periods. Moreover, assemblymen charged such a lenient slave code would discourage loyalist slave-owning planters from immigrating into the province and might prod those already in the colony to leave.³⁴

But members of the council were also slave owners, and it is confusing to explain their stance. Few possessed more Negroes than John Moultrie, president of the council and master of Bella Vista on the Matanzas River. The Reverend John Forbes, councilman since 1765, owned fifty-nine slaves, and councilmen Henry Yonge, James Hume, and John Holmes each owned considerably more.³⁵ All of them would be equally inconvenienced and would suffer financially if slave trials were conducted in St. Augustine. Thomas Brown, colonel of the East Florida Rangers and a slave-owning refugee who joined the council in 1778, might have been the one who suggested that a lenient slave code would help make blacks in his rangers and in the provincial militia more reliable.

There are a number of possible motives to justify the council's action. When the council criticized the assembly's slave code and charged that swift executions and the possible use of torture

34. East Florida assembly minutes, July 25, 1781, CO 5/572; East Florida council minutes, July 27, 1781, CO 5/572.

35. Memorial of John Murray in behalf of Dorothy Forbes, London, December 15, 1786, Great Britain, Public Record Office, Treasury 77/6. The totals of Yonge's, Hume's, and Holmes's slaves are based primarily but not exclusively on documents in Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, II.

smacked of Turkish despotism, it may have been thinking less of unfortunate blacks and more of Andrew Turnbull, the proprietor of New Smyrna, and his supporters in the lower house. Turnbull, whose wife was from Turkey, was a leader of the political faction opposed to most if not all council members. Moultrie, Forbes, Yonge, and other councilmen, including Governor Tonyn who agreed with them also must have taken satisfaction in trying to make East Florida's slave code the most humane in America and contrasting it to the thirteen colonies where "liberty" was supposed to be flourishing. Throughout the Revolution Tories delighted in denouncing Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry for mouthing liberty while practicing the vilest slavery.

Probably the best explanation of the council's action is that its members were influenced by the growing British abolitionist movement. Slavery had been abolished in the mother country in 1772. Councilman John Forbes had been sent over to East Florida by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts which had something of an anti-slavery tradition. Thomas Brown, who had led black and white soldiers into battle, may have assumed that justice demanded that black soldiers should have the same status as whites not only when bullets were flying but also in peacetime.

Confronted by opposition of the assembly which refused to make any appropriations until the council altered its position and encouraged by authorities in London to become conciliatory, the upper house made concessions. Local justices of the peace and freeholders could still try and convict offenders promptly, but trial proceedings had to be reviewed by the governor and capital punishment administered in St. Augustine.³⁶

Near the end of the Revolution East Florida authorities made provisions for building a workhouse. Its primary function was to serve as a jail for fugitive slaves and for itinerant blacks of questionable legal status. Slaves were to be kept in the workhouse until redeemed by their masters; in the interim they labored to help pay for their keep. Whites, such as runaway indentured servants, may also have been assigned to the workhouse. Because East Florida's workhouse was built so late, most fugitive slaves

36. An act for the better government and regulation of Negroes and other slaves in this province, St. Augustine, May 31, 1782, CO 5/624.

were incarcerated in St. Augustine's jail on the plaza or elsewhere.³⁷

East Florida's black religious and medical practices are little understood partly because it is not certain whether Florida blacks were recent arrivals from Africa or had been in the New World for some time. If they had been born in North America, at least a veneer of Christianity represented part of the acculturation. But whether Christ or obeah-men had the greatest influence or whether the white master or the black medicine man treated sick Negroes is unclear. The few surviving records of the Anglican church do not indicate that Anglican ministers overly concerned themselves with black salvation. In fairness to ministers of the Society for the Gospel in Foreign Parts it must be recognized that this missionary arm of the Church of England was overtaxed in East Florida. The needs of white civilians and the garrison were barely attended to, and the Reverend John Forbes, a member of the council, judge of the vice-admiralty court and the court of common law, acting chief justice, and a large planter, had little free time. Anglican priests served as schoolmasters, though there is no record of their ever teaching a black pupil.³⁸

At the end of the Revolution the German traveller Johann D. Schoepf visited St. Augustine and discovered a black Baptist minister preaching to a Negro congregation in a cabin outside town.³⁹ The only fact known about this minister is that he had to be one of the first of his kind in North America. Just before the Revolution Baptists had made numerous converts among Southerners, black and white alike. Negro Baptist churches at Savannah, Georgia, Silver Bluff, South Carolina, and at Williamsburg, Virginia, were all founded in the mid-1770s.⁴⁰ Two questions come to mind in connection with the St. Augustine Baptist preacher. Had he established his church in East Florida soon after the British arrived in 1763, or was he a South Carolina or Georgia exile who arrived in the province with thousands of loyalists in 1782-1785? The other unanswered puzzle is was the Baptist con-

37. Act for granting to the crown £3000 in aid of the support of the government of East Florida, CO 5/624.

38. Wright, *Florida in the American Revolution*, 100, 101.

39. Johann David Schoepf, *Travels in the Confederation, [1783-1784]*, transl. and ed. by Alfred J. Morrison, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1911), II, 230.

40. Walter H. Brooks, "The Evolution of the Negro Baptist Church," *Journal of Negro History*, VII (January 1922), 15-16.

gregation typical and were most East Florida blacks if not Baptists at least Christians? This again raises the fundamental issue of language and culture. Were East Florida blacks essentially transplanted Africans or acculturated Americans?

East Florida's Negro population spurted at the end of the Revolution after Britain evacuated Charleston and Savannah. In 1782 and 1783 ships laden with 100 to 300 Negroes each brought approximately 8,300 blacks into the province, a figure almost three times larger than the entire pre-war population, black and white combined.⁴¹ The status of many of these blacks in East Florida was confused, though there was no doubt about their condition as far as South Carolina and Georgia Whig plantation owners were concerned. They charged that the departing British had spirited away thousands of Whig-owned slaves in violation of the peace treaty and basic justice. But it was not that simple, because British commanders had promised freedom to southern blacks who deserted their rebel masters and came into British lines to serve George III.⁴² Thousands who had accepted the British offer regarded themselves as free and assumed they had won their liberty at the same time United States republicans had received theirs. Georgians and South Carolinians visited St. Augustine at the end of the Revolution to recover their property but with little success. East Floridians refused to return hardly any blacks partly as a matter of honor—because many slaves had been promised their freedom—and partly out of spite. Southern Whigs had confiscated large amounts of loyalist property, and East Florida loyalists reciprocated by ensuring that few blacks ever returned to Whig owners.⁴³

The 1783 peace treaty stipulated that East Florida must be handed over to Spain, and this brought to the forefront the future of East Florida's 11,000 blacks. A majority left, and one can follow the broad pattern of the evacuation. The largest single group went to the neighboring Bahama Islands. Benjamin West, an American expatriate artist in London, painted the *Reception*

41. Mowat, *East Florida*, 137.

42. Alexander Leslie to Carleton, Charleston, June 27, 1782, Great Britain, Public Record Office, Sir Guy Carleton (Dorchester) Papers, 4916, microfilm copies in Robert Manning Strozier Library, Florida State University, Tallahassee.

43. James Clitherall to John Cruden, St. Augustine, May 25, 1783, *ibid.*, 7766.

of the *American Loyalists by Great Britain in 1783*.⁴⁴ Some of his figures were black, and it is safe to assume that at least a few East Florida Negroes ended up in the mother country. Whatever their previous status, they were definitely free after reaching Britain because of Parliament's abolition of slavery in 1772. That Florida masters could not retire with their slave property to the mother country's free soil posed a dilemma for some white loyalists. Other blacks, as slaves, freemen, and indentured servants, went to Nova Scotia, Jamaica, St. Lucia, and the Mosquito Shore in Central America.⁴⁵ At least some East Florida blacks who were sailors spent years at sea with no place to call home. A considerable number of Negroes and whites remained in East Florida after the Spaniards returned in 1784. John Leslie and Francis Philip Fatio both stayed, cooperated with the Spaniards, and employed blacks in their St. Augustine houses, on their plantations, and in their trading stores. An undetermined number of blacks fled into the Indian country— sometimes on the same day their surprised white masters sailed away— and the percentage of black "Seminoles" increased in the wake of the Revolution.⁴⁶ The fate of St. Augustine's black Baptist minister is unknown, though one might speculate that he moved to Jamaica or the Bahamas like Baptist ministers George Liele and Brother Amos who evacuated Georgia.⁴⁷

One can hope that in the Bahamas, in musty attics or in public archives, papers have been preserved which will illuminate the black experience in British East Florida. Perhaps buried in some Scottish castle or manor house are plantation records and personal correspondence which will better disclose the rhythm of life on an East Florida plantation and tell more about the culture of East Florida blacks. The potential of oral history cannot be overlooked. Among black "Indians" in Florida and Oklahoma, black Bahamians, blacks in Nova Scotia (or Sierra Leone where many subsequently moved), or in black communities in scattered

44. Hugh E. Egerton, ed., *The Royal Commission on the Losses and Services of American Loyalists 1783-1785* (Oxford, 1915), reproduces this picture in the frontispiece.

45. The standard account of the loyalist evacuation of East Florida is Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, I, 137-79.

46. Porter, "Negroes and the Seminole War, 1817-1818," 251-52.

47. "An account of Several Baptist Churches, Consisting Chiefly of Negro Slaves: Particularly of One at Kingston, in Jamaica: and Another at Savannah in Georgia," *Journal of Negro History*, I (January 1916), 70-73.

port cities there may be oral accounts of how their ancestors labored and fought for George III in East Florida.⁴⁸ From widely scattered written sources, oral traditions, linguistic studies, and archeological investigations scholars in time may discover more about those Floridians who during the American Revolution comprised a majority of the population. Whenever the story of blacks in British East Florida is fully told— and of Spanish Florida as well— it is likely to be an interesting one that will illuminate not only the history of colonial Florida but of the entire Southeast.

48. Alex Haley is an example of a writer who has utilized oral tradition in his unique forthcoming work, *Roots*.

MERMAIDS RIDING ALLIGATORS: DIVIDED COMMAND ON THE SOUTHERN FRONTIER, 1776-1778

by W. CALVIN SMITH*

GEORGE CLEMENCEAU'S oft-quoted remark that war was too important a matter to entrust to the military simply put into words a thought prevalent in the western civil mind at least since the days of the Roman Republic. The obverse, that politics is too vital a business to be left to politicians, is equally true in the western military mind but less-often spoken.¹ For a general to utter these words would bring immediate accusations of a "Caesar-complex" or worse. That twentieth-century playwrights would permit such a statement only from a power-mad, insanely-obsessed general, such as Jack Ripper in the production, *Dr. Strangelove*, testifies to the above circumstance.

Nowhere in western society were such beliefs more actualized than in British constitutionalism of the eighteenth century. A good deal of political philosophy on both sides of the "British Lake," i.e. Atlantic Ocean, condemned standing armies and the union of civil and military authority. To the Anglo mind, military subordination to civilian control had become a *sine qua non* of personal freedom and liberty in a properly governed state. Building upon an image of an Anglo-Saxon utopia of free-holding militia corrupted by Norman feudalism and Stuart despotism, interpreters of England's history had made British subjects acutely conscious of inherent dangers in a military establishment and strengthened their determination that generals should be on tap, not on top.²

By the time of the American Revolution, this genuine fear of military despotism had made Americans sensitive to the proper civil-military relationships. In the colonial arrangement, the royal governor was "Captain-General" and "Commander-in-Chief" with

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1. Don Higginbotham, *The War of American Independence: Military Attitudes, Policies, and Practice, 1763-1789* (New York, 1971), 204-05.
2. *Ibid.*, 13-14.

an important role in colonial defense. The "quest for power" of the lower houses of assembly on the eve of revolution led colonists in rebellion to believe that civil control meant legislative control, with the legislature advising the governor on his military power even when the governor had ideas of military glory all his own. Transposed to the Continental scene, this assembly attitude generated suspicion of the army almost as soon as it was established. Congress, the national legislature, kept close watch on its military creation, and the recurrent friction between that body and General Washington is open knowledge. For its part, the Continental military was equally annoyed by the attitudes and controls of the civil authority. In the dark days of Valley Forge and again in the final months of the war, the army felt neglected— or worse— by the national legislature.³

Given this mood of mutual suspicion on the Continental level, it comes as no surprise that dissension and even distrust should prevail on the provincial level between the Continental army and state officials. Here, Continental officers had to contend with a civil authority that not only regarded the army as potentially dangerous, but also had its own citizen-soldiers in the Anglo tradition to offset reliance on the Continental establishment if need be. Further, within some states, such as Georgia, the personal jealousies and rivalries between contending citizens, some who headed the military establishment and others who headed the civil establishment, amplified the inherent suspicion, making distrust personal and vindictive.⁴ With a determination that the military should be strictly subordinated to civil power, these states barred military official from assembly seats and state office.⁵

Since American civil-military suspicion was born of the British Constitution, the Revolution likewise revealed a continuing jealousy and distrust between the king's generals and his governors. Although royal governors, constantly requested troops for protection, they were never willing to yield their military authority as commander in chief to the generals. Indeed, the most

3. *Ibid.*, 17-18, 209.

4. E. Merton Coulter, *Georgia, A Short History*, 3rd rev. ed. (Chapel Hill, 1960), 134-35, 151-52.

5. Kenneth Coleman, *The American Revolution In Georgia, 1763-1789* (Athens, 1958), 80; Higginbotham, *War of American Independence*, 206.

certain governors, such as Patrick Tonyn of East Florida, would acknowledge was a shared command.⁶ The generals of His Majesty's forces, on the other hand, were apt to regard royal governors as exclusively civil, even denying to them control over their provincial militia in a massive war like the American rebellion. For the most part, in the professional general's view, the governor could not be considered a superior in war councils, and was only occasionally regarded as an equal.⁷

The foregoing situations prevailed in Georgia and East Florida respectively during the Revolution and added measurably to an understanding of divided command on both sides, revealing its sources and the tactical difficulties arising from it. In addition, these circumstances explain why two neighboring provinces, which sought security in the subordination of one another, were never able to achieve that security in the period between 1776 and 1778. Only when the full might of the British army, upon coordination by its civil head in England, turned south late in 1778 did the situations in Georgia and Florida alter drastically.

An astute observer might have predicted a severe civil-military quarrel in both patriot Georgia and loyalist East Florida once acquainted with particular individuals who would play the roles of governor and general. In Georgia, deciding just who would fill those roles provoked a continuing controversy when patriots attempted to bring organization to their emerging independence. Dissension occurred in the selection of personnel to command Georgia's battalion of the army authorized by Congress.⁸ Competing for command were Lachlan McIntosh and Button Gwinnett, each of whom represented different factions in Georgia politics. The Savannah elite, reluctant in rebellion because of family relationships, comprised McIntosh's primary support,

6. Higginbotham, *War of American Independence*, 16-17; Paul H. Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats: A Study in British Revolutionary Policy* (New York, 1972), 89-90, 127-28; Patrick Tonyn to Augustine Prevost, December 24, 1777, in Great Britain, Public Record Office, British Headquarters (Sir Guy Carleton) Papers, 1747-1783. Microfilm copies of these 107 volumes are located in the South Carolina Department of Archives and History building in Columbia. Hereinafter cited as BHQP.

7. Augustine Prevost to William Howe, September 9, 1776, April 5, 1778, in Great Britain, Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on American Manuscripts in the Royal Institution of Great Britain*, 4 vols. (London, 1904-1909), I, 58, 223-24.

8. Allen D. Candler, comp., *The Revolutionary Records of the State of Georgia*, 3 vols. (Atlanta, 1908), I, 305-06.

whereas, transplanted New England Congregationalists of Midway and Sunbury, relatively new in Georgia politics, composed Gwinnett's following.⁹ In January 1776, the Provincial Congress of the state finally gave the Continental commands to McIntosh and his friends and dispatched Gwinnett to the Continental Congress in hopes of avoiding a patriot rupture.¹⁰ In the long run, their action contributed to the dissension. It gave one faction command of the Continental forces and provided the other an edge in assuming control of the state government following the Declaration of Independence.¹¹

In East Florida, meantime, the crown had filled the offices of governor and general in the traditional manner unencumbered by the politics of revolution. Nevertheless, the personalities and pride of individuals here also created a situation seeded with future dissension. Patrick Tonyn had assumed his post as governor of East Florida barely two weeks prior to the introduction of the Coercive Acts in Parliament. An army officer who had served in Europe during the Great War for the Empire, Tonyn had requested and obtained the governorship from Lord Dartmouth in 1773. He also retained his military commission and undoubtedly took most seriously his authority and prerogatives as captain-general and governor-in-chief.¹² The new governor preferred his own councils and hesitated to call an assembly, thereby promoting the development of a small, noisome opposition faction. Tonyn accused it of being pro-American, but his

9. *Ibid.*; Joseph Clay to [?], September 16, 1775, Joseph Clay Papers, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah; Charles Francis Jenkins, Button Gwinnett, *Signer of the Declaration of Independence* (Garden City, New York, 1926), 95-96.

10. *Georgia Gazette*, February 7, 1776; Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 95.

11. Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 95, 98; Journal of Council, August 30, 1776, Archibald Bulloch Proclamation, July 1776, in Candler, *Revolutionary Records*, I, 194-95, 280-81, 305-06; Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett*, 95-96, 98-101. The edge became apparent when Gwinnett and his followers returned to Georgia in the summer of 1776 armed with the Declaration and a charge from Congress to frame a constitution for Georgia.

12. Charles Loch Mowat, *East Florida As A British Province, 1763-1784* (Berkeley, 1943; facsimile edition, Gainesville, 1964), 83. Leonard Woods Labaree, *Royal Government In America: A Study of the British Colonial System before 1783* (New Haven, 1930; facsimile edition, New York, 1958), discusses the personalities and occupation types usually chosen by the British for American governorships. See chapter two, especially pages 37-43.

most serious troubles with this opposition came from its nourishing the antagonism between Tonyn and the regular British troops stationed in St. Augustine as the American conflict unfolded.¹³

Those troops had been small in number, about ninety-eight men and twenty-four officers, until the transfer of additional forces to East Florida during 1776. The increase consisted primarily of the 60th Foot Regiment, recruited from England and Hanover and commanded by a capable career-man, Colonel, later General, Augustine Prevost.¹⁴ Roughly coinciding with the arrival of Prevost, Tonyn, anxious about the safety of his province, formed a special force of loyalist refugees into a provincial corps dubbed the East Florida Rangers. Its commander, Thomas Brown, received a commission as lieutenant colonel from General Thomas Gage and reported directly to Tonyn at the governor's insistence.¹⁵ The existence of this corps fed dissension in East Florida in the same manner that the McIntosh-Gwinnett dispute spurred it in Georgia. In consequence of such discord, the likelihood of one side conquering the other on the southern frontier was less real than imagined in the period 1776 to 1778, although each proclaimed the danger great and continually planned the subjugation of the other.

Their efforts began early. In January 1776, the Continental Congress harkened to suggestions from Georgia and recommended to North and South Carolina, and to Georgia, the capture of St. Augustine.¹⁶ Before any action followed this proposal, however, the South found itself the scene of an intended British invasion by sea. Governor Tonyn and the loyalist refugees in East Florida eagerly designed an invasion of Georgia and the Carolinas to coincide with General Henry Clinton's assault against Charleston. The governor felt he could lead a combined expedition of regulars, Indians, and refugees that would easily re-

13. Mowat, *East Florida*, 86-97, 101. In truth, the opposition was more nuisance than threat, but Tonyn hated its leaders for friendliness to the regular officers who did not think him their military equal.

14. *Ibid.*, 107-08.

15. *Ibid.*, 110; Gary D. Olson, "Thomas Brown, Loyalist Partisan, and the Revolutionary War in Georgia, 1777-1782," *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, LIV (Spring 1970), 2, 17n. Brown, an outspoken loyalist, had been forced to flee the Carolina backcountry in 1775.

16. Resolution of January 1, 1776, suggesting conquest of St. Augustine, in Worthington Chauncey Ford, ed., *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789*, 34 vols. (Washington, 1904-1937) IV, 15.

store these provinces to the crown.¹⁷ Tonym's project does not appear to have been taken seriously. It seems ludicrous since the full contingent of regulars had not yet arrived in St. Augustine, and Tonym was having difficulty protecting the border with Georgia. Still, the governor's proposal was not fully tested since Clinton's repulse at Charleston ended Tonym's schemes temporarily and gave the initiative to the Georgians who now planned the conquest of St. Augustine.

In June 1776, the Georgia Council of Safety dispatched a committee to Charleston to request support for an invasion from General Charles Lee, Continental commander in the Southern Military Department. Lee, ready to capitalize on his good fortune in the South, listened sympathetically and agreed to come to Savannah for an inspection in August.¹⁸

When he arrived, Lee found Georgia weak, defenseless, and incapable of mounting the supply and transport necessary to capture St. Augustine. Rejecting an immediate attempt to reduce the British stronghold, which he had tentatively considered earlier, Lee recommended the establishment of a series of forts and mounted patrols to contain raiding from East Florida, the only threat then apparent to Georgia's security.¹⁹ The council wished to launch a full-scale invasion of Florida anyway and countered Lee's doubts concerning supply with declarations of the bountiful provisions in the countryside. Stating that plunder along the march would supply the invading force, the council urged Lee to lead an expedition and noted that the civilians, at least, were "heartly and ready" to help reduce East Florida.²⁰

While Lee and the Georgia council debated policy, parties of militia and Continentals under McIntosh destroyed a British outpost on the St. Marys and threw the settlements between that river and the St. Johns into disarray. Lee believed their ac-

17. Olson, "Thomas Brown," 1-2; Mowat, *East Florida*, 108-10, 118; Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 100-01; Tonym to Henry Clinton, February 13, 15, 1776, Henry Clinton Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

18. Journal of Council, June 19, 20, 21, 25, July 1, 2, 5, 1776, Candler, *Revolutionary Records*, I, 139-40, 140-43, 143-44, 144-47, 147-48, 148-50, 150-54; John R. Alden, *General Charles Lee, Traitor or Patriot?* (Baton Rouge, 1951), 131-32.

19. Olson, "Thomas Brown," 3; Alden, *General Charles Lee*, 132.

20. Journal of Council, August 19, 20, 1776, Candler, *Revolutionary Records*, I, 181-83.

complishment sufficient to protect Georgia, and he expressed to the council in late August 1776 his conviction that too few cannon, forces, and provisions existed to besiege St. Augustine at this time.²¹ The council remained adamant. It insisted that overcrowding would force surrender of the fort in St. Augustine, which would win over the Indians, stop slave runaways, and end all future raids from Florida.²² Lee, equally immovable, now considered the Georgians completely impractical and “harum skarum” in their planning. He confided to his deputy, General John Armstrong: “They [the councillors] will propose anything, and after they have propos’d it, discover that they are incapable of performing the least. . . . Upon the whole I shou’d not be surpris’d if they were to propose mounting a body of Mermaids on Alligators.”²³

Exasperated by the council and the lack of material, Lee saw little hope for a successful expedition against St. Augustine, and he continually advised defensive measures only. The council ignored Lee’s advice and began collecting boats for an insisted-upon expedition, which finally came in early September. When the main body of the invading force, in Lee’s opinion only a raiding party, reached Sunbury, thirty miles from Savannah, the commander decided to turn back because of bad weather, lack of transports, and the increase of the garrison at St. Augustine.²⁴ In truth, Lee had not undertaken a strong invasion since he had already received orders from Congress to return to the North, and he was glad to be rescued from an impossible situation. The angry Georgians of course blamed Lee for the failure and began contemplating future expeditions against St. Augustine.²⁵

Although the anger and division in Georgia’s first attempted

21. Journal of Council, August 19, 1776, Candler, *Revolutionary Records*, I, 179-82; Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 101.

22. Journal of Council, August 19, 1776, Candler, *Revolutionary Records*, I, 179-82.

23. Charles Lee to John Armstrong, August 27, 1776, quoted in Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 97; Alden, *General Charles Lee*, 132.

24. Journal of Council, August 24, 28, 1776, Candler, *Revolutionary Records*, I, 189, 190-93; Alden, *General Charles Lee*, 132; Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 102. Colonel William Moultrie took field command of this expedition, since Lee was already preparing to return to the North. Mowat, *East Florida*, 119.

25. Alden, *General Charles Lee*, 132; Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 102; Charles C. Jones, Jr., *The History of Georgia*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1883), II, 248-49.

invasion made counter-measures in Florida almost unnecessary. Governor Tonyn did not treat the attempt lightly. Convinced that genuine danger existed in mid-summer 1776, the governor requested regulars, supported by armed vessels, to take post on the St. Marys and sought the aid of the Indians. When the American raiding party under McIntosh arrived at the St. Marys in August, the King's forces retreated quickly, much to the dismay and disgust of Tonyn, who characterized the attacking force as "inconsiderable."²⁶ Colonel Prevost disagreed with Tonyn and defended the regulars' falling back from a river impossible to defend without adequate naval force in the face of a "strong" party of rebels. Tonyn thereupon decided to authorize his East Florida Rangers to provide him with intelligence and to conduct counter-raids into Georgia since the regulars, in the governor's view, were neither willing nor able to perform this function.²⁷ Annoyed, Prevost reported the situation to the British commander in chief in America, General Sir William Howe, and requested direct orders for the garrison in East Florida to avoid depending "entirely" upon "a Civil Governor and Council."²⁸

By the fall of 1776, therefore, dissension revealed that military operations on the southern frontier would not proceed smoothly on either side. For the Americans, disagreement between state authorities and the Continental Army officers concerning command and policy meant that two heads, not one, would be issuing orders. The civil head based its reasoning on purely political considerations, such as the good effect the capture of St. Augustine would have on patriots. The military head considered primarily issues of armaments, supply, and tactics in reaching its decisions. Unless one or the other voluntarily yielded, chances of capturing East Florida were slim. For the British, command would be less divided. The home government could always intervene and combine questions of politics and tactics. Nevertheless, the existence of an independent provincial corps under the exclusive authority of a civil governor galled the British military in St. Augustine and would continue to do so until higher au-

26. Howe to Tonyn, August 25, 1776, Tonyn to Howe, February 24, 1778, *Report on American Manuscripts*, I, 56-57, 198.

27. Prevost to Howe, September 9, 1776, Tonyn to Howe, February 24, 1778, *Report on American Manuscripts*, I, 58, 198.

28. Prevost to Howe, September 9, 1776, *Report on American Manuscripts*, I, 58.

thority ruled on this issue. The likelihood that either Americans or British would quash their dissension appeared remote as each anticipated invasion of the other in 1777.

In January, Tonym and Prevost discussed the supply problem in East Florida and the possibility of foraging expeditions in southern Georgia to replenish food stores in St. Augustine. Convinced that East Florida could not provide sufficient sustenance for its refugee-and-troop-increased population, Governor Tonym believed the solution lay in cattle raids across the St. Marys. He demanded action accordingly. Prevost, doubtful of the productivity of such excursions, contended that the garrison was too small to risk on cattle raids.²⁹ Tonym proved insistent, however, pointing out that his ranger corps knew the woods well and could move rapidly, although it would need some assistance from regulars. At length, Prevost relented.³⁰

The invading force, consisting of regulars, rangers, and a band of Creeks crossed into Georgia in February 1777. Shortly, Lieutenant Colonel Brown and his forces captured Fort McIntosh, a Georgia stockade on the Satilla River eighty miles south of the Altamaha. Immediately, additional regulars under Colonel Lewis Fuser moved up for a combined advance against Fort Howe on the Altamaha. When Georgia Continentals, led by General McIntosh, advanced to halt the British, Fuser retired, burned Fort McIntosh, and returned to St. Augustine with 2,000 head of cattle.³¹

The success of the raid, which for a moment had given evidence of a real assault, was marred by dissension between regulars and rangers. Fuser, displaying a professional's disdain, referred to the rangers as plunderers and the Indians as boys. According to Brown's complaint to Tonym, Fuser's insults and mistreatment of both rangers and Indians made it unlikely that either would cooperate with him in the future.³²

As Tonym prepared to take up this complaint with Prevost, the Georgians, though unsure if the raid had been only a prelude to a larger attack, attempted to organize a counter-thrust.

29. Olson, "Thomas Brown," 3-4; Mowat, *East Florida*, 119-20.

30. Mowat, *East Florida*, 120; Tonym to Prevost, December 24, 1777, BHQP; Tonym to Howe, February 24, 1778, *Report on American Manuscripts*, I, 197-99.

31. Olson, "Thomas Brown," 3-4.

32. Mowat, *East Florida*, 120.

The Council of Safety gave its president emergency power, called out the militia, and requested aid from General Robert Howe, Lee's successor as Continental commander of the Southern Department.³³ Arriving in Georgia from Charleston, General Howe found the civil authorities planning to advance against St. Augustine. Their proposal to do so stunned Howe as he noted the weak condition of Georgia defenses and the lack of preparation for a successful invasion.³⁴ Georgia's council president, Button Gwinnett, who had recently attained this position following his return from the Continental Congress, demanded an attack. Further, he determined to lead it himself as Georgia commander in chief both to ensure subordination of the military and to demonstrate his own abilities in the field.³⁵

Gwinnett had early perceived the opportunity available to political newcomers in a revolution and had never quite forgiven the Savannah leadership for denying him military command of the Georgia Battalion in 1776. Now he moved to reverse that circumstance, bring the Continentals officered by his opponents to heel under his authority, and prepare the way for him to become Georgia's first elected governor. In this fashion, revolutionary democracy would permit an individual, characterized by the old elite as unfit for high office because of his rank and "situation in life," to rise to the highest position in a sovereign state.³⁶

Yet, the key to all Gwinnett's plans remained a successful invasion of Florida to publicize his abilities, and it appeared unlikely that the Continentals would willingly serve his ambition. Certainly, Howe would not. The general refused to commit any Continentals from South Carolina for a foolhardy expedition. He

33. Joseph Clay to John Burnley, February 24, 1777, in *Collections of the Georgia Historical Society*, 15 vols. (Savannah, 1840-date), VIII, 20-21; Journal of Council, February 21, 1777, Candler, *Revolutionary Records*, I, 224-25; Jones, *History of Georgia*, II, 263.

34. Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 103.

35. *Ibid.*, 88; Jones, *History of Georgia*, II, 264.

36. Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett*, 28, 60, 128, 150-52; Joseph Clay to Bright and Pechin, July 2, 1777, in *Collections of the Georgia Historical Society*, VIII, 34-36. For opinions on Gwinnett's ambition and revolutionary democracy, see various letters of Joseph Clay (*supra*) and also Samuel Elbert to Lachlan McIntosh, September 23, 1776, Ferdinand Julius Dreer Autograph Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

soon returned to Charleston with an opinion of Georgia's civil leaders no better than that of his predecessor.³⁷

Angry, but undaunted, Gwinnett pushed ahead with his plans. He pointed out to the council that Howe's leaving Georgia emphasized the danger of giving power to the military and insisted that all orders and decisions for the Georgia Continentals, as well as the militia, should come from civil authority. Gwinnett then called out the militia for an invasion that would snub the Continentals and particularly embarrass General McIntosh. He also ordered the arrest of the general's brother on a trumped-up charge of treason.³⁸

Gwinnett's action astonished the military, which had earlier tried to clarify the chain of command. All the Continental officers in Georgia had pledged in 1776 to obey orders of the Council of Safety when not in conflict with the Continental Congress. In addition, General McIntosh had requested General Washington to instruct him on the degree of control state authorities had over Continental troops.³⁹

Still, no satisfactory arrangement had been reached respecting state authority and the Continental establishment when Gwinnett planned his expedition. The council, annoyed by Howe and swayed by Gwinnett, agreed to use only militia. So few militia responded, however, that by the end of March 1777, the council at last called upon the Georgia Battalion, but not Howe, for assistance. Much to the consternation of McIntosh, Gwinnett wanted the Continentals merely to carry out the plans he had already made, not help in formulating new ones.⁴⁰ Those plans called for Georgia forces to gather at Sunbury, depart by different routes, and rendezvous at Sawpit Bluff near the St. Johns River at the end of May.⁴¹

By mid-April, the combined forces had arrived at Sunbury where McIntosh and Gwinnett could no longer avoid an open

37. Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 103.

38. Jones, *History of Georgia*, II, 264-65; Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 103-04.

39. McIntosh to Washington, February 16, 1776, in George White, *Historical Collections of Georgia*. . . (New York, 1854), 92-93.

40. Jones, *History of Georgia*, II, 265; McIntosh to Howe, April 2, 1777, in Lilla M. Hawes, ed., "The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1799," Part III, *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, XXXVIII (December 1954), 365; Robert Howe to a friend in Georgia, May 29, 1777, Revolutionary Collection, William R. Perkins Library, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina.

41. Olson, "Thomas Brown," 4.

confrontation. The general insisted upon leading the Continentals as the ranking officer and required the militia to coordinate its efforts with his troops. Gwinnett would not hear of such a scheme, and he insisted that as superior authority in the state, he should command the entire force. Each man called separate councils of war and criticized the interference of the other. At length, with the expedition stalled, both men followed the Council of Safety's suggestion to return to Savannah and leave Colonel Samuel Elbert, the next ranking Continental officer, in charge of the troops.⁴²

Elbert accepted the command, perplexed as to whom to obey. Gwinnett soon sent orders from Savannah to continue the expedition, but Elbert deferred to his Continental commander and begged instructions. Resigned to the dilemma, McIntosh advised Elbert to proceed cautiously. Unquestionably, he warned, the enemy had been alerted by the long delay and dissension.⁴³ Indeed the enemy had. News of the invasion prompted counter-measures by the British, and Governor Tonym hurried to protect his province.. The governor, more anxious than Prevost, wrote directly to British agents among the Creeks and Cherokees for assistance. He urged agent David Tate to bring the Lower Creeks at once to St. Augustine and send the Upper Creeks and Cherokees on the warpath into the Georgia-Carolina backcountry.⁴⁴ In his excitement, Tonym exaggerated the danger; but he was not alone in his fear of this invasion, since not a few citizens of St. Augustine spoke of capitulation to the enemy.⁴⁵

Prevost did not share this hurried, almost frantic, response to invasion. He agreed with Tonym on the necessity for action but saw no immediacy required until the Americans should reach the St. Johns. Further, he felt the use of Indians to "harrass and distress a few perhaps innocent people" pointless. The Indians, as-

42. Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 104; Jones, *History of Georgia*, II, 265-67; "Papers respecting the Augustine Expedition in April 1777," in Lilla M. Hawes, ed., "The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1799," Part IV, *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, XXXIX (March 1955), 63-65.

43. Elbert to McIntosh, April 24, 1777, in *Collections of the Georgia Historical Society*, V, Part 2, 19; McIntosh to Elbert, April 26, 1777, in Hawes, "The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1799," Part III, 368.

44. Tonym to David Tate, April 20, 1777, BHQP.

45. Mowat, *East Florida*, 120.

sented Prevost, should be used only in conjunction with large operations.⁴⁶

Nor did the colonel wish to rely on independent rangers to keep Indian raiders in check. He and the governor had already clashed on this subject in an examination of Brown's complaint against Fuser following the Fort McIntosh action in February. Subsequently, Prevost had requested, and had been denied, presumably for economy, permission from General William Howe to form his own corps of mounted rangers.⁴⁷ Howe, who desired a "perfect good understanding" between the military and the civil power in Florida, cautioned both parties against dissension in the different branches of the king's service.⁴⁸ Yet, the tone of his correspondence shared Prevost's view regarding the use of Indians, and he advised Tonym to "sandwich" the Indians in between groups of militia and regulars to oppose the invaders "*should they reach the St. John's*."⁴⁹

In mid-May, an advance party of militia from the divided and confused Georgia invasion reached Nassau Creek between the St. Marys and the St. Johns where it met and was defeated by a small combined force of regulars, rangers, and Indians. Major James Mark Prevost, the colonel's brother, commanded the regulars on this occasion. Though he praised Brown, Major Prevost evidently complained that the Indians would have massacred prisoners had not the regulars prevented them, implying that the rangers could not control their allies.⁵⁰ Consequently, Colonel Prevost, promoted to brigadier in command of all troops in East and West Florida at the time of the invasion, warned Tonym again of Indian behavior and began to demand control of the East Florida Rangers as well. Tonym steadfastly refused to yield to the general's pressure, intimating that to do so would jeopardize the constitution and throw civilians into consternation at the prospect of unchecked military rule. Galled by Tonym's exaggerated

46. Prevost to John Stuart, June 14, 1777, BHQP.

47. Howe to Prevost, July 14, 1777, Prevost to Howe, November 1, 1777, *Report on American Manuscripts*, I, 124, 147-48.

48. Howe to Governor Chester, January 20, 1777, *Report on American Manuscripts*, I, 84; Howe to Tonym, May 4, 1777, to Prevost, May 3, 1777, BHQP.

49. Howe to Tonym, May 12, 1777, BHQP.

50. Mowat, *East Florida*, 120-21.

position, Prevost could only beg Howe to assist him in gaining control over that "truly independent corps of Rangers."⁵¹

While the governor and the general in East Florida continued their bickering until a higher-up should put an end to it, their Georgia counterparts determined upon a more drastic resolution of their differences. The Elbert-led Gwinnett expedition had reached Amelia Narrows when it learned of the reversal of the Georgia militia by Major Prevost and Lieutenant Colonel Brown. Although the Georgian boasted he could have made "the whole Province of East Florida tumble," he decided to abandon the invasion, claiming that the militia's defeat had altered the situation and left the state defenseless.⁵² Actually, the entire effort had been conceived by ambition and jealousy and had been wrecked by dissension between the civil and military branches before it began. Elbert's withdrawal was no more than the belated announcement of this much earlier failure to unify command.

The contending parties showed no disposal to rectify that failure in the subsequent investigation of the aborted invasion by Georgia's first assembly under its new constitution. Instead, each attempted to fix the blame upon the other. The Gwinnett party castigated General McIntosh for not yielding command to the council president; but the general insisted that Gwinnett's jealousy and ambition were at fault. McIntosh countered suggestions of incompetence with the assertion that Gwinnett had tried to create confusion in the army because Continental command had been denied him.⁵³ When the assembly voiced its approval of Gwinnett's conduct, the general forced the issue by publicly calling Gwinnett "a Scoundrell & lying Rascal." As expected, the erstwhile council president demanded "the satisfaction accorded a gentleman" before sunrise on May 16, 1777.⁵⁴

On that morning, the two men with their seconds met in a

51. *Ibid.*; Howe to Prevost, April 1, May 4, 1777, to Tonyn, May 4, 1777, Prevost to Howe, November 1, 1777, March 21, 1778, *Report on American Manuscripts*, I, 100, 107, 147-48, 216; Prevost to Tonyn, December 20, 1777, Tonyn to Prevost, December 24, 1777, BHQP.

52. Elbert to Joseph Habersham, May 30, 1777, *Collections of the Georgia Historical Society*, V, Part 2, 33-34; Jones, *History of Georgia*, II, 268-69.

53. Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 89; McIntosh to Henry Laurens, May 30, 1777, William G. Simms Collection of Laurens Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia. Simms Collection hereinafter cited as WGSC.

54. Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett*, 152; Candler, *Revolutionary Records*, I, 306; McIntosh to Laurens, May 30, 1777, WGSC.

pasture outside Savannah and agreed to exchange a single shot each from a distance of roughly twelve feet. Both fired at the same time and both found their mark— the other's leg! The duelists then shook hands, declared honor satisfied, and left the field.⁵⁵ The nature of their duel demonstrated that they were apparently willing to end their quarrel with honor but without serious injury, a circumstance that could have cleared the air for future cooperation between civil and military authorities. Unhappily, Gwinnett's wound did not heal. A few days after the duel, he died, a victim of gangrene, resulting from a combination of hot weather, shattered bone, and poor medical care.⁵⁶

The dead man's friends, thoroughly dismayed by the turn of events, determined to avenge their champion by having McIntosh cashiered from the army. They circulated petitions asking Congress to remove the general for dueling in violation of the articles of war. In the assembly, they attempted to take complete control of the army and encouraged new recruits to demonstrate against officers who engaged in dueling.⁵⁷

McIntosh, unwilling to resign yet ready to end a bad situation that threatened to destroy the Georgia Battalion, submitted to a trial. The jury acquitted him, but Gwinnett's friends would not cease their disruption of the army. Finally, in an effort to end rancor and save the state from ruin, the general's associates requested George Washington to transfer McIntosh to Continental army headquarters.⁵⁸ Prior to his departure, McIntosh expressed regret that no clear line of authority had been established to protect the Continental army from the "interference" of state authorities. Thereafter, a few thoughtful Georgians on both sides began to wonder if the state could survive governors turned gen-

55. Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett*, 153-54; McIntosh to Laurens, May 30, 1777, WGSC.

56. Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett*, 153-54.

57. McIntosh to George Walton, July 14, 1777, quoted in Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett*, 256-62; McIntosh to Laurens, May 30, 1777, WGSC; Thomas Gamble, *Savannah Duels and Duellists, 1733-1877* (Savannah, 1923), 16; Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett*, 159-61. Gwinnett's friends hoped to force the resignations of both McIntosh and his second, Colonel Joseph Habersham, and gain mastery over the army. Since McIntosh was the challenged party, however, he had not violated the articles of war. See Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett*, 162-63.

58. Gamble, *Savannah Duels*, 16; Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett*, 167-68; Walton to Washington, August 5, 1777, in Edmund C. Burnett, ed., *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress*, 8 vols. (Washington, 1921-1938), II, 439.

eral and generals determined to preserve their independence of state control.⁵⁹ Regrettably, the number of such discerning persons was too small to force cooperation between the opposing sides.

As Georgians shot at one another and arranged protective transfers, Tonyn and Prevost continued their struggle for control of the East Florida Rangers and, in their respective views, the future of the province. Prevost, certain that as long as Tonyn could send separate raiding parties into Georgia there could be no coordinated policy for the southern frontier, repeatedly complained of the rangers' independence, lack of discipline, and the high rank of their commander, Brown. As lieutenant colonel, Brown outranked all the British officers in St. Augustine except Fuser and Prevost himself. Contending that regulars refused orders from a non-professional who reported to the governor, Prevost renewed his request to Tonyn for control of the rangers as 1777 ended.⁶⁰

The governor again remained steadfast. He answered Prevost with an implication that the regulars were ignorant of the woods and provincial warfare, yet agreed that when the rangers were in combat with troops they were under Prevost's command. On other occasions, Tonyn asserted, knowing full well that his proposal was unsatisfactory to Prevost, the general had only to express his wishes to him and he would see them carried out.⁶¹ In this fashion, with the British permitting a petty quarrel concerning a small provincial corps to get out of hand, and the Georgians divided into dueling civil and military factions, each side prepared for a third try against the other.

During the winter of 1777-1778, the Georgia assembly named John Houstoun of Savannah to a term as governor. Neither a member of the Gwinnett camp nor totally under the influence of the Continental officers, he represented a compromise. Quarrelling should have abated. Yet, more than one person wondered

59. McIntosh to Laurens, May 30, 1777, WGSC; Joseph Clay to Edward Telfair, August 10, 1777, Clay to Laurens, October 16, 1777, in *Collections of the Georgia Historical Society*, VIII, 37-38, 50.

60. Mowat, *East Florida*, 111; Prevost to Howe, June 14, November 1, 1777, *Report on American Manuscripts*, I, 119-20, 147-48; Prevost to Tonyn, December 20, 1777, BHQP.

61. Tonyn to Prevost, December 24, 1777, BHQP; Tonyn to Howe, February 24, 1778, *Report on American Manuscripts*, I, 197-99; Mowat, *East Florida*, 110.

if this governor would play general also when the state requested of General Howe what military operations had been ordered for Georgia by "those in authority to the Northward."⁶² Hardly had the Continental commander pondered an answer to this query when Tonym's rangers destroyed a small outpost on the Altamaha River. Tonym viewed their success as evidence of the ease with which Georgia could be taken; but Prevost, interpreting the rangers' uncontrolled action negatively, predicted retaliation from Georgia that would disrupt British military operations.⁶³

The general proved correct. Stung by this insult, the Georgia assembly voted emergency powers to Governor Houstoun, brushed aside Howe's objections to a Florida expedition, and vowed to proceed against St. Augustine. The "*Augustinia delenda est*" zeal of the assembly captivated Houstoun, who determined to accomplish what the Lee and Gwinnett invasions had failed to do.⁶⁴ Unfortunately, he was in no better position to do so than they. General Howe advised him that the Continentals lacked supplies and troops to take St. Augustine and that the militia had farming tasks to attend to. Nevertheless, Governor Houstoun persevered, and Howe reluctantly agreed to a combined expedition. By the end of April 1778, therefore, the Georgians had amassed nearly 2,000 troops for the attack on St. Augustine.⁶⁵

Both Prevost and Tonym in East Florida prepared for the invasion as intelligence reports reached St. Augustine. The immediate objective of the invading force appeared to be Fort Tonym, an outpost on the south side of the St. Marys, which the rangers used as a rendezvous on their raids into Georgia.⁶⁶ Tonym, in a rush, called upon Prevost to send regulars to reinforce Brown at the outpost. Unperturbed, the general refused to send troops

62. Candler, *Revolutionay Records*, I, 324; Journal of Council, January 20, 1778, in *ibid.*, II, 11; Clay to Telfair, August 10, 1777, Clay to Laurens, October 16, 1777, Clay to Josiah Smith, Jr., spring 1778, in *Collections of the Georgia Historical Society*, VIII, 37-38, 48-51, 69.

63. Brown to Tonym, March 13, 1778, Tonym to Howe, February 24, March 31, 1778, Prevost to Howe, March 21, 1778, *Report on American Manuscripts*, I, 209, 197-99, 221, 216.

64. Journal of Council, February 9, 1778, Candler, *Revolutionay Records*, II, 27; Journal of Council, April 16, 1778, *ibid.*, 75-76; I, 324.

65. Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 106-07; Jones, *History of Georgia*, II, 288-89; Journal of Council, April 16, 1778, Candler, *Revolutionay Records*, II, 75-77.

66. Brown to Prevost, April 10, 1778, *Report on American Manuscripts*, I, 227-28; Olson, "Thomas Brown," 7, 17n.

beyond the St. Johns. When pressed by the governor, Prevost seized the occasion to gain mastery over the rangers. He would send no officers of the king's troops, he declared, to be commanded by Brown. Tonym knew he was trapped. He yielded and required Brown to submit to the orders of Major Glazier of the regulars in this "alarming crisis."⁶⁷ Yet, the governor had no thought of a permanent surrender to Prevost. He quickly dispatched a letter to General William Howe explaining the situation and blaming all the trouble on jealousy of Brown's rank by the majors in the regulars, particularly Major James Mark Prevost. The regular officers, thought Tonym, were too proud to take orders from a provincial, even when he had proved both his loyalty and his ability.⁶⁸

Tonym had correctly pinpointed the source of irritation, as Prevost admitted in his own correspondence to Howe. His Majesty's officers simply would not serve under a young colonist who had never seen service anywhere but in America. Furthermore, defended Prevost, Brown's independence of action and undisciplined behavior made him more a liability than an asset.⁶⁹ With the matter now fully before the British commander in America, the adversaries in Florida could await a permanent solution while their temporary agreement allowed Prevost sole command of the defense against the American invasion.

The invasion had not advanced far before it had generated the familiar argument over command between the Georgia governor and the ranking Continental officer. Unlike their enemy, they could neither reach a temporary agreement nor await a permanent solution. The troops, made up of Continentals and militia from Georgia and South Carolina, as well as naval units, had progressed by alternate routes across the Altamaha towards the St. Marys without unifying command. The Continentals, easier to mobilize than the slower militia, arrived at the St. Marys first. Upon their approach, the rangers destroyed Fort Tonym and fell back to the main body of British regulars at Alligator Bridge. Presuming an advantage that did not exist, the Americans at-

67. Tonym to Howe, May 1, 1778, Tonym to Brown, April 18, 1778, *Report on American Manuscripts*, I, 243-44, 234.

68. Tonym to Howe, February 24, April 4, May 1, 1778, *ibid.*, I, 197-99, 222-23, 243-44.

69. Prevost to Howe, April 5, 1778, to Clinton, September 25, 1778, *ibid.*, I, 223-24, 302.

tacked Major Prevost's forces, then withdrew after several hours to the ruins of Fort Tonyn to await the militia.⁷⁰ In actuality, this drawn battle of June 30, 1778 proved the high point of the invasion.

Governor Houstoun and the Georgia militia reached the St. Marys on July 4, 1778; the South Carolina militia finally arrived a week later. Disappointment and dissension soon followed delay. General Howe, the senior officer, demanded command by right; Houstoun, though lacking experience, refused to be commanded. Adding to the confusion, the South Carolina militia would take no orders from the Continentals; and the naval commander, uncertain if the intra-coastal galleys were state or Continental, rejected everyone's authority.⁷¹ Such entanglement could not be unsnarled since none was willing to yield to anyone.

Howe, convinced that delays and disagreement had cost the initiative, confided to his officers of embarrassment "beyond expression" at being required to rely upon men he could not command and called the present circumstance "one of the most unfortunate accidents" in his life.⁷² Disgusted, and unwilling to place Continental officers under a state governor, Howe called a war council and put to his officers the question: "Can the army, whilst the command is divided, act with security, vigor, decision, or benefit to the common cause?"⁷³ The Continentals unanimously answered no and agreed to end the expedition. Incensed, Governor Houstoun at first wanted to march the militia on to the St. Johns, but as the Continentals departed, he abandoned this wild notion and ordered his citizen-soldiers home. Within a few weeks, cattle-raiding from East Florida began once more.⁷⁴

Recrimination naturally followed this third aborted effort both north and south of the St. Marys River. General Howe returned to Charleston complaining of uncooperative civilians who

70. Tonyn to Howe, June 3, 1778, Prevost to Clinton, July 11, 1778, *ibid.*, I, 259, 271-73; Mowat, *East Florida*, 122; General orders of Samuel Elbert, June 6, 1778-July 4, 1778, in *Collections of the Georgia Historical Society*, V, Part 2, 161-75.

71. Jones, *History of Georgia*, II, 297; Joseph Habersham to Bella Habersham, July 5, 1778, Joseph Habersham Papers, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah.

72. Howe to William Moultrie, July 5, 1778, quoted in Jones, *History of Georgia*, II, 295-96.

73. Jones, *History of Georgia*, II, 299-300.

74. *Ibid.*, 300-02; Mowat, *East Florida*, 122.

had "perplexed" affairs in Georgia, while Houstoun and the militia now regarded Howe an an "interloper" who had faltered on the invasion. Even so, ridiculous as it may appear, Continental and state forces both spoke of undertaking yet another attempt against St. Augustine in the autumn when the weather more suited southern operations.⁷⁵

In the Florida capital, Prevost and Tonyn, the crisis past, renewed their quarrel over control of the rangers and Brown's rank. Prevost declared to his superiors that only the regulars had saved Brown from defeat at Alligator Bridge; Tonyn intimated that the rangers had driven back the invaders with some help from Major Prevost's troops.⁷⁶ Before their squabble could reach its former proportions, however, Sir William Howe and his successor in 1778, Sir Henry Clinton, expressed displeasure at the difficulty between Prevost and Tonyn. By August, Clinton insisted that the dispute end and the rangers be established on the same terms as other provincial forces. Tonyn agreed as he learned of impending plans for the fall of 1778.⁷⁷

The British ministry, given the stalemated situation in the northern colonies, had decided to do what Tonyn had wished done since 1776, subdue Georgia and the Carolinas and end the rebellion in the South. Britain's decision to "roll-up" the war from the South also ended the divided command on the southern frontier, though in opposite fashion for the respective parties. Savannah, the first British objective in the resulting invasion, fell easily in December 1778 when forces from New York and Florida moved against it. Its defender, General Howe, had remained at odds with the Georgia governor until the last. Subsequently, not a few of the general's former civilian antagonists revenged themselves by testifying against him at a court of inquiry investigating the loss of the city.⁷⁸

75. Howe to Moultrie, December 8, 1778, in William Moultrie, *Memoirs of the American Revolution*. . . , 2 vols. (New York, 1802), I, 247; Higginbotham, *War of American Independence*, 354-55; Jones, *History of Georgia*, II, 303; Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 108.

76. Prevost to Clinton, September 25, 1778, Brown to Tonyn, June 30, 1778, *Report on American Manuscripts*, I, 302, 269.

77. Howe to Prevost, May 1, 1778, Howe to Tonyn, May 1, 1778, Clinton to Prevost, June 3, August 25, 1778, Clinton to Tonyn, June 3, 1778, Tonyn to Clinton, September 30, 1778, *Report on American Manuscripts*, I, 242-43, 258, 282, 305.

78. Mowat, *East Florida*, 122-23; Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 120-21; "Proceedings of a general court martial, held at Philadelphia . . .

Just as British victory had rendered academic the divided command between Georgia civil authority and Continental officers, so too had it brought an end to the dispute between Tonyn and Prevost over the rangers. Clinton had forced a measure of cooperation between the two when the Georgia operation commenced. With its conclusion, Secretary of State Lord George Germain instructed Tonyn to surrender control of the rangers to the British commander in chief for reorganization at his discretion. No longer would they be considered East Florida troops; henceforth, the rangers would be on the same standing as other provincial corps of loyalists.⁷⁹ Accordingly, the very objective Tonyn had sought cost him his rangers and their special status as it removed the source of irritation between himself and the British regulars.

Yet, the governor did get in a last word. When Prevost had to fall back from Charleston and Beaufort, South Carolina, early in 1779, the governor could scarcely wait to notify Clinton and inform him of rumors that "great discontent" from lax discipline prevailed among Prevost's troops.⁸⁰ His enthusiasm to detract from Prevost's efforts was matched only by the eagerness with which Georgia militiamen testified against Howe at his court of inquiry. Consequently, although British victory had ended divided command on the southern frontier, sufficient evidence of dissension remained to question whether generals or politicians had learned or forgotten anything from their experience.

If they had not, as Tonyn's last sneers at Prevost and the glee of certain Georgians at Howe's discomfort indicate, they were at least being true to an ancient tradition that neither began nor ended with them. Historically, over and again, civil-military division has flourished and given bloom to accusation and counter-accusation in wartime. Although division always recedes with the fading cause, the military, with its "no substitute for victory," retains its distrust of politicians; while they, on the

for the trial of Major General Howe, December 7, 1781," originally published in Philadelphia in 1782, reprinted in *Collections of the New York Historical Society for the Year 1879* (New York, 1880), 213-311.

79. Clinton to Prevost, October 20, 1778, Clinton to Tonyn, October 20, 1778, *Report on American Manuscripts*, I, 314.

80. Tonyn to Clinton, July 13, 1779, *Report on American Manuscripts*, I, 469-70.

other hand, remain haunted by Clemenceau's remark on the importance of war. One can only hope, in the historical process, that timely cooperation will prevail as necessary to prevent either the disaster of Caesar— or that of Cicero.

EAST FLORIDA AS A LOYALIST HAVEN

by LINDA K. WILLIAMS*

WHEN THE American Revolution broke out, East Florida, a British colony since 1763, supported the mother country and offered refuge to those in other American colonies who were loyal to the crown. East Florida became a loyalist haven when George III ordered Governor Patrick Tonyn to issue a proclamation in November 1775 inviting them to come to St. Augustine. Tonyn was also authorized "for the encouragement of such persons as may under these cruel Circumstances be induced to seek a happy Asylum in the Province, to make out for them gratuitous Grants of Land exempt from Quit Rents for Ten Years"¹ Copies of this proclamation were distributed in the southern colonies and posted in Charleston and Savannah.²

Encouragement to flee to St. Augustine came not only from Florida, but also from the rebel governments. South Carolina's assembly passed an act requiring all free male inhabitants to swear allegiance to the state; those refusing were to sell their property and emigrate within a month.³ Georgia and North Carolina enacted similar legislation, aimed at encouraging those who might still be undecided to join the patriot cause, or to leave, since they were considered a hostile threat.

For some who tried to fight for Britain, the patriots utilized tar and feathering, lynching, and other appropriate treatment. Men such as Thomas Brown of South Carolina and Georgia, who had experienced tar and feathering, scorplings with hot irons, and burnings that resulted in the loss of toes, believed that East Florida could serve as a base for offensive operations against the southern colonies.⁴ By the time of the signing of the Declaration

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1. Proclamation by Patrick Tonyn, November 2, 1775, Great Britain, Public Record Office, Colonial Office, 5/556:68.
2. Wilbur Henry Siebert, ed., *Loyalists in East Florida, 1774-1785: The Most Important Documents Pertaining Thereto, Edited With An Accompanying Narrative*, 2 vols. (DeLand, 1929), I, 24.
3. *Ibid.*, 61.
4. Tonyn to George Germain, January 7, 1777, CO 5/557:96.

of Independence, loyalists from the Carolinas, Georgia, and other colonies, were already leaving their homes, lands, and much of their personal property in order to flee to East Florida.

There is no simple reason why approximately twenty per cent of the white Americans decided to remain loyal to Great Britain.⁵ There were loyalists in all the thirteen colonies, and they could be found in every social and economic class. Some, like John Alsop of New York, actively fought for colonial reform as "long as a door was left open for a reconciliation with Great Britain."⁶ Others were crown officials or in positions that made them politically or financially dependent on colonial ties with the mother country. Religious groups, with the exception of Jews and Catholics, who constituted only a small percentage of the population, tended to remain loyal.⁷ Also, those whose former nationality was non-English, generally supported the King.⁸ Basically, however, loyalists made up a conservative minority that was unwilling to disallow its allegiance for possible independence.⁹

Besides Thomas Brown, other early refugees to East Florida included Daniel McGirth of Georgia and Moses Kirkland of South Carolina, who originally had been active supporters of the rebel cause.¹⁰ John Stuart, superintendent of Indian affairs for the Southern District, arrived in St. Augustine in 1775, as did Allan Cameron of South Carolina, whose role in the unsuccessful loyalist attempt to separate the southern colonies from the north had landed him in a Philadelphia jail.¹¹ Among those who emigrated from Georgia were some "families of note," members of the council, attorneys, civil officials, and merchants.¹² Poor farmers and some plantation owners, bringing their slaves with them, also began arriving. When it became apparent that the conflict would not end quickly, the number of loyalists moving to Florida increased. In April 1778 Governor Tonyn informed George Ger-

5. Paul H. Smith, "The American Loyalists: Notes on Their Organization and Numerical Strength," *William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, XXV (April 1968), 261, 269.

6. Catherine S. Crary, ed., *The Price of Loyalty: Tory Writings from the Revolutionary Era* (New York, 1973), 6.

7. William H. Nelson, *The American Tory* (Oxford, 1961), 90.

8. *Ibid.*, 89.

9. North Callahan, *Royal Raiders: The Tories of the American Revolution* (Indianapolis, 1963), 43.

10. Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, I, 26-27.

11. *Ibid.*, 25, 28-29.

12. Tonyn to Germain, May 19, 1776, CO 5/556:287.

main that some 400 loyalists, "that have been mostly forced to shelter in the Woods in Carolina and Georgia, have by the assistance of our Rangers arrived in this province."¹³ The flight into Florida was not a simple undertaking. One group of refugees, arriving at St. Augustine on August 28, 1776, woke the next day to find that the vessel that had brought them, probably still containing most of their belongings, had been captured by patriots.¹⁴ Those traveling to Florida from the Georgia backcountry and the Carolinas had to be concerned with possible rebel attacks.

Many refugees, bringing with them their slaves and plantation tools, hoped to secure land which they could cultivate. Land had always been easy to obtain in the colony, even by those who held it only for speculation. However, when the loyalists began arriving in the 1770s, most of the valuable land had already been granted, or it was possessed by the Indians. Noting that much of the granted property had never been cultivated, forty-nine Georgian refugees in 1776 petitioned the government for grants of these unsettled lands. After considering the request that winter, the Board of Trade authorized Governor Tonyn to begin issuing up to 500 acres of land from the unsettled tracts to the refugees. Those who owned the properties were given six to twelve months to show cause why the acreage should not be transferred to the emigres.¹⁶ With the increasing number of refugees, more and more land was needed, and in 1781 the East Florida Assembly was again discussing the problem of securing acreage for these loyalists.¹⁷ Apparently many large landowners in 1776 had been able to retain their uncultivated properties. Refugees living in St. Augustine occupied houses that had been left behind by the Spanish when they moved out in 1763. They could also petition the council for town lots to build on. Most were dependent upon the benevolence of the government to help them get settled in their new surroundings.

13. Tonyn to Germain, April 28, 1778, CO 5/558:128-29.

14. Tonyn to Germain, September 8, 1776, CO 5/556:390.

15. Of the 1,438,000 acres granted in East Florida by 1777, only 222,000 acres were settled, leaving 1,216,000 acres of granted land uncultivated. CO 5/557:22-23; Georgian refugees to ?, November 1, 1776, CO 5/557:22-23.

16. Board of Trade to Tonyn, March 25, 1777, CO 5/563:509-13.

17. Commons House of Assembly, June 6, 1781, CO 5/572:112-14. Microfilm copies, Florida State University, Tallahassee.

Although loyal to the crown and anxious to maintain the integrity of the empire, East Floridians were primarily concerned with the safety of their own colony. In the summer of 1776, Governor Tonyn, with approval of his council, summoned the inhabitants to a meeting at the state house, at which time he proposed the formation of a militia for the defense of the province.¹⁸ Floridians strongly supported the proposal.¹⁹ The refugees, however, were not only concerned about the defense of their new home, but also about the fighting in the colonies they had left behind. For instance, 350 refugees from Carolina did not wait for the governor or anyone else to form a provincial corps. They sent a memorial to Brigadier General Augustine Prevost, who then forwarded it to General William Howe, demanding to be a part of two battalions of provincial troops and be allowed to join the king's forces.²⁰ Howe was in the process of turning over his command to Sir Henry Clinton, and it was the latter who approved the formation of the South Carolina Royalists in 1778.²¹ Colonel Alexander Innes, former secretary to Governor William Campbell of South Carolina, was given command, Joseph Robinson was made lieutenant colonel, and Evan McLaurin, major of that corps.²²

The South Carolina Royalists was the second major corps of provincial troops organized in St. Augustine. In June 1776, Tonyn authorized Thomas Brown to form a loyalist regiment, the East Florida Rangers, to help defend the province.²³ Brown had been commissioned lieutenant colonel.²⁴ Later the Royal North Carolina Regiment and the St. Augustine Grenadiers were also organized.²⁵

Many loyalists not in the provincial corps looked for other

18. Council Minutes, August 15, 1776, CO 5/571:202.

19. Tonyn to Germain, August 21, 1776, CO 5/556:370.

20. Augustine Prevost to William Howe, April 24, 1778, Great Britain, Public Record Office, British Headquarters (Sir Guy Carleton) Papers, 1124:2. Hereinafter cited as BHQP. See also Memorial of George Dawkins and Edward Lane to Prevost, BHQP 1125:2. Microfilm copies, Florida State University.

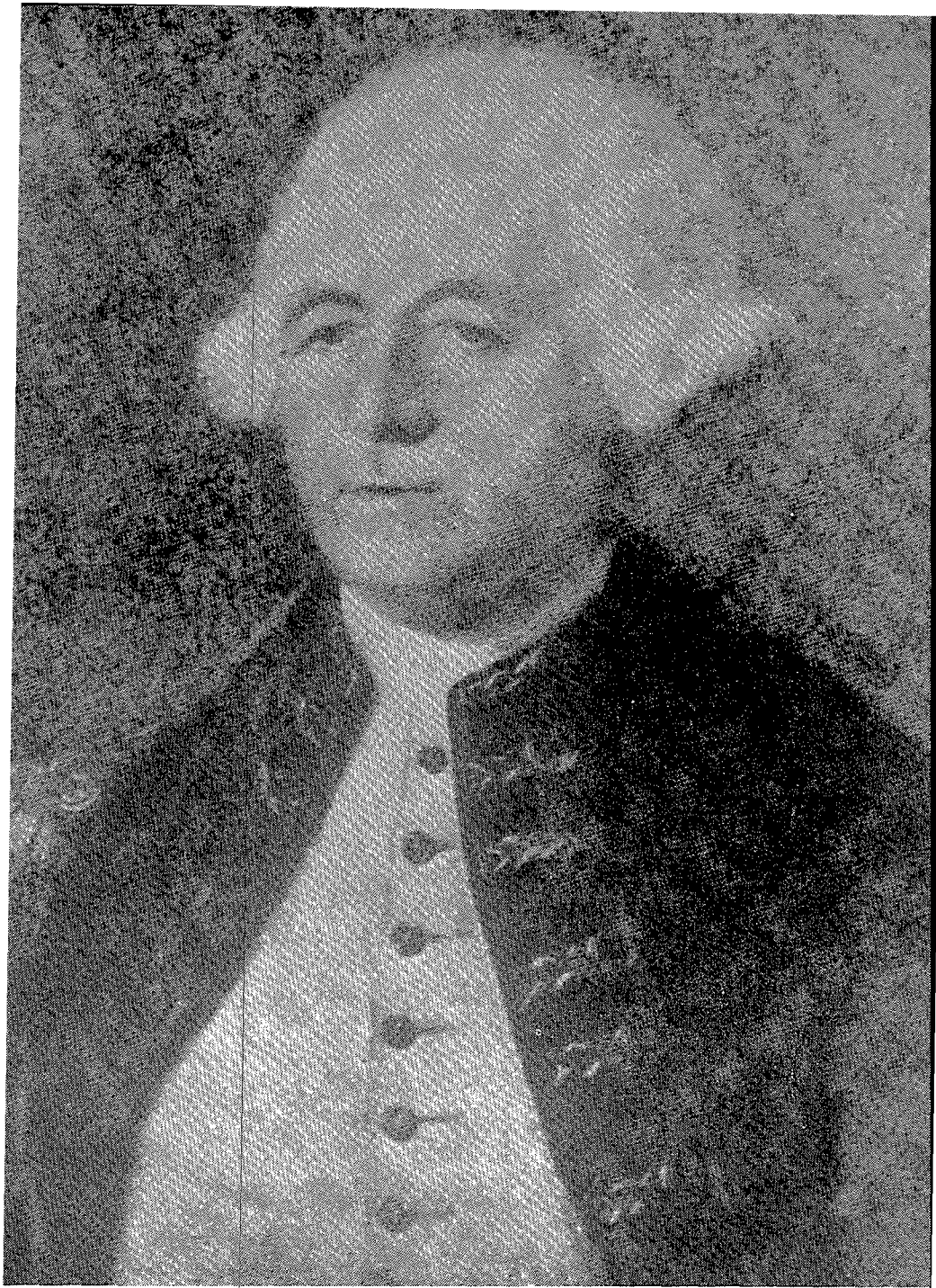
21. Henry Clinton to Prevost, June 3, 1778, BHQP 1203:1.

22. Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, I, 52-53.

23. Gary D. Olson, "Loyalists and the American Revolution: Thomas Brown and the South Carolina Backcountry, 1775-1776," Part II, *South Carolina Historical Magazine*, 69 (January 1968), 54.

24. Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, I, 38.

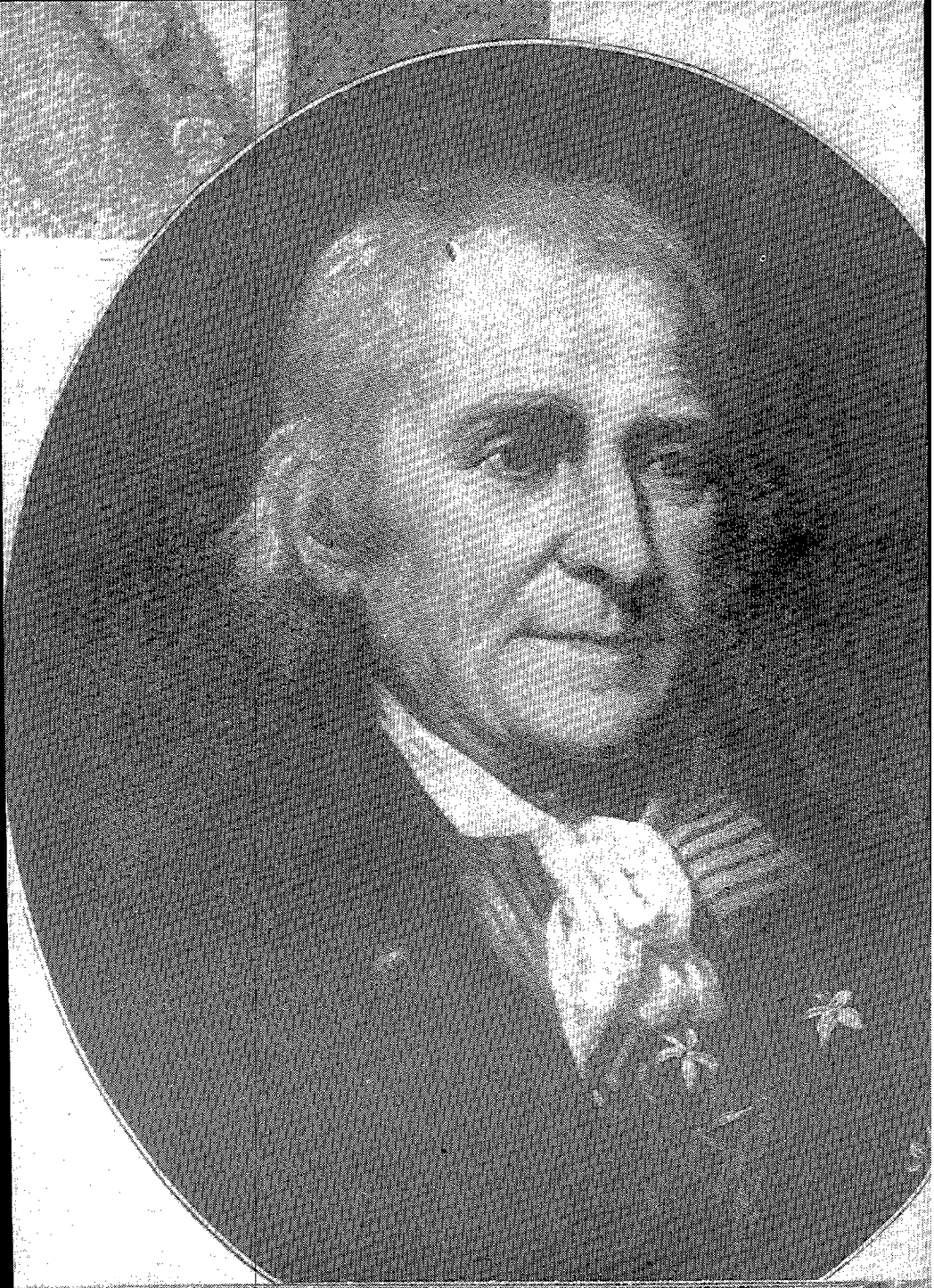
25. Burton Barrs, *East Florida in the American Revolution* (Jacksonville, 1932), 39.



General Augustine Prevost, veteran of the Seven Years' War and commander of Britain's Sixtieth Regiment in East and West Florida. From Wright, *Florida in the American Revolution*, opposite p. 96.



Patrick Tonyn, Governor of East Florida, 1774-1784. From J. Leitch Wright, Jr., *Florida in the American Revolution* (Gainesville, 1975), opposite p. 96.



William Bartram, naturalist, traveller, and author who described the British Floridas in his works. From a reproduction in the P. K. Yonge Library.



Andrew Turnbull, founder of the New Smyrna settlement approximately seventy miles of St. Augustine. From a reproduction in the P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida, Gainesville.

means to provide for themselves and their families. Those who petitioned for land, planned to begin new plantations. Others, not accustomed to farm life, had more difficulty. In his letter to John Stuart requesting that he move to St. Augustine, Prevost felt that superintendent's residence there "would enable you to procure a Number of White people for the purposes mentioned in Sir Wm. Howes letter . . . many of the frontier inhabitants of this Province who have been drove from their settlements and many refugees from the revolting Colonies would be happy to be employed."²⁶ Governor Tonym also tried to find employment for refugees. In 1780 he wrote to Clinton about John Martin, "a very respectable Gentleman who took refuge in this Province about four years ago, leaving considerable property in Georgia," who was deserving of employment.²⁷

During the early war years, with the threat of invasion from Georgia and the constant arrival of refugees, East Florida continued to be dependent upon Britain. Realizing this, the Parliament increased the colony's contingent fund in the 1776-1777 budget by £1,000.²⁸ While most of this money went for the purchase of provisions, the needs of the colony were only temporarily relieved.²⁹ In 1778 Prevost realized that the increasing population "renders it absolutely requisite to receive a supply of provisions."³⁰ The St. Augustine government from June 1777 through December 1778 spent over £2,363 to meet expenses of refugees and prisoners, an amount larger than the funds allotted in the budget. Tonym had to request an additional £1,200.³¹

By 1780 the colony was adjusting to the demands of its burgeoning population, as evidenced in Tonym's report to Germain: "The Planters have been successfully employed in raising Grain and making Naval Stores. The season has been remarkably rainy, the Crops have turned out well, and the Inhabitants have enjoyed perfect health . . . the Inhabitants were formerly supplied with Grain from Carolina and Georgia, this year they have raised sufficient for our consumption."³²

26. Prevost to John Stuart, June 14, 1777, BHQP 585:3.

27. Tonym to Clinton, June 7, 1780, BHQP 2817:1-2.

28. Germain to Tonym, April 12, 1777, CO 5/557:53.

29. General account of contingent expenses, June 30, 1770, CO 5/557:291-92.

30. Prevost to Howe, April 27, 1778, BHQP 1124:2.

31. General account of expenses, February 1779, CO 5/559:63-64; Tonym to Germain, April 28, 1778, CO 5/558:129.

32. Tonym to Germain, December 9, 1780, CO 5/560:50-51.

Tonyn also reported on exports: "40,000 barrels of naval stores have been shipped in the course of last year; and I flatter myself next year will give a considerable additional increase, as I look for several refugee families [*sic*] from the neighboring colonies, who shall receive every encouragement and protection in my power."³³ Florida's growing population now seemed to be beneficial to the colony.

Prior to the Revolution, loyalists had enjoyed the benefits of an elected assembly, and when they arrived in Florida they helped raise desires there for a similar form of government. The first indication of this is found as early as June 1775, in the presentments of the grand jury for the province of East Florida. The need for an elected assembly was based on the idea that having one would "induce many to seek that Assylum [*sic*] among us they cannot now enjoy in older Provinces."³⁴ Nevertheless, hundreds of loyalists fled to East Florida during the early war years, despite its lack of a representative body. The demand for an assembly, however, increased along with the population. In a letter, Tonyn commented that "there prevails in America a thirst for power, and a desire of consequence unknown among the lower class of people in Europe: This perhaps more the foundation of the cry for a provincial legislature than the . . . want of local laws, and a security of their property in Negroes."³⁵ Tonyn also noted that the colony was still too poor to contribute to the expenses of government.³⁶ This, along with his fear that an elected assembly may suggest hints unfavorable to true constitutional principles," deterred him from calling for elections until March 1781.³⁷ Of the nineteen members elected at that time, only four—Robert Payne, George Kemp, Jacobus Kepp, and Francis Levett—were in the colony early enough to be included in "A List Of the Inhabitants of East Florida, Their Employs, Business and Qualifications in Science from 1763 to 1771," drawn up by De-Brahm.³⁸ At least five—John Mowbray, William Moss, John

33. *Ibid.*, 51.

34. Grand jury to ?, June 21, 1775, CO 5/556:3.

35. Tonyn to Germain, December 9, 1780, CO 5/560:52.

36. *Ibid.*

37. *Ibid.*

38. William Gerard De Brahm, *De Brahm's Report of the General Survey in The Southern District of North America*, ed. Louis De Vorse, Jr. (Columbia, 1971), 180-86.

Martin, Benjamin Lord and Peter Edwards— came to St. Augustine after the war had started. Many refugees seemed willing to become politically active in East Florida.

Even before the news of Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown reached St. Augustine, conditions were improving for its inhabitants. British victories had removed the threat of patriot attacks, and the fear of the Spanish was lessened by the defense programs. The colonists now numbering around 10,000, were beginning to produce enough goods for their own needs, as well as naval stores and indigo for profit. Finally, the people had achieved a voice in government when the assembly began meeting in 1781. The loyalists also felt secure in the regard of the mother country and when news of the vote in Parliament to seek a peaceful settlement with the United States reached St. Augustine, few probably realized how involved their future was in that decision.

The resolution to end the war passed Commons February 27, 1782. Early in April, Sir Guy Carleton, the new commander in chief of the British forces in America, was on his way to New York with orders to withdraw the troops from that city as well as the garrisons in Charleston and Savannah.³⁹ Prior to his arrival, his predecessor, Sir Henry Clinton, informed Lieutenant General Alexander Leslie in Charleston to prepare for the evacuation of troops from the whole Southern District, which included East Florida.⁴⁰ Carleton supported these orders, and on May 23, 1782, he informed Leslie to expect transports for the evacuation of Savannah and St. Augustine, to carry troops, provisions, and those loyalists who wished to depart.⁴¹

For the next month Leslie, Carleton, and even King George III were bombarded with arguments against the evacuation of the troops in St. Augustine, the sure step to the downfall of the entire colony. The East Florida landowner and merchant James Penman, who learned confidentially of the planned evacuation, was the first to voice his protest. In a letter he stressed the economic reasons against the decision: loss of naval stores produced

39. Charles Loch Mowat, *East Florida as a British Province, 1763-1784* (Berkeley, 1943; facsimile edition, Gainesville, 1964), 135.

40. *Ibid.*

41. Sir Guy Carleton to Alexander Leslie, May 23, 1782, BHQP 4636:1.

in the colony, lack of employment for Negroes, and the loss of the £250,000 already spent on East Florida by Great Britain.⁴²

Penman was not the only Charlestonian to protest the removal of troops from St. Augustine. Apparently resigned to the loss of their own colony, South Carolina loyalists sent a memorial to Leslie, which supported Penman's arguments, but also stressed the value of East Florida as an asylum for refugees.⁴³ Leslie received another memorial two days later, this one from South Carolinians who owned land in East Florida.⁴⁴ They and others who were to follow pointed out the fact that "East Florida has been held out by Governor Tonyn in Several Proclamations as an Asylum for Refugees," and now they wanted to make use of that condition.⁴⁵

The strongest protestations came from East Floridians through their newly-formed assembly. In June 1782, the legislators sent an address to the governor and drew up resolutions, presenting arguments against the military evacuation, and requesting that more troops, arms and ammunition, and provisions be sent into the province.⁴⁶ In addition, the Florida assembly dispatched a message to the King, thanking him for the "Paternal Care and Royal Bounty which we have so fully and effectually experienced from the Cession of this Province to Your Majesty's Crown and Dominions," secondly expressing their loyalty and astonishment at the news of the evacuation.⁴⁷ They implored George III "to extend his immediate aid and protection to Men who trust they are still deemed Subjects of the British Empire."⁴⁸

Before these petitions and memorials were ever composed, and in fact only four days after he had sent the orders to Leslie, Carleton decided to postpone the evacuation of St. Augustine. This was not occasioned by any special value that East Florida might have, but was simply due to the lack of tonnage available for troop removal.⁴⁹ Leslie thus informed Tonyn, who reported it

42. James Penman to Leslie, June 5, 1782, BHQP 4739:1-7.

43. Inhabitants of South Carolina to Leslie, June 12, 1782, BHQP 9984:3.

44. Memorial of proprietors of lands in East Florida to Leslie, June 14, 1782, BHQP 4793:1-3.

45. *Ibid.*, 1.

46. East Florida Assembly to Tonyn, June 19, 1782, BHQP 4810:1-3; Resolutions of the assembly, June 20, 1782, BHQP 4816:1-3.

47. East Florida Assembly to George III, June 21, 1782, BHQP 4824:1.

48. *Ibid.*, 2-4.

49. Carleton to Leslie, May 27, 1782, BHQP 4667:1.

to the assembly in July 1782.⁵⁰ East Floridians believed that their loyalty and value to Britain were the basis of this decision. In a letter to Carleton, Tonym noted that the people of East Florida "flatter ourselves that the affection due to Subjects so distinguished for their loyalty, as these are, and the very commodious asylum this Province will prove . . . will induce His Majesty to continue it under his royal protection, and that time will evince the wisdom of such measures, and the importance of this colony to the trade and Commerce of Great Britain."⁵¹ The assembly expressed similar sentiments, thanking Tonym, Leslie, and Carleton for allowing the colony to remain under British protection.⁵²

In fact, when Carleton informed Leslie that St. Augustine was not to be evacuated along with Charleston and Savannah, he indicated that this action probably would take place the following winter or spring, and he hoped that the inhabitants would begin preparing for that eventuality.⁵³ It is unknown whether or not Leslie passed this information on to Tonym or to anyone else, but if so, the news went unheeded.⁵⁴ To the refugees the loyal colony of East Florida appeared to be the perfect asylum.

In the summer of 1782 the evacuation of British troops and loyalists from Georgia and South Carolina began. In order to determine how many were coming to East Florida and to supervise the distribution of provisions, John Winniett and several assistants were appointed. Their records indicate that 2,925 whites and 4,448 blacks emigrated to East Florida during the Georgia-South Carolina evacuation.⁵⁶ As a result, the population in 1783 increased to between 16,000 and 17,375.⁵⁷

Once in East Florida these loyalists, like their predecessors,

50. Tonym to East Florida Assembly, July 23, 1782, BHQP 5133:1.

51. Tonym to Carleton, July 31, 1782, BHQP 5174:2.

52. East Florida Assembly to Tonym, August 16, 1782, BHQP 3321.1-3.

53. Carleton to Leslie, May 27, 1782, BHQP 4667:1-2.

54. A great many loyalists had doubts about moving to East Florida. Although not worried about the possible evacuation of East Florida, men in both Georgia and South Carolina realized that provisions were scarce in that colony and decided to move with their slaves and other property to Jamaica. Leslie to Carleton, July 19, 1782, BHQP 5104:1-3.

55. Archibald McArthur to Leslie, October 30, 1782, BHQP 6036:2.

56. Returns of refugees, December 23, 1782, BHQP 6475:1; April 20, 1783, BHQP 7468:1.

57. Wilbur H. Siebert, "The Dispersion of the American Tories," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, I (September 1914), 195; Mowat, *East Florida*, 137.

needed assistance, and land was granted without quit rents.⁵⁸ The refugees also needed provisions. In letters to various officials, Tonym stressed the needs of the loyalists, who had been "driven from their Homes, [and have] arrived in this province, without provisions, money, cloathing, or implements of agriculture."⁵⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Archibald McArthur, military commander in St. Augustine, also wrote to Carleton noting the desperate need for supplies in East Florida.⁶⁰ Even the loyalists themselves were petitioning for help.⁶¹ As a result, beef, pork, butter, rice, oatmeal, and peas were supplied by Great Britain and rationed out to the refugees and their slaves.⁶²

Upon their arrival, most refugees congregated either in St. Augustine or near the bluff on the St. Johns River, at least until arrangements could be made for new lands and farming tools. St. Johns Bluff became a major commercial center. By the spring of 1783 the town had 300 houses, a public house, dry goods store, two taverns, and a livery stable. An Anglican missionary was there to conduct religious services, and the town had both a physician and freemasons lodge.⁶³ More importantly, St. Johns Bluff was another port through which products could travel to and from East Florida.

Those who acquired lands settled down to a life not unlike that which planters and farmers had been leading in the colony since 1763. The chief crops were still indigo, rice, and corn; naval stores and lumber were among the chief exports, and blacks provided the main work force.⁶⁴ Some men found East Florida a disappointing replacement for their previous holdings, like James Butler, a Georgian refugee, who bitterly complained of the unhealthy climate in East Florida.⁶⁵ Most were content to make the best of their new homes, however, and to plea for redress from the mother country for their losses.

St. Augustine also experienced a rapid growth in population because of the evacuation of Savannah and Charleston. Since most

58. Carleton to Tonym, March 20, 1783, BHQP 7172:1-2.

59. Tonym to the Earl of Shelburne, November 14, 1782, CO 5/560:235.

60. McArthur to Carleton, January 9, 1783, BHQP 10049:1.

61. Georgian refugees to Carleton, January 4, 1783, BHQP 6708:1-3.

62. Return of provisions, June 25, 1783, BHQP 10128:1.

63. Barrs, *East Florida in the American Revolution*, 40.

64. McArthur to Carleton, May 23, 1783, BHQP 7750:1-3.

65. Robert S. Lambert, "The Flight of the Georgia Loyalists," *Georgia Review*, XVII (Winter 1963), 440.

of the lots and houses already in the town were occupied, later emigres built cabins out of thatched palmetto leaves on the outskirts of town.⁶⁶ In addition to the loyalists, there were regular soldiers, provincial troops, Indians, and slaves living in St. Augustine.⁶⁷

The increasing number of people, however, brought new activities to the colonial capital. Among the refugees was David Zubly from Savannah, who in 1783 printed John Tobler's *Almanack* on a press in his own home. It was the first book to be printed in British East Florida.⁶⁸ Another loyalist, Dr. William Charles Wells of South Carolina, established the first newspaper to be printed in the colony, the *East-Florida Gazette*, in the name of his older brother John.⁶⁹ This paper was printed from February 1783 to April 1784. Two books, *The Case of The Inhabitants of East-Florida* and an edition of Samuel Gale's *Essay II. On The Nature and Principles of Publick Credit*, were also printed in 1784 under the name of John Wells.⁷⁰

Social life in St. Augustine increased with the population. Taverns and bars were popular, and plays were performed in the statehouse. *The Beaux Stratagem*, *Miss In Her Teens*, *The Entertainment of Barnaby Rattle*, and *Douglas, A Tragedy* were staged with all-male casts to entertain the inhabitants and "for the benefit of the distressed Refugees."⁷¹

In April 1783 the news reached St. Augustine that the colony was to be returned to Spain. Along with the dispatches came assurances to the loyalists from Carleton that "they shall have every assistance that may be in my power to furnish them with, for removing to such places as they are desirous of going to."⁷² The East Florida Assembly responded graciously, noting their con-

66. Johann David Schoepf, *Travels in the Confederation, [1783-1784]* transl. and ed. Alfred J. Morrison, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1911), II, 231.

67. Charles Mowat, "St. Augustine Under the British Flag, 1763-1775," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XX (October 1941), 149.

68. Calhoun Winton, "English Books and American Readers in Early Florida," in Samuel Proctor, ed., *Eighteenth-Century Florida and the Revolutionary South* (forthcoming from the University Presses of Florida, Gainesville).

69. Douglas C. McMurtrie, "The Beginnings of Printing in Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XXIII (October 1944), 63.

70. *Ibid.*, 66-67.

71. *East-Florida Gazette*, February 22-March 1, May 10-17, 1783.

72. Carleton to McArthur, April 5, 1783, BHQP 7327:4.

fidence in Great Britain and in the belief that "everything will be done for alleviating our distresses"⁷³

Privately, however, the news was received with little enthusiasm. The colony was made up of settlers who had remained loyal to the crown before and during the Revolution, of refugees forced out of their homes and businesses by rebel troops, of men who had fought alongside British soldiers against fellow Americans, and of inhabitants who had already suffered the trauma of being evacuees. That the king and Parliament did not see the value of East Florida, which the loyalists had so thoroughly described in their petitions and memorials, was difficult for the inhabitants to accept.

One indication of the sentiments of the people of East Florida is in a letter written by Mary Stout, who with her husband Joseph, had settled in Florida before the American Revolution. In 1783 she described the impending upheaval as "the worst thing that could have hapened. . . . We know not what to do nor whear to go all our property being hear and very littell of it can be moved. . . . Nobody hear but what are dissatisfied to the Last degree [*sic*]."⁷⁴

A stronger note of dissatisfaction is revealed in a letter written by John Mullryne Tattnell, a refugee from Savannah who was in St. Augustine when news of the retrocession of East Florida to Spain arrived. He wrote that the peace terms were "the severest Shock our Feelings have ever had to struggle with."⁷⁵ Tattnell and other loyalists believed themselves to be deserted by their country and king, and unrewarded for their loyalty and service: "It's no small Comfort tho' 'That it's not our crimes, but our Virtues that have distressed us.' With Respect to myself . . . I have nothing which I can reproach myself, with regard to my Conduct during the War. The Part I acted was uniform, adhering to the Cause in which I first engaged— But that assails me not — We are all cast off; some few indeed recommended to the Mercy

73. Upper House of Assembly to Tonym, April 25, 1783, in Joseph Bryne Lockey, ed. and transl., *East Florida, 1783-1785: A File of Documents Assembled, and Many of Them Translated*, ed. John Walton Caughey (Berkeley, 1949), 101-02.

74. Mary Stout to her brother, April 28, 1783, in Barbara Gorely Teller, "The Case of Some Inhabitants of East Florida, 1767-1785," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XXXIII (October 1954), 102.

75. John Mullryne Tattnell to Sheet [?], May 30, 1783, CO 5/560:1.

of a merciless People: I shall ever tho' remember with Satisfaction that it was not I [that] deserted my King, but my King that deserted me."⁷⁶ George III alone was not to be blamed for the fate of the people. "Oh Englishmen where is now your National Honor? nothing but Bribery, Corruption & Treasons prevails in your Senate, who promised Protection & then . . . betrayed."⁷⁷

Not only were the preliminary peace agreements the reason for these bitter sentiments but also the treaty between Britain and the United States, by which "the real British Subjects are to be recommended by Congress to the different States to be taken out of the Confiscation Act but we, who have born Arms, exposed our Lives and Sacrifice our Properties . . . are particularly Thrown out in a most severe & pointed manner, instead of being the first provided for."⁷⁸ Tattnall and other loyalists in East Florida began even to question whether being Englishmen was worth the price they had paid. If a situation should occur like that which they had already experienced, or "Should England be engaged in another war . . . let her not expect that, out of thousands of us Refugees, there will be one who will draw a Sword in her Cause."⁷⁹

If these words expressed the private sentiments of the majority of the refugees, outwardly most remained loyal English subjects willing to accept the provisions and protection the mother country supplied. Once plans for evacuating the colony were formulated, the loyalists were dependent upon the government for transportation to Jamaica, England, Providence, Nova Scotia, and other British territories. Without this aid, evacuating East Florida would have been almost impossible, and few loyalists wanted to remain in the province.

The evacuation of East Florida took over two years to complete and the difficulties involved in it became ever more apparent. The dangerous St. Augustine bar, which had caused problems throughout the entire British period, encouraged many loyalists to embark instead from Amelia Harbor near the mouth of the St. Marys River.⁸⁰ Slaves were loaded promptly since their

76. *Ibid.*, 2.

77. *Ibid.*, 6.

78. *Ibid.*, 3.

79. *Ibid.*

80. Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, I, 156.

owners feared they might run away.⁸¹ Those who hoped to sell their lands and houses directly to the Spanish soon abandoned this idea since few Spaniards were coming to East Florida in the spring of 1784, and those who did were able to purchase property for a quarter of its value.⁸² Tonyn decided to send the fire engine, bell, and church pews to the Bahamas because he could not find a Spanish buyer for them.⁸³ Finally, many loyalists were forced to leave some of their belongings behind since space for everything could not be found on board the transports.⁸⁴ Nevertheless, when Johann David Schoepf visited the colony in the spring of 1784, he noted that "all the preparations are making for the transfer, and ships are continually going out, with goods and passengers, to the West Indies or Nova Scotia."⁸⁵

On August 10, 1785, Governor Tonyn reported that the evacuation of East Florida was completed.⁸⁶ Around 1,000 remained, 3,000 had returned to the American states, and another 4,000 were settling on lands along the Mississippi River.⁸⁷ The other loyalists traveled to British territories such as Jamaica, Nova Scotia, the Bahamas, and England.⁸⁸ Only a fraction of the East Floridians submitted claims to the British government and 372 received compensation for their losses, totaling just over £170,351.⁸⁹

Those who did submit claims represented only a few of the men and women who had suffered because of the American Revolution and the cession of East Florida to Spain. Probably the loyalists of East Florida agreed with John Mullryne Tattnell when he wrote to his friend expressing his "warmest wishes that you & [your] family may never experience the Calamities of war nor the Distress that we have so long had for a constant Companion."⁹⁰ For East Floridians, scattered all over the world by 1786, that was the price of loyalty.

81. Thelma Peters, "The Loyalist Migration from East Florida to the Bahama Islands," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XL (October 1961), 136.

82. Mowat, *East Florida*, 145.

83. Peters, "Loyalist Migration from East Florida," 134.

84. Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, I, 155.

85. Schoepf, *Travels in the Confederation*, II, 240.

86. Tonyn to Lord Sydney, August 10, 1785, Lockey, *East Florida, 1783-1785*, 574.

87. Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, I, 174.

88. Lockey, *East Florida, 1783-1785*, 11.

89. Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, II, viii.

90. Tattnell to Sheet [?], May 30, 1783, CO 5/560:8. For more on this general subject, see Linda K. Williams, "Loyalism in East Florida, 1763-1785" (M.A. thesis, Florida State University, 1975).

THE EAST FLORIDA SOCIETY OF LONDON, 1766-1767

by GEORGE C. ROGERS, JR.*

DURING THE GREAT speculation in American lands that preceded the American Revolution, there was more interest in the real estate of East Florida than in the property of any other region of British America. Charles Loch Mowat stated in his seminal study on British East Florida that the Privy Council in London issued orders in council for 2,856,000 acres of land in East Florida in the years from 1764 to 1770, while issuing orders for only 2,108,000 acres in Nova Scotia, New York, Quebec, and West Florida combined. Of the 227 orders for East Florida, 122 were issued in 1767, the peak year of British interest in East Florida real estate.¹ Although Mowat named some of the grantees, he was not able to analyze the forces that lay behind the petitions for those orders in council. Letters recently discovered in the papers of General James Grant at Ballindalloch Castle, Banffshire, Scotland, now permit the historian to present a more complete account.²

Mowat did note that many of the grantees were Scots, but he did not perceive that this speculation was another manifestation of the Scottish drive for success which undergirded the golden age of Scotland. In some strange way the defeat of the Jacobites at Culloden had triggered the Scottish renaissance of the last half of the eighteenth century.³ The Florida venture was a part of the larger story of Scotland, and, inasmuch as the rapaciousness of

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1. Charles Loch Mowat, *East Florida as a British Province, 1763-1784* (Berkeley, 1943; facsimile edition, Gainesville, 1964), 59, 58.
2. In June and July 1975 the author of this article surveyed some 100 bundles of papers in the Ballindalloch Castle Muniments which pertain to the development of East Florida. Sir Ewan Macpherson-Grant, the owner of these papers, has kindly given permission to quote from the manuscripts. Documents in the Ballindalloch Castle Muniments are hereinafter cited as BCM, followed by the appropriate bundle numbers.
3. For a recent explanation of this flowering of Scottish culture, see T. C. [Christopher] Smout, *A History of the Scottish People, 1560-1830* (New York, 1969).

the Scots excited suspicions among the colonists, and thus heightened anti-Scottish feelings in America, it was also a part of the story of the coming of the American Revolution.

Lord Adam Gordon, the fourth son of the second Duke of Gordon, made an extensive American tour in 1764 and 1765, visiting the West Indies, the Floridas, and the mainland colonies. His principal purpose was to visit his regiment in the West Indies, but he was too perceptive an observer not to note the resources of each part of the empire through which he traveled.⁴ There was an admixture of prospecting in the tour.⁵ While in St. Augustine Lord Adam was the guest of Colonel James Grant, a fellow Highlander who had fought in America during the French and Indian War, most notably as commander of the 1761 expedition against the Cherokees on the frontiers of South Carolina.⁶ Grant, because of his considerable knowledge of American affairs, had been appointed governor of East Florida on October 8, 1763.⁷ Lord Adam was obviously excited by the possibilities of exploiting Florida, for he became the leader of the East Florida lobby in London. The key letter in his correspondence with Grant is that of February 14, 1767, in which he revealed the existence of the East Florida Society of London and described its activities. A group of influential Britons had adopted the custom of meeting monthly at the Shakespeare Head, a tavern in Covent Garden known for the "life of dissipation" led there, where they discussed the prospects for founding estates in America.⁸ At these gatherings the health of Governor Grant was always drunk just after that of the king.⁹

In the letter, Lord Adam listed those attending the most recent meeting of the society. Their names are placed below, not

4. [Adam Gordon?], "Journal of an Officer Who Travelled in America and the West Indies in 1764 and 1765," in Newton D. Mereness, ed., *Travels in the American Colonies* (New York, 1916; facsimile edition, New York, 1961), 367-453.

5. Lord Adam Gordon (1726?-1801) was a member of the House of Commons, first for Aberdeenshire (1754-1768) and then for Kincardineshire (1774-1788). Edith, Lady Haden-Guest, "Lord Adam Gordon," in Lewis Namier and John Brooke, eds., *The History of Parliament, The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, 3 vols. (London, 1964), II, 510-12.

6. For Grant's South Carolina connections see Philip M. Hamer, George C. Rogers, Jr., and David R. Chesnutt, eds., *The Papers of Henry Laurens*, 5 vols. to date (Columbia, South Carolina, 1968-date), III, passim.

7. *Gentleman's Magazine*, XXXIII (October 1763), 518.

8. Bryant Lillywhite, *London Coffee Houses* (London, 1963), 525-27.

9. Gordon to James Grant, February 14, 1767, BCM 474.

in the order in which Lord Adam mentioned them, but in the chronological order of the dates on which each received his order in council for land in East Florida. The number of acres allotted is recorded after the name.

May 23, 1764	Denys Rolle	20,000 acres
July 20	Richard Oswald	20,000
	Arthur Jones	5,000
	Kendar Mason	5,000
September 6, 1765	John Hamilton	10,000
February 17, 1766	Robert Charles	5,000
June 18	Sir William Duncan	20,000
	William Elliott	20,000
	Lord Adam Gordon	20,000
	John Grayhurst	20,000
	Samuel Touchet	20,000
	Charles Townshend	20,000
	Dr. Andrew Turnbull	20,000
	George Udney	20,000
	Lord Richard Grosvenor	12,000
	William Knox	12,000
	Thomas Bradshaw	10,000
	James Penman	10,000
	Peter Taylor	10,000
December 3	Duke of Buccleuch	20,000
	Earl of Cassillis	20,000
	Sir John Delaval	20,000
	Lieutenant Colonel William Fawcitt	20,000
	Sir Alexander Grant	20,000
	Earl of Thanet	20,000
	Lord George Townshend	20,000
	William Crowle	10,000
	John Murray	10,000
	Robert Paris Taylor	10,000
May 13, 1767	John Augustus Ernst	20,000
	Baker John Littlehales	20,000

	Dr. William Stork	20,000
	4 children of Dr. Turnbull	20,000
	Emanuel Lutterloh	10,000
	John Murray	10,000
	Peter Paumier	10,000
	Joshua Wilson	10,000
	Frederick Rolfes	5,000
April 24, 1769	General James Oglethorpe	20,000 ¹⁰

The meeting of the East Florida Society mentioned in Lord Adam's letter was held after many of those attending had received their orders in council but just prior to the date on which others petitioned to receive theirs, thus in the middle of the period of intense interest in American speculations. Lord Adam Gordon was president of the society; Peter Taylor was vice president; and Joshua Wilson, secretary. Future membership in the society was to be limited to those who held lands in East Florida. All but three of those attending this meeting eventually received orders in council for land. General James Oglethorpe did petition for 20,000 acres on April 24, 1769, but never secured an order in council. Joseph Manesty and Thomas Thoroton apparently never applied for Florida lands.

These speculative fires had been sparked by the pamphlets of Dr. William Stork and fanned by the reports of Dr. Andrew Turnbull. Dr. Stork, a German, published after his return from Florida in 1766, a pamphlet in which he painted a glowing picture of that region, of its sunshine and climate so reminiscent of the eastern Mediterranean and so suitable for producing subtropical crops.¹² To a second edition Dr. Stork appended the journal of John Bartram, the Philadelphia botanist who was highly respected in London and who had just completed a survey of East Florida. The journal covered the period from August 1765 to April 1766.¹³ Lord Adam Gordon wrote Grant in May

10. Great Britain, Privy Council, *Acts of the Privy Council of England, Colonial Series*, 6 vols. (London, 1908-1912), IV, 813-15; V, 588-93.

11. Gordon to James Grant, February 14, 1767, BCM 474.

12. [William Stork], *An Account of East-Florida. With remarks on its future importance to trade and commerce* (London, 1766).

13. [William Stork], *An Account of East-Florida, with a Journal, kept by John Bartram of Philadelphia, Botanist to His Majesty for The Floridas; upon A Journey from St. Augustine up the River St. John's* (London, 1766). James Grant had sent Lord Bute, who was establishing a botanical

1766: "I am glad you have been so good to old Bartram— He's a Cunning Fox— but has credit among the Society, as they call themselves."¹⁴ Bartram's journal, added to the second edition, and the words of Denys Rolle, member of Parliament, added to a third, edition, endorsed Stork's favorable views.¹⁵ Lord Adam was not exaggerating when he wrote that "Doctor Stork's Pamphlet has sett us all Florida Mad."¹⁶ He had written that Dr. Stork is now "Puff General."¹⁷

The other stimulus was the first-hand report of Dr. Andrew Turnbull who, having made an exploratory visit to Florida, returned to London early in 1767. Turnbull had been a physician in the employ of the Turkey Company for many years at Smyrna in Asia Minor where he had met and married the daughter of a Greek merchant. His desire was to assist Greek Christians to leave Turkey for a home in the new world.¹⁸ His London friends included Sir William Duncan, physician to George III during his attack of porphyria in 1765, and Dr. George Macaulay who had arrived in London from Scotland in 1752, and had married Catharine Sawbridge, later the famous historian Mrs. Macaulay.¹⁹ Dr. Macaulay received an East Florida grant of 20,000 acres on June 18, 1766.²⁰ These physicians were in a position to introduce Dr. Turnbull to the men of power and influence.

Richard Oswald, who was one of the first grantees, wrote Grant in March 1767, that "the Florida Society makes a very respectable figure at the Shakespeare head once a Month, where

garden, some seeds that John Bartram had gathered. James Grant to Lord Bute, December 24, 1765, BCM 659. Grant also sent a long extract of the Bartram journal to the Board of Trade as an enclosure to his letter of April 26, 1766. Great Britain, Public Record Office, Colonial Office 5/541.

14. Gordon to James Grant, May 15, 1766, BCM 474.

15. [William Stork], *An Extract from the Account of East Florida, published by Dr. S — — — —. With the Observations of Dr. Rolle, etc.* (London, 1766).

16. Gordon to James Grant, May 15, 1766, BCM 474.

17. Gordon to James Grant, February 14, 1767, BCM 474.

18. Dr. Andrew Turnbull's attempt to establish a settlement in East Florida has been told in full in E. [Epaminondes] P. Panagopoulos, *New Smyrna: An Eighteenth Century Greek Odyssey* (Gainesville, 1966). See also Rogers, *Papers of Henry Laurens*, V, 231n.

19. Richard Oswald to James Grant, March 6, 1766, BCM 295; Stanley Ayling, *George the Third* (New York, 1972), 124, 129; William Prideaux, "Mrs. Catharine Macaulay (1731-1791)," Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee, eds., *The Dictionary of National Biography*, 21 vols (London, 1949-1950), XII, 407-09.

20. *Acts of the Privy Council of England, Colonial Series*, IV, 815.

your health begins the toast. Next Thursday [March 19] there is an extraordinary meeting summoned to receive Doctor Turnbull's Report of the Colony & its productions."²¹ It is not known what Turnbull said, but the report must have been most favorable for on March 27 a large number of applications for land were made; the orders in council were issued on May 13. The boom was certainly nourished by the prospectuses of Doctors Stork and Turnbull.

Many of those who petitioned on March 27 probably attended the meeting on March 19 mentioned by Oswald. Thus the membership of the East Florida Society certainly extended beyond the group identified by Lord Adam. Francis Levett, James Mill, Gilbert Ross, Patrick Tonym, George, Earl of Tyrone, and his brothers John and William Beresford, Thomas Wooldridge, Robert Bisset, Michael Herries, Charles Bernard, and George Laidler, Sr., who received orders in May 1767, and who were to play an active part in the history of the province before the American Revolution, moved within the orbit of the London club.²²

The order in council was not a grant; it was simply a warrant of survey. Each of the above persons had to find some one to travel to Florida, to select a spot of ground equal in extent to the number of acres mentioned in the order in council, have it surveyed, and then record the survey with the governor of the province who would then issue the formal grant. Even then the grant was not necessarily secure as each grantee had to settle "the Lands with protestant White Inhabitants within ten Years from the Date of the Grant in the proportion of one person for every hundred Acres."²³ This is the stipulation which enhanced the importance of Stork and Turnbull who had influence with the Germans and the Greeks who wanted to settle in America.²⁴

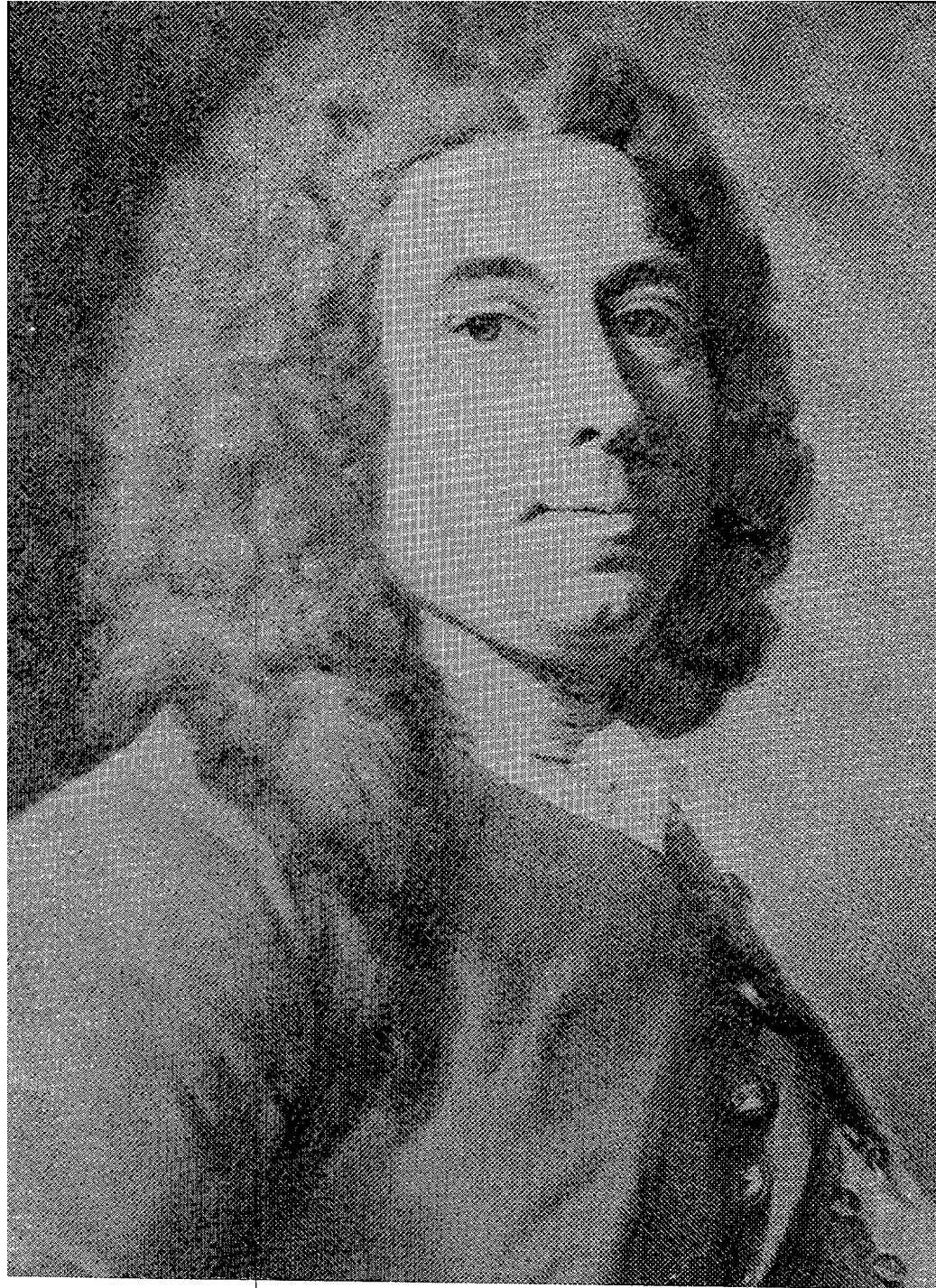
Florida was to be colonized in a different way from South Carolina and Georgia, land being taken up in large blocks rather than in small holdings. Henry Laurens, who acted as agent for some of these highly placed British gentlemen, continually warned them that it was almost impossible to locate good land

21. Oswald to James Grant, March 15, 1767, BCM 295.

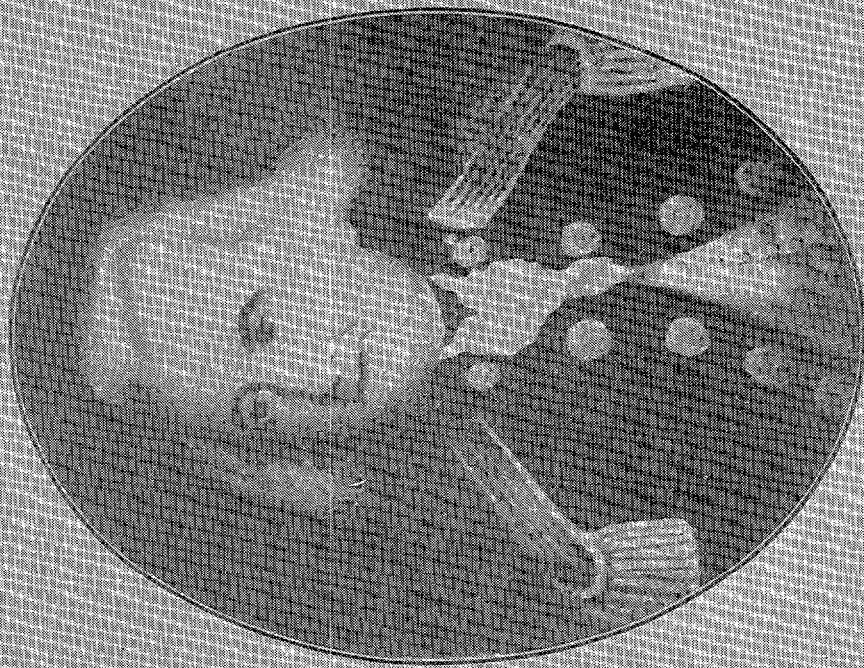
22. *Acts of the Privy Council of England, Colonial Series*, V, 590-91.

23. *Ibid.*, 589.

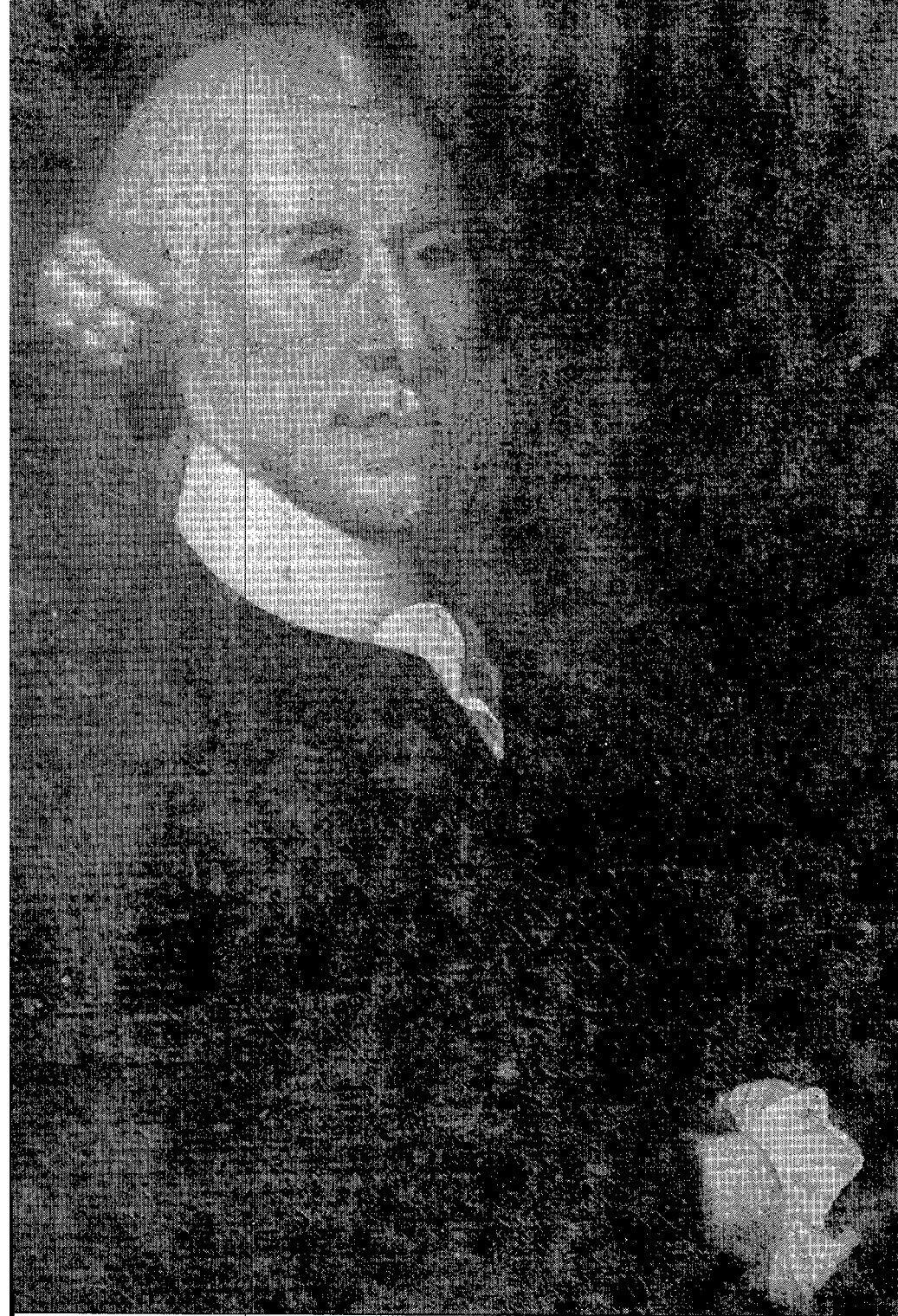
24. Did members of the Greek Orthodox Church meet the requirements for white Protestant settlers?



James Grant, Governor of East Florida, 1763-1770. From E. [Epaminondes] P. Panagopoulos, *New Smyrna: An Eighteenth Century Greek Odyssey* (Gainesville, 1966), opposite p. 172.



Elias Durnford and wife. Captain Durnford surrendered Mobile to Gálvez. From Peter J. Hamilton, *Colonial Mobile* (Mobile, 1897).



John Moultrie, Lieutenant Governor of East Florida, 1771-1774. From a reproduction in the P. K. Yonge Library.



Bernardo de Gálvez, Spanish conqueror of Mobile (March 14, 1780) and Pensacola (May 8, 1781). From Wright, *Florida in the American Revolution*, opposite p. 96.

in such large tracts.²⁵ The contrast in land policies helps to explain why South Carolina and Georgia took one course during the American Revolution and the Floridas a quite different one. Laurens made the significant point when he wrote Grant in 1769, that he had been urging a young South Carolinian to go and settle in Florida as he would "do more essential service in that Young Colony than fifty Noble Men with pattents for 20,000 Acres each."²⁶

It is not the purpose of this article to trace the steps by which these men tried to secure their grants and exploit their new plantations, but to analyze the membership of the East Florida Society in order to ascertain what categories of Britons were interested in these speculations.²⁷ The results of this analysis lend support to the interpretation of British politics made by Sir Lewis Namier that the government of Britain in the 1760s was corrupt, in that men in high places used their influence to expand their private interests. Namier utilized, however, examples drawn from the attempts to exploit Nova Scotia rather than the Floridas.²⁸

The principal groups were Scots and army contractors, the latter having supplied the armies in Germany during the Seven Years' War. Richard Oswald, a Scotsman, was representative of both groups. After making a fortune out of the bread contract for the armies in Germany, he was in the 1760s busy establishing his Scottish estate of Archencruive in Ayrshire.²⁹ The "German" Peter Taylor and his son Robert Paris Taylor had both been army contractors.³⁰ James Penman and William Makdougall, two

25. Rogers, *Papers of Henry Laurens*, V, 181, 188, 190-91, 195-96, 334-35, 361-62, 469, 476.

26. Laurens to James Grant, April 4, 1769, BCM 275.

27. However, the stories of the attempts by Richard Oswald, John Tucker, Peter Taylor, the Earl of Cassillis, the Earl of Moira, the Earl of Egmont, etc., to do so could indeed be told by exploiting the resources in these papers.

28. Lewis Namier, *England in the Age of the American Revolution*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1961), 270-73.

29. Peter Taylor to the Marquis of Granby, from the Camp at Wetter, August 29, 1759, British Museum, Additional Manuscripts 32895, 5-6; Rogers, *Papers of Henry Laurens*, IV, 506n.

30. Gordon to James Grant, May 15, 1766, BCM 474. Peter Taylor sat for Wells (1765-1766) and Portsmouth (1774-1777), and his son, Robert Paris Taylor, for Berwick-upon-Tweed (1768-1774). J. A. Cannon, "Peter Taylor," "Robert Paris Taylor," in Namier and Brooke, *History of Parliament, The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, III, 517-18, 518.

young Scotsmen, had served Oswald as clerks in Germany and were to act as Oswald's agents in Florida.³¹ Lieutenant Colonel William Fawcitt³² and Captain Robert Bisset were veterans of the same war.³³ Arthur Jones and Kendar Mason, who received their orders in council on the same day as Richard Oswald, were partners of Witter Cuming, the local provision contractor for the troops stationed in St. Augustine.³⁴ Circumstantial evidence points to Oswald as their sponsor. Out of the fifty members of the 1761 House of Commons who were merchants, Namier concluded that thirty-seven were contractors.³⁵

In 1764 Oswald was busy scouting opportunities for his former aides. He wrote a letter of introduction for John Lewis Gervais and James Theodore Rossel to Henry Laurens, and thereby put these two young Huguenots from Hanover in touch with the most successful developer of properties in South Carolina.³⁶ Grant asked Laurens: "Pray to what extent does Mr. Oswald go in the Advance of Money for them. They were in his Employment in Germany. He found them faithfull, and it is good in him to help them."³⁷ Grant actually thought that "those two German Gentlemen" were destined for East Florida, but Laurens picked Gervais to run a backcountry estate at Ninety Six and made use of Rossel as manager of his Broughton Island plantation in Georgia.³⁸ The two men did make a trip to Florida but, apparently on Laurens's advice, decided on careers in the

31. Taylor wrote James Grant in 1766 and again in 1769 that Penman and Makdougall had been abroad in his and Oswald's service. Taylor to James Grant, September 16, 1766, April 12, 1769, BCM 491.

32. William Fawcitt wrote James Grant, December 24, 1766, that he had been military secretary to the commander in chief, the Marquis of Granby. On March 20, 1767, he wrote that he wanted his lands to be near those of his friends, Adam Gordon, Richard Oswald, and Peter Taylor. Fawcitt to James Grant, December 24, 1766, March 20, 1767, BCM 244.

33. Fawcitt had known Captain Bisset for a long time; both had been in Germany. Fawcitt to James Grant, February 20, 1768, BCM 412. Bisset was a friend of Lord George Germaine. John Moultrie to James Grant, March 3, 1778, BCM 242.

34. James Grant to Witter Cuming and Kendar Mason, August 2, 1766, BCM 659; Laurens to Witter Cuming, October 12, 1767, in Rogers, *Papers of Henry Laurens*, V, 352.

35. Namier, *England in the Age of the American Revolution*, 227.

36. Laurens to Oswald, July 7, 1764, in Rogers, *Papers of Henry Laurens*, IV, 331-32.

37. James Grant to Laurens, April 3, 1765, BCM 659.

38. James Grant to Laurens, March 12, April 3, 1765, BCM 659. For Gervais and Rossel, see Rogers, *Papers of Henry Laurens*, V, 2, 33-34, 102-04, 581-83, 664-67, 670, 671.

neighboring provinces. Laurens was almost from the start pessimistic about the prospects for planting in Florida. His letters therefore provide a good contrast to the rosy optimism of Stork and Turnbull.³⁹

As the German war was such a source of profit in the 1750s, and as the contractors undoubtedly hovered around the commander in chief of the British forces, one might expect the entourage of the Marquis of Granby, who was the commander in Germany from 1759 to 1763, to have swarmed with future Florida speculators. The Marquis of Granby and his father, the Duke of Rutland, did, of course, represent one of the important political factions.⁴⁰ John Calcraft, the prince of army contractors, looms large in the Granby circle, often supplying the marquis with personal loans and obviously receiving favored considerations in return. Sir Lewis Namier has written that Calcraft used Peter Taylor as a source for war information which was funneled through Rotterdam to London and permitted Calcraft to speculate on "Change Alley."⁴¹ But the central figure in the Granby-Rutland family group was Thomas Thoroton who had married an illegitimate daughter of the Duke of Rutland and served him as his principal agent. Although Thoroton received no order in council for land in East Florida, he was a member of the East Florida Society and also of the Nova Scotia Society of London as well.⁴² Thoroton was the link between the East Florida and Nova Scotia speculators, particularly after Richard Oswald and James Grant decided to give up their Nova Scotia interests and concentrate on Florida.⁴³

It was British policy to block the movement of American settlers to the West and to channel migration instead to the North and South. The Proclamation of October 7, 1763, had called for

39. James Grant to Laurens, July 16, 1765, to Adam Bachop, August 13, 1765, BCM 659.

40. Lewis Namier, "George Manners," "John Manners," in Namier and Brooke, *The History of Parliament, The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, III, 102, 102-06.

41. Lewis Namier, "John Calcraft," in *ibid.*, II, 170-74.

42. Thomas Thoroton (1723?-1794) sat for Boroughbridge (1757-1761), for Newark (1761-1768), and Bramber (1769-1782). Lewis Namier, "Thomas Thoroton," in *ibid.*, III, 526-27.

43. Oswald to James Grant, February 24, 1766, BCM 295. Although there is no evidence that Thoroton received an order in council for East Florida lands, he does seem to have been involved. See James Grant to Laurens, August 31, 1766, BCM 659.

a line to be drawn along the crest of the Appalachian mountains beyond which settlement was not to extend. At the same time it established governments for the four territories acquired from France by the Treaty of Paris: the Grenadas, West Florida, East Florida, and Quebec. If the orders in council during the 1760s are any indicators, settlement was being directed into these new areas. The Scots who in the days of Lord Bute had an easy path to preferment received the four new governorships in 1763: Robert Melville was sent to the Grenadas, George Johnstone to West Florida, James Grant to East Florida, and James Murray to Quebec.⁴⁴ The development of West Florida and the Grenadas is similar to that of East Florida.⁴⁵ In each new province the Scots played a major part.

Richard Oswald wrote Grant early in 1766 that he had recently dined with their Nova Scotia friends at the home of Levett Blackburne, a dependent of the Duke of Rutland. Oswald, Blackburne, William Jackson, John Tucker, Thomas Pownall, and Benjamin Franklin were there— all the Nova Scotia men except Thomas Thoroton. At that gathering Oswald and Grant had been released from their interests in Nova Scotia so that they might concentrate on Florida.⁴⁶ John Tucker was the only member of this group who received large grants in both provinces.⁴⁷ Oswald provided Grant a further glimpse of this coterie when he explored Thoroton's close connections with the Rutland family and particularly with Lord Granby, "to whose generous protection," Oswald added, "I was so much obliged in Germany on many critical occasions." Oswald had been dining at the duke's with Lord Granby, Mr. Thoroton, and others where jokes passed round the table about the many settlements that would be needed to satisfy Mr. Thoroton's nine children.⁴⁸

Perhaps it is strange to think of such dissimilar geographic areas with such opposing climates as having much in common. But if one considers naval and military strategy, one can see that

44. *Gentlemen's Magazine*, XXXIII (October 1763), 518.

45. For the story of West Florida, see Cecil Johnson, *British West Florida, 1763-1783* (New Haven, 1943).

46. Oswald to James Grant, February 24, 1766, BCM 295. For Nova Scotia land booms during the 1760s, see John Bartlett Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia: A Marginal Colony during the Revolutionary Years* (New York, 1937), 92-121.

47. *Acts of the Privy Council of England, Colonial Series*, IV, 814, V, 597.

48. Oswald to James Grant, June 9, 1766, BCM 295.

these areas have a common significance, especially when viewed from London by the ministry. Halifax was the command post for both the admiral and general in charge of American forces. It was also the seat of the first appellate vice admiralty court established in the British provinces in America in 1764. St. Augustine evoked the same strategic considerations. These posts have been described as the two centers of strength to which the British army was withdrawn in the late 1760s.⁴⁹

Both regions needed people, and one must therefore examine the entrepreneurs of migration. Robert Grant, who was always specially interested in Nova Scotia, wrote to James Grant in 1772, after the latter had returned to Ballindalloch Castle on the Speyside, telling him that he should not be surprised to see two or three large vessels in Moray Firth next spring. He was implying that the surplus population of the Highlands might make good settlers for the northern lands.⁵⁰ William Gerard De Brahm had been just such an agent-entrepreneur in the southern region; his Ebenezer in Georgia was a model for future settlements.⁵¹ Dr. William Stork probably found his entree to London circles through the army contractors; he may have been on the staff of one of the field hospitals operated in Germany under the contract awarded to Robert Cathcart.⁵² John Augustus Ernst of Saxe, Emanuel Lutterloh, and Frederick Rolfes, undoubtedly following similar paths, went out to St. Augustine in the same ship with Dr. Stork.⁵³ White Protestants were needed to secure these numerous grants, and where better to find them than in Germany? In this context of looking to Scotland and Germany for help and assistance in colonization, the use of Scottish Highland regiments and Hessians during the American Revolution appears as a logical solution for British wartime manpower problems.

Some of the leading ministers of government were involved in the Florida schemes. Charles Townshend, chancellor of the ex-

49. John Shy, *Toward Lexington: The Role of the British Army in the Coming of the American Revolution* (Princeton, 1965), 269-78.

50. Robert Grant to James Grant, August 1, 1772, BCM 661.

51. William Gerard De Brahm, *Report of the General Survey in the Southern District of North America*, ed. Louis De Vorse, Jr. (Columbia, 1971), 9-10.

52. Peter Taylor to the Marquis of Granby, from the Camp at Wetter, August 29, 1759, British Museum, Additional Manuscripts 32895, 56.

53. There is a list of the passengers who went out in 1767 with Dr. Stork in the *Aurora* in BCM 412.

chequer in 1766 and 1767, and his financial advisor Samuel Touchet (whom some considered as the author of the famous Townshend duties of July 2, 1767) were both down for 20,000 acres each.⁵⁴ Townshend's brother, George Lord Townshend, who had served in Germany and who would shortly be named Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and Townshend's stepson, Henry, Duke of Buccleuch, were also members of the East Florida Society and were listed with 20,000 acres each.⁵⁵ The Duke of Grafton, the titular leader of the British government at this time, was represented by his hanger-on Thomas Bradshaw.⁵⁶ More remarkable was the largest grant of all, that for 100,000 acres to Lord Dartmouth and his four sons, which was made in 1770.⁵⁷ Charles Townshend and Lord Dartmouth went further than most grantees and attempted to send colonists to Florida.

Members of the Irish establishment were also grasping for new estates. The Earl of Tyrone and his two sons William and John Beresford each received an order in council for 20,000 Florida acres. John Beresford (1738-1805), who sat for forty-five years in the Irish House of Commons, was appointed to the Irish Privy Council in 1768 and soon thereafter made the Chief Commissioner for the Revenue in Ireland. At one time it was said that the Beresfords controlled one quarter of the jobs in Ireland, their assiduous devotion to self-interest winning for them the name of "the King-fishers."⁵⁸ Although John Earl of Moira, the father of the famous Lord Rawdon, only secured 10,000 acres in East Florida, he petitioned for 30,000 to 40,000 acres in Georgia and South Carolina on February 10, 1766.⁵⁹

54. Lewis Namier and John Brooke, *Charles Townshend* (London, 1964), 106-07, 130, 159, 174, 189-91.

55. The Honorable George Townshend (1724-1807) sat for Norfolk (1747-1764). Lewis Namier, "Hon. George Townshend," in Namier and Brooke, *History of Parliament, The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, III, 548-52; Henry Paton, "Henry Scott, Third Duke of Buccleuch (1746-1812)," *Dictionary of National Biography*, XVII, 963-64.

56. Thomas Bradshaw (1733-1774) sat for Harwich (1767-1768) and for Saltash (1768-1774). John Brooke, "Thomas Bradshaw," in Namier and Brooke, *History of Parliament, The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, II, 110-11.

57. For Dartmouth's career, see B. D. Bargar, *Lord Dartmouth and the American Revolution* (Columbia, 1965). The 100,000 acres for Lord Dartmouth and his four sons were granted on December 9, 1770. *Acts of the Privy Council of England, Colonial Series*, V, 593.

58. Edmund Curtis, *A History of Ireland* (New York, 1936), 322.

59. *Acts of the Privy Council of England, Colonial Series*, IV, 821. For the efforts made by the Earl of Moira to settle his East Florida lands, see BCM 443.

In spite of the army contractors and the aristocratic factions, the Scots represented the major group interested in Florida. James Grant was the magnet drawing his fellow countrymen to the province. Richard Oswald was the most active improver; Lord Adam Gordon the principal lobbyist; but the Hamiltons, Kennedys, Murrays, and Grants represented the core of the Scottish interest.

John Hamilton of Bargany, Ayrshire (1715-1796), who had asked for a grant of 20,000 acres but received only 10,000 on September 6, 1765, may well have been the most intriguing figure in this whole group as far as the student of South Carolina history is concerned. Although born Dalrymple, he succeeded to the Bargany estates and changed his name to Hamilton on the death of James, fourth Lord Bargany, in 1736. It was this John Hamilton who in 1737 had secured the Great Survey for 200,000 acres in the backcountry of South Carolina, the largest grant in the history of the province and state. Part of this survey had passed in the middle of the 1750s to Dr. John Murray and William Simpson, two Scotsmen prominent in the history of the province and who were later loyalists. In the 1760s Hamilton supported Bute and Greenville and was appointed master of the works on July 4, 1765; he naturally voted against the repeal of the Stamp Act. In 1769 he married a Montgomerie and thus became allied to Archibald Montgomerie, later Earl of Eglinton, who had fought against the Cherokees in 1760.⁶⁰

Thomas Kennedy, Earl of Cassillis, who lived at Culzean Castle on the Ayrshire coast, informed Grant in the spring of 1767 that he wanted Dr. Stork to locate his 20,000 acres. He remembered that he had once had the pleasure of entertaining Grant and Archie Montgomerie "at my house Culzean when I was Sir Thomas Kennedy and you were both on your way to Ireland to sail for America."⁶¹

60. John Hamilton (formerly Dalrymple) (1715-1796) sat for Wigtown Burghs or Wigtownshire from 1754 to 1768. Edith, Lady Haden-Guest, "John Hamilton (formerly Dalrymple)," in Namier and Brooke, *History of Parliament, The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, II, 569-70. For Hamilton's "Great Survey," see Robert L. Meriwether, *The Expansion of South Carolina, 1729-1765* (Kingsport, Tennessee, 1940), 116, 125-27.

61. Earl of Cassillis to James Grant, March 10, 1767, BCM 244. David Kennedy, who succeeded his brother Thomas as Earl of Cassillis on November 30, 1775, sat for Ayrshire (1768-1774). Edith, Lady Haden-Guest, "David Kennedy," in Namier and Brooke, *History of Parliament, The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, III, 4-5.

The Murrays were spread far and wide, always supported by the most successful member of the family, the Earl of Mansfield. John Murray of Philiphaugh (1726-1800) had received two grants of 10,000 acres each. As his brother James was the governor of Quebec, he was naturally speculating in lands on the Isle of St. John as well as in those of Florida. He acted as security for £7,000 for John Rutherford of North Carolina, a man with extensive interests in the southeastern region of North America.⁶² The Grants were almost too many to identify: Sir Alexander Grant,⁶³ Sir Archibald Grant,⁶⁴ Duncan Grant,⁶⁵ and Alexander, Robert, and William Grant.⁶⁶ They were slave traders, West Indian planters, Nova Scotia entrepreneurs.

Most of these Scotsmen were either members of Parliament or were closely related to sitting members. Ever since the union of England and Scotland the Scottish members of Parliament had been voted as a group by the ministry. The Duke of Argyll had been the first principal organizer of patronage and thus the deliverer of votes after the Hanoverian succession.⁶⁷ In the 1760s the Scots were managed first by the Marquis of Bute and then by his brother James Mackenzie Stuart.⁶⁸ That they voted as a bloc can be proved by the fact that sixty per cent of the Scots in the House of Commons opposed repeal of the Stamp Act.⁶⁹ And after 1770 Lord North would consistently have the support of the Scottish members, and none more so than James Grant himself. J. Steven Watson, the distinguished historian of the reign of George III, has explained the role of the Scottish members of Parliament in this way: "to run an employment agency for the

62. John, Murray of Philiphaugh (1726-1800) sat for Linlithgow Burghs (1754-1761). Edith, Lady Haden-Guest, "John Murray," in Namier and Brooke, *History of Parliament, The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, III, 187-89.

63. Sir Alexander Grant (?-1772) sat for Inverness Burghs (1761-1768). Edith, Lady Haden-Guest, "Sir Alexander Grant," in *ibid.*, II, 528.

64. The relationship of Sir Archibald Grant to James Grant has not been ascertained.

65. The relationship of Duncan Grant to James Grant has not been ascertained.

66. All of the documents in BCM 326 pertain to the accounts of James Grant with the London firm of Messrs. Alexander, Robert, and William Grant. The documents cover the years from 1760 to 1764.

67. Basil Williams, *The Whig Supremacy, 1714-1760* (Oxford, England, 1939), 257-58.

68. Smout, *History of the Scottish People*, 218.

69. Lewis Namier, *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III*, 2nd ed. (London, 1957), 154.

benefit of her surplus men of talent and the preservation of her great family connexions."⁷⁰ In return for plunder, they gave their votes.

But how does this story of land grabbing impinge upon the story of the American Revolution? How much of the greed of these aristocratic factions, army contractors, and the Scots was observed and understood by the leaders of South Carolina in the 1760s? Were they aware of the corrupting effect all this had upon British politics and therefore upon the ministry's plans for America? The South Carolinians had seen the Scots in South Carolina. They had observed Colonel Archibald Montgomerie's Highland Regiment march up and back from the mountains in 1760. That regiment wore the plaid, which Highlanders were no longer permitted to do in Scotland.⁷¹ In 1761 James Grant had led the royal troops against the Cherokees, accompanied this time by the Provincial Regiment under the command of Colonel Thomas Middleton. At the conclusion of that campaign the ill-feeling between Grant and Middleton had erupted in a duel between the two men. Christopher Gadsden had been particularly critical of Grant's conduct during the campaign and afterwards. When Lord Adam Gordon visited Charleston in the winter of 1764-1765, he noted that only Thomas Middleton and Henry Laurens had refused to associate with him.⁷²

It was Gadsden who was most suspicious of Scottish plots. Under the pseudonym of "Homespun Freeman," in 1766 he wrote of Butean, Jacobite rascals in Charleston as the persons most to blame for trying to ram the Stamp Act down the throats of the colonials.⁷³ The solid Scottish vote in Parliament against repeal could have only confirmed him in his fears. John Stuart, Indian commissioner for the southern region and leader of the Scots in Carolina, was the man who identified Christopher Gadsden to Grant as "Homespun Freeman."⁷⁴

The South Carolinians did indeed know that these large

70. J. Steven Watson, *The Reign of George III, 1760-1815* (Oxford, England, 1960), 282.

71. The wearing of the plaid had been forbidden after the '45 (1745 marks the date of the last Jacobite rebellion).

72. Gordon to James Grant, March 9, 1765, BCM 474.

73. *Country Journal*, February 18, 25, April 1, 1766; Christopher Gadsden to William Samuel Johnson, April 16, 1766, in Richard Walsh, ed., *The Writings of Christopher Gadsden, 1746-1805* (Columbia, 1966), 69-74.

74. John Stuart to James Grant, February 20, 1766, BCM 251.

Florida grants were being made in London. William Drayton wrote Grant from the banks of the Ashley River in the late summer of 1766, that he agreed with Francis Kinloch that the Duke of Buccleuch, Lord Townshend, and others, would have made a better bargain had they applied to Governor Grant "than where they did, for Tracts of Land in East-Florida."⁷⁵ Grant himself referred to these men as "our great grantees."⁷⁶ He wrote Henry Laurens: "I am of opinion with you, that large Tracts of good Land are not easily found, but the Country will do very well; and I do not approve of your having a poor Opinion of it. Be kind enough to keep that to yourself, 'till People have given it a tryal. Such a hint would alarm the English Grantees, and ruin the Province at once, for they will soon have a great part of it in their hands, if they go on at the rate they have done."⁷⁷ William Elliott commented that the body of East Florida planters were sufficiently rich so that one need not worry whether they could afford to settle their lands or not.⁷⁸ This is strong criticism by the South Carolina leaders of the East Florida land speculations. There was also a tension between the two groups with reference to their mode of planting. Francis Kinloch, Thomas Lynch, who made an inspection trip of Florida lands,⁸⁰ Henry Laurens, and William Drayton understood the problems of development; the great landlords of Britain were interested in being masters of thousands of acres not in the development of a sound American economy.

Isaac Barré made this very point when he wrote Grant on May 29, 1769, that Captains Samuel Barrington and John Jervis who had each secured an order in council on May 13, 1767, for 20,000 acres wanted to go no further than "having the title of being proprietors of lands in E. Florida; The former has got a Ship & is gone to the Mediterranean, the other is the Duke of Cumberland's Captain, & both I believe are keener for a french

75. William Drayton to James Grant, September 16, 1766, BCM 263.

76. Gordon to James Grant, February 14, 1767, BCM 474.

77. James Grant to Laurens, August 31, 1766, BCM 659.

78. William Elliott to James Grant, June 15, 1767, BCM 264.

79. For the Francis Kinloch-James Grant correspondence, see BCM 254.

80. Gordon wrote James Grant from New York stating that Lynch was interested in Florida lands. October 5, 1765, BCM 483. John Bowman informed Grant that Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Lynch were planning a voyage to St. Augustine. October 23, 1769, BCM 394. The Lynch family did visit East Florida in 1771. Tames Penman to James Grant, October 12, 1771, BCM 491.

& spanish war, than for the slow progress of cultivation in America.”⁸¹ To the governing classes of Britain the world was their oyster to be sucked up in one way or another.

The East Florida Society did continue to support the province. A treatise on the plantation culture and Negro police of St. Domingo translated from the French was sent by William Elliott to Grant, with the suggestion that it might provide useful advice for the governor of East Florida.⁸² But it was Grant’s own departure in May 1771 that eventually undermined the province.⁸³ His strong hand with all the support that he could marshal at home would henceforth be lacking. William Elliott confessed that the “real” Florida planters hated to see him return to Scotland.⁸⁴

The Florida experiment was an example of what the residents of the other North American mainland colonies did not approve – colonization of large tracts of land which had been obtained through influence at home. The East Florida Society and its operations in London symbolized the corruption of the society from which the Patriots desired to separate. Yet enough had been accomplished to mark East Florida society. Although Florida was in actuality not a great economic success, it could still be a base from which the other colonies could be harrassed. The agents of the great British landlords still resided there, and they naturally looked to London, not to Philadelphia. With John Stuart setting up his Indian superintendency in St. Augustine and with his deputies in all of the tribes in the southeast, South Carolina and Georgia felt surrounded.⁸⁵ No wonder that in the first days of the Revolution the Carolina patriots seized Mrs. John Stuart and placed her under house arrest, holding her as a hostage so that her husband would be constrained from letting loose the Indians upon the Carolina frontier.⁸⁶

On October 3, 1775, Frederick William Mulcaster wrote Grant

81. Barre to Grant, May 29, 1769, BCM 394; *Acts of the Privy Council of England, Colonial Series*, V, 591.

82. William Elliott to Grant, October 3, 1769, BCM 264.

83. *South-Carolina Gazette*, May 23, 1771.

84. Elliott to James Grant, April 15, 1771, BCM 264.

85. John Richard Alden, *John Stuart and the Southern Colonial Frontier: A Study of Indian Relations, War, Trade, and Land Problems in the Southern Wilderness, 1754-1775* (Ann Arbor, 1944; facsimile edition, New York, 1966), 170-71, 210-14.

86. Sarah Stuart to John Stuart, February 14, [1776], BCM 478.

from St. Augustine that Stuart had not yet told him what orders he had received from England and what he intended to do about the Indians: "his wife being at Charles Town, makes him apprehensive for her safety, he thinks she would be massacred should he bring down the red people he wishes her away, & I wish so too."⁸⁷ On October 29, 1775, Parson John Forbes wrote Grant: "I suspect Mr. Steward's inactive state of body and the situation of his wife and his estate may without positive orders render his situation very difficult with regard to employing the Indians, you will not want their assistance."⁸⁸ These statements would seem to verify the worst fears of the Carolinians and perhaps justify their seizure of Mrs. Stuart.

When David Ramsay wrote his history of the American Revolution in 1789, he identified the "Scotch" as the group in America most hostile to the Revolution. "The Scotch on the other hand, though they had formerly sacrificed much to liberty in their own country, were generally disposed, to support the claims of Great Britain. Their nation for some years past had experienced a large proportion of royal favour. A very absurd association was made by many, between the cause of John Wilkes and the cause of America. The former had rendered himself so universally odious to the Scotch, that many of them were prejudiced against a cause, which was so ridiculously, but generally associated, with that of a man who had grossly insulted their whole nation. The illiberal reflections cast by some Americans on the whole body of the Scotch, as favourers of arbitrary power, restrained high-spirited individuals of that nation from joining a people who suspected their love of liberty. Such of them as adhered to the cause of independence, were steady in their attachment. The army and the Congress ranked among their best officers, and most valuable members, some individuals of that nation."⁸⁹

87. Frederick William Mulcaster to James Grant, October 3, 1775, BCM 381.

88. John Forbes to James Grant, October 29, 1775, BCM 483.

89. David Ramsay, *The History of the American Revolution*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1789), II, 311.

GOVERNOR GEORGE JOHNSTONE OF BRITISH WEST FLORIDA

by R. F. A. FABEL*

GEORGE J OHNSTONE was the first governor of British West Florida. His activities from his arrival at Pensacola in October 1764, to his departure in January 1767, have inspired detailed but narrow description.¹ What nobody has sufficiently considered are the reasons for his appointment as governor and the circumstances surrounding the loss of this office. These omissions are worthy of examination. It is surprising that a junior naval officer with a spotty record should have been selected for one of the more lucrative colonial governorships. Even more astonishing is that a man who proved to be the most vigorous and possibly the most intelligent governor that British West Florida ever had, should have lost his office after less than three years.

The first thirty-two years of his life gave no hint that Johnstone was destined for eminence. He was born in 1730, the fourth son of a poor Scottish baronet, Sir James Johnstone of Westerhall, who had to provide for fourteen children. Some of his seven sons served in the East India Company, and one took a commission in the army, but George chose a career in the Royal Navy. As was customary in the eighteenth century, he entered at an early age, probably when he was thirteen. Promotion came slowly, in spite of his proven bravery. Johnstone's readiness to risk his life did not always reflect credit on him. For example, he fought a duel against Captain Crookshanks of the *Lark* for refusing him a certificate of good con-

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1. An account may be found in Lawrence Henry Gipson, *The British Empire Before the American Revolution*, rev. ed., 15 vols. (New York, 1958-1970), IX, 200-31. See also Cecil Johnson, *British West Florida, 1763-1783* (New Haven, 1943), particularly chapter 2, 24-60; Clinton N. Howard, *The British Development of West Florida, 1763-1769* (Berkeley, 1947), 20-39, 43-47, 107-17, 124-27; and "Governor Johnstone in West Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XVII (April 1939), 281-303.

duct.² On other occasions he employed his courage more profitably for his country, and ultimately, since his deeds of daring were an important factor in securing his governorship, for himself.

The most conspicuous example of such a deed occurred towards the end of the War of the Austrian Succession. Admiral Knowles had launched a naval attack on Port Louis, Hispaniola, on March 8, 1748. The enemy replied by sailing a fireship among the anchored British squadron, from which small boats were detached to neutralize the menace. One was commanded by young Johnstone, who disregarded the garrison artillery and the musketry which, in the language of the official report, "played very smartly" from the shore. He ran his craft within the shadow of the fort, boarded the fireship, and attached a chain by which it was towed clear of the immobile British vessels. The deed is not mentioned in the log of Johnstone's ship, the *Canterbury*, but on such subjects logs are customarily laconic and posterity has given Johnstone credit for it.³

Unfortunately for the midshipman's prospects, the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle ended the war with France and Spain in 1748. His success in the examination necessary for promotion to lieutenant in 1749 was followed by several years of peace in which the king found no employment for him.⁴ Recalled to the colors in 1755, as yet another in the series of conflicts of Bourbons versus Britons came to the boil, Johnstone still had to wait another five years before being given a vessel to command.

The reluctance of the Admiralty to entrust Johnstone with responsibility probably resulted from his reputation for insubordination, which was fostered by one of the captains under whom he had served, and for which there was considerable

2. James Ralfe, *The Naval Biography of Great Britain*, 4 vols. (London, 1828), I, 364.

3. Royal Navy Lieutenants' Logs, Admiralty/L/C 39, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, England; *London Gazette*, May 3, 1748; John Knox Laughton, "George Johnstone," in Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee, eds., *The Dictionary of National Biography*, 22 vols. (London, 1921-1922), X, 963.

4. Great Britain, Public Record Office, Admiralty 107/4. Hereinafter cited as ADM.

evidence.⁵ Apart from his duel with Captain Crookshanks, he had drawn up articles for the court martial of Captain Cookson of the *Tryal* for the way he had commanded his ship when Johnstone was aboard.⁶ Also, while lieutenant of the *Biddeford*, Johnstone himself was court-martialed in 1757 for disobeying the orders of Captain Digby. Severe punishment would probably have ended his naval career; instead, in consideration of former acts of gallantry, the court merely reprimanded him.⁷ He was not, therefore, barred from minor elevation in 1760 to the command of the sloop *Hornet*. Lieutenant Johnstone showed good judgment and the ability to act decisively on more than one occasion aboard his vessel. A dangerous situation, for example, developed when 128 impressed men in a tender that he was escorting mutinied. With characteristic fortitude Johnstone harangued the recalcitrants, but without success. When the mutineers subsequently seized control of the tender, he put a sudden stop to their desperate activities with two carefully aimed broadsides. Later he turned his prisoners over to the authorities at Sheerness intact, but for one mutineer killed and nine wounded.⁸ Johnstone was very critical of the practice of impressment, but had dutifully enforced the law with a firmness that probably limited bloodshed.

Another commendable exploit occurred when the *Hornet* was based on the Portuguese station. When Britain declared war on Spain, January 4, 1762, Johnstone determined to use his early knowledge of the news as effectively as possible. He placed James M'Laurin, master of the *Hornet*, in command of a French prize with orders to carry the intelligence to British naval units in the Caribbean as swiftly as his ingenuity and the winds would allow. The result was that George Rodney, who commanded a squadron in the West Indies, was able to have Spanish shipping in Jamaica seized, to halt the packets bearing news of the declaration of war from Spain to her

5. Captain Forrest's opinion is referred to in Sir Gilbert Elliott to James Johnstone, November 23, 1759, Laing manuscripts 2:73, Edinburgh University Library, Edinburgh.

6. Fragmentary court martial articles in rough draft and Johnstone's hand, and a letter from James Douglas to Johnstone, January 6, 1759, containing references to press reports of the forthcoming trial, in *ibid.*

7. ADM 1/5323:1

8. Johnstone to Admiralty, October 6, 1760, ADM 1/1985:65.

colonies, and to launch attacks on the Spanish trade before the Spaniards were aware that the conflict had begun.⁹ Nevertheless, although Johnstone lobbied assiduously for promotion, and despite the flair and courage which he displayed as a sloop-commander, he was not made a post captain until 1762. By that time the war, which alone could make his captaincy profitable, was all but over.

It was not his competence in command which had finally brought him promotion but rather, as was usual in his day, the intervention of the influential and the powerful. Johnstone's patrons at the Admiralty were powerful, but his links with them were tenuous. Sir Gilbert Elliott, a lord of the Admiralty from 1756 to 1761, was a friend less of George than of his brothers, William and James. To Anson, first lord of the Admiralty, who uttered the tardily-fulfilled promise to make Johnstone a post captain, he was connected only by the fact that his uncle, George Murray, had served under Anson when he had voyaged around the world in 1740.¹⁰ His closest connection was his uncle, Patrick, Lord Elibank, whom Johnstone considered his adopted father. Elibank was rich, and he knew many of the important people of the time.¹¹ His major defect, however, was that, like George himself, he was a Scot, an undoubted impediment in his efforts to help his favorite nephew.

Ever since the unpopular Act of Union of 1707, Englishmen had been suspicious of their northern neighbors. Three times in the first half of the eighteenth century, Scotsmen had risen in arms against the King of England, and the Whig families who governed the realm for their Hanoverian sovereigns from 1715 until the accession of George III had found it politically profitable to make no concessions to possible Jacobites. Not every Scot, to be sure, was a Jacobite, but all Scots, except the very few whose loyalty was unquestionable, were excluded from

9. Rodney to Mickle, May 16, 1788, in Catherine L. Johnstone, *History of the Johnstones: Supplement* (Glasgow, 1925), 49.

10. George Murray (1706-1785) entered the Royal Navy in 1721, and commanded the *Pearl* in Anson's fleet although he took her no farther than Cape Horn. He probably found Johnstone his first naval post. See *Town and Country Magazine*, XIII (October 1781), 513.

11. For material on Elibank's career and importance, see Ernest Campbell Mossner, ed., "New Hume Letters to Lord Elibank, 1748-1776," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language: A Journal of the Humanities*, IV (Autumn 1962), 433-36.

choice appointments. Their prospects, however, began to improve in 1760 when George III ascended the throne. The young king was an admirer of his Scottish tutor, the Earl of Bute, and had no special prejudice against the peer's countrymen. It took the new sovereign only two years to shape the government to his taste, and in 1762 he named Bute first lord of the treasury, the highest political office in the land.

Anti-Scot sentiment ran through all levels of society, from Dr. Samuel Johnson down to the Covent Garden mob who threw apples and yelled "No Scots" at two Highland officers who dared to visit the opera, after helping conquer Havana for Britain.¹² Popular prejudice had not been changed by Bute's elevation but the facts of political life had. The king was the fount of all patronage, and now his esteemed mentor was his chief adviser on the subject. Scottish blood had ceased to be a disadvantage for political aspirants, and it could even be a qualification for office if it had resulted in connection with Bute's coterie. George Johnstone could never have penetrated the earl's orbit if his life had followed an orderly pattern. On August 11, 1762, he became a post captain and was given command of the sloop *Hind*. Sailing the high seas and being absent from Britain would scarcely have made him either conspicuous or available for expected political preferment. But an accident kept Johnstone in England. A few days after his appointment he was walking home in the dark after an evening with the soldier-politician, Isaac Barré, when he fell from a seventeen-foot height, severely injuring his right leg.¹³ It was during his convalescence that Johnstone began to acquire friends in Bute's circle.

Barré was highly favored by the first lord, who made him adjutant-general of the British army and appointed him governor of Stirling. Perhaps it was Barré who brought Johnstone to Bute's attention, but more likely it was Lord Elibank, of whom Bute thought so well that he intended to make him one of the sixteen Scottish peers in the House of Lords. This appointment was stopped, however, when John Wilkes, one of Bute's opponents, charged Elibank, all too plausibly, with

12. Frederick A. Pottle, ed., *Boswell's London Journal, 1762-1763* (New York, 1950), 71.

13. Johnstone to Admiralty, August 23, 1762, ADM 1/1985:72.

crypto-Jacobitism. The effective device which Wilkes used to smear Elibank was to forge a letter approving of Bute's appointment seemingly written by the Stuart pretender himself in Rome. The spurious letter appearing in *The North Briton*, February 19, 1763, blocked Elibank's advancement and weakened his ability to help his nephew.

It was John Home, Bute's private secretary, who probably secured the governorship of West Florida for George Johnstone. How the two men met is not known, but since he had helped the secretary when he was a struggling dramatist, it is quite possible Elibank had introduced them.¹⁴ Both men were members of the expatriate Scottish community in London. It is known that Johnstone dined at Lord Eglinton's on several occasions, possibly when Home was also present.¹⁵

The pair had more in common than is immediately apparent. Both had literary interests; Johnstone was a novelist *manqué*, and Home may have listened to an account of his frustrations in the navy with unusual sympathy because he, too, had known misfortune and neglect. Earlier in life he had been compelled to resign his post as a Presbyterian minister because he had written a play, the tragedy *Douglas*. Thereafter he had poor success in interesting anybody in his literary ability until he became Bute's secretary in 1757.¹⁶ When his employer became the king's first minister, Home rose with him and became, in the opinion of Alexander Carlyle, "the second man in the kingdom while Bute was in power." Carlyle knew Home well and thought him gullible, "easily deluded by pretences, especially to those of romantic valour." He cited Johnstone as an example of a "friend" advanced to power by Home because of such pretensions.¹⁷ Carlyle's use of inverted commas to describe Johnstone's friendship with Home seems unjustified. The pair traveled together to Scotland in 1763, and years later Home was remembered in Johnstone's will as "the most worthy of the human race."¹⁸

14. Mossner, "New Hume Letters," 436.

15. Pottle, *Boswell's London Journal*, 123, 237, 244.

16. Henry McKenzie, *An Account of the Life and Writings of John Home Esq.* (Edinburgh, 1822), 35-51.

17. Alexander Carlyle, *Autobiography of the Rev. Dr. Alexander Carlyle, Minister of Inveresk, containing memorials of the men and events of his time* (Edinburgh, 1860), 409.

18. Great Britain, Public Record Office, Probates 11/1154.

It would seem that Home's recommendation of Johnstone was decisive, even though Bute also owed Elibank a favor for having had to deny him a parliamentary seat. Bute may well have felt that he had sufficiently requited Elibank by conferring the governorship of Canada on his brother James Murray. Nevertheless, the praise which Elibank would have undoubtedly found for his nephew may have strengthened Home's recommendation.

Thanks to British acquisitions during the Seven Years' War, Bute had the disposal of four newly-created British colonies—Canada, the Ceded Islands of the French West Indies, and the two Floridas. Johnstone was not initially marked for any particular governorship, although he preferred West Florida. He tried to show Bute the difference between West and East Florida on a map. Lord Egremont, secretary of state for the Southern Department, thought that Johnstone would be better suited for the more easterly province because he was well qualified “to find out harbours amongst dangerous rocks and shoals.” Johnstone argued that West Florida was as much a maritime province as East Florida and begged Bute to use his influence to overrule Egremont.¹⁹ Although Bute was no longer in office at the time, he was evidently able to meet Johnstone's request, and the king nominated the captain for the governorship he preferred on July 14, 1763.²⁰

Delayed by a law suit, affairs relating to the East India Company, and the difficulty of obtaining suitable ships to transport himself and his official family, the new governor did not reach Florida for over a year. During this waiting period he read the letter sent to England by the army officers who were administering the colony pending his arrival. He also tried to make himself conversant with the many problems demanding solution in West Florida.²¹

The task awaiting Johnstone was not just that of taking over a colony from Britain's late enemies. Rather, it was the creation of a colony from almost nothing, while coping simultaneously

19. Johnstone to Bute, June 16, 1763, in Ninetta Jucker, ed., *The Jenkinson Papers, 1760-1766* (London, 1949), 157.

20. Egremont to the Lords of Trade, July 14, 1763, in Great Britain, Public Record Office, Colonial Office 5/65:205. Hereinafter cited as CO.

21. Great Britain, Board of Trade, *Journal of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations*, 14 vols. (London, 1920-1938), XII, 7, 12, 60-61.

with a lethal climate, unpredictable Indians, wretched communications, and parsimonious, regulation-ridden ministries. Whoever assumed the governorship would deserve the comparatively ample compensation of £1,200 a year. "We are informed there is a governor appointed," wrote Major Forbes from Pensacola, "but for my part, untill the Country is greatly improved, I know nothing he has to govern."

With Johnstone as governor, arbitrary military government ended. As chief executive, Johnstone depended upon the aid and advice of a council and a representative assembly. Under his guidance Pensacola and Mobile were laid out according to a rational plan and became connected by a road. Mobile's civilian population, a negligible handful of leftovers from French rule and a few entrepreneurs whom Forbes described as peddlers rather than merchants, were formed into a potentially prosperous business community.²² The land acquired by Britain seems to have been equitably distributed under Johnstone's supervision. Also at his initiative, the province's northern boundary was extended, and settlements were planned along the Mississippi. There was also a significant increase in population.

There were some difficulties which Johnstone failed to solve. One persistent problem was the overlapping responsibilities of the governor and the army representatives in West Florida. Their squabbles dominated the correspondence between Pensacola and London during Johnstone's term. Frustration evoked crude and savage qualities in the governor. These qualities emerged in his dealings with the military and with even greater force when he was unable to bring about a peaceful settlement with the Indians.

Even before he left England— and understandably in the year of Pontiac's rebellion— Johnstone had worried about the very real threat which the Indians presented to the few defenders of West Florida behind their scanty fortifications.²³ Once in Florida, Johnstone was at first successful in conciliating

22. William Forbes to [Secretary of State?], January 29, 1764, CO 5/582:190.

23. Johnstone to [Secretary of State?], May 4, 1764, Mississippi Provincial Archives, English Dominion, 1763-1783, transcribed manuscripts in ten volumes, only one was printed, Jackson, Mississippi, I, 189-90. Microfilm 128, 129, rolls 3, 4, Auburn University Library. Hereinafter cited as MPAED. Memorial of Johnstone to Lords of Trade, May 30, 1764, *ibid.*, 531-32.

the Indians and in obtaining land concessions from them. Two congresses between the governor and the chiefs were of crucial importance. The first convened in Mobile at the end of March 1765. It was the easier to arrange because the Chickasaw, the main tribe involved, were traditional allies of the British. At this meeting the Indians agreed to cede a strip of coast extending twelve leagues northward.²⁴ It was more difficult to persuade the Creeks, particularly their old chief, The Mortar, to attend another congress designed to secure British possession of land around Pensacola. John Hannay and Thomas Campbell, Johnstone's Creek emissaries, were finally able to arrange a meeting in Pensacola in May and June 1765, and there Chevalier Montault de Monbérault persuaded the Indians to turn land over to the British.²⁵

Johnstone was justifiably jubilant for the moment, but his optimism was short-lived. So disappointed was he when the apparent peace achieved by the agreements was broken by the murder of British traders among the Creeks, that he turned to violence for a solution to the Indian problem. Beginning in the fall of 1766, with increasing vehemence he began to advocate a war against the Creeks. There is an attractive simplicity in explaining, as some historians have done, the governor's recall in February 1767 as the result of his bellicosity towards the Indians. According to John Shy, "It was over the Indian question that Johnstone finally fell from power."²⁶ I. R. Christie formulated his explanation, at the expense of a minor inaccuracy

24. Speeches and documents relative to the congress are in Dunbar Rowland, comp. and ed., *Mississippi Provincial Archives, 1763-1766, English Dominion, Letters and Enclosures to the Secretary of State from Major Robert Farmar and Governor George Johnstone* (Nashville, 1911), 215-55.

25. Robin F. A. Fabel and Robert R. Rea, "Lieutenant Thomas Campbell's Sojourn Among the Creeks, November, 1764-May, 1765," *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XXXVI (Summer 1974), 97-111; Milo B. Howard, Jr. and Robert R. Rea, eds., *The Mémoire Justificatif of the Chevalier Montault de Monberaut, Indian Diplomacy in British West Florida, 1763-1765* (University, Alabama, 1965), 40-43.

26. John Shy, *Toward Lexington: The Role of the British Army in the Coming of the American Revolution* (Princeton, 1965), 285. Shy also suggests that the timing of Johnstone's recall related to the politics of the East India Company, which Chatham sought to bring under government control. It would seem odd, however, that Shelburne should have wanted Johnstone back in East India House. As his old opponent there, Johnstone was unlikely to support the plans for India of Chatham and Shelburne.

of date, when he wrote, "In January 1767, after he had begun to make plans for a punitive war against the Creek Indians, which ran counter to government policy, he was recalled."²⁷ Lawrence Henry Gipson linked the dismissal letter written to Johnstone on February 19, 1767, by Lord Shelburne, secretary of state for the Southern Department, to his receipt of a letter from General Thomas Gage reporting the governor's war-like activities.²⁸ According to Clinton Howard, Shelburne "dismissed [him] for commencing hostilities against the Creek Indians."²⁹ Cecil Johnson cited the governor's "action in re-kindling Indian warfare" as the first of Shelburne's reasons for dismissing Johnstone.³⁰

The facts are more complicated and perhaps even mysterious, but it should be emphasized that waging war on the Creeks was not the reason for Johnstone's recall. There was no war; nor did Shelburne believe that hostilities had begun when he dispatched his dismissal letter. If Johnstone deserved dismissal for merely advocating war on the Creeks, then many other Britons in responsible positions deserved similar punishment. Brigadier William Tayler, surveying the Creek-Choctaw conflict that erupted in the spring of 1766, urged the use of English troops in alliance with Indians to attack the Creeks from every quarter if they should do anything hostile to the British.³¹ Three months later, General Thomas Gage, commander in chief of all British troops in North America, thought that to "bring the Creeks to reason" might require "a few Provincials and regulars properly employed with their allies."³² West Florida's council and assembly were more extreme. They called for both "Effectual Chastisement" of the Creeks and the infliction of "those Punishments, by which alone the Mind of a Savage, is affected."³³

27. I. R. Christie, "George Johnstone," in Lewis Namier and John Brooke, eds., *The History of Parliament, The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, 3 vols. (London, 1964), II, 684.

28. Gipson, *Triumphant Empire*, 229-30.

29. Howard, "Governor Johnstone in West Florida," 303.

30. Johnson, *British West Florida*, 60.

31. Tayler to Stuart, June 24, 1766, CO 5/67:41.

32. Gage to the Lords of Trade, August 30, 1766, CO 5/67:231.

33. "Humble Representation of the Council, and Assembly for the Province of West Florida" to the "Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations," November 22, 1766, in Howard, *British Development of West Florida*, 115.

Johnstone therefore was not alone in contemplating war on the Creeks. But, apart from the council and assembly of West Florida whose petition he may have influenced, if not actually worded, the governor's recommendation was more extreme than that of anybody else. He may be said to have possessed a "Pearl Harbor mentality"; he believed in what twentieth-century military jargon calls "preemptive strikes." Years later, in 1778, he was to urge blows against the fleets of France and Spain before those countries were at war with Britain. Similarly, in 1766, convinced that conflict with the Creeks was inevitable, Johnstone advocated the harshest of all wars, "destroying Men, Women, and Children" before the Indians could prepare.³⁴ He made no secret of his wish and begged London for a force of over 3,000 men to carry it out.³⁵ His plea, being contrary to the Indian policy of the government, was ignored. Even to suggest, on the heels of Pontiac's rebellion, an expensive genocidal war to an administration desperate for money and deeply concerned to conciliate restlessness in more important colonies than West Florida, is in indication that Johnstone was losing touch with the feasible. He had not, however, lost his sense of reality so far as to imagine that, without support, he could himself initiate war. "I can do little more than represent," he wrote to John Stuart, the Indian superintendent. "The management of Indians is in you. The power to Chastise them and defend us is in the Brigadier."³⁶

It is unlikely that Johnstone lost his governorship for advocating a war which, lacking command over a single soldier, he could not possibly wage. It is entirely probable that his recall was determined as soon as William Petty, second Earl of Shelburne, assumed the secretaryship for the Southern Department on August 2, 1766—before Johnstone's bellicose Indian schemes had even reached England.³⁷ Shelburne knew the governor; both had been Bute supporters and the peer had presided at the Board of Trade when Johnstone received his ap-

34. Charles Stuart to John Stuart, October 1, 1766, CO 5/67:411.

35. Johnstone to Conway, June 23, 1766, in Rowland, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, 511-12.

36. Johnstone to Stuart, September 30, 1766, CO 5/67:423.

37. The letter in which Johnstone asked for massive reinforcements to help exterminate the Creeks did not reach Shelburne until October.

pointment in 1763. The men had been involved in East India Company affairs in 1764, Shelburne backing the loser and Johnstone the winner in the directorial elections of that year. Since presumably he also read the commoner weekly and monthly papers, Shelburne was aware of a demeaning brawl which the choleric Scotsman, prior to his voyage to America, had caused. Johnstone had permitted himself to be provoked by a hack-writer's attack on both his and his uncle's appointments to governorships. Johnstone felt that honor required him to seek out the author and thrash him.³⁸ Nothing in Johnstone's career suggests that he had a penchant for appeasement. Yet that was precisely the quality which Shelburne would have most welcomed in a governor in 1766. Prior to that year, the secretary, while in opposition to the Grenville ministry, had fallen under the influence of William Pitt and had adopted his mentor's belief that a conciliatory colonial policy was mandatory. It was a time of turbulence for most colonies, a time, therefore, for unusual tact by colonial governors. Shelburne's elevation to the secretaryship in 1766 made him responsible for colonial affairs, and gave him a chance to put his principles of friendship and cooperation into practice.

Reading the accumulated correspondence from West Florida upon his taking office must have been deeply disturbing for Shelburne. He may well have been reminded of the fury which Johnstone had conjured up when engaged in East India Company politics. The running conflict with the military in which, almost from the moment of his setting foot on the Gulf Coast, the new governor had engaged had, at times, set soldier against soldier, officer against officer, and regiment against regiment. Shelburne was furious to discover that the instructions deciding the proper relations between the civil and military establishments in the colony had been "liable to Dispute and Misinterpretation," and he approved the soldiers' rather than the governor's reading of them.³⁹

The spirit of division had spread to other members of the

38. *Gentlemen's Magazine*, XXXIII (October (1763), 516; *Monthly Review*, XXIX (November 1763), 391-92.

39. Shelburne to Gage, September 13, 1766, in Clarence Edwin Carter, comp. and ed., *The Correspondence of General Thomas Gage*, 2 vols. (New Haven, 1931-1933), II, 45-46.

West Florida community. On August 1, 1766, the day before Shelburne assumed responsibility for the colonies, the Board of Trade had assembled a collection of eighty letters concerning the "state of Anarchy and Confusion" in West Florida, a situation so dangerous that the Lords of Trade called for immediate royal intervention.⁴⁰ It was revealed that apart from disputes with the military, Johnstone had suspended the attorney general and had brought serious charges against the colony's chief justice, who had resigned in protest from the West Florida Council.⁴¹ In addition, Johnstone charged the lieutenant governor with speculation, pandering, and fomenting unrest. He had, the governor alleged, incited civilians to depose him and soldiers to kill him.⁴² Shelburne also read a petition from twenty-two West Floridians complaining of the governor's despotism, his "thirst of Power and Command," and his "unjustifiable, Arbitrary and Tyrannical Principles."⁴³

Tranquility in the colonies was a prime aim for Shelburne; in September 1766 he had reiterated the need for tact and conciliatory measures to other governors.⁴⁴ He probably made his decision to remove the quarrelsome Johnstone during his first weeks as secretary, even before he knew that he was advocating war on the Creeks. By the time Johnstone's letter asking for a force for use against the Indians reached London in October, Shelburne had already taken steps to bring the governor home. On September 22, 1766, the secretary informed Johnstone that on the petition of friends, he was giving him six months leave to attend to his private affairs.⁴⁵ That this was tantamount to dismissal is suggested by the fact that when Shelburne wished to replace Governor Sir Francis Bernard of Massachusetts in May of the following year he drafted a similar letter to him granting

40. "Letter from Board of Trade to the King," August 1, 1766, in Rowland, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, 342-43.

41. "The Governor's Complaint of the Chief Justice," April 1, 1766, in *ibid.*, 465-77; Edmund Wegg to Secretary of Lords of Trade, April 23, 1766, *ibid.*, 505-06.

42. Johnstone to Secretary of Lords of Trade, April 1, 1766, *ibid.*, 460-64.

43. Memorial to John Pownall, April 1766, in *ibid.*, 303-06.

44. R. A. Humphreys, "Lord Shelburne and a Projected Recall of Colonial Governors in 1767," *American Historical Review*, XXXVII (January 1932), 270.

45. Shelburne to Johnstone, September 22, 1766, MPAED, X, 665. Who the friends were remains a mystery; perhaps East India Company politicians.

leave.⁴⁶ If it may be accepted that September 22, 1766, was the real date of Johnstone's dismissal, then Shelburne had ousted him at a time when he knew that the governor had been causing problems, but when he was not yet aware of how really bellicose Johnstone had become towards Indians.

The difficulty which arises, if September 22 is taken as the recall date, is why Shelburne should have written a tart letter of dismissal on February 19, 1767. The action would seem particularly irrational in that the governor had acted on the September letter, and was already on his way back to England by February 19. The answer seems to be that Shelburne's hand was forced by a clamor within the ministry led by the Duke of Grafton, first lord of the treasury. The duke's attention had been drawn to the turbulence in West Florida by a letter from Brigadier Tayler to the treasury requesting considerable expenditures in preparation for the grandiose warlike schemes against the Creeks which he and Johnstone were contemplating. These plans, of course, depended on approval from London which was never granted. Nevertheless, Grafton was sufficiently alarmed to raise the matter in the cabinet and to demand that a new governor be dispatched to West Florida without delay. Johnstone's record as governor was examined. Quite apart from his relations with the Creeks, it was, wrote Shelburne on February 17, 1767, "that of a perfect madman." Everybody, he continued, including the king, agreed that his replacement required "the utmost dispatch."⁴⁷

In these circumstances, even if he felt like doing so, it would have been quite futile for Shelburne to say that action was unnecessary since Johnstone was probably already on his return voyage to England. He was forced to take redundant action because of political pressure. To refuse to do so would certainly have evoked royal displeasure and possibly caused the resignation of Grafton, which would have resulted in the dissolution of the government.

Whether sincerely or not the secretary affected belief in the

46. This letter was never sent because Shelburne's superior, Chatham, changed his policy. Humphreys, "Lord Shelburne and a Projected Recall of Colonial Governors in 1767," 271.

47. Shelburne to Chatham, February 17, 1767, in Great Britain, Public Record Office, Chatham manuscripts 30/8/3:189.

existence of a war against the Creeks in West Florida. It was a convenient excuse for replacing Johnstone. On February 19 he wrote to Thomas Gage, in reply to a letter on the Creek situation which he possibly misunderstood, that the king was displeased "to receive Accounts that the Governor of West-Florida had resolved on a War with the Creeks without waiting for Instructions from hence. . . . His Majesty has therefore thought fit to recall Him from His Government."⁴⁸

Writing to George Johnstone on the same day that he replied to General Gage, Shelburne minced no words in phrasing his dismissal. There were two reasons: "rashly rekindling the War" between Indians and Englishmen and "that Spirit of Disunion" which had "weakened and distracted" West Florida under Johnstone's government. In some ways, however, yet another of Shelburne's letters written to Lieutenant-Governor Montfort Browne of West Florida that same day, February 19, and presumably the last of the series, is the most curious. When he started to write it, Shelburne gave an appearance of believing that a Creek war was under way, and he ordered Browne to take over the government of West Florida from Johnstone and to put "an entire and immediate stop to hostilities." But before he finished the letter to Browne he apparently received a dispatch from Gage acquainting him that Brigadier Tayler had been successful in preventing such a war.⁴⁹ Shelburne had it in his power to tear up all the communications written that day relating to Johnstone's dismissal before the mail left his office. If making war on the Creeks had been the main reason for Johnstone's recall, he would have done so. But it was not, and he did not change his mind. The probability is that bellicosity towards the Creeks did not determine the decision to retire Johnstone, but it did precipitate a general examination and condemnation of conduct already found unacceptable by the secretary of State for the Southern Department.

48. Gage to Shelburne, December 23, 1766, in Carter, *Correspondence of General Thomas Gage*, 115; Shelburne to Gage, February 19, 1767, *ibid.*, 51.

49. Shelburne to Johnstone, February 19, 1767, Shelburne to Browne, February 19, 1767, MPAED, X, 668, 671.

BRIGADIER FREDERICK HALDIMAND— THE FLORIDA YEARS

by ROBERT R. REA*

THE BRITISH COLONIES of East and West Florida were the fruits of one war and fell from the grasp of George III as the result of another. Throughout their brief history runs a common theme: both were part of a military frontier and to both the presence of British army units was of prime importance—economically, administratively, and socially. Their civil governors were men of modest competence at best. Trade never developed as profitably as merchants hoped, nor did immigrants rush to claim their untilled soil. But the army provided a degree of stability, as well as security, in spite of the petty bickering that so often absorbed the energies of civil and military officials alike. The real contribution to colonial history made by the much-maligned British soldier has seldom been admitted, yet his was the one effective, all-encompassing imperial arm in America.

The Floridas were exceptionally fortunate in falling under the guardianship of one of the finest military administrators in North America. Of all such men in the king's service, observed the leading authority on the subject, "only two Swiss officers, Haldimand and Bouquet, displayed notable vigor, honesty, and good judgment."¹ First to Henry Bouquet and then to Frederick Haldimand, General Thomas Gage assigned responsibility for the Floridas when lengthy explanatory orders from New York and meticulous instructions from Whitehall failed to relieve the birth pangs of British authority at St. Augustine and Pensacola. The death of Bouquet shortly after he reached Pensacola in 1765, frustrated Gage's initial effort. It was not until 1767 that the Floridas received the brigadier who would combine the elements of strength and moderation necessary to transform discord into harmony, who could preserve the lives of his troops and popu-

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1. John Shy, *Toward Lexington: The Role of the British Army in the Coming of the American Revolution* (Princeton, 1965), 290.

larize the army's presence, who could himself survive the climate and the frustrations of his assignment— for West Florida in particular was a graveyard of reputations as well as redcoats— and by so doing win appointment to the highest military place in North America. This exemplar of imperial and martial virtues, Frederick Haldimand, began his career as a Swiss mercenary, and ended it as lieutenant general and Knight of the Bath. Long recognized as a great figure in the history of Canada, he deserves as much honor for his accomplishments in eighteenth-century Florida.

Frederick Haldimand, younger son of middle class parents of Yverdun, Neuchatel, Switzerland, was born August 11, 1718. He received a good basic education before seeking a career, as did many young Swiss, in foreign military service. At about the age of twenty-one he is reported to have entered the Sardinian or, perhaps, the Dutch army. When the Austrian Succession War broke out in 1740 he attached himself to the forces of Frederick II of Prussia— a master from whom a young officer could learn self-discipline as well as the arts of war. At the end of hostilities in 1748, Haldimand found employment in the United Netherlands and secured a commission in the Stadholder's Swiss Guard at The Hague. There he served with his compatriot, Henry Bouquet, and made the acquaintance of the British ambassador, Sir Joseph Yorke, upon whose recommendation he and Bouquet owed their transfer to the army of George II.

In the autumn of 1755, Britain began recruiting foreign Protestant officers for a regiment to be known as the Royal Americans. Haldimand was commissioned lieutenant colonel in the new 62nd Regiment (which became the 60th in 1757), on January 4, 1756, and six months later he set foot on American soil at New York. His first task was to raise his own troops among the recent European immigrants in western Maryland and Pennsylvania. In 1757 a field command was offered by General Abercrombie, and the next year found Haldimand marching against the French at Fort Ticonderoga. He commanded the grenadiers in support of Abercrombie's ill-fated assault and escaped with only a superficial wound. Captain Thomas Sowers subsequently attested to Haldimand's gallantry under fire, crediting Haldimand with saving his life when he fell with a severe head wound. The campaign was a failure, but Haldimand remained in New York

in command of Fort Edward on the Hudson River. He was charged with rebuilding the fort at Oswego in 1759, and he saw action with Sir William Johnson at Niagara. Summoned thence when Sir Jeffrey Amherst concentrated British troops against Montreal in 1760, Haldimand was present at the surrender of the last citadel of New France and remained in Canada after the end of hostilities.

On February 19, 1762, Haldimand was promoted to colonel (a rank he had held in America since January 17, 1758), and in the spring he was named district governor at Three Rivers, halfway between Montreal and Quebec, where he displayed considerable administrative ability. While in Canada, he acquired, in conjunction with Bouquet, certain properties on the Gulf of Saint Lawrence and on Shepody Bay, Nova Scotia. With the end of military government in Canada, Haldimand's future became entwined with the advancement of his old companions-in-arms Thomas Gage and Henry Bouquet.²

Gage became commander in chief in North America in succession to Amherst, and he quickly recognized the desirability of having a brigadier in the southern colonies. He first thought of Deputy Quartermaster General James Robertson, who had visited the Floridas in 1763, but he dropped that idea, much to Robertson's relief.³ Gage then selected Bouquet who was appointed brigadier in April 1765, sailed from Philadelphia in June, and reached Pensacola at the end of August, only to succumb to fever.⁴ By November, Gage had received word of Bouquet's death and named Colonel John Reed to act as brigadier, but as Reed

2. This sketch of Haldimand's early years is based upon the Haldimand Papers in the British Museum, London, and transcripts of those papers located in the National Archives of Canada, Ottawa. Hereinafter cited as HP. See also Francis J. Audet, "Sir Frederic Haldimand," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, XVII (Section I, 1923); A. Latt, "Un Vaudois gouverneur general du Canada, Sir Frederic Haldimand," *Revue Historique Vaudoise*, XLI (1933); Jean N. McIlwraith, *Sir Frederick Haldimand* (Toronto, 1926).

3. Robertson to Gage, January 24, 1765, Gage to Secretary of War, January 24, 1765, in Great Britain, Public Record Office, War Office Papers 1/6: 112, 114. Hereinafter cited as WO. For a general account see Charles L. Mowat, "The Southern Brigade: A Sidelight on the British Military Establishment in America, 1763-1775," *Journal of Southern History*, X (February 1944), 59-77. On Robertson, see Robert R. Rea, "Lieutenant Colonel James Robertson's Mission to the Floridas, 1763," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, LIII (July 1974), 33-48.

4. Henry Bouquet Papers, British Museum, Additional Manuscripts 21637/105, 109.

wandered off into the Illinois country instead of remaining at his post on the Gulf Coast, Gage settled for the moment on Colonel William Tayler.⁵ The commander in chief's choice for permanent assignment as brigadier went to Frederick Haldimand, and on December 12, 1765, secretary at war signified His Majesty's wish that Haldimand "should succeed his deceased countryman" Bouquet as brigadier for the Southern Department.⁶

Nearly the whole of 1766 dragged out in slow communications. Haldimand, who was visiting in Philadelphia, had yet to learn of his promotion as late as June. The recent death of his old friend Bouquet and that of his favorite nephew, Lieutenant Peter Haldimand, in Canada bore heavily upon his spirit. Nor, when it came, was his new assignment a matter for universal rejoicing. When Thomas Mills, Haldimand's brigade major in Canada, heard of his chief's new honor, he hastily begged that he might be excused from accompanying him and offered to pay for a substitute to take his place. Such an arrangement was concluded, and Captain Francis Hutchinson undertook the office which he filled to Haldimand's great satisfaction throughout the Florida years.⁷ Not until December was Haldimand able to embark at New York aboard H.M.S. *Cygnét*. He was far from uplifted by his prospects, for Colonel Tayler's dispatches from Pensacola indicated that "disunion reigns there more than ever."⁸ In March 1767, Tayler rejoiced to advise Gage that Haldimand was reported at Jamaica in February; and finally, on March 24, 1767, the new brigadier landed at Pensacola.⁹

The scene upon which Frederick Haldimand now entered gave promise of endless labor. His predecessors had done little to refurbish the old Spanish fort, a mere log stockade whose timbers were rotten, and the huts in which the troops were barracked kept out neither rain nor cold. Brigadier Tayler had suffered the same discomforts in the commandant's quarters. "You may imagine," Haldimand wrote, "How I was surprised at my

5. Gage to Secretary at War, November 8, 1765, WO 1/6: 299, 333.

6. Secretary at War to Gage, December 12, 1765, WO 4/988. Mowat, "Southern Brigade," 64, states that Haldimand received his appointment in January 1766.

7. Haldimand to James Murray, June 26, 1766, Mills to Haldimand, October 4, 1766, Haldimand to Mills, November 29, 1766, Mills to Haldimand, January 3, 1767, HP.

8. Haldimand to Mills, November 30, 1766, HP.

9. Tayler to Gage, March 4, 1767, Haldimand to Gage, March 25, 1767, HP.

first entering this place, to see the misery people lived in, being pent within high rotten Palisados built for Spanish convicts; deprived of air and particularly of the sea breeze, the only comfort Nature seems to intend for this place." Huts covered with bark and streets paved with the same inflammable material posed a frightening fire hazard, though one steadily diminished by the elements. As Haldimand observed, "Each storm destroys a few more huts and we will soon be out in the open."¹⁰ Military energies had chiefly been expended in violent quarrels with Governor George Johnstone which had produced enough correspondence to have papered the whole town. Fortunately for Haldimand, Johnstone had returned to England before his arrival, and Lieutenant Governor Montfort Browne seemed well disposed. For the moment all was quiet, Haldimand reported, although "the spirit of party" hung heavy in the air.¹¹

The new brigadier immediately set out to remedy the circumstances of his long-suffering troops. Within two weeks he had laid plans to relocate and construct the stockade and the buildings of the fort, and by the end of April 1767, that work was well advanced.¹² Lumber was readily available, but labor was in short supply, there being few carpenters or craftsmen to supplement the efforts of the small and sickly garrison. It was obvious to Haldimand that part of his problems arose from the local water supply, which came from a sluggish stream at the edge of the swamp behind the town. The drinking water looked as bad as it tasted, being "yellow as saffron" for days after a rain.¹³ By June, Haldimand had a crew of twenty-five blacks working under the direction of a white overseer, but he found slave labor costly and inefficient. Five white carpenters drawing exorbitant wages could accomplish more than the blacks, and Haldimand felt that the results would justify the greater expense.¹⁴ If General Gage would only send him a few more skilled workmen, the job of renovation would move rapidly.

Gage, although greatly pleased by Haldimand's vigorous approach to his problems, was concerned by mounting expenses. In letter after letter he observed that the cost of repairs was running

10. Haldimand to Tayler, October 5, 1767, HP.

11. Haldimand to Gage, March 25, 1767, HP.

12. Haldimand to Gage, April 6, 1767, HP.

13. Haldimand to Gage, April 31 [*sic*], 1767, HP.

14. Haldimand to Gage, June 6, 1767, HP.

excessively high and warned the brigadier that no new construction might be undertaken without specific approval from London.¹⁵ Haldimand assured Gage that he was doing his best to keep expenditure low, but alleviation of the frightful conditions of the garrison and the acquisition of accurate information concerning the vast area of his command took both time and money.¹⁶ The force of Haldimand's arguments succeeded in persuading Gage to acquiesce in his plans, and even to dispatch to Pensacola a master carpenter, six journeymen, and two boat-builders who arrived before the end of November 1767.¹⁷

In the course of a very hot and busy summer which made him "yearn for the ice of Canada," Haldimand had accomplished much.¹⁸ The stockade had been relocated a considerable distance from the buildings within the fort, storehouses had been erected, and a large piece of ground had been cleared and planted in gardens from which the troops could supplement their meager diet. A hospital had been built, as well as magazines and sheds, and workmen had begun "a ditch to drain the swamps behind the town, and bring fresh water into the Garrison." Haldimand took satisfaction in seeing that "sickness diminishes every day," though he had yet to complete proper barracks for the men.¹⁹ The work had been exhausting, but, as he proudly noted, "His Majesty certainly didn't send me here with the rank of Brigadier General just to preside at the funerals of his brave troops."²⁰ And to a friend in New York he wrote, "Had we only the necessaries of life in some degree of plenty and goodness, we would be able to enjoy them in some comfort."²¹

For himself, Haldimand found lodging at first with Robert Ross, from whom he was the recipient of "many civilities." The commandant's quarters proving inadequate, he secured a house in the town for £500. He purchased the Tayler's furniture, though

15. Gage to Haldimand, May 8, 1767, HP.

16. Haldimand to Gage, June 15, 1767, HP.

17. Gage to Haldimand, September 7, October 4, 1767, Haldimand to Gage, November 28, 1767, HP.

18. Haldimand to Gage, June 16, 1767, HP.

19. Haldimand to Captain Ross, August 6, 1767, HP.

20. Haldimand to Gage, November 28, 1767, HP. This was not merely a figure of speech. Between July 25, 1765, and July 10, 1767, the 31st Regiment at Pensacola lost 6 officers, 190 men, 28 women, and 44 children to various diseases. Robert R. Rea, "'Graveyard for Britons,' West Florida, 1763-1781," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XLVII (April 1969), 353.

21. Haldimand to Hugh Wallace, November 30, 1767, HP.

one bureau was returned to Mrs. Tayler in St. Augustine, as the brigadier judged. it "too fine for a man."²² Haldimand had brought his personal gear with him, of course, but by the summer of 1768 his china was almost gone, and he commissioned a friend to send him twenty-four plates and other pieces.²³ His agents in New York, Hugh and Alexander Wallace, were asked to provide such items as grindstones, plaster of paris, linen shirts, cheese, poultry, and nuts. The Wallaces were also the source of much of Haldimand's wine. "I really believe your good Madyra has been the best preservatif I could have wished," he wrote to Hugh Wallace. "I am sorry it is almost gone as well as the other pyp of sherry and several . . . of claret and vin de Graves. Doctors say that wine is the best liqueur for this country."²⁴ But it was the native New York wine which Haldimand declared he preferred "to any others."²⁵

To a considerable degree the exchange of gifts made life on the Gulf Coast more bearable. From various naval officers sailing between Pensacola and Jamaica, Haldimand received limes, yams, cigars, rope, and old canvas, and the latest London pamphlets, magazines, and newspapers. His friend and former companion Thomas Sowers sent apples and "two dozen of my old Madeira," along with a "reeding glass," while Mrs. Sowers forwarded a "large collection of good pickles." General and Mrs. Gage dispatched two barrels of apples, two pieces of beef, and two bottles of gravy, but the apples disappeared en route and the beef did not survive the voyage from New York to Pensacola. In return, Haldimand sent the Wallaces "a fine turtle," and to the Gages went flowering plants, jasmine seeds, and those of the best watermelon Haldimand had ever tasted. The isolation of Pensacola was evidenced by the gift Haldimand presented to the former French governor at New Orleans in 1769— a copy of the latest available *Annual Register* — that for 1766!²⁶

In spite of his own efforts, and those of kindly friends, Frederick Haldimand looked upon Pensacola as a sort of purgatory.

22. Haldimand to Tayler, October 5, 1767, HP.

23. Haldimand to Captain Marsh, August 12, 1768, HP.

24. Haldimand to Wallace, November 2, 1767, HP.

25. Haldimand to Wallace, March 3, 1768, HP.

26. Sowers to Haldimand, February 16, 1773, October 10, 1771; Gage to Haldimand, November 17, 1767; Haldimand to Gage, May 26, 1768, November 29, 1767; to Aubry, January 10, 1769, HP.

"The scorching heat of last summer and the severity of this winter," he wrote in 1768, were "intollerable."²⁷ Official duties occupied much of his time but seldom provided much real satisfaction. He complained to Hugh Wallace: "It would have been more advantageous to me to idell about St. James, than to ruin my fortune & constitution in this inhospitable part of the world;— if I ever get anything God knows, it will not have been all favour, I will have deserved part of it."²⁸

The long-delayed court martial of Major Robert Farmar plagued Haldimand from the moment of his arrival. Former Governor George Johnstone and Lieutenant Philip Pittman had levelled such a host of charges against the first British commandant at Mobile that Gage had agreed to a general court martial which Haldimand must convene. Johnstone had retired to England, but Haldimand could not escape Major Farmar's personal solicitations, nor the complaints of Lieutenant Pittman. There was endless bickering over witnesses and for Haldimand the problem of collecting (and keeping alive) a sufficient number of army captains to form a court. "Everything seems to work against this 'malheureuse' court martial," Haldimand complained to Gage, and he besought his commander in chief to reduce the charges and move the trial away from Pensacola, which seemed "destined to be the seat of disorder and confusion." Not until April 1768 did Haldimand have the satisfaction of convening Farmar's court martial and clearing the record of a most troublesome case.²⁹

The distribution of the few troops allotted to West Florida also concerned Haldimand. He proposed and carried out the abandonment of the small fort on the Tombeche River and, recognizing the impracticality of the post at the Iberville, he suggested an establishment at Natchez or Baton Rouge. Having built a hospital at Pensacola, Haldimand took a long, hard look at the sickly condition of Fort Charlotte and was led to reassign medics to Mobile and propose a drastic reduction of that garri-

27. Haldimand to Thomas Willing, April 20, 1768, HP.

28. Haldimand to Wallace, July 5, 1768, HP.

29. Haldimand to Gage, November 28, December 21, 1767, April 20, 1768, Lieutenant General Thomas Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Hereinafter cited as GP. See also my introduction to Philip Pittman, *The Present State of the European Settlements on the Mississippi* (London, 1770; facsimile edition, Gainesville, 1973), xxxv-xxxix.

son.³⁰ The recovery of the numerous deserters from British expeditions which had passed through New Orleans on their way up the Mississippi to the Illinois also absorbed Haldimand's attention. His efforts met with reasonable success, but having wooed the delinquents with fair promises, he quickly shipped them off to the West Indies where they could trouble him no longer.³¹

Then, on August 8, 1768, Haldimand received orders from New York to abandon all outlying posts and withdraw all but three companies of troops to St. Augustine.³² The concentration and reassignment of British forces in North America delighted him, but the disappearance of Pensacola's most reliable source of revenue appalled the civilian population. Lieutenant Governor Montfort Browne protested the military decision to the brigadier, complaining of dangers from Indians and loss of trade, foreseeing eventually the loss and destruction of the liberty and property of every colonist. Haldimand tartly replied that he believed the withdrawal would actually benefit the colony by forcing the settlers to turn their minds to agriculture, whereby they would be more useful to themselves and to the Mother Country. The pay of the troops, upon which Pensacola merchants fattened, only induced idleness. Honest trade could better be protected by a provincial sloop patrolling the inland waterways and lakes than by any post or garrison, and the Indians would cause no trouble if backwoods traders were properly regulated— a task which troops could not accomplish in any case.³³ To Gage, Haldimand pointed out that the concern of the colonial authorities over the troops' departure was based solely on their fears of pecuniary loss. Bitter was his criticism of "our good English merchants." The very real possibilities for American colonial development, he thought, were being blighted by the greed of men for whom "Liberty and Property" had become cabalistic terms which covered the narrowest sort of self-interest.³⁴

The movement of the troops from West Florida required extensive efforts and the collection of considerable shipping. The

30. Haldimand to Gage, November 30, December 6, 1767, May 1, 1768, HP.

31. See Robert R. Rea, "Military Deserters from British West Florida," *Louisiana History*, IX (Spring 1968), 123-37.

32. Gage to Haldimand, June 27, 1768, HP. The West Florida garrison was increased to six companies. Gage to Haldimand, January 6, 1769, HP.

33. Haldimand to Browne, August 15, 1768, HP.

34. Haldimand to Gage, August 14, 28, 1768, HP.

21st and 31st Regiments were not strong in manpower, but together they mustered 151 women, thirty of whom were pregnant, and 127 children. The Mobile garrison all had fever, and Haldimand complained that he had "more trouble and difficulty embarking two or three hundred men here than I would have embarking 3000 at Philadelphia." By the end of October 1768, the troops were beginning to depart Pensacola, but it took nearly two months for the transports to make the round trip to East Florida. Not only was shipping in short supply, but only shallow draft vessels that could clear the bar at St. Augustine could be employed. Lack of transportation delayed Haldimand's own departure and caused him to cry, "The first month of 1769 has passed, and I'm still in this lousy country!" Ultimately he seems to have made part of the trip by land (probably from Apalachee) and was in St. Augustine by the last day of April 1769.³⁵

St. Augustine provided more solid comforts than had Pensacola, but Haldimand's problems remained much the same. At his new headquarters he was fortunate enough to rent a house from Captain Jenkins of the departing 9th Regiment for the annual sum of £50, but he was only able to close the deal in September. Hoping to enjoy some comfort in the more sociable surroundings of St. Augustine, he proposed to put a piazza around part of his new home.³⁶ More pressing were the usual problems of barracks and magazines; supplies were dear and labor short. Before long Haldimand was convinced that St. Augustine was the worst possible place to station a major body of troops.³⁷ Given the choice, he would not have maintained troops in either East or West Florida, but having to conform to his superiors' plans, he would have preferred Pensacola to St. Augustine.³⁸ To meet the problem of overcrowding, Haldimand concentrated his attention upon the construction of St. Francis Barracks, a large building designed for the hot climate with plentiful windows for circulation and porches for shade even a cupola and a weathercock.

35. Haldimand to Gage, September 16, 29, October 30, 1768, February 7, July 1, 1769, HP. Major Thomas Whitmore to Gage, April 30, 1769, GP.

36. Rental agreements, September 23, 1769, HP.

37. Haldimand to Gage, October 13, 1769; to Robertson, November 30, 1769, HP.

38. Haldimand to Elias Durnford (private), January 1, 1770, HP.

39. Charles Loch Mowat, *East Florida as a British Province, 1763-1784* (Berkeley, 1943; facsimile edition, Gainesville, 1964), 30-31. See also Charles L. Mowat, "St. Francis Barracks, St. Augustine: A Link With the

Little had been accomplished, however, before Haldimand and his troops were ordered back to Pensacola. Fears of Spanish strength at New Orleans led to Gage's instructions of February 26, 1770, to put Pensacola and Mobile "in a state of defence as shall discourage or disappoint any sudden attempt to distress or break up our infant settlements." Haldimand, who had been hoping for permission to return to New York, received these orders on March 20, and prepared to move at once, although he was downcast by the turn of events and saw, all his efforts and advice gone for nought. His health would not allow him to proceed by land, and contrary winds which made the bar at St. Augustine impassable delayed his sailing until April 26. By mid-May he was back at Pensacola, then off to survey the condition of Mobile's deserted defenses before sketching the location of new batteries which he proposed for the defense of the harbor.⁴⁰

The army's return was signalled with great rejoicing in Pensacola. "Our friends here are so happy," wrote an early arrival, "that nothing but feasting and drinking has gone on since ever we came among them."⁴¹ Haldimand was advised that his house—which had been rented by Montfort Browne and used for public offices and a church by Governor John Elliot—was in good repair, and the prospect of his presence (and the military payroll) "reanimates the minds of the people in general."⁴²

Nervousness aggravated by the Spanish military presence at New Orleans (the result of a revolt by French residents in 1769) and the growing threat of war with Spain over the distant Falkland Islands forced serious consideration of the strategic and tactical circumstances of West Florida upon British authorities. The European war which spread to the Gulf Coast in 1779 might easily have broken out in 1770 and its consequences have fallen upon Brigadier Haldimand. In light of the loss of the region during the American Revolutionary War; his views are of particular interest and significance.

Having surveyed and renewed the defenses of Pensacola, and

British Regime," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XXI (January 1943), 266-80.

40. Gage to Haldimand, February 26, 1770; Haldimand to Gage, March 21, April 12, May 31, 1770, HP; Haldimand to Gage, June 27, 1770, GP.

41. N to Haldimand, March 12, 1770, HP.

42. James Jones to Haldimand, March 11, 1770. See also Elias Durnford to Haldimand, March 9, 1770, HP.

having seen enough of the local Indians to judge their capacity, Haldimand was of the opinion that the citizens of Pensacola were in no danger from Indian attack, even should Superintendent John Stuart's diplomacy fail to hold their loyalty and should Spain provide them with gunpowder—something which France had not been able to do in the last war. The occasional Indian outrage was usually attributable to provocation caused by illicit traders who ought to be subjected to civilian regulation and who could not, in any case, be deterred by a marching regiment. By the same token, distant detachments and companies assigned to the Mississippi River borders of the province were no more than hostages to the Spaniards at New Orleans. There being no practical route to their support by way of the lakes and the Iberville River, in spite of the dreams of successive engineers and governors, such isolated posts merely drained off British manpower for no military purpose.

The only threat to the security of Pensacola and Mobile was from the sea, but neither place, in Haldimand's opinion, could be defended against seaborne assault, once it developed. The defense of the Gulf Coast must depend upon British men-of-war, those of the Jamaica squadron in particular. Vast sums of money and many years would be required to erect fortifications that could withstand attack by European troops, and Haldimand was too much a realist, too experienced an officer, to believe that these would be forthcoming or available. With this evaluation General Thomas Gage was in complete agreement.⁴³

What might be done on the spur of the moment, Haldimand undertook promptly. Together with Lieutenant Governor Elias Dunford, himself an army engineer and a naval captain, he selected sites for batteries at the tip of Santa Rosa Island and at the mouth of Pensacola Bay. These, he hoped, might stop small vessels from entering the harbor, but only warships could provide an effective off-shore line of defense. Observing that Mobile's brick fort was in ruinous condition, Haldimand and Durnford agreed upon razing three of its four bastions in order to make the remaining one serviceable.⁴⁴ However, Gage's warning of imminent hostilities, in February 1771, saved Fort Charlotte from

43. Haldimand to Gage, February 11, March 21, 1770; Gage to Haldimand, March 23, 1770, HP.

44. Haldimand to Gage, February 12, 1771, HP.

destruction, even though the general's own engineer, Captain Sowers, agreed that it was militarily useless— a conclusion in which Elias Durnford would be forced to concur nine years later when he surrendered it to Bernardo de Gálvez.⁴⁵

Spain's prospects of seizing British West Florida, early in 1771, rested upon a slender force of 350 men at New Orleans and another 100 scattered elsewhere in the province. According to Haldimand's information, 500 more troops were shortly expected from Havana. With further support from Cuba, the Spaniards boasted, they would seize West Florida if it came to war, but at the same time they seemed extremely nervous about their own fate should the British strike first.⁴⁶

General Gage had urged Haldimand to take the initiative in case of a rupture: "Better to attack, than wait to be attacked in West Florida"; and he had condemned the folly of scattering the colonial forces "in posts it is impossible to support," as the civil authorities so ardently desired. When the British attack was ready to be launched, Indians should be employed in raiding the borders of Louisiana and drawing off the defenders of New Orleans. Recognizing that the proximity of Havana posed a real threat, Gage foresaw that it would be difficult to draw assistance for West Florida from Jamaica as that island "will have enough to defend itself."⁴⁷

During his first tour of duty in West Florida, Haldimand had scoffed at its military potential. While Pensacola Bay might serve as a refuge for frigates and privateers, the troops in the colony were too few to attack the Spaniard on the Mississippi; the supposition that West Florida might serve as a base for offensive action was a "chimera." If New Orleans were to be attacked, it must be by a British force sent from the north, coming down the broad highway of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers.⁴⁸

The brigadier now believed that Louisiana might be taken by 2,000 regulars supported by 200 or 300 Indians. He contemplated a diversionary thrust westward along the lakes toward New Orleans while the main body of troops struck up the Mississippi, making use of British naval resources. The shallow-draft

45. *Ibid.*

46. Haldimand to Gage, February 13, 1771, HP.

47. Gage to Haldimand, November 30, 1770, March 29, 1771; to Stuart, February 5, 1771, GP.

48. Haldimand to Gage, December 6, 21, 1767, HP.

vessels used to convey the regiments from St. Augustine to Pensacola would be suitable for going up the Mississippi, but he would need three of four frigates as escorts and wanted a naval squadron to protect his rear by keeping an eye on Havana. His most critical shortage, however, was artillery. That in the colony dated from the Seven Years' War, and, besides being nearly unserviceable, it was of too small calibre to be of use in defending the entrance to Pensacola harbor.⁴⁹

An alternate plan for attacking New Orleans was submitted to Gage by Lieutenant John Thomas, an artillery officer and erstwhile Indian agent on the Mississippi. Thomas offered to take New Orleans with a force of 150 regulars and thirty artillerymen. Embarking his expedition from Fort Pitt in ten batteaux of twenty oars, two with a pair of four-pounders at their prows, Thomas proposed to pick up 150 Chickasaw and Choctaw braves at the mouth of the Yazoo River or at Natchez. His project claimed to have the support of Indian Superintendent John Stuart, and its concept was strikingly similar to that of the raid which would be carried out by James Willing in 1778— with the significant difference, of course, that for Willing, New Orleans was a sanctuary rather than a target, and the British on the Mississippi were his intended victims.⁵⁰

The crisis passed quickly, however. By July 3, 1771, Haldimand was advised of the relaxation of international tensions.⁵¹ Nonetheless, defense considerations continued to interest him and even more the new governor of West Florida, Peter Chester, whose military ambitions (he had held a commission during the last war) and security measures ran counter to Haldimand's better judgment. Chester wanted a government house inside the fort at Pensacola. It could only be "an apple of discord," in Haldimand's opinion, but Gage advised his subordinate to let the governor have his way in order to avoid greater trouble. Chester was willing, it seemed, to support Haldimand's wish to abandon "what they call the Fort of Pensacola" and station all his troops at the Red Cliffs at the harbor mouth. The defenses depended upon those batteries, and more gunners were needed to man them effectively. The town merchants "would remonstrate endlessly"

49. Haldimand to Gage, February 13, 1771, GP.

50. Thomas to Gage, March 26, 1771, GP.

51. Gage to Haldimand, May 17, 1771, HP.

at the loss of business upon which they made 100 per cent profit, Haldimand wrote to Gage, but as Chester and Durnford would stand to clear a large sum by the move, they could be counted on to support it.⁵²

While Haldimand assured Chester and the townsfolk that the local defense system of Pensacola would suffice to protect the place against any imaginable Indian foray, a young engineer, Lieutenant John Campbell, launched his own attack on all Haldimand had done and proposed the construction of a new fort upon Gage Hill, above the town. Campbell's suggestion, which would be carried out a few years later, was condemned in 1772 by Governor Chester who at least partially recognized the validity of Haldimand's arrangements: a fort on Gage Hill could not provide a place of security for the townspeople and their goods in the event of an Indian attack. That it was also the wrong place to try to defend the city against a Spanish assault he had yet to learn.⁵³

While Pensacola was headquarters for the Southern Brigade and home to its commander, Frederick Haldimand saw something of the rest of British West Florida. In the fall of 1768, he spent a month at Mobile— and determined never to return because of the miserable weather. Three weeks of continuous rain and thunderstorms turned the countryside into a morass and made the roads nearly impassable.⁵⁴ Again, in December and January 1771-1772, Indian affairs required his presence at Mobile, and when that business was concluded Haldimand sailed westward along the coast as far as the Pascagoula River. Stopping briefly at the plantation of Hugo Krebs, whose friendship he enjoyed, he made his way some fifteen leagues up the river.⁵⁵ The return voyage to Mobile was made by way of the off-shore islands: Round, Corn, and Dauphin, but neither these nor any other part of the coastal

52. Haldimand to Gage, May 1, 14, 1772, HP; to Gage, May 11, 1772, GP. The weakness of the batteries at the Red Cliffs was later noted by Major Alexander Dickson who observed that they "would never hinder any ships from coming into the Harbour with a fair wind." Dickson to Gage, April 22, 1775, GP.

53. Haldimand to Chester, November 9, 1772; Sketch of Observations on the Fort at Pensacola by Lieutenant John Campbell, Engineer, 1772; Chester to Haldimand, November 13, 1772, HP.

54. Haldimand to Gage, December 14, 1768, GP.

55. Krebs to Haldimand, December 20, 1768, HP.

plain greatly impressed him. He saw much swamp and sand, he informed Gage, but only one French habitant.⁵⁶

Like most who found themselves in West Florida for an indefinite period, Haldimand secured some temporary grants of land in the western parts of the colony. Five hundred acres on the Amite River he disposed of to an unsuccessful planter from the West Indies named Maubec; at one time Haldimand intended to settle some tenants on the remaining land, but he seems to have taken no action toward that end.⁵⁷ Another 500 acres on the Mississippi Haldimand gave to his friend Thomas Willing of Philadelphia.⁵⁸ Such distant properties were easily secured and lightly disposed of, although Haldimand had some regrets that he never "improved the time I was in Florida" to see the Mississippi River.⁵⁹

Haldimand was not tempted to settle his family or sink his small fortune in West Florida, although he had retained properties in Canada and in Maryland. He brought a young nephew, Pierre, to Pensacola in July 1768, rather more for company than for any other reason. Pierre was a tall, well-educated, and promising youth, and his uncle proposed to assist him in a military career. A commission was solicited from General Gage, but it would have cost Haldimand £400, and that he could not afford. Pierre soon headed north with an eye to entering trade, and he temporarily settled upon his uncle's farm in Maryland.⁶⁰

If he could not advance his family's interest in West Florida, Haldimand could at least raise a memorial to his old comrade Henry Bouquet. In 1770 he saw to the construction of a simple gray brick marker at a corner of the fort at Pensacola, not far from the grave of former Governor John Elliot.⁶¹

The later years of Haldimand's tenure at Pensacola passed quietly enough once the Anglo-Spanish military crisis ended. At first Haldimand had some differences with the new and ambitious Governor Peter Chester who, like his predecessors, wished to assert his authority over the regiments at Pensacola, argued over

56. Haldimand to Gage, February 19, 1772; HP.

57. Haldimand to Evan Jones, July 2, 1773; Chester to Haldimand, October 8, 1773, HP.

58. Haldimand to Thomas Willing, June 2, 1775, HP.

59. Haldimand to Major Alexander Dickson, November 30, 1773, HP.

60. Haldimand to Wallace, July 5, 1768; to [?], June 28, 1769; Samuel Holland to Haldimand, September 8, 1769, HP.

61. Certificates of John Volla, February 1, 3, 1770, HP.

protocol, sought to send troops to the Mississippi, and wished to enjoy both the status and security of a house within the stockade. But Haldimand was both conciliatory and firm; he succeeded in retaining his rightful command while satisfying the governor's sense of proprieties.⁶²

The care of his troops was a constant burden. At one time he had personally to arrange the purchase of bread for his men, locate fresh provisions, and then pay the victualling agent a penny a pound profit for selling them to the troops.⁶³ Later, fire destroyed a considerable number of the huts in which the married soldiers lived, and Haldimand's earlier efforts to provide housing had to be repeated.⁶⁴ Deservedly, his unflagging endeavors won him the highest praise from Quartermaster General James Robertson: "You are both a friend to the troops and a good manager of public money."⁶⁵ Such officers are rare in any army.

Yet none of this was calculated to improve Haldimand's view of West Florida or significantly advance his career. He had been grievously disappointed at his failure to get a regiment after the Seven Years' War, and he was concerned that it might now be supposed that he was profiting financially from the command of the Southern Brigade. In fact, both his fortune and his constitution were impaired daily, he told a friend in England. He was occasionally plagued by sore throat, which he blamed on temperatures as low as 17° in the winter of 1768, suffered so from piles that he could scarcely sit or walk, and was by no means immune to the summer's fevers.⁶⁶ He observed that the colonists continued their lackadaisical ways. No one was planting or sowing; all trusted to commerce or engaged in lawmaking of which, he remarked, Solon would have been jealous.⁶⁷ When he attempted to assist newcomers like James Willing, brother of his Philadelphia correspondent, he encountered the same desire for instant wealth without earnest effort. Haldimand's cordial relationship with James Willing provides an ironic touch to these years. Willing

62. See for example Haldimand to Gage, August 16, 25, 1770; Chester to Haldimand, August 23, 1771; Haldimand to Chester, August 29, 1771; Gage to Haldimand, February 17, 1772, HP. See also Shy, *Toward Lexington*, 286-87.

63. Haldimand to Edward Codrington, June 11, 1770, HP.

64. Haldimand to Gage, February 21, 1772, HP.

65. Colonel James Robertson to Haldimand, April 4, 1771, HP.

66. Haldimand to Gage, January 28, 1768; to Marsh, August 12, 1768, HP.

67. Haldimand to Gage, June 22, 1770, HP.

briefly settled property on the Mississippi, which the brigadier made available to him, and christened the place Haldimand Cliffs. He sent Haldimand gifts of nuts, oranges, and claret which were secured at New Orleans from Oliver Pollock, and he later offered the brigadier snuff and buffalo tongue. He arranged to purchase other properties on the river in which Haldimand was interested, although he broke the agreement when he returned to Philadelphia in 1774. Like any settler, Willing urged that troops should be posted along the Mississippi to provide protection for British lives and property. Willing seems to have spent more time in New Orleans than at Haldimand Cliffs, however, and he showed more interest in the sort of commercial activity in which his friend Pollock was engaged than in becoming a Mississippi planter.⁶⁸ Haldimand witnessed neither his departure nor his return to West Florida, however, for in 1773, a happy turn of fate called the brigadier north.

After ten years of responsibility for the British military establishment in America, General Thomas Gage was granted leave to visit England in 1773. As his successor in temporary command at New York he chose Frederick Haldimand whose competence and seniority had won him promotion to major general in May 1772. On March 27, 1773, Haldimand received the welcome order to proceed to New York "with all convenient speed." By mid-April he was ready to embark on the schooner *Mercury*, and he sailed within a short time, leaving his house and property interests to be disposed of by his friends and agents.⁶⁹ That which he most cherished he probably took to New York with him.

Frederick Haldimand's private life is not prominently displayed by his reports to Gage or in his surviving personal correspondence. He was a bachelor, a senior officer of foreign birth, assigned to a dreary, isolated command. His expressed attitudes toward both civil and other military officers make it clear that he maintained a formality appropriate to his station, but that he also possessed a warmth of character which won lasting friend-

68. Haldimand to James Willing, July 30, 1772; to Thomas Willing, June 2, 1775; James Willing to Haldimand, January 3, July 6, November 11, 1772, April 10, 1773; Oliver Pollock to Haldimand, December 1, 1772; J. Stephenson to Haldimand, August 15, 1774, HP.

69. Gage to Haldimand, February 20, 1773; Haldimand to Lieutenant John Campbell, April 14, 1773; Major Alexander Dickson to Haldimand, May 19, 1773; Chester to Haldimand, January 2, 1774; J. Stephenson to Haldimand, February 4, 1774, HP.

ships. His grief at the deaths of a young nephew and an old companion was deep and poignant. At the same time a modest improvement in his circumstances could cheer him mightily, and his correspondence betrays a touching appreciation of the simplest kindness. Mrs. Gage and Mrs. Tayler were good friends to him, and with Mrs. Tayler he could be positively frivolous. To her he announced his decision to eschew his native French and henceforth conduct his correspondence in English (which he obviously spoke fluently), but it was another woman among the officers' and civilians' wives at Pensacola who caught Haldimand's eye. Mrs. Henry Fairchild's husband was a merchant, often absent on business in the interior and on the Mississippi at Natchez where he was engaged in trade with John Bradley. The circumstances are hidden, but the charming Mrs. Fairchild became a widow; Frederick Haldimand became her protector and she his companion.⁷⁰ Although Haldimand could be stern with his junior officers when they formed awkward relationships with the ladies, he could also appreciate that some human relationships could not be fitted into the normal pattern, and so he seems to have viewed his own liason with Mrs. Fairchild. There was no marriage, but she would accompany him throughout his later career and be recognized as his lady.

From 1773 General Haldimand was increasingly occupied with the affairs of American colonies moving rapidly toward armed revolt. Although West Florida was never a hotbed of independence, Haldimand had seen there something of that quarrelsome, self-seeking, irresponsible attitude which elsewhere would be called patriotism. As early as 1768, when he was hoping to return to England, he feared that "these riotous Oliverians will be the cause of my remaining upon this continent longer than I wish."⁷¹ He was, of course, aware of the disturbances in the northern colonies, and he blamed them upon the ill-temper of thoughtless and greedy men too shortsighted and too narrow-minded to recognize either the blessings or the obligations of the British imperial system. With Thomas Willing, the sage Pennsylvania banker-colleague of Robert Morris, he exchanged views—and hopes and fears. As revolution blazed up in Boston, he wrote sadly to his old friend: "I see with uneasiness that so fine a

70. J. Stephenson to Haldimand, February 14, 1774, HP.

71. Haldimand to Maar [Marsh?], November 14, 1768, HP.

Continent as this is threatened to be plunged in all the horrors and calamities of a civil war by the rashness and imprudence of these people who by their conduct will prevent what moderation, equity and temper are much more probable to attain when perhaps a little more attention to the injustice of destroying the property of their fellow subjects and an equitable compensation made in time might have restored that mutual confidence between Great Britain and the Colonies which alone can render both flourishing and happy."⁷²

A few months later, General Haldimand joined General Gage in beleaguered Boston. Once more his mind turned to the defense of British North America, and he feared for the security of St. Augustine, he recalled how Americans were establishing themselves on the Mississippi at Natchez, and he contemplated the threat of joint Spanish-American action against West Florida. Happily for Frederick Haldimand, duty called him elsewhere. He sailed from Boston the day before the battle for Breed's Hill, and he would return to America in 1778 as governor-general of Canada.⁷³

72. Haldimand to Thomas Willing, September 14, 1774, HP.

73. Allen French, "General Haldimand in Boston, 1774-1775," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, LXVI (1936-1941), 88, 90. On Haldimand's career in Canada, see Gustave Lanctot, *Canada and the American Revolution, 1774-1783* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1967), 172-77, 182, 185-89, 190, 191, 193, 208, 209, 222, 198-206 passim.

CAMPBELL TOWN: FRENCH HUGUENOTS IN BRITISH WEST FLORIDA

by J. BARTON STARR*

THE TREATY OF PARIS signed between France, Spain, and England in 1763, transferred Spanish Florida and French Louisiana to the Mississippi River to Great Britain. With the Proclamation of 1763, this property became British West Florida. Almost immediately an extensive publicity campaign began to attract settlers to the Gulf coast of Florida. Typical of such propaganda were the sentiments of George Johnstone, newly-appointed governor of West Florida: "Upon the whole, whether we regard the situation or the climate, West Florida bids fair to be the emporium as well as the most pleasant part of the New World."¹

Because of its remoteness throughout the two decades the English remained in Florida, there were constant efforts to bring in prospective colonists. Much of the energy expended was aimed at encouraging foreigners—both from overseas and from neighboring Louisiana—to migrate to West Florida.² As a result, there were numerous early schemes to settle foreigners in the colony. The Board of Trade presented a petition to George III in May 1764, on behalf of eleven men who wanted large tracts of land in East and West Florida which they proposed to settle with "Protestant white Inhabitants" within

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1. For a discussion of immigration into British West Florida, see Jeannette M. Long, "Immigration to British West Florida, 1763-1781" (M.A. thesis, University of Kansas, 1969); Clinton N. Howard, *The British Development of West Florida, 1763-1769* (Berkeley, 1947), 29, 30, 36, 46, 70, 100, 104, 118, 124; Cecil Johnson, *British West Florida, 1763-1783* (New Haven, 1943), 132-44, 150-54.
2. Endorsed "Copy of Govr Johnstone's preamble to His Majesty's Instructions for the speedy & effectual Settlement of the Province of West Florida. In the Govr's Letter of 9 Novr 1764," in Great Britain, Public Record Office, Colonial Office 5/574. Hereinafter cited as CO. A fuller examination of the propaganda efforts for East and West Florida is in Charles L. Mowat, "The First Campaign of Publicity for Florida," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXX (December 1943), 359-76.

CAMPBELL TOWN

ten years. While most of these men did receive their grants, only two— Denys Rolle in East Florida and Montfort Browne in West Florida— ever fully attempted to implement the proposed colonization plans.³

Despite the lack of success of most of these schemes, the idea continued to intrigue British officials. When requested by John Pownal to determine “by what methods the most reasonable and frugal the new established colonys in America may be peopled and settled with usefull industrious inhabitants,” Governor Johnstone responded with an eighteen-point program. Apparently in spite of his personal feelings that a “European Colony” like West Florida “is generally made up of the overflowing scum of all the other societies,” Johnstone geared his program toward encouraging the immigration of those people who could not otherwise afford the journey.⁴ He proposed that the master of a ship transporting settlers be paid from two to twenty pounds sterling (depending on the worth the governor placed on different classes of individuals) and that tools, provisions, shelter, and medical assistance be provided to aid in the initial settlement. As an additional inducement, he urged that any man who remained in the colony for over a year be given a slave or two.⁵ British officials apparently accepted at least the goals of Johnstone’s plan, for on September 8, 1764, he received instructions from the Duke of Halifax to offer “every proper encouragement” to foreign settlers who might desire to immigrate to West Florida.⁶

As a result of this apparent unanimity among the British ministry, the government continually encouraged foreign immigration to West Florida. The French Huguenot colony established at Campbell Town under the leadership of Lieutenant

3. “Representation to His Majesty . . .,” May 8, 1764, CO 5/563; “List of the Names of Persons petitioning for Lands in His Majesty’s Provinces of East Florida & West Florida . . .,” May 8, 1764, CO 5/563.

4. Johnstone to Lord Hillsborough, June 11, 1765, CO 5/574.

5. Johnstone to John Pownal, July 27, 1763, CO 5/574.

6. Duke of Halifax to Johnstone, September 8, 1764, CO 5/574. Two years later the assembly of West Florida echoed these sentiments when they passed “An Act to encourage Foreigners to come into and settle in this Province,” December 22, 1766, CO 5/623, in U. S. Library of Congress, Records of the States of the United States of America, West Florida, Legislative Records, microfilm roll 1, John C. Pace Library, University of West Florida, Pensacola. Hereinafter cited as RSUS/WFLR, followed by microfilm roll number.

Governor Montfort Browne was an example of this type of settlement.

The Board of Trade had early begun consideration of the settling of West Florida with foreign Protestants, and on November 21, 1763, it approved placing an advertisement in the *London Gazette* inviting requests for land grants for that purpose. This announcement resulted in a sizable number of requests, including the one presented on behalf of the eleven petitioners.⁷ Among the numerous petitions received by the board was one read on June 26, 1765, which ultimately led to the founding of Campbell Town. The memorial of "several French Protestants" stated that they wished to migrate to West Florida in order to apply themselves "to the culture of vines and bringing up silkworms"; and they therefore requested passage, clothing, tools, and temporary subsistence necessary for such a venture. At the same meeting of the Board of Trade, it was noted that Lieutenant Governor Montfort Browne intended to present a proposal for this purpose at a later date. Consequently, the commissioners postponed further discussion of the matter.⁸

Less than a week later the board again took the petition of the French Protestants and the proposals of Browne into consideration and decided to accept the lieutenant governor's plan. They agreed that Browne should transport the sixty French settlers to Mobile or Pensacola on a ship that was preparing to sail from the Thames River. For each settler he would receive seven pounds seven shillings sterling; two children under the age of fourteen would be counted as one adult. Upon their arrival in West Florida, the colonists were to be furnished arms and tools as well as nine months' provisions at the rate of four pence per diem. The board also agreed that the Reverend Peter Levrier should accompany the settlers as their pastor with an annual allowance of 100 pounds sterling. If he chose to serve as schoolmaster, he would receive another 100 pounds. Finally, all of the expenses, including Levrier's salary, were to be defrayed out of the parliamentary grants for the "encouragement

7. Minutes, November 21, 1763, in Great Britain, Board of Trade, *Journal of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations*, 14 vols. (London, 1920-1938), XI, 407-08.

8. "Memorial of several French Protestants," read June 26, 1765, CO 5/574. See also Minutes, June 26, 1765, *Journal of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations*, XII, 187.

of beneficial articles of produce" in West Florida.⁹ Three days later, July 5, 1765, West Florida Agent John Ellis and Browne signed a formal agreement incorporating the instructions issued by the Board of Trade.¹⁰

Despite the belief by the board that Reverend Levrier was a "man of virtue and piety," before the small band even sailed from England problems arose between the pastor and Browne.¹¹ The lieutenant governor reported to the board on August 23, 1765, that when he went to the ship to make sure everything was in order to sail, he found conditions in an uproar. Levrier and his wife had been provided quarters which for some reason were not satisfactory. Levrier wanted Browne's cabin, or that of the captain of the vessel. Browne reported that when he spoke to the minister, "he flew into a most violent passion, insisted upon his having a right to one of them, and used several expressions, I thought very unbecoming his profession." Levrier also insisted on eating in a small dining cabin with seven or eight other people instead of the "great cabin" with the rest of the passengers. Perhaps the most damaging charge, however, was that when a few of the original French settlers decided not to migrate to West Florida, Levrier substituted several other people on the list. Browne asserted that he believed these people to be "Papists," particularly one French officer he had known in Canada. He asked if it would be proper to administer oaths of allegiance to the immigrants upon the ship's arrival at Cork. He feared the "worst consequences" if he carried to the "infant colony a French officer & Roman Catholick, who may have it much in his power to poison the minds of the surrounding Indians." ¹²

The Board of Trade considered Browne's letter the same day he wrote it. They were upset by Levrier's conduct especially as "that character of piety and meekness" had recommended him for their consideration. As for the "concealed Papists," the commissioners approved Browne's plan to have a magistrate issue

9. Minutes, July 2, 1765, *Journal of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations*, XII, 188-89. An explanation of their intentions is contained in a letter from the Board of Trade to Johnstone, July 2, 1765, CO 5/599.

10. Agreement between John Ellis and Browne, July 5, 1765, CO 5/574.

11. Board of Trade to Johnstone, July 2, 1765, CO 5/599.

12. Browne to Board of Trade, August 23, 1765, CO 5/574.

oaths of allegiance at Cork. They ordered Browne to discharge all "Recusants" and to embark other foreign Protestants in their place. In the event he could not find such replacements, he could procure any others "whose knowledge in the culture of vines and silk may make them fit objects of this laudable charity." Finally, Browne was to signify to Levrier the Board of Trade's disapproval of his conduct and to inform him that the continuation of his salary depended upon Browne's approbation.¹³ Problems with Levrier were not yet over, however, and would recur in the future.

The vessel that carried Browne and the colonists was the *Red Head* galley, with Richard Neal as master. While fitting it out and providing for its passengers, Browne drew upon the £1,000 that Parliament had provided in the civil establishment of West Florida for 1764 and 1765. John Ellis, agent for West Florida, initially paid out £441 to Browne for the passage of the settlers, £75 for nine months' salary for Reverend Levrier, and £180 for necessities for the voyage, as well as tools, medicine, kettles, and other supplies, including chamber pots.¹⁴

The civil establishment included the £500 bounty to support the settlers for only one more year. The Earl of Shelburne informed the governor of West Florida on April 11, 1767, that the grant would not be renewed until "a plan shall be settled for the future application of this bounty, it not having been applied to the object for which it was granted." Despite renewed applications by Lieutenant Governor Browne and the Council of West Florida in 1767 for further funding, Parliament failed to appropriate additional bounties.¹⁵

With oaths of allegiance administered and final preparations for the voyage completed, the *Red Head* departed Cork bound

13. John Pownal to Browne, August 30, 1765, CO 5/599; Minutes, August 23, 1765, *Journal of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations*, XII, 192-93.

14. Civil establishment, January 20, 1764, CO 5/599; Civil establishment, March 1, 1765, CO 5/599; "Account of Bounties to encourage commerce in West Florida from 24 of June 1763 to 24 Jun: 1764 and from the 24 of June 1764 to 24 June 1765," CO 5/574; "An Account of Sundry Necessaries bought . . . for the use of the 60 French Protestant Emigrants . . .," August 7, 1765, CO 5/574; John Ellis to Pownal, October 3, 1765, CO 5/574.

15. Civil establishment, March 6, 1766, CO 5/599; Earl of Shelburne to Governor of West Florida, April 11, 1767, CO 5/618; Hillsborough to Browne, February 14, 1768, CO 5/619; Browne to [Hillsborough], July 1, 1768, CO 5/620.

for Pensacola. While the date of the sailing is unclear, apparently Browne and the French Huguenots left Cork in September or October 1765, and arrived at Pensacola in mid-January 1766. There are no records to indicate that the voyage was anything other than uneventful, although they did stop briefly at Dominica where several of the passengers deserted.

The first notice of the settlers' arrival in Pensacola was the appearance of lieutenant Governor Browne before the West Florida Council on January 20, 1766. After being sworn in as a member of the council, he presented the July 2, 1765 letter of the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations concerning the immigrants. In response to its orders to assist them, the council assigned as lodging the temporary hospital that had been built for the troops. The councillors felt that there was little chance that anybody would furnish provisions at the rate of four pence per day as set by the Board of Trade's instructions as it was too low for West Florida. They decided, however, to have Governor Johnstone issue orders to that effect, but in case nobody responded, the contractor for the troops in the colony must furnish the rations. Finally, the council made provisions for housing for Reverend Levrier by forcing someone to evacuate "one of the hutts" outside the garrison, if necessary.¹⁶

The emigrés had come to West Florida to establish a new community where they could cultivate grapes and raise silkworms. Accordingly, the Board of Trade had instructed Governor Johnstone to provide a township of 20,000 acres "on such convenient spot as they themselves shall choose, adapted to the objects they have in view." If possible, the site was to be on a navigable river, land was to be designated for town lots and for a glebe for the Reverend Levrier. The board's optimism was evident in their instructions; the French would not need 20,000 acres, but it was thought that their success would entice other settlers to follow.¹⁷

Johnstone accompanied a delegation of the immigrants to examine several tracts of land, and a site on the Escambia River

16. Minutes of the Council, January 20, 1766, CO 5/625. The *London Chronicle* reported on September 10, 1765, that a brigantine had arrived in Pensacola carrying ninety French passengers from Cayenne. While there is no other evidence concerning this report, these settlers clearly were not the ones who established Campbell Town.

17. Board of Trade to Johnstone, July 2, 1765, CO 5/599.

was selected.¹⁸ According to the governor, the area, twenty miles from Pensacola by water up the Escambia River, and ten by land, "in beauty or richness of soil, can hardly be excelled."¹⁹ Lieutenant Governor Browne did not share Johnstone's opinion, for less than a year later he reported to the Board of Trade that the settlers "had the misfortune, upon their arrival to fix upon a very unhealthy spot for their settlement."²⁰

Because there were so few settlers, the settlement was distant from Pensacola, and Indians were numerous in the area, Governor Johnstone felt that the immigrants should be protected. Consequently, a sergeant and twelve men of the 31st Regiment were assigned to accompany the settlers and remain for a period of two months.²¹ This was a time when Johnstone was involved in one of his many disputes with the military, and Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Walsh insisted that while Johnstone had no authority to order him to furnish the troops, he would comply, since it was for the good of the colony.²²

The disagreement between Walsh and Johnstone was symptomatic not only of the early years of British West Florida, but also of the disputatious spirit which surrounded the settlement of Campbell Town. The first major argument began within less than a week after the immigrants' arrival in the frontier province. Governor Johnstone complained to John Pownal on February 26, 1766, that the lieutenant governor had arrived in the middle of the disagreements between the governor and Walsh, and that he had joined the argument. Browne, according to Johnstone, had told the settlers that the governor could be removed from office "on the slightest representation." Browne

18. Minutes of the Council, February 25, 1766, CO 5/625, RSUS/WFLR 1. At a later council meeting, Johnstone reported that as agent for Patrick, Lord Elibank, he had selected 20,000 acres according to Elibank's mandamus grant. However, when the French immigrants arrived and selected the same site for Campbell Town and threatened to move to another part of the province unless they received it, he relinquished it and chose another tract. Minutes of the Council, December 6, 1766, CO 5/632, RSUS/WFLR 6.

19. Johnstone to Pownal, April 2, 1766, CO 5/574.

20. Browne to Board of Trade, March 25, 1767, CO 5/575.

21. Minutes of the Council, February 25, 1766, CO 5/625, RSUS/WFLR 1.

22. Johnstone to Ralph Walsh, February 26, 1766, CO 5/574; Walsh to Johnstone, February 26, 1766, CO 5/574. For more on difficulties between civil and military officers in British West Florida, see Johnson, *British West Florida*, passim, and my own book forthcoming from the University Presses of Florida, *Tories, Dons, and Rebels: The American Revolution in British West Florida, 1775-1783*.

therefore had circulated a memorial to that effect. According to Johnstone, the people, believing it to be an address to the governor, had signed the petition without reading it.²³

A month later Johnstone explained the reason for the difficulties in more detail. In the original agreement signed between Browne and John Ellis, the lieutenant governor had agreed to furnish arms, ammunition, soap, tea, and sugar, valued at forty-one pounds, four shillings, five pence sterling.²⁴ Upon the *Red Head's* arrival in West Florida, Johnstone requested that Browne deliver the tools and other supplies that the Board of Trade had stipulated as well as the items provided in the agreement with Ellis. According to Johnstone, Browne had agreed to turn over all the supplies. Then, the next day, he announced that the supplies had never left England; the *Red Head*, it seems, had sailed before the goods were loaded. Browne insisted that John Pownal had known about this matter and had authorized him to keep the money for the supplies because of his efforts to obtain them. Johnstone found this explanation difficult to believe because of the "exactness" of Pownal, but decided that he would accept the lieutenant governor's word. To protect himself, the governor felt it wise to put all of this in a letter to Browne. The latter, believing that Johnstone was indeed doubting his word, "parted in ill humor." Nonetheless, Browne politely answered the letter, assuring Johnston that the supplies would be forthcoming. To replace the forgotten muskets, he would furnish guns at three times the value from his own stores. When the goods were still not produced and the ship was preparing to sail for Mobile, Johnstone, having received no satisfaction from Browne, threatened to arrest the captain. Finally, Johnstone reported, "after long negotiations," Browne landed the items as well as twenty inferior muskets. Powder and ball came from the king's stores in Pensacola, but they did not fit the weapons.

Because of this altercation with Browne, the governor concluded, "I am afraid, I have forfeited forever the good wishes of that gentleman." Consequently, the governor observed that Browne had become very friendly with Lieutenant Colonel

23. Johnstone to Pownal, February 26, 1766, CO 5/574.

24. List of Necessaries which Lieut. Govr. Browne agreed to deliver to the French Emigrants . . . , read July 31, 1766, CO 5/574.

Walsh. The "basis and cement" of that friendship, Johnstone claimed, was one of the female French immigrants that Browne had delivered to Walsh. Outraged at such "improper" action, the governor fumed that the young lady had been transported to West Florida at government expense, and besides she "stands on the list delivered to me."²⁵ The records do not reveal any reply by Browne to Johnstone's charges.

Another dispute arose from within Campbell Town itself. Less than six months after their arrival, the settlers informed Governor Johnstone that the Reverend Levrier had left the settlement and did not plan to return. The council ordered Levrier to appear before them on June 12, 1766, to explain his intentions. Answering in French, Levrier responded with vague answers, which the council found to be "indirect, delusive, and unworthy the character of a clergyman." The councilmen therefore resolved to write a letter ordering Levrier to return to Campbell Town within a fortnight. If he failed to obey these instructions, the council would inform the Board of Trade that the pastor "is unworthy of the trust reposed in him" and that he should be replaced with another minister. There is no record of Levrier's action in the face of the council's demand.²⁶

The final point of contention had its origins in England but came to a head in West Florida. During the discussions by the Board of Trade and the preparations for the voyage, the figure of sixty French Protestants was accepted as the number of settlers to be transported to Campbell Town. When Browne first met with the West Florida Council on January 20, 1766, the subject of the settlers was introduced with the words, "relative to sixty French Protestants." Two paragraphs later in the minutes of the same meeting, however, Browne reported one immigrant had deserted at Cork, he had discharged one at Cork upon discovering he was a recusant, one died in passage, three others had deserted at Dominica, and he had added one additional person at Cork. Consequently, Browne asserted that he had arrived with only forty-six persons: twenty-two men,

25. Johnstone to Pownal, April 1, 1766, CO 5/574. Clearly this last statement could mean that the girl was simply on Johnstone's list of French immigrants transported to West Florida at government expense and therefore such a transaction was "improper."

26. Minutes of the Council, June 12, 1766, CO 5/632, RSUS/WFLR 6.

eight boys, twelve married women, and four girls. There was an additional traveler, one man who had paid his own passage. He was willing to become a settler if the council would grant him the same indulgences the French Protestants were to receive.²⁷ Here the matter rested for nearly two years.

The next time anything concerning the number of immigrants appeared in the records was in a council meeting on February 21, 1768. At that session the lieutenant governor presented a letter from John Ellis which charged the Reverend Levrier with making a false return. According to the agent, the minister, apparently for personal gain, had presented one list of settlers embarking at London and a considerably different roll once he reached West Florida. The council summoned Levrier to the meeting and demanded an explanation. According to the minister, fifty-six French Protestants had left London, had been joined by four more at Cork, and a child had been born on board enroute to Florida. There was a total of sixty-one persons, seven of whom were under the age of fourteen. However, during the voyage, thirteen had either died at sea or deserted at Cork or Dominica; only forty-eight of the original sixty-one thus reached West Florida.²⁸

Four days after Levrier's testimony, the council again discussed it, but there was no new information.²⁹ The final recorded evidence concerning this dispute appeared on July 6, 1768, in a letter from Lieutenant Governor Browne to the Board of Trade. He asserted that the minutes of the West Florida Council of January 20, 1766, when he first reported on the French immigrants, contained some errors. Browne agreed with Levrier's figures as to the number of immigrants, but he still wished to point out some misbehavior on the part of the pastor. According to Browne, the "greater number" of the immigrants whose names were on Levrier's first list, had changed their minds and had remained in England. The pastor therefore filled their places with "the first vagabonds he could find such as hair dressers, cooks, etc." Browne also claimed that Levrier "for some particular purposes has winked at some of the

27. Minutes of the Council, January 20, 1766, CO 5/625, RSUS/WFLR 1.

28. Minutes of the Council, February 21, 1768, CO 5/626, RSUS/WFLR 1.

29. Minutes of the Council, February 25, 1768, CO 5/620. See this letter for a list of the immigrants by name.

emigrants running away at Dominique,” and that “his behavior at Cork and the whole passage was so very disagreeable that I cheerfully gave him up the command of the whole.”³⁰ While there are passing references to other letters, it would appear that this dispute ended with Browne’s letter.

There is little material available concerning the actual settlement of Campbell Town. Following the selection of the site, Provincial Surveyor Elias Durnford surveyed the new lands. He used a plan which he had drawn and which the council had approved, which provided for a division of the town into lots in which the married settlers would have preference. Unmarried immigrants would receive land by drawing in a lottery.³¹ While the settlers moved into Campbell Town, constructed houses, and cultivated the land, few took the trouble to petition for land grants. Records reveal only twelve people who took out grants, and only one name is recognizable as one of the original French immigrants. Apparently others intended to take out grants for there are references to land forfeited by one immigrant “when he deserted the colony.”³² If there is little information about the initial settlement, there is also nothing concrete to explain the name chosen for the new township. Why the French Protestants decided to call their new home Campbell Town is shrouded in mystery.

When Governor Johnstone issued the call for the first assembly in West Florida on August 18, 1766, he announced that there would be six representatives each from Pensacola and Mobile and two from Campbell Town. This first legislative body met in Pensacola on November 3, 1767, and one of its initial functions was to appoint a committee on privileges and elections. The returns from Campbell Town showed the election of John Satterthwaite and David Williams. Dr. John Lorimer, however, contested the results, charging that Deputy Provost Marshall James Johnstone had given a false return for the township. Lorimer asserted that he had received sixteen votes while Williams had drawn only twelve. After an investiga-

30. Browne to [Board of Trade?], July 6, 1768, CO 5/620.

31. Minutes of the Council, March 15, 1766, CO 5/632, RSUS/WFLR 6; Minutes of the Council, July 28, 1766, CO 5/632, RSUS/WFLR 6.

32. Howard, *British Development of West Florida*, 74-104; Minutes of the Council, 1766-1770, CO 5/625-5/626.

tion, the assembly expelled Williams and gave the seat to Lorimer. At the same time they discharged the provost marshal and reprimanded Williams.³³ The next election which resulted in the meeting of the legislature in December 1767, saw Dr. Lorimer and John Crozer selected as delegates from Campbell Town.³⁴

In the meantime, events in West Florida caused concern for the inhabitants at Campbell Town. Because of Indian unrest, primarily among the Creeks, a committee of the council resolved on October 3, 1766, to build a "respectable Block House" at the new settlement.³⁵ Three days later the council met to consider a letter from Colonel William Tayler, acting brigadier general for the Southern District, concerning the nature of the fortification. He was inquiring if the proposed structure was merely to be a post for the troops or if it should be large enough to accommodate and protect women and children in case of an attack. The council wanted the blockhouse to be large enough to quarter an officer and twenty men and to provide temporary shelter for the women and children. The fortification would mount only one cannon, but the weapon could be moved to swivels at four different locations. They also asserted that "proper signals" between Pensacola and Campbell Town would be of advantage to both settlements. The council hoped the post could be ready for use within a month.³⁶

In addition to the problem of Indian attacks, the immigrants were having a difficult time simply surviving, and Lieutenant Governor Browne decided something had to be done to prevent them from starving. The inhabitants petitioned Browne in early 1767 requesting a continuation of their rations

33. Proclamation of Governor Johnstone, August 18, 1766, in Library of Congress, West Florida Papers, microfilm copies in Robert Manning Strozier Library, Florida State University, Tallahassee, microfilm roll 1. Minutes of the Lower House of Assembly, November 3-4, 1766, *ibid.*; Clarence E. Carter, "The Beginnings of British West Florida," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, IV (December 1917), 339-40. In May 1767, a motion was made that since William Satterthwaite had died, a representative should be elected in his place. Accordingly, John Blommart became the new delegate from Campbell Town. Minutes of the Lower House of Assembly, May 12, 20, 1767, CO 5/627, RSUS/WFLR 2.

34. Minutes of the Lower House of Assembly, December 15, 1767, CO 5/627, RSUS/WFLR 2.

35. Minutes of the Council, October 3, 1766, CO 5/632, RSUS/WFLR 6.

36. Minutes of the Council, October 6, 1766, CO 5/632, RSUS/WFLR 6.

and the establishment of a military post near Campbell Town to protect them from the Indians. With the advice and consent of the council, Browne allowed them six months' additional provisions and applied to Colonel Tayler to establish the post.³⁷ The council apparently wondered why Colonel Tayler had not already constructed the fortification, and called him in for questioning. Tayler asserted that he had intended to build the post, but that the settlers would not relinquish the lots where the fort was to go. Consequently, he had been unable to begin construction.³⁸

In order to "bind them to their settlement," Browne also required the French immigrants to sign an agreement of rules and regulations. This document, endorsed by eleven of the male inhabitants, bound the settlers to remain in the township and cultivate the lands for four years or forfeit them. They were also ordered to cut three trees a day per family until a sufficient quantity of logs were available to construct defense works. Any person who worked outside the township for more than a fortnight would forfeit his lands as if he had not cultivated them. Finally, in the event they found a better location on the "adjacent high ground," they could move "from the hollow where it now stands" in order to improve the health and defense of the town.³⁹

These efforts by Browne were to no avail. In December 1767, the Reverend Levrier presented a petition—ostensibly on behalf of all the residents of Campbell Town—to the assembly in which he stated that they had obtained a grant of land at Natchez, and he hoped to secure assistance in transporting them to the new area. The house tabled the petition and ordered Levrier to attend their next meeting. Four days later the pastor appeared before the lower house and, after examination, the assembly dismissed the petition, "it appearing that

37. Minutes of the Council, February 23, 1767, CO 5/632, RSUS/WFLR 6; Minutes of the Council, March 2, 1767, CO 5/632, RSUS/WFLR 6; Browne to the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, March 25, 1767, CO 5/575; Browne to [Hillsborough?], August 10, 1768, CO 5/620.

38. Minutes of the Council, March 7, 1767, CO 5/632, RSUS/WFLR 6.

39. Minutes of the Council, March 9, 1767, CO 5/632, RSUS/WFLR 6; "Report of a Committee of the Council Appointed to draw up Certain Rules and Regulations to be entrd into and Signed by the French Emigrants in the Township of Campbelltown," March 1767, CO 5/575.

he had no authority to present the same in the name of the inhabitants of Campbell Town.”⁴⁰ Levrier, however, still was not finished. He petitioned for a town lot in Pensacola in April 1770 and received lot 125, Eight months later, December 4, 1770, he requested 500 acres of land at Manchac, and the governor in council granted him 100 acres. While there are no extant records to substantiate Levrier’s movements, it is assumed that he settled on the land he received along the Mississippi.⁴¹

The population of Campbell Town continued to decline so that by the summer of 1768, Lieutenant Governor Browne observed that the immigrants had “long since abandoned Cambletown on account of its unhealthfulness.”⁴² Consequently, when the assembly met in the fall, a bill was introduced by George Urquhart providing that “as through various accidents the inhabitants of Campbell Town have removed from that township to other parts of the province,” their representatives should not be elected solely from that area but that they should be included in the elections for the district of Pensacola. If Campbell Town became “repeopled” in the future, they would once again elect their own representatives. Urquhart’s bill passed in the lower house and was sent to the upper house where it was read one time. Before the bill could be read the second time, however, the lieutenant governor dissolved the assembly.⁴³

The history of assembly elections from Campbell Town is one of fraud and multiple returns. As already discussed, the first election was confused as Dr. John Lorimer contested the election of David Williams. Other than the second election in 1767, every other race from Campbell Town was the source of constant bickering. In the session which began in January

40. Minutes of the Lower House of Assembly, December 24, 28, 1767, CO 5/627, RSUS/WFLR 2.

41. Minutes of the Council, April 3, 1770, CL 5/626, RSUS/WFLR 1; Minutes of the Council, December 4, 1770, CO 5/629, RSUS/WFLR 1. Browne had reported in July 1768 that Levrier planned to move to Charleston, but there is no evidence to indicate that he did. Browne to [Board of Trade?], July 6, 1768, CO 5/620.

42. Browne to [Board of Trade?], July 6, 1768, CO 5/620.

43. Minutes of the Lower Hose of Assembly, October 8, 19-20, 1768, CO 5/627, RSUS/WFLR 2; Minutes of the Upper House of Assembly, October 20, 1768, CO 5/626, RSUS/WFLR 2.

1769, John Campbell and John Allen Martin represented Campbell Town. John Maitland and Arthur Strothers, however, charged that the provost marshal had illegally prevented several freeholders from voting. After conducting a long investigation, the house removed Martin and Campbell and gave their seats to Maitland and Strothers.⁴⁴

All of this debate over elections in January 1769, became moot in March, when the king disallowed the law under which the assembly had been called. The governor therefore dissolved it and called for a new election. The assembly met May 22, 1769, and again Campbell Town sent two representatives and a double return. David Ross was elected without question, but returns for John Falconer and Walter Hood revealed that each man had an equal number of votes. The house declared the seat vacant and called for a new election. The records do not show whether this election took place.⁴⁵

This 1769 session of the assembly was the last time Campbell Town sent representatives. Twice in 1771 the council minutes indicated the lack of necessity for such representation as the township "is now entirely abandoned."⁴⁶ Governor Peter Chester, who arrived in West Florida on August 10, 1770, noted in the summer of 1772, "as it is entirely deserted no electors appeared to vote."⁴⁷

There are only scattered hints in the records as to why Campbell Town failed. One historian notes that in 1766 sixteen French Protestant families on the Escambia River were virtually wiped out by yellow fever, but there is no evidence to substantiate such a claim.⁴⁸ In March 1770, the governor in council

44. Minutes of the Lower House of Assembly, January 25, 30-31, 1769, CO 5/627, RSUS/WFLR 2. The provost marshal, John Campbell, and John Allen Martin had to pay the expenses involved in the investigation—amounting to eleven pounds one shilling and ten pence half-penny. Minutes of the Lower House of Assembly, May 24, June 10, 1769, CO 5/627, RSUS/WFLR 2.

45. Minutes of the Lower House of Assembly, May 22, 1769, CO 5/627, RSUS/WFLR 2; Minutes of the Council, March 5, April 7, 1769, CO 5/626, RSUS/WFLR 1.

46. Minutes of the Council, April 23, June 24, 1771, CO 5/629, RSUS/WFLR 3.

47. Peter Chester to Hillsborough, July 8, 1772, CO 5/579.

48. Francois X. Martin, *History of Louisiana* (New Orleans, 1882), 201. He states that the sixteen families consisted of sixty-four persons. Campbell Town had problems with illness according to many references in the records. Bad health, however, was a constant problem for inhabitants

took up the subject of Campbell Town, and acting Governor Elias Durnford reported that after settling the township and four or five grants being taken out, the village was "entirely abandoned excepting by one or two, most of the people are now dead or left the province." The governor and council therefore decided that they would grant any abandoned lots to anybody who requested and promised to cultivate them.⁴⁹ While there were several petitions for the vacant lands, the governor and council granted land to only two individuals, and for all practical purposes by 1770 Campbell Town no longer existed.⁵⁰

of British West Florida. See Robert R. Rea, "'Graveyard for Britons,' West Florida, 1763-1781," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XLVII (April 1969), 345-64.

49. Minutes of the Council, March 6, 1770, CO 5/626, RSUS/WFLR 1.

50. Minutes of the Council, June 5, 1770, CO 5/626, RSUS/WFLR 1; Minutes of the Council, December 4, 10, 18, 1770, CO 5/629, RSUS/WFLR 3.

CONTINUITY IN COMMERCE: DEVELOPMENT OF THE PANTON, LESLIE AND COMPANY TRADE MONOPOLY IN WEST FLORIDA

by THOMAS D. WATSON*

AS THE YEAR 1782 drew to an end, the framers of Indian policy in British East Florida found themselves in a quandary. Although the evacuation of Savannah and Charleston signaled the end of military campaigning, the precise status of the British Empire in postwar North America remained unknown. To Thomas Brown, Indian superintendent of the Southern District, and Governor Patrick Tonyn, this uncertainty was a matter of real concern; numerous deputations of Indians—some from as far as the Great Lakes region—had descended on St. Augustine seeking assurances of continued British support.¹ The officials responded by encouraging the Indians to remain loyal allies while discouraging them from engaging in offensive warfare with the Americans. Toward the latter end, Superintendent Brown deemed it advisable to divert the minds of the Indian visitors from the warpath by exhorting them to resume their hunting and trade. Brown and Tonyn were particularly anxious to retain the good will of the Creeks, whose domains abutted Spanish, British, and American frontiers.²

Unlike the other Indian delegations visiting East Florida, some 3,000 Creeks, despite Brown's urgings, persisted in their stay. Acutely aware of the covetousness of southern land speculators, a majority of these Indians dreaded the thought of be-

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1. Thomas Brown to Sir Guy Carleton, November 15, 1782, Governor Patrick Tonyn to Carleton, December 23, 1782, Brown to Carleton, January 12, 1783, in Great Britain, Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on American Manuscripts in the Royal Institution of Great Britain*, 4 vols. (London, 1904-1909), III, 222-23, 276-77, 325-27.
2. *Ibid.*, 325-27; James H. O'Donnell, III, *Southern Indians in the American Revolution* (Knoxville, 1973), 129-30.

coming dependent on Georgian outlets for their trade. They knew that demands for Creek land cessions would quickly follow any such development.³ In this atmosphere, four prominent East Florida merchants—William Panton, Thomas Forbes, John Leslie, and William Alexander—with the blessings of Tonym and Brown formed a partnership. On January 15, 1783, the new concern was licensed to engage in the Indian trade under the name of Panton, Leslie and Company, and the partners agreed to establish a trading post within reasonable access of Creek settlements. A site was selected several miles distant from the abandoned Fort St. Marks in the environs of Apalachee Bay, and the post opened for business the following fall.⁴

In April 1783, meanwhile, Governor Patrick Tonym received official notification of the retrocession of East Florida to Spanish control. Panton, Forbes, and Leslie, not altogether disheartened by the news, bought out Alexander and resolved to seek the consent of the Spaniards to engross the entire southern Indian trade.⁵ To this purpose Tonym addressed a letter to his Spanish successor on behalf of Panton, Leslie and Company. The partners, he advised, had contributed greatly to the province's well being through "maintaining cordial harmony and trade with the Indian nations"; he recommended granting them the trading privileges they sought.⁶ Georgia and Carolina, the governor warned, were particularly interested in causing the Creeks "to imbibe notions extremely dangerous to the peace of this province."⁷

By this time Thomas Forbes had reached London where he presented the company's case to the Marqués Del Campo,

3. *Report on American Manuscripts*, III, 326.

4. Randy Frank Nimnicht, "William Panton: His Early Career on the Changing Frontier" (M.A. thesis, University of Florida, 1968), 46-48; J. F. H. [John Francis Hamtramck] Claiborne, *Mississippi as a Province, Territory and State, with Biographical Notices of Eminent Citizens* (Jackson Mississippi, 1880; facsimile edition, Baton Rouge, 1964), 132; Alexander McGillvray to Arturo O'Neill, March 26, 1784, to Estevan Miró, March 28, 1784, in John Walton Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks* (Norman, 1938), 72-74.

5. William Panton to John Leslie, July 18, 1791, in *D. W. Johnson et al. v. James Innerarity et al.*, Louisiana State Supreme Court case no. 1156, 1825. Hereinafter cited as *Johnson v. Innerarity*.

6. Tonym to O'Neill, September 19, 1783, in Joseph Byrne Lockey, *East Florida, 1783-1785. A File of Documents Assembled, and Many of Them Translated*, ed. John Walton Caughey (Berkeley, 1949), 190.

7. *Ibid.*

Spain's ambassador to the English court. Forbes informed Del Campo of the pitfalls inherent in attempting to supply the Indians within the normal Spanish mercantilist regime, since Spain did not produce Indian trade goods and had no use for the pelts the Indians bartered for such goods. Pantón, Leslie and company, Forbes inferred, was both willing and able to conduct the Indian trade through West Florida if permitted direct access to the London market and if guaranteed the right to operate for a reasonable period of time.⁸

The representations of Tonyn and Forbes reached Madrid by December where they came under the scrutiny of Bernardo de Gálvez, captain-general of Louisiana and the Floridas. The popular Don Bernardo, lionized for his conquest of British West Florida, was unimpressed with the proposals. He was not at all ignorant of the importance of trade to maintain successful Indian relations, nor did he harbor delusions on the inadequacies of the Spanish economy for supporting this kind of traffic. Indeed, he had gained special commercial privileges for Louisiana and West Florida designed in large measure to facilitate the southern Indian trade. Thus, he preferred loyal Spanish subjects for the task of promoting Indian friendship while reaping the commercial profits.⁹

Shortly after the fall of Pensacola in 1781, Don Bernardo dispatched his wealthy father-in-law, Gilberto Antonio de Maxent, a New Orleanian and veteran Louisiana fur trader, to the Spanish court bearing proposals for commercial reform and for cementing Indian friendship.¹⁰ Maxent brought about the promulgation of the royal cedula of January 22, 1782. Among other things, this commercial directive opened Louisiana and

8. Forbes to Messrs. Davis, Shaham and Co., September 20, 1783; to Del Campo, September 22, 28, 1783, in Archivo General de Simancas, Simancas, Spain, *estado, legajo* 8138. The last letter cited also appears in Lockey, *East Florida, 1783-1785*, 161-63.

9. Bernardo de Gálvez to José de Gálvez, December 20, 1783, in Arthur Preston Whitaker, transl. and ed., *Documents Relating to the Commercial Policy of Spain in the Floridas, with Incidental Reference to Louisiana* (DeLand, 1931), 39-41.

10. Bernardo de Gálvez to José de Gálvez, May 26, 1781, Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Spain, *estante* 86, *cajon* 6, *legajo* 12, document 29, photostat in Stetson Collection, P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida, Gainesville. Archivo General photostats and transcripts hereinafter cited as AGI, followed by location and document numbers; Stetson Collection documents will be cited as ST.

West Florida to direct commerce with designated French ports at six per cent duty charges for a ten-year period following the establishment of peace, a provision partly intended to allow the use of French-made Indian trade goods and to open the French market to peltry exports.¹¹ Other court arrangements not only made Maxent a monopolist supplier of Indian wares, but also placed him in charge of Indian affairs in Louisiana and West Florida. Maxent, however, suffered a series of misfortunes, and eventually, charged with smuggling specie, was placed under house arrest and stripped of his official duties. Bernardo de Gálvez instructed Esteban Miró, the ad interim governor of Louisiana, to assume Maxent's responsibilities for Indian affairs.¹²

While the Maxent disaster was unfolding, Pantón, Leslie and Company gained an articulate intercessor in the person of Alexander McGillivray, quarter-breed Creek chief and wartime British Indian agent whom the Creeks had installed as their principal leader and spokesman in May 1783.¹³ Shortly afterwards, he learned from Superintendent Brown that the southern Indian department had been ordered to settle its affairs in anticipation of the evacuation of East Florida. Brown advised that the Creeks should apply to the Spaniards for assistance since they too had an interest in checking the American hunger for land which had begun manifesting itself.¹⁴ Pantón offered McGillivray similar advice, and he further suggested that he also press the company's cause. As added inducement, Pantón promised McGillivray a one-fifth share of the company's profits once it had gained Spanish acceptance.¹⁵

McGillivray heeded the advice. In September 1783 he visited

11. Whitaker, *Documents Relating to the Commercial Policy of Spain*, xxix; Summary of a Representation by Gilbert Antoine de St. Maxent relative to the Commerce of West Florida and Louisiana, October 4, 1781, Royal Cedula Granting New Privileges for the Encouragement of the Commerce of Louisiana, January 22, 1782, *ibid.*, 22-29, 30-38.

12. *Ibid.*, 225n.

13. J. H. O'Donnell, "Alexander McGillivray: Training for Leadership, 1777-1783," *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, XLIX (June 1965), 173, 177, 182-83.

14. David H. Corkran, *The Creek Frontier, 1540-1783* (Norman, 1967), 324.

15. Petition of D. W. Johnson and George Edwards, Pantón to Lachlan McGillivray, April 10, 1794, in *Johnson v. Innerarity*. A copy of the letter is in the Albert J. Pickett Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

Arturo O'Neill, the Spanish governor of West Florida, in Pensacola and declared that the Creeks intended to turn their backs on the British, to seek peace and trade with the Spaniards, and to frustrate the designs of the Georgians for a treaty and land cession. In January 1784, on discovering the definitive terms of the Paris peace settlement, McGillivray formally appealed to O'Neill for Spanish protection.¹⁶ By way of indicating the advantages of a Spanish-Creek alliance, McGillivray described the exertions of the Carolinians and Georgians "to fix . . . [the Creeks] in their Interests," which if unchecked would render them "Very dangerous Neighbours."¹⁷ Mistakenly or otherwise, he also advised O'Neill that the peace terms specified that British Indian traders would be permitted to remain in East Florida. But the distances involved, McGillivray asserted, made it unfeasible for the Upper Creeks to trade there. As a remedy he asked permission to bring trade goods from St. Augustine to Mobile. O'Neill quickly promised McGillivray Spanish protection for the Creeks, but he offered little encouragement that the Pantan firm would be welcomed into West Florida. The Creek spokesman nevertheless persisted in supporting the British concern.¹⁸

In New Orleans, meanwhile, Miró and Martin Navarro, the Louisiana intendant, were devising their own solution for the trade dilemma. In April 1784, the Spanish officials reached an agreement with a New Orleans firm headed by James Mather and Arthur Strother designed to place the West Florida Indian trade on a solid basis. Aware of McGillivray's influence, Miró and Navarro clearly understood that his assent to any commercial arrangement was indispensable. Accordingly, Miró informed the Creek leader that while trade proposals of "all sorts" would be discussed at a treaty congress at Pensacola in May, Mather would be on hand with offers of particular interest.¹⁹

16. O'Neill to Josef de Ezpeleta, October 19, 1783, Alexander McGillivray to O'Neill, January 1, 1784, Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 62, 64-65.

17. McGillivray to O'Neill, January 1, 1784, *ibid.*, 65.

18. *Ibid.*, 65; O'Neill to Miró, February 17, 1784, McGillivray to O'Neill, March 26, 1784, McGillivray to Miró, March 28, 1784, *ibid.*, 71-72, 72-73, 73-74; O'Neill to Charles McLatchy, February 6, 1784, encl. No. 2, in Vicente Manuel de Zéspedes to Conde de Gálvez, No. 21, August 16, 1784, AGI 86-6-87, photostat in ST.

19. McGillivray to McLatchy, October 4, 1784, *ibid.*, 82-83; Miró to Navarro,

The Spanish-Creek treaty discussions began on May 30, 1784, and an accord was reached in three days. The Creeks, led by McGillivray, routinely accepted Spanish protection and agreed to trade exclusively through Spanish outlets. Miró and Navarro, representing Spain, promised the Creeks permanent trading arrangements at moderate prices. Miró was sufficiently impressed with McGillivray's abilities to appoint him as Spanish agent to the Creeks. Leaving Pensacola, Miró and Navarro called at Mobile and concluded similar treaties with the Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Alabamas.²⁰

Mather attended the Creek treaty congress, but Pantón, delayed at St. Marks, arrived at Pensacola after the Louisiana governor and intendant had departed. McGillivray was less than fully candid in informing his erstwhile colleague on exactly what had transpired in his absence. Pantón learned only that Miró and Navarro would recommend placing the Creek trade "on a solid footing" and that they had granted McGillivray immediate permission to bring trade goods into Pensacola either from St. Marks or St. Augustine.²¹ McGillivray mentioned neither the ardent recommendations Miró and Navarro had made on Mather's behalf nor his own vague acquiescence to Mather's trade proposals. Pantón left Pensacola to gather the goods that Miró and Navarro had authorized McGillivray to import. He was confident of reaching an agreement with the Spaniards on his return, and unaware that they regarded his mission only as a temporary expedient.²²

Meanwhile, Governor Vicente Manuel de Zéspedes had arrived in St. Augustine and had taken possession of East Florida for Spain. Leslie, Tonym, and Brown quickly convinced him that the services of Pantón, Leslie and Company were quite indis-

April 15, 1783, to Bernardo de Gálvez, April 15, 1783, Navarro to José de Gálvez, April 16, 1784, Elizabeth Howard West Papers, P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History. Hereinafter cited as West Papers.

20. Jack D. L. Holmes, "Spanish Treaties With West Florida Indians, 1784-1802," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XLVIII (October 1969), 141-44.

21. Pantón to Forbes, August 27, 1784, in Great Britain, Public Record Office, Chatham Papers, 30/8/344, Part 1, "Extract of Sundry Letters to Mr. Thomas Forbes, Merchant." A copy is deposited among The Papers of Pantón, Leslie and Company, University of West Florida, Pensacola. Hereinafter cited as "Extract of Sundry Letters."

22. Navarro to José de Gálvez, August 18, 1784, West Papers; Navarro to O'Neill, June 11, 1784, Joseph Byrne Lockey Collection, P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History. Hereinafter cited as Lockey Collection.

pensable for keeping the Indians tractable.²³ Zéspedes strongly endorsed a company memorial to the King requesting Indian trading privileges in both Floridas “on the same basis as formerly under the British government of this province.”²⁴ While awaiting a reply to this request, Zéspedes permitted the company to operate in East Florida as though confirmation had already arrived. He claimed that the exigencies of Indian relations demanded this action. A royal order of May 8, 1786, granted the company the terms it requested, limiting them, however, to East Florida Indian trade alone.²⁵

Panton's quest for merchandise consumed more time and effort than he originally anticipated and eventually led him to a five-month sojourn in Nassau. On his return to West Florida in March 1785, he learned of the competition he now faced from Mather and Strother. To his chagrin, Panton also discovered that McGillivray had agreed to become associated with the rival firm in the Choctaw-Chickasaw trade at Mobile while envisioning a similar connection with Panton in the Creek trade at Pensacola.²⁶ McGillivray joined Panton in May at Pensacola, where the two men reconciled their differences. McGillivray explained the pressures that he had been subjected to during the treaty congress, and he pointed out that Miró had approved the dispatch of a Mather vessel directly to London for Indian wares, a highly favorable precedent if approved by the Spanish crown. Taking consolation in the fact that Mather's ship had not yet returned, Panton planned to make inroads among the traders residing among the Choctaws and Chickasaws, thereby making replacement by his rivals a difficult task.²⁷

Throughout the remainder of the summer of 1785, McGillivray importuned Spanish officialdom on behalf of Panton, Leslie and Company.²⁸ Meanwhile, Panton forwarded to Miró and

23. Leslie to Forbes, August 25, 1784, January 25, 1785, “Extract of Sundry Letters.”

24. Memorial of Panton, Leslie and Company, July 31, 1784, Lockey, *East Florida, 1783-1785*, 258.

25. Zéspedes to O'Neill, September 12, 1784, to Bernardo de Gálvez, October 21, 1784, *ibid.*, 273, 296-97; Sonora [José de Gálvez] to Conde de Gálvez, May 8, 1786, to Zéspedes, August 31, 1786, West Papers.

26. Panton to Zéspedes, December 4, 1784, to Forbes, March 15, 1784, in Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division, East Florida Papers, bundle 116L9. Hereinafter cited as EF, followed by appropriate bundle number.

27. Panton to Forbes, May 21, 1785, EF 116L9.

28. McGillivray to Zéspedes, May 22, 1785, to O'Neill, July 6, 1785, for the

Navarro the conditions his firm sought for continuing in the Indian trade. The replies were both tardy and vague. In September he traveled to New Orleans where he succeeded in acquiring passports to import up to 125,000 pesos worth of Indian goods into Pensacola for use in 1786 from "whatever" neutral port subject to six per cent duties. Miró and Navarro justified the concession, noting McGillivray's alarming reports of American machinations to absorb the Indian trade.²⁹ By obtaining the passports, Pantón, Leslie and Company had achieved a tenuous foothold in Spanish West Florida.

In 1786, McGillivray, exasperated with the Georgians for occupying Creek lands on the basis of controversial treaties concluded with pro-American Creek splinter factions, plunged the American frontier into general warfare. Supported initially with clandestine gifts of Spanish munitions, Creek war parties made frequent forays through the Georgia backcountry and the Cumberland district, terrorizing the settlements and inflicting considerable property damage. The sporadic fighting continued until mid-1788 when, because of curtailed Spanish support, McGillivray consented to a poorly observed truce.³⁰ Inas-

Chiefs of the Creek, Chickasaw, and Cherokee Nations, July, 10, 1785, to O'Neill, July 24, 1785, to Miró, August 20, 1785, Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 87-89, 90, 90-93, 93-94, 94-95; McGillivray to Zéspedes, August 22, 1785, Lockey, *East Florida, 1783-1785*, 682-83.

29. Pantón to Miró, June 27, 1785, Navarro passport, September 16, 1785, West Papers; Charles McLatchy to Leslie, December 10, 1785, Lockey, *East Florida, 1783-1785*, 742-43; Miró to Navarro, September 16, 1785, Disposition of Navarro in Favor of William Pantón, September 16, 1785, Navarro to Conde de Gálvez, October 4, 1785, Conde de Gálvez to Navarro, November 15, 1785, Navarro to Conde de Gálvez, December 12, 1785, Conde de Gálvez to Navarro, January 26, 1786, in D. C. Corbitt, ed. and transl., "Papers Relating to the Georgia-Florida Frontier, 1784-1800," *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, XXI (March 1937), 76-77, 77, 78, 78, 78-79, 79; Pantón to O'Neill, July 30, 1785, in D. C. Corbitt and Roberta Corbitt; transls. and eds., "Papers from the Spanish Archives relating to Tennessee and the Old Southwest, 1783-1800," Part I, 1783-1785, *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications* 9 (1937), 123-25;
30. Randolph C. Downes, "Creek-American Relations, 1782-1790," *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, XXI (June 1937), 143-75; R. S. [Robert Spencer] Cotterill, *The Southern Indians: The Story of the Civilized Tribes Before Removal* (Norman, 1954) 70-74. Texts of the disputed treaties of Augusta, Galphinton, and Shoulderbone appear in Linda Grant DePauw, ed., *Documentary History of the First Federal Congress of the United States of America, March 4, 1789-March 3, 1791*, 2 vols. to date (Baltimore, 1972-), II, 165-69, 180-83. The Spaniards began to withhold supplies of munitions from the Creeks out of fear that their

much as the fighting served as a barrier against American commercial penetration among the Spanish treaty Indians, it was a fur trader's war. The truculence of the Creeks, however, had little effect on the aspirations of important factions among their western neighbors to improve their lot through American friendship and trade.

From 1782 onward, delegations of Choctaws and Chickasaws occasionally contacted Americans, and in 1786 treaties with American commissioners appointed by Congress were concluded.³¹ These Indians, unlike the Creeks, were relatively free from any immediate threat from American expansionists. But of greater importance, perhaps, the Chickasaws and Choctaws were extremely discontented with the Mobile trade. Their spokesmen complained vehemently against Mather and Strother, not only for overcharging, but also for arbitrarily downgrading the quality of peltry.³² At first Miró dismissed the Indian complaints as so much haggling for better bargains. Both Mather and McGillivray assured him that the Americans could not possibly undersell the Mobile-based firm.³³ Panton, however, not only could— he did.

In September 1786, Miró, acting on complaints lodged by Mather, warned Panton to cease and desist from supplying goods to the Choctaw and Chickasaw traders. The demand was followed by a formal market division limiting the traders supplied by the rival houses to their respective trading spheres under pain of confiscation of the goods of violators.³⁴ With

agressiveness, if unchecked, might have led to a direct Spanish-American confrontation. See Miró to O'Neill, March 24, 1787, O'Neill to McGillivray, April 21, 1788, Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 145-46, 177-78.

31. Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 59-61, 66-70. The treaties, negotiated at the Hopewell, South Carolina, estate of General Andrew Pickens, are reproduced in Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., *Indian Affairs. Laws and Treaties. Vol. II. (Treaties.)* (Washington, 1904; facsimile edition, New York, 1972), 11-16.
32. Manuel Serrano y Sanz, *España y Los Indios Cheroquis y Chactas en La Segunda Mitad del Siglo XVIII* (Seville, 1916), 31-34; Miró to José de Gálvez, June 1, 1787, to Josef de Ezpeleta, September 24, 1787, Lockey Collection.
33. Miró to Don Pedro Favrot, July 6, 1786, D. C. Corbitt and Roberta Corbitt, transls. and eds., "Papers from the Spanish Archives relating to Tennessee and the Old Southwest, 1783-1800, Part II, 1786," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, 10 (1938), 141.
34. Miró to Panton, September 6, 1786, EF 114J9; Favrot to Miró, June 28, 1787, to O'Neill, March 12, 1787, West Papers.

many traders disgusted with the edict and on the verge of quitting, how Miró and Navarro could sacrifice "the peace and prosperity of a colony . . . to the interests of one House" left Pantón bemused.³⁵

In 1787, the economic discontent of the Choctaws and Chickasaws intensified. After discovering that deputations from both tribes had parleyed with Georgian agents in the spring, Miró discreetly investigated their complaints. He learned that both Mather and Pantón had experienced losses in 1786 due to a softening of the London peltry market, but while the former responded by raising prices, the latter adhered to the previously agreed upon price.³⁶ For some time Miró entertained notions of awarding Pantón the Mobile trade, but after Mather promised to meet Pantón's prices, the Spanish governor changed his mind.³⁷

The denial of the Choctaw-Chickasaw market was only one of several frustrations experienced by Pantón in 1787. Throughout the previous year, Ambassador Del Campo had inundated Spanish Florida with disturbing reports of the arrival in London of vessels from Louisiana and West Florida. Manned by Englishmen, these vessels had flagrantly violated Spanish commercial codes.³⁸ José de Gálvez, minister of the Indies, passed Del Campo's allegations on to Intendant Navarro, requesting that he answer the charges and exercise greater vigilance. Navarro denied that there had been any smuggling, but the adverse reports from London continued. In October José de Gálvez warned Navarro that if the safeguards covering imports into the provinces were inadequate, the king would rescind the liberal commercial privileges granted in the cedula of 1782.³⁹

Miró and Navarro again denied any wrongdoing, but they did take steps to tighten Spanish control over Mather and Pantón. They resolved to refurbish and garrison Fort St. Marks,

35. Pantón to Leslie, February 22, 1787, EF 144J9.

36. Miró to José de Gálvez, June 1, 1787, Lockey Collection.

37. Miró to Ezpeleta, September 24, 1787, Lockey Collection; McGillivray to Miró, October 4, 1787, Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 161.

38. Floridablanca to José de Gálvez, March 16, 1786, Del Campo to Floridablanca, September 5, December 29, 1786, West Papers.

39. José de Gálvez to Navarro, March 21, 1786, Navarro to José de Gálvez, July 22, 1786, José de Gálvez to Navarro, October 5, 1786, Navarro to José de Gálvez, February 12, 1787, to O'Neill, February 16, 1787, West Papers.

which at O'Neill's request, Bernardo de Gálvez had transferred from the administrative control of East Florida to West Florida in 1785. The thought of Britons challenging Spanish sovereignty in the remote recesses of Apalachee Bay had caused O'Neill anxiety from the outset, but the project to reinforce St. Marks had languished for reasons of economy.⁴⁰ In addition, Miró and Navarro issued Pantón and Mather import licenses for 1787 so laden with restrictions as to evoke heated protests from both merchants.⁴¹

William Pantón, meanwhile, having been denied the Choctaw and Chickasaw trade, had been investigating the possibilities of withdrawing to East Florida, preferably to St. Marks if that location remained under the jurisdiction of complaisant Governor Zéspedes. Not only could the Creeks be supplied from there without any great inconvenience, but the company also enjoyed royal confirmation of its trading privileges in East Florida.⁴² On discussing the matter in St. Augustine with Zéspedes, however, John Leslie learned that St. Marks indeed had been transferred to West Florida control. But the Spanish governor advised against abandoning St. Marks too hastily; it had been part of East Florida when the company submitted its July 1784 memorial and thus should be entitled to its stipulations. Zéspedes promised to try to have the boundaries of East Florida extended so as to reinclude St. Marks or, failing in this, secure its coverage under the company's East Florida commercial privileges. Leslie agreed at least to continue the St. Marks trade for one year.⁴³

In Pensacola, meanwhile, Pantón curtly refused the terms imposed by the 1757 import license, informing Miró and Navarro that such restrictions would subject him "to the risque

40. Miró to O'Neill, February 15, 1787, O'Neill to Miró, February 15, 1787, West Papers; Miró to McGillivray, July 13, 1787, in D. C. Corbitt and Roberta Corbitt, trans. and eds., "Papers from the Spanish Archives relating to Tennessee and the Old Southwest, 1783-1800, Part III, January, 1787-August, 1787," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, 11 (1939), 84.

41. Pantón to Miró and Navarro, February 15, 1787, Miró and Navarro license for Mather, March 13, 1787, Lockey Collection.

42. McGillivray to Zéspedes, January 5, 1787, Pantón to Leslie, February 22, 1787, EF 114J9.

43. Zéspedes to McGillivray, March 27, 1787, EF 114J9; Zéspedes to José de Gálvez, March 9, 1787, Lockey Collection.

of absolute ruin."⁴⁴ He also announced his intention to retire to East Florida within a year, since his company was able to operate there unencumbered with burdensome restrictions. Disturbed at Pantón's threat and realizing the Creek-American tensions, Miró and Navarro somewhat softened their demands and implied that Pantón had misunderstood their original intent.⁴⁵ Availing himself of the opportunity for rapprochement, Pantón in turn expressed his willingness to remain in Pensacola and West Florida should the company receive privileges there identical to those it enjoyed in East Florida. These included, he alleged, export duty exemptions. He also expressed his reluctance to acquire the Choctaw and Chickasaw trade, at least for the present. In lieu of prevailing adverse peltry prices, the Creeks took all the merchandise that Pantón cared to risk. But, he predicted, should the Georgians make peace with the Creeks, the Spaniards would soon "learn the necessity" of granting the Indian trade to persons who sold as cheaply as possible.⁴⁶ With amicable relations restored, Miró and Navarro implored the Marqués Del Campo not to impose excessive restrictions on the imports of Pantón and Mather. Preserving Indian friendship demanded the use of every available expedient.⁴⁷

In Madrid, meanwhile, the entire commercial regime of Louisiana and West Florida had been brought under review. The powerful merchant guilds complained that the liberal commercial rules granted to the provinces in 1782 had converted them into sieves through which enormous quantities of contraband flowed into Spain's other American possessions. Moreover, the deaths of Bernardo and José de Gálvez had removed two foremost advocates of a liberal commercial policy from the ranks of Spanish decision-makers.⁴⁸ Within these changing perspectives, the king, on August 16, 1787, canceled the authority of Miró and Navarro to issue import licenses for the Indian trade and instructed the intendant to submit a list of the

44. Pantón to Miró and Navarro, February 15, 1787, Lockey Collection.

45. Miró and Navarro to Pantón, March 9, 1787, West Papers.

46. Pantón to Miró and Navarro, May 9, 1787, *ibid.*

47. Mird and Navarro to Del Campo, March 14, 1787, Lockey Collection.

48. John G. Clark, *New Orleans, 1718-1812: An Economic History* (Baton Rouge, 1970), 232; Report of a Committee of Merchants of Barcelona on the Commerce of Louisiana and the Floridas, June 19, 1788, Whitaker, *Documents Relating to the Commercial Policy of Spain*, 64-74.

articles regularly consumed by the Indians. Other arrangements would be made for their commercial needs.⁴⁹

Late in 1787 Panton encountered new commercial impediments at St. Marks, which he considered both onerous and intolerable. The new commandant, acting on orders from Miró and Navarro, impounded one of the company's vessels that had arrived from Nassau with goods that were needed to replenish the firm's inventories.⁵⁰ Henceforth, it was announced, all ships calling at St. Marks would have to clear Pensacola customs before entering and departing from this duty post. Panton vented his wrath over the latest imposition of the "western Masters" in an abrasive letter to Governor Zéspedes: "If I mistake not," the irate Panton wrote, the royal order of May 1786 sanctioned the St. Marks trade "on the *terms proposed by ourselves*."⁵¹ Unless the privileges formerly enjoyed at St. Marks were restored, Panton vowed that he and his partners would wind up their affairs in both Floridas.⁵²

In 1788, Miró and Navarro allowed the vessels of Mather and Panton to voyage to London carrying peltry accumulated during the past season. The merchants were advised, however, that further imports on their part would require official approval. Mather and Panton used the occasion to submit memorials laying down the conditions they would require for continuing in the Indian trade. Miró and Navarro also sent their superiors advisements expressing their indifferences as to how the Indians would be supplied, but stressing the need for fresh stocks of merchandise in West Florida no later than November.⁵³

The Mather memorial asked the king's indulgence for the firm to borrow 50,000 pesos in the highly inflated paper currency of Louisiana and to exchange it for 50,000 silver pesos from the royal coffers in Vera Cruz. Miró and Navarro endorsed the memorial, citing the services of the firm to the royal interest, confirming its heavy credit outlays, and denying rumors that the

49. Antonio Valdes to Navarro, August 16, 1787, West Papers.

50. McGillivray to Zéspedes, January 5, 1788, Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 166.

51. Panton to Zéspedes, January 8, 1788, EF 116L9. (The italics are Panton's.)

52. *Ibid.*

53. Miró and Navarro to Valdes, February 22, 1788, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid, Spain, *estado, legajo* 3888, document 19.

partners had amassed fortunes.⁵⁴ The Panton memorial outlined the difficulties arising from existing restrictions, which if continued, Panton asserted, his company's "ruin in a little time would be perfectly complete."⁵⁵ He declared he had lost \$30,000 in 1784 and 1785 while weaning the Creeks away from his Georgian competitors. Furthermore, he alleged, his subsequent profits had not been adequate for offsetting the earlier losses. A business so unprofitable could not continue, he maintained, unless the past restrictions were removed and the company gained the liberty to import "freely whatever is necessary for the Indian trade."⁵⁶ In addition, the company must receive the Choctaw-Chickasaw trade exclusively, a measure required for offsetting the losses incurred from competing with the Georgians in the Creek trade. Claiming that American ports were freeing the Indian trade from all duties and imposts, Panton questioned the logic of expecting his firm to "stand forever on the out-post, while others [were] securely at our Expense enjoying a feast within."⁵⁷

Admitting some basis for Panton's complaints of slim profits, but perplexed at his demands for the Choctaw-Chickasaw trade, Miró offered to support a counterproposal that would permit the sale of one-fourth of the Pensacola-based firm's imports on the New Orleans market. Panton declined the offer, insisting that he receive such a concession above and beyond his other demands.⁵⁸ The incensed Miró concluded that Panton's rebuff stemmed from convictions that he was irreplaceable. Although conceding that replacing Panton would be difficult indeed, the governor recommended that perhaps it should be considered, as Panton had not taken the full oath of loyalty to Spain. However, Miró advised, McGillivray must be granted an interest in any successor to Panton, Leslie and Company. Governor Miró

54. Mather and Strother Memorial to Miró and Navarro, n.d., West Papers; Miró and Navarro to Valdes, April 1, 1788, Lockey Collection; D. C. Corbitt and Roberta Corbitt, transls. and eds., "Papers from the Spanish Archives relating to Tennessee and the Old Southwest, 1785-1800, Part VI, 1788," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, 14 (1942), 97-98.

55. Panton memorial to Del Campo, April 8, 1788, West Papers.

56. *Ibid.*

57. *Ibid.*

58. Miró to Valdes, July 13, 1788, Panton to Miró, August 5, 1788, Lockey Collection; Miró to O'Neill, July 12, 1788, Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 189.

also declared that the king should not concede anything to Pantón which would be detrimental to the interests of Mather and Strother.⁵⁹

A royal order of August 29, 1788, authorized Pantón and Mather to import enough goods to sustain the Indian trade an additional year. This, it was felt, would provide the Supreme Council of State the time it needed to devise plans for replacing them.⁶⁰ Pantón's vessel returned to Pensacola in December with a smaller than usual consignment of goods, and Pantón, expecting a denial of his demands, hesitated to extend any more credit to traders. To encourage Pantón, and in light of the tensions among the Creeks, Miró advised him that the king's ministers would soon discover the pitfalls involved in finding a suitable replacement. He promised to recommend his request for duty exemptions.⁶¹

At this juncture, Mather's ship reached Mobile with news that the firm's petition for credit relief had been denied. The cargo it carried was not adequate to support the Choctaw-Chickasaw trade. In February 1789, Miró asked Pantón to take over the Mather concession, informing him that the king would very likely look favorably on his acceptance. Pantón reluctantly agreed; he hoped to have some indication of Spain's disposition toward his memorial before making any commitment.⁶²

In September 1788, meanwhile, the Supreme Council of State had taken the Indian trade question under full consideration, having before it the observations of Miró, Navarro, Zéspedes, and Del Campo. Miró and Navarro had listed the

59. Miró to Valdes, August 28, 1788, Lockey Collection.

60. Valdes to Floridablanca, August 29, 1788, to Zéspedes, August 29, 1788, West Papers.

61. Miró to Valdes, February 12, 1789, Lockey Collection. Miró's encouragement of Pantón stemmed from fears that McGillivray, who was angry at the curtailment of gifts of Spanish arms, and who was also despondent over the uncertainties surrounding Pantón's future commercial status in the Floridas, might consort with William Augustus Bowles, an adventurer backed by Lord Dunmore, governor of the Bahamas, and Bahamian mercantile interests in a bid to rid the Creeks of all dependency on the Spaniards. See McGillivray to Miró, August 12, 20, 1788, to O'Neill, August 22, 1788, O'Neill to Miró, August 22, 1788, McGillivray to O'Neill, August 29, 1788, to Miró, September 20, 1788, Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 193-95, 195-96, 196-97, 197-98, 198-99, 199-202; J. Leitch Wright, Jr., *William Augustus Bowles: Director General of the Creek Nation* (Athens, 1967), 26-33.

62. Miró to Pantón, February 28, April 7, 1789, to Valdes, May 20, 1789, AGI 86-6-17-180, ST.

huge credit demands, the attendant risks of recovery, and falling peltry prices as major liabilities in dealing with the Indians. Any Spaniard who contemplated assuming the trade, they advised, should first gain direct personal knowledge of the problems involved. Otherwise, he would very likely abandon the operations quickly, and the Indians would of necessity turn to the Americans.⁶³ Zéspedes had suggested a gradual displacement of the Pantón firm by introducing a young Spaniard into the partnership who could gain the necessary business experience before taking it over on his own.⁶⁴ Even Del Campo, despite his suspicions that the West Florida Indian trade served only as a pretext for massive smuggling, had reflected on the folly of dismissing Pantón and his associates too abruptly.⁶⁵

In response to such advice, the council in October 1788 called for the advice of Martín Navarro, who had returned to Spain after resigning from the Louisiana intendency. On his recommendation, the council resolved to send Navarro to France, England, and the Netherlands to gather specimens of Indian manufactures for duplication by Spanish artisans. The council also heeded Navarro's advice on the need to encourage Pantón and Mather to remain in the Indian trade until the economic takeover was completed.⁶⁶ A royal order of March 23, 1789, authorized the two firms to conduct the Indian trade selling British goods, and it exempted them from both export and import duties.⁶⁷ This directive came too late to benefit Mather and Strother.

This ambitious Spanish project fell victim to the wars

63. Minutes of a Meeting of the Supreme Junta de Estado, September 22, 1788, Whitaker, *Documents Relating to the Commercial Policy of Spain*, 99-103; Miró to Valdes, July 13, 1788, Lockey Collection; Navarro to Valdes, January 8, 1789, West Papers.

64. Zéspedes to Valdes, No. 7, March 24, 1788, Lockey Collection. A translation appears in D. C. Corbitt and Roberta Corbitt, transls. and eds., "Papers from the Spanish Archives relating to Tennessee and the Old Southwest, 1783-1800, Part VI, 1788," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, 14 (1942), 86-94.

65. Del Campo to Floridablanca, July 4, 1788, Lockey Collection.

66. Navarro to Valdes, January 12, 1789, report of Navarro, January 15, 1789, resolution of the Junta Suprema de Estado, March 16, 1789, West Papers; Navarro to Valdes, December 8, 1789, AGI 87-3-19, Santo Domingo 2665, ST.

67. A copy of the Royal order is enclosed in Domingo Cabello to Zéspedes, June 26, 1789, West Papers.

spawned by the French Revolution. Under the privileges gained in 1789 Panton, Leslie and Company increased its sway over the southern Indians until the mid-1790s when the growing strength of the United States and the weakening of the Spanish position in North America created difficulties for Panton and his associates. These were sufficiently serious to prompt Panton to bargain with the Spaniards over means for retiring from the Indian trade without incurring serious losses.

Ironically enough, British merchants were once again firmly ensconced in West Florida within less than a decade after its conquest by Spanish arms. The expulsion of Britons from the Gulf of Mexico had been a prime Spanish objective during the American Revolution. In the case of Panton, Leslie and Company, however, the political imperatives of preserving Spanish hegemony over the southern Indians outweighed traditional Spanish merchantilist tendencies.⁶⁸

68. Thomas D. Watson, "Merchant Adventurer in the Old Southwest: William Panton, the Spanish Years, 1783-1801" (Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Tech University, 1972), 245-62, 298-303.

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The Florida Historical Quarterly

July 1975-April 1976

CONTENTS OF VOLUME LIV

- Accent Florida*, by Dunn, reviewed, 118
- Alachua County: A Sesquicentennial Tribute*, ed. by Opdyke, reviewed, 412
- Allies For Freedom: Blacks and John Brown*, by Quarles, reviewed, 396
- All Mankind is One: A Study of the Disputation Between Bartolomé de las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda in 1550 on the Intellectual and Religious Capacity of the American Indians*, by Hanke, reviewed, 387
- Alvarez, Eugene, *Travel on Southern Antebellum Railroads, 1828-1860*, reviewed, 102
- American Association for State and Local History awards, 419
- American Navy, 1918-1941: A Bibliography*, by Smith, reviewed, 122
- American Self-Dosage Medicines: An Historical Perspective*, by Young, reviewed, 122
- And They All Sang Hallelujah: Plain-Folk Camp-Meeting Religion, 1800-1845*, by Bruce, reviewed, 224
- Ante-bellum Pensacola and the Military Presence*, by Dibble, reviewed, 215
- Archives of Spanish West Florida, 1782-1810, Index to*, reviewed, 236.
- Arthur W. Thompson Memorial Prize in Florida History (1974-1975), 123
- Bartlett, Richard A., *The New Country: A Social History of the American Frontier, 1776-1890*, reviewed, 393

- Bartley, Numan V., book review by, 234
- Bauer, K. Jack, *The Mexican War, 1846-1848*, reviewed, 226
- Beeman, Richard R., *Patrick Henry: A Biography*, reviewed, 222
- Bellman, Samuel I., *Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings*, reviewed, 93
- Bennett, Charles E., transl., *Three Voyages*, René Laudonnière, reviewed, 379
- Berkeley, Dorothy Smith and Edmund, *Dr. John Mitchell: The Man Who Made the Map of North America*, reviewed, 219
- Berkeley, Edmund and Dorothy Smith, *Dr. John Mitchell: The Man Who Made the Map of North America*, reviewed, 219
- Bibliography of Printed Battle Plans of the American Revolution, 1775-1795*, by Nebenzahl, reviewed, 237
- Bicentennial: Beyond the Birthday*, color film, 243
- Bicentennial Chronicle*, published by Third Century U.S.A., 242
- Billings, Warren M., ed., *The Old Dominion in the Seventeenth Century: A Documentary History of Virginia, 1606-1689*, reviewed, 239
- Billington, Monroe Lee, *The Political South in the Twentieth Century*, reviewed, 410
- Biographical Register of the Confederate Congress*, comp. by Warner and Yearn, reviewed, 414
- "Blacks in British East Florida," by J. Leitch Wright, Jr., 425
- Booker T. Washington Papers: Volume 3, 1889-95*, ed. by Harlan, reviewed, 109
- Brandon, William, *The Last Americans: The Indian in American Culture*, reviewed, 405
- Breckinridge: Statesman, Soldier, Symbol*, by Davis, reviewed, 229
- "Brigadier Frederick Haldimand— The Florida Years," by Robert R. Rea, 512
- Bright, Marion Converse, comp., *Early Georgia Portraits, 1715-1870*, reviewed, 238
- Brooks, H. K., book review by, 385
- Bruce, Dickson D., Jr., *And They All Sang Hallelujah: Plain-Folk Camp-Meeting Religion, 1800-1845*, reviewed, 224
- Buker, George E., *Swamp Sailors: Riverine Warfare in the Everglades, 1835-1842*, reviewed, 91
- Burts, Robert Milton, *Richard Irvine Manning and the Progressive Movement in South Carolina*, reviewed, 401
- "Campbell Town: French Huguenots in British West Florida," by J. Barton Starr, 532

- Carswell, Elba Wilson, *Tempestuous Triangle: Historical Notes on Washington County, Florida*, reviewed, 412; *Possum Cookbook, America's Amazing Marsupials and Dozens of Ways to Cook Them*, reviewed, 416
- Carter, Luther J., *The Florida Experience: Land and Water Policy in a Growth State*, reviewed, 380
- Center for Latin American Studies, University of Florida, "The Florida Borderlands During the Age of the American Revolution," Bicentennial Conference, Gainesville (March 1-2, 1976), 419
- Charlton W. Tebeau Junior Book Award (1974), 124
- Chesnutt, David R., George C. Rogers, Jr., Peggy J. Clark, and Walter B. Edgar, eds., *The Papers of Henry Laurens, Volume Four: Sept. 1, 1763- Aug. 31, 1765*, reviewed, 99
- "Civil War Letters of Colonel David Lang," ed. by Bertram H. Groene, 340
- Clark, Patricia P., "J. F. B. Marshall: A New England Emigrant Aid Company Agent in Postwar Florida, 1867," 39
- Clark, Peggy J., George C. Rogers, Jr., David R. Chesnutt, and Walter B. Edgar, eds., *The Papers of Henry Laurens, Volume Four: Sept. 1, 1763 - Aug. 31, 1765*, reviewed, 99
- Clark, Thomas D., book reviews by, 109, 393
- Coleman, Kenneth, book review by, 390
- Confederate Soldier*, by Wilson, facsimile reprint, reviewed, 121
- "Continuity in Commerce: Development of the Pantón, Leslie and Company Trade Monopoly in West Florida," by Thomas D. Watson, 548
- Corbett, Theodore G., "Population Structure in Hispanic St. Augustine, 1629-1763," 203
- Crackers and Swamp Cabbage*, by Smith, reviewed, 117
- Craig, Alan, book review by, 96
- Craven, Avery O., *Rachel of Old Louisiana*, reviewed, 121
- Culbertson, R. E., book review by, 108
- "Cultural Legacy of the Gulf Coast, 1870-1940," Gulf Coast History and Humanities Conference, Pensacola, 127
- Curl, Donald W., book review by, 210
- Current, Richard N., book review by, 399
- Davis, William C., *Breckinridge: Statesman, Soldier, Symbol*, reviewed, 229
- D. B. McKay Florida History Award, Tampa Historical Society, presented to Gloria Jahoda, 420

- Dead Towns of Sunbury and Dorchester*, 2nd edition, by McIlvaine, reviewed, 238
- Deep South States of America: People, Politics, and Power in the Seven Deep South States*, by Peirce, reviewed, 234
- DeRosier, Arthur H., Jr., book review by, 405
- Dewey, Jane, and Nancy Henderson, 1974 Charlton W. Tebeau Junior Book Award winners, 124
- Dial, Adolph L., and David K. Eliades, *The Only Land I Know*, reviewed, 239
- Dibble, Ernest F., book review by, 112; *Ante-bellum Pensacola and the Military Presence*, reviewed, 215
- Dispatches of The Spanish Governors of Louisiana, 1766-1792*, Index to, 236
- Dr. John Mitchell: The Man Who Made the Map of North America*, by Berkeley and Berkeley, reviewed, 219
- Dodson, Mayhew "Pat," book review by, 95; obituary, 128
- Doherty, Herbert J., Jr., book review by, 102
- DuBois, Bessie Wilson, *Shipwrecks in the Vicinity of Jupiter Inlet*, reviewed, 117
- Dukes of Durham, 1865-1929*, by Durden, reviewed, 121
- Dunn, Hampton, *Accent Florida*, reviewed, 118
- du Pratz, Antoine Simon Le Page, *The History of Louisiana*, facsimile, ed. by Tregle, reviewed, 236
- Durden, Robert F., *The Dukes of Durham, 1865-1929*, reviewed, 121
- Earl, John, *John Muir's Longest Walk*, reviewed, 412
- Early Georgia Portraits, 1715-1870*, comp. by Bright, reviewed, 238
- Eastern Cherokees*, comp. by Siler, reviewed, 415
- "East Florida as a Loyalist Haven," by Linda K. Williams, 465
- "East Florida Society of London, 1766-1767," by George C. Rogers, Jr., 479
- Eaton, Clement, book review by, 397
- Eaton, John Henry, and John Reid, *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, facsimile, ed. by Owsley, reviewed, 116
- Ed Ball: Confusion to the Enemy*, by Griffith, reviewed, 212
- Edgar, Walter B., George C. Rogers, Jr., David R. Chesnutt, and Peggy J. Clark, eds., *The Papers of Henry Laurens, Volume Four: Sept. 1, 1763-Aug. 31, 1765*, reviewed, 99
- Eighteenth-Century Florida and Its Borderlands*, ed. by Proctor, reviewed, 208

- Eliades, David K., and Adolph L. Dial, *The Only Land I Know*, reviewed, 239
- E. Merton Coulter History Award (1974), Georgia Historical Society, 126
- European Discovery of America: The Southern Voyages, A.D. 1492-1616*, by Morison, reviewed, 385
- Fabel, R. F. A., "Governor George Johnstone of British West Florida," 497
- Falconer, Thomas, *On the Discovery of the Mississippi, and on the South-Western, Oregon, and North-Western Boundary of the United States*, facsimile, reviewed, 237
- Fernald, Edward A., and Robert B. Marcus, *Florida: A Geographical Approach*, reviewed, 96
- First Constitution of the State of Louisiana*, reviewed, 417
- First on the Land: The North Carolina Indians*, by Wetmore, reviewed, 415
- Fischer, Roger A., *The Segregation Struggle in Louisiana, 1862-1877*, reviewed, 231
- "Flagler's Magnificent Hotel Ponce de Leon," by Thomas Graham, 1
- Fleming, Julius J., *The Juhl Letters to the Charleston Courier: A View of the South, 1865-1871*, ed. by Moore, reviewed, 121
- Florida: A Geographical Approach*, by Marcus and Fernald, reviewed, 96
- Florida Bicentennial Commission, Bicentennial Floridiana Facsimile Series, 116-17; Fifth Annual Florida Bicentennial Symposium (1976), 418
- "Florida Borderlands During the Age of the American Revolution," Center for Latin American Studies, Bicentennial Conference, University of Florida (March 1-2, 1976), 419
- Florida College Teachers of History Conference (1976), 242, 418
- Florida Confederation of Historical Societies, 123
- Florida Experience: Land and Water Policy in a Growth State*, by Carter, reviewed, 380
- Florida Genealogical Society, 421
- Florida Handbook, 1975-1976*, comp. by Morris, reviewed, 411
- Florida Historical Society:
 Annual meeting, 123, 245
 Gifts to the Society, 256
 Minutes of directors' meetings, 247

- New members, 256
- Treasurer's report, 260
- Florida History in Periodicals, 1974, 85
- Florida History Research In Progress, 367
- Florida Place Names*, by Morris, reviewed, 95
- Florida Ramble*, by Shoumatoff, reviewed, 218
- "Fort Foster: A Second Seminole War Fort," by Michael G. Schene, 319
- Four Centuries of Southern Indians*, ed. by Hudson, reviewed, 402
- Foxfire III*, ed. by Wigginton, reviewed, 416
- France, Mary Duncan, "'A Year of Monkey War': The Anti-evolution Campaign and the Florida Legislature," 156
- Francis Butler Simkins Award, Southern Historical Association, 127
- From Ticks to Politics*, by Magill, reviewed, 117
- Fundamental Testaments of the American Revolution: Papers presented at the second symposium, May 10 and 11, 1973*, Library of Congress, reviewed, 100
- Gannon, Michael V., book review by, 387
- Gawalt, Gerard W., John R. Sellers, Paul H. Smith, and Patricia Molen van Ee, comps., *Manuscript Sources In the Library of Congress for Research on The American Revolution*, reviewed, 237
- General L. Kemper Williams Prizes in Louisiana History (1976), 243
- General W. S. Brown Memorial Military History Conference (January 24, 1976), 243
- Genovese, Eugene D., *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made*, reviewed, 103
- George C. Osborne Social Science Publication Award, 1974-1975, University of Florida, 126
- Giraud, Marcel, *A History of French Louisiana, Volume One, The Reign of Louis XIV, 1698-1715*, reviewed, 97
- Godoy, Gustavo J., "José Alejandro Huau: A Cuban Patriot in Jacksonville Politics," 196
- "Governor George Johnstone of British West Florida," by R. F. A. Fabel, 497
- Goza, William M., American Association for State and Local History Award, 419
- Graham, Thomas, "Flagler's Magnificent Hotel Ponce de Leon,"

1; book review by, 214

Griffith, Leon Odell, *Ed Ball: Confusion to the Enemy*, reviewed, 212; *John Holliday Perry, Florida Press Lord*, reviewed, 214

Groene, Bertram H., ed., "The Civil War Letters of Colonel David Land," 340

Gulf Coast History and Humanities Conference, "Cultural Legacy of the Gulf Coast, 1870-1940," Pensacola (October 2-3, 1975), 127

Hackney, Sheldon, book review by, 114

Hair, William I., book review by, 231

Halifax Historical Herald, 125

Hanke, Lewis, *All Mankind is One: A Study of the Disputation Between Bartolomé de las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda in 1550 on the Intellectual and Religious Capacity of the American Indians*, reviewed, 387

Harlan, Louis R., ed., *The Booker T. Washington Papers: Volume 3, 1889-95*, reviewed, 109

Harner, Charles E., *A Pictorial History of Ybor City*, reviewed, 118

Harvey, Cecil, and Joel Schor, comps., *A List of References for the History of Black Americans in Agriculture, 1619-1974*, reviewed, 239

Haworth, Esther Bernice Howell, *Jottings and Echoes Related to Newansville, One of Florida's Earliest Settlements of Alachua and Columbia Counties*, reviewed, 236

Henderson, H. James, *Party Politics in the Continental Congress*, reviewed, 391

Henderson, Nancy, and Jane Dewey, 1974 Charlton W. Tebeau Junior Book Award winners, 124

Higginbotham, Don, book review by, 222

Hill, Samuel S., Jr., book review by, 216

Hirshberg, Edgar W., book review by, 408

Historical Association of Southern Florida Historic Museum, American Association for State and Local History Award, 419

Historical Background of Pinellas County, Florida, comp. by Pinellas County Planning Council, reviewed, 236

History of French Louisiana, Volume One, The Reign of Louis XIV, 1698-1715, by Giraud, reviewed, 97

History of Louisiana, by du Pratz, facsimile reprint, reviewed, 236

History of Martin County, comp. by Hutchinson, ed. by Paige, re-

- viewed, 413
- History of Martin County*, ed. by Paige, comp. by Hutchinson, reviewed, 413
- History of the Tampa Bay Hotel*, reviewed, 119
- Hoffmeister, John Edward, *Land from the Sea: The Geologic Story of South Florida*, reviewed, 385
- Hole, Louis J., *Melbourne Sketches: A Souvenir of Melbourne on the Indian River, Brevard County, Florida*, reviewed, 416
- Holland, Jack M., *The Reception Center*, reviewed, 414
- Holy Cross Church: The First Hundred Years*, reviewed, 414
- Hudson, Charles M., ed., *Four Centuries of Southern Indians*, reviewed, 402; book review by, 407
- Hutchinson, Janet, comp., *History of Martin County*, ed. by Paige, reviewed, 413
- Ikwa of the Temple Mounds*, by Searcy, reviewed, 239
- In Defense of the Indians: The Defense of the Most Reverend Lord, Don Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas, of the Order of Preachers, Late Bishop of Chiapa, Against the Persecutors and Slanderers of the Peoples of the New World Discovered Across the Seas*, ed. by Poole, reviewed, 387
- Index to the Archives of Spanish West Florida, 1782-1810*, reviewed, 236
- Index to the Dispatches of the Spanish Governors of Louisiana, 1766-1792*, reviewed, 236
- Indian Temple Mound Museum of Fort Walton Beach, American Association for State and Local History Award, 419
- Into the Twenties: The United States from Armistice to Normalcy*, by Noggle, reviewed, 232
- Jahoda, Gloria, book review by, 93
- James Mooney Award, Southern Anthropological Society, 125
- "J. F. B. Marshall: A New England Emigrant Aid Company Agent in Postwar Florida, 1867," by Patricia P. Clark, 39
- John Holliday Perry, *Florida Press Lord*, by Griffith, reviewed, 214
- John James Tigert: American Educator*, by Osborn, reviewed, 382
- John Muir's Longest Walk*, by Earl, reviewed, 412
- Johnson, Grant, and the Politics of Reconstruction*, by Mantell, reviewed, 104
- "José Alejandro Huau: A Cuban Patriot in Jacksonville Politics,"

- by Gustavo J. Godoy, 196
- Joseph E. Lee Memorial Library-Museum, Jacksonville, 241
- Jottings and Echoes Related to Newnansville, One of Florida's Earliest Settlements of Alachua and Columbia Counties*, by Haworth, reviewed, 236
- Journal of Urban History*, 244
- Juhl Letters to the Charleston Courier: A View of the South, 1865-1871*, by Fleming, ed. by Moore, reviewed, 121
- Kerber, Stephen, book review by, 401
- Kings Road Marker, Jacksonville, 421
- Klingman, Peter D., book review by, 212
- Knights of the Fourth Estate: The Story of the Miami Herald*, by Smiley, reviewed, 210
- Kousser, J. Morgan, *The Shaping of Southern Politics: Suffrage Restriction and the Establishment of the One-Party South, 1880-1910*, reviewed, 114
- Lamb, Ursula, book review by, 385
- Lander, Ernest M., Jr., book review by, 226
- Land from the Sea: The Geologic Story of South Florida*, by Hoffmeister, reviewed, 385
- Lane, Mills, *The People of Georgia: An Illustrated Social History*, reviewed, 119
- Last Americans: The Indian in American Culture*, by Brandon, reviewed, 40
- Letters from the Frontiers*, by McCall, facsimile reprint, reviewed, 116
- Lewis, Elsie M., book review by, 103
- Library of Congress Symposia on the American Revolution, Leadership in the American Revolution, Papers presented at the third symposium, May 9 and 10, 1974*, reviewed, 390
- Life of Andrew Jackson*, by Reid and Eaton, facsimile reprint, reviewed, 120
- Linderman, Gerald F., *The Mirror of War: American Society and the Spanish-American War*, reviewed, 112
- List of References for the History of Black Americans in Agriculture, 1619-1974*, comp. by Schor and Harvey, reviewed, 239
- Louisiana Reconstructed, 1863-1877*, by Taylor, reviewed, 399
- Loxahatchee Historical Society, historical map, 242

- McCall, George A., *Letters from the Frontiers*, facsimile, ed. by Mahon, reviewed, 116
- McDonald, Forrest, *The Presidency of George Washington*, reviewed, 222
- McGovern, James R., " 'Sporting Life on the Line': Prostitution in Progressive Era Pensacola," 131
- McIlvaine, Paul, *The Dead Towns of Sunbury and Dorchester*, 2nd edition, reviewed, 238
- McIntosh, James T., ed., *The Papers of Jefferson Davis, Volume 2, June 1841-July 1846*, reviewed, 397
- "Madison County's Sea Island Cotton Industry, 1870-1916," by Clifton Paisley, 285
- Magill, Inez, *From Ticks to Politics*, reviewed, 117
- Mahon, John K., facsimile ed., *Letters from the Frontiers*, by McCall, reviewed, 116; book reviews by, 215, 380; ed., *Proceedings of the Gulf Coast History and Humanities Conference, Volume V, Indians of the Lower South: Past and Present*, reviewed, 407
- Mantell, Martin E., *Johnson, Grant, and the Politics of Reconstruction*, reviewed, 104
- Manuscript Sources In the Library of Congress for Research on the American Revolution*, comp. by Sellers, Gawalt, Smith, and van Ee, reviewed, 237
- Marcus, Robert B., and Edward A. Fernald, *Florida: A Geographical Approach*, reviewed, 96
- Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, by Bellman, reviewed, 93
- Mark Twain & the South*, by Pettit, reviewed, 408
- Martin, Richard A., 1974-1975 Arthur W. Thompson Memorial Prize in Florida History winner, 123
- Matter, Robert Allen, "Missions in the Defense of Spanish Florida, 1566-1710," 18; book review by, 379
- May, Philip Stockton, obituary, 423
- Melbourne Sketches: A Souvenir of Melbourne on the Indian River, Brevard County, Florida*, by Hole, reviewed, 416
- "Mermaids Riding Alligators: Divided Command on the Southern Frontier, 1776-1778," by W. Calvin Smith, 443
- Meroney, Geraldine M., book review by, 100
- Mexican War, 1846-1848*, by Bauer, reviewed, 226
- Milanich, Jerald T., book review by, 402
- Minorcans in Florida: Their History and Heritage*, by Quinn, reviewed, 207

- Mirror of War: American Society and the Spanish-American War*, by Linderman, reviewed, 112
- "Missions in the Defense of Spanish Florida, 1566-1710," by Robert Allen Matter, 18
- Mohl, Raymond A., ed., *Journal of Urban History*, 244
- Morison, Samuel Eliot, *The European Discovery of America: The Southern Voyages, A. D. 1492-1616*, reviewed, 385
- Moore, John Hammond, ed., *The Juhl Letters to the Charleston Courier: A View of the South, 1865-1871*, by Fleming, reviewed, 121
- Morris, Allen, *Florida Place Names*, reviewed, 95; comp., *The Florida Handbook, 1975-1976*, reviewed, 411
- Nasatir, A. P., book review by, 97
- Nathans, Elizabeth Studley, book review by, 104
- Nebenzahl, Kenneth, *A Bibliography of Printed Battle Plans of the American Revolution, 1775-1795*, reviewed, 237
- New Country: A Social History of the American Frontier, 1776-1890*, by Bartlett, reviewed, 393
- 1976 Florida Historical Calendar*, comp. by Sullivan, 421
- Noggle, Burl, *Into the Twenties: The United States from Armistice to Normalcy*, reviewed, 232
- Nordin, D. Sven, *Rich Harvest: A History of the Grange, 1867-1900*, reviewed, 108
- Nor Is It Over Yet: Florida in the Era of Reconstruction, 1863-1877*, by Shofner, reviewed, 90
- Obenreder, Julie J., *West Pasco's Heritage*, reviewed, 235
- Old Dominion in the Seventeenth Century: A Documentary History of Virginia, 1606-1689*, ed. by Billings, reviewed, 239
- Only Land I Know*, by Dial and Eliades, reviewed, 239
- On the Discovery of the Mississippi, and on the South-Western, Oregon, and North-Western Boundary of the United States*, by Falconer, facsimile reprint, reviewed, 237
- Opdyke, John B., ed., *Alachua County: A Sesquicentennial Tribute*, reviewed, 412
- Osborn, George Coleman, *John James Tigert: American Educator*, reviewed, 382
- Ossa, Helen, *They Saved Our Birds, The Battle Won and the War to Win*, reviewed, 118
- Owsley, Frank L., Jr., facsimile ed., *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, by Reid and Eaton, reviewed, 116

- "Padrone Looks At Florida: Labor Recruiting and the Florida East Coast Railway," by George E. Pozzetta, 74
- Paige, Emeline K., ed., *History of Martin County*, comp. by Hutchinson, reviewed, 413
- Paisley, Clifton, "Madison County's Sea Island Cotton Industry, 1870-1916," 285
- Panton, Leslie & Company Papers, publications program, 241
- Papers of Henry Laurens, Volume Four: Sept. 1, 1763-Aug. 31, 1765*, ed. by Rogers, Chesnutt, Clark, and Edgar, reviewed, 99
- Papers of Jefferson Davis, Volume 2, June 1841-July 1846*, ed. by McIntosh, reviewed, 397
- Party Politics in the Continental Congress*, by Henderson, reviewed, 391
- Patrick Henry: A Biography*, by Beeman, reviewed, 222
- Peace River Valley Florida History Award (1975), presented to Lawrence E. Will, 420
- Pearson, Jim Berry, book review by, 232
- Peckham, Howard H., ed., *The Toll of Independence*, reviewed, 120
- Peirce, Neal R., *The Deep South States of America: People, Politics, and Power in the Seven Deep South States*, reviewed, 234
- Pensacola Bicentennial Books, 242
- People of Georgia: An Illustrated Social History*, by Lane, reviewed, 119
- Pettit, Arthur G., *Mark Twain & the South*, reviewed, 408
- Pictorial History of Ybor City*, by Harner, reviewed, 118
- Pinellas County Planning Council, comp., *Historical Background of Pinellas County, Florida*, reviewed, 236
- Political South in the Twentieth Century*, by Billington, reviewed, 410
- Poole, Stafford, ed., *In Defense of the Indians: The Defense of the Most Reverend Lord, Won Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas, of the Order of Preachers, Late Bishop of Chiapa, Against the Persecutors and Slanderers of the Peoples of the New World Discovered Across the Seas*, reviewed, 387
- "Population Structure in Hispanic St. Augustine, 1629-1763," by Theodore G. Corbett, 263
- Posey, Walter B., book review by, 224
- Possum Cookbook, America's Amazing Marsupials and Dozens of Ways to Cook Them*, by Carswell, reviewed, 416
- Pozzetta, George E., "A Padrone Looks at Florida: Labor Re-

- cruiting and the Florida East Coast Railway," 74; 1974-1975 George C. Osborne Social Science Publication Award (University of Florida) winner, 126
- Presidency of George Washington*, by McDonald, reviewed, 222
- Proceedings of the Gulf Coast History and Humanities Conference, Volume V, Indians of the Lower South: Past and Present*, ed. by Mahon, reviewed, 407
- Proctor, Samuel, ed., *Eighteenth-Century Florida and Its Borderlands*, reviewed, 208
- Quarles, Benjamin, *Allies For Freedom: Blacks and John Brown*, reviewed, 396
- Quinn, Jane, *Minorcans in Florida: Their History and Heritage*, reviewed, 208
- Rabun, James, book review by, 229
- Rachel of Old Louisiana*, by Craven, reviewed, 121
- Rea, Robert R., "Brigadier Frederick Haldimand— The Florida Years," 512
- Reception Center*, by Holland, reviewed, 414
- Reid, John, and John Henry Eaton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, facsimile, ed. by Owsley, reviewed, 116
- Rembert W. Patrick Memorial Book Award (1974), 124
- Reynolds, Clark G., book review by, 91
- Richard Irvine Manning and the Progressive Movement in South Carolina*, by Burts, reviewed, 401
- Richardson, Joe M., " 'We Are Truly Doing Missionary Work': Letters from American Missionary Association Teachers in Florida, 1864-1874," 178; book review by, 396
- Rich Harvest: History of the Grange, 1867-1900*, by Nordin, reviewed, 108
- "Robert and John Grattan Gamble: Middle Florida Entrepreneurs," by Michael G. Schene, 61
- Rogers, George C., Jr., "The East Florida Society of London, 1766-1767," 4
- Rogers, George C., Jr., David R. Chesnutt, Peggy J. Clark, and Walter B. Edgar, eds., *The Papers of Henry Laurens, Volume Four: Sept. 1, 1763-Aug. 31, 1765*, reviewed, 99
- Rogers, William Warren, and John K. Severn, "Theodore Roosevelt Entertains Booker T. Washington: Florida's Reaction to the White House Dinner," 306

- Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made*, by Genovese, reviewed, 103
- Rosen, F. Bruce, book review by, 106
- Sanger, Marjory Bartlett, book review by, 218
- Schene, Michael G., "Robert and John Grattan Gamble: Middle Florida Entrepreneurs," 61; "Fort Foster: A Second Seminole War Fort," 319
- Schools for All: The Blacks & Public Education in the South, 1865-1877*, by Vaughn, reviewed, 106
- Schor, Joel, and Cecil Harvey, comps., *A List of References for the History of Black Americans in Agriculture, 1619-1974*, reviewed, 239
- Searcy, Margaret Zehmer, *Ikwa of the Temple Mounds*, reviewed, 239
- Segregation Struggle in Louisiana, 1862-77*, by Fischer, reviewed, 231
- Sellers, John R., Gerard W. Gawalt, Paul H. Smith, and Patricia Molen van Ee, comps., *Manuscript Sources In the Library of Congress for Research on the American Revolution*, reviewed, 237
- Severn, John K., and William Warren Rogers, "Theodore Roosevelt Entertains Booker T. Washington: Florida's Reaction to the White House Dinner," 306
- Shaping of Southern Politics: Suffrage Restriction and the Establishment of the One-Party South, 1880-1910*, by Kousser, reviewed, 114
- Shipwrecks in the Vicinity of Jupiter Inlet*, by DuBois, reviewed, 117
- Shofner, Jerrell H., *Nor Is It Over Yet: Florida in the Era of Reconstruction, 1863-1877*, reviewed, 90; 1974 Rembert W. Patrick Memorial Book Award winner, 124
- Shoumatoff, Alex, *Florida Ramble*, reviewed, 218
- Siler, David W., comp., *The Eastern Cherokees*, reviewed, 415
- Silver, James W., facsimile ed., *The Confederate Soldier*, by Wilson, reviewed, 121; book review by, 410
- Slaughter, Frank G., *The Stonewall Brigade*, reviewed, 121
- "Slave Experience in America: A Bicentennial Perspective," conference at University of Mississippi (October 1-3, 1975), 127
- Smiley, Nixon, *Knights of the Fourth Estate: The Story of the Miami Herald*, reviewed, 210

- Smith, E. A. "Frog," *Crackers and Swamp Cabbage*, reviewed, 117
- Smith, Myron J., Jr., *The American Navy, 1918-1941: A Bibliography*, reviewed, 122
- Smith, Paul H., book review by, 391
- Smith, Paul H., John R. Sellers, Gerard W. Gawalt, and Patricia Molen van Ee, comps., *Manuscript Sources In the Library of Congress for Research on the American Revolution*, reviewed, 237
- Smith, W. Calvin, "Mermaids Riding Alligators: Divided Command on the Southern Frontier, 1776-1778," 443
- Snell, Marvis R., *Testimony to Pioneer Baptists: The Origin and Development of the Gillette First Baptist Church*, reviewed, 216
- Society of American Archivists, archival security program, 420
- South Atlantic Urban Studies*, 422
- Southern Genealogist's Exchange Society seminar, Jacksonville (October 24-25, 1975), 242
- Southern Labor Archives of Georgia State University, catalogues, 126-27
- Southern Labor History Conference, Georgia State University, Atlanta (April 1-3, 1976), 421
- South Florida Pioneers* (Fort Ogden, Florida), 125
- "Spaniards and William Augustus Bowles in Florida, 1799-1803," by David H. White, 145
- "'Sporting Life on the Line': Prostitution in Progressive Era Pensacola," by James R. McGovern, 131
- Starr, J. Barton, book review by, 208; "Campbell Town: French Huguenots in British West Florida," 532
- Stonewall Brigade*, by Slaughter, reviewed, 121
- Sullivan, John A., comp. *1976 Florida Historical Calendar*, 421
- Swamp Sailors: Riverine Warfare in the Everglades, 1835-1842*, by Buker, reviewed, 91
- Swint, Henry L., book review by, 382
- Tanner, Helen Hornbeck, book review by, 219
- Taylor, Joe Gray, *Louisiana Reconstructed, 1863-1877*, reviewed, 399
- Tregle, Joseph G., Jr., facsimile ed., *The History of Louisiana*, by du Pratz, reviewed, 236
- Tempestuous Triangle: Historical Notes on Washington County, Florida*, by Carswell, reviewed, 412

- Testimony to Pioneer Baptists: The Origin and Development of the Gillette First Baptist Church*, by Snell, reviewed, 216
- "Theodore Roosevelt Entertains Booker T. Washington: Florida's Reaction to the White House Dinner," by John K. Severn and William Warren Rogers, 306
- They Saved Our Birds, The Battle Won and the War to Win*, by Ossa, reviewed, 118
- Three Voyages*, René Laudonnière, transl. by Bennett, reviewed, 379
- To Conquer a Peace: The War Between the United States and Mexico*, by Weems, reviewed, 226
- Toll of Independence*, ed. by Peckham, reviewed, 120
- Travel on Southern Antebellum Railroads, 1828-1860*, by Alvarez, reviewed, 102
- van Ee, Patricia Molen, John R. Sellers, Gerard W. Gawalt, and Paul H. Smith, comps., *Manuscript Sources In the Library of Congress for Research on the American Revolution*, reviewed; 237
- Vaudreuil Papers*, calendar and index, reviewed, 119
- Vaughn, William Preston, *Schools for All: The Blacks & Public Education in the South, 1865-1877*, reviewed, 106
- Walsh, Richard, book review by, 99
- Warner, Ezra J., and W. Buck Yearns, comps., *Biographical Register of the Confederate Congress*, reviewed, 414
- Watson, Thomas D., "Continuity in Commerce: Development of the Panton, Leslie and Company Trade Monopoly in West Florida," 548
- "'We Are Truly Doing Missionary Work': Letters from American Missionary Association Teachers in Florida, 1864-1874," by Joe M. Richardson, 178
- Weems, John Edward, *To Conquer a Peace: The War Between the United States and Mexico*, reviewed, 226
- Wentworth Foundation, Inc., Grant, 124
- West Pasco's Heritage*, by Obenreder, reviewed, 235
- Wetmore, Ruth Y., *First on the Land: The North Carolina Indians*, reviewed, 415
- White, David H., "The Spaniards and William Augustus Bowles in Florida, 1799-1803," 145
- Wildes, Harry Emerson, *William Penn*, reviewed, 222

- William Penn*, by Wildes, reviewed, 222
- Williams, Linda K., "East Florida as a Loyalist Haven," 465
- Williams, T. Harry, book review by, 90
- Wilson, LeGrand J., *The Confederate Soldier*, facsimile, ed. by Silver, reviewed, 121
- Wright, J. Leitch, Jr., book review by, 207; "Blacks in British East Florida," 425
- Years, W. Buck, and Ezra J. Warner, comps., *Biographical Register of the Confederate Congress*, reviewed, 414
- " 'Year of Monkey War': The Anti-evolution Campaign and the Florida Legislature," by Mary Duncan France, 156
- Young, James Harvey, *American Self-Dosage Medicines: An Historical Perspective*, reviewed, 122

