

Florida Historical Quarterly

Volume 24
Number 3 *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Vol 24,
Issue 3

Article 1

1945

Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. 24, Issue 3

Florida Historical Society
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Recommended Citation

Society, Florida Historical (1945) "Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. 24, Issue 3," *Florida Historical Quarterly*. Vol. 24: No. 3, Article 1.

Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol24/iss3/1>

The
FLORIDA HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

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Published quarterly by
THE FLORIDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
St. Augustine, Florida

THE CONTEST FOR PENSACOLA BAY AND
OTHER GULF PORTS, 1698-1722

by **STANLEY FAYE**

PART I

John Law's Mississippi Bubble of speculation began to inflate itself on September 26, 1717, when Law's Company of the West made ready to colonize Louisiana. Yet Law in Paris already knew that a sandbar had blocked up the one seaport of Louisiana that he thought suitable for receiving his transatlantic vessels. Five years later the bubble persisted only in memory, the bubble-maker lingered in exile and necessity persuaded light-draft French shipping to enter the Mississippi river. In the course of those five years the Company of the West had searched unavailingly for another deep, suitable and almost necessary port, and French Louisiana for that purpose had made unavailing war on Spanish Pensacola.

Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne de Bienville, not yet nineteen years of age, knew Pensacola bay in January 1699, before he knew Louisiana. Disguised as a servant to a French officer he went ashore from his brother Iberville's squadron and looked upon the unfinished stockade that during two months past a force of more than two hundred Spanish subjects from Mexico had raised to debar France from this prized bay.¹ Therefore Biloxi bay, whose entrance permitted the passage of boats drawing not

1. Pierre Margry, ed., *Decouvertes et Etablissements des Français*. . . . (6 v. ; Paris, 1876-1886). IV. 96-97; Frank to (the Consejo de Indias?), Feb. 19, Jordan to the king, Nov. 1, 1699, annexed to royal cedula, April 19, 1698, Moctezuma to the king, Sept. 18, 1698, Archivo General de Indias (Seville), Audiencia, Mexico, 61-6-22.

much more than seven French feet ² of water, became headquarters during three years for the new colony that honored with its name the king of France.

Tampa bay lay too far southeastward to have interested any Frenchman intending settlement of the lands through which in 1682 Cavelier de la Salle had come from the Illinois to the Gulf of Mexico. Only rowboats could approach the shore of Apalachee bay and mount to the angle formed by the Rio de Apalache (St. Marks river) and the Rio de Nordeste (Wakulla river), where stood San Luis de Apalache (St. Marks, Fla.), St. Augustine's only post on the Gulf. ³ Pensacola bay's first governor failed in 1700 to take his deep riding vessel on an inspection tour in the shallow Mobile bay although he found at what seemed to be the southwestern entrance 3 *brazas* of water with only 14 *palmas* at the southeast. ⁴ A Mexican inspector of earlier years had satisfied himself that Mississippi sound and its inlets and the Mississippi river mouth "had no anchorage such that deep draft vessels might

2. "Avis de Mr. hubert sur l'Etablissement de Pensacola, de celuy de L'Isle aux vaisseaux, et sur l'usage de l'Isle Dauphine," Oct. 28, 1719, Archives Nationales (Paris), Colonies, C¹³A, 5:294-295, folios 294-294v. Cf. Drouot de Valdeterre, "Instruction sommaire," Bibliotheque Nationale (Paris), Collection Moreau, 1311:3-20, f 10v. The French foot had the value of 32.48 cm. or 1.066 English feet.
3. Vicente Folch, map of San Marcos de Apalache, AGI, Papeles de Cuba, Legajo 1330: *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XV (July, 1936), 7; Arriola to Alburquerque, July 11, annexed to Alburquerque to the king, Sept. 30, 1704, Mexico, 61-6-22; Primo de Rivera to Ayala Escovar, April 28, annexed to Benevides to the king, Aug. 12, 1718, Santo Domingo, 58-1-30. The mission of San Luis de Talimali, near modern Tallahassee, was also sometimes called San Luis de Apalache; cf. *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XVII (April, 1939), 254-280.
4. Junta de Guerra de Indias, minutes, July (), 1702, Mexico, 61-6-22. One braza (2 varas, 8 palmas or 6 Spanish feet) equalled 1.67 meters or 5 feet 6 inches, English measure.

lie there.”⁵ The Spaniards, like the French, knew nothing of Galveston entrance or of the eleven to twelve feet of water on its constant bar.⁶ The French in an earlier year had learned too much about Pass Cavallos and its inconstant bar. St. Joseph bay indeed offered from 5 to 7 brazas of depth,⁷ but its position was far eastward, though west of Apalache. Only Pensacola bay seemed to the French of Biloxi, and to those of Paris, to be a port bearing potential importance for Louisiana.

Any port opening on the Gulf of Mexico and capable of receiving warships of even the second class held importance for Spain. All colonies of the Spanish empire except Buenos Aires sent their riches to Europe by way of that Spanish lake. Gold from the viceroyalty of Peru crossed the Isthmus of Panama to vessels that, joined with the vessels from Caracas and Cartagena, sailed northward through the Yucatan Channel and eastward past Havana in treasure fleets known as the *galeones*. Products from the Philippines, unloaded at Acapulco, crossed the narrow continent to waiting vessels that, joined with silver-laden ships from Vera Cruz, sailed eastward past Havana in the convoys called the *flotas*.

England, France and the free Netherlands, Spain's rivals on the seas, hungered for Spanish loot, for Spanish lands of the new world and most of all for the colonial commerce without which Spain could no longer remain in Europe a military nation of the first class. Intrusion of aliens into

5. Report of the fiscal (Martin de Solis y Miranda), Madrid, Aug. 11, 1690. Archivo General y Publico de la Nacion (Mexico, D.F.), Historia, v. 298.
6. *Ibid.*; cf. Alexandra Thompson, "Plano de la Bahia y Puerto de Galveston. . . . 1828," University of Texas, MS.: Galveston City Directory for 1870, page 118 (Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Tex.)
7. Digest of Arriola to Alburquerque, Nov. 15, 1701, in Junta de Guerra, minutes, July (), 1702, Mexico, 61-6-22.

any unoccupied port of the Gulf would threaten the existence of the Spanish empire by threatening Spain's line of communication with her colonies. Almost at the end of the eighteenth century Spain for that reason, as well as for reasons of commerce, persisted in refusing to cede even a minor port on the Gulf to the new American republic. Early in that same century the Spanish king and his statesmen did not cease reminding one another that danger would exist from the presence there "of the French or of any other nation." For the moment, the Spaniards directed their definite thoughts toward the immediate source of danger, the French.

Rumors of the first Louisiana that Cavelier de la Salle had established beyond the inconstant but always shallow bar, Pass Cavallos, of San Bernardo bay in Texas were confirmed by five survivors of that colony,⁸ and aroused in 1692 a Spanish fear lest Pensacola bay likewise should "be occupied by the French in order therefrom to "gain command of all the regions that are on the banks of the [Mississippi] River."⁹ Acting under successive orders from his king¹⁰ the viceroy of Mexico in 1698 sent Andres de Arriola as governor with an armed force to Pensacola bay, therefrom to hold command of all the Gulf coast between Florida's Apalache port and the unoccupied regions of his vicerealty.

The viceroy's new port on that coast held no commercial value for Mexico or for Spain. Unlike Mobile bay, unlike the Gulf at the Mississippi mouth, Pensacola bay received the waters of no river large enough to serve as a highway of trade with Indian

8. Report of the fiscal, Aug. 11, 1690, AGM, Historia, v. 298. The name San Bernardo was applied to all the waters within the pass.

9. The king to Galve, June 26, 1692, Mexico, 61-6-21.

10. Consejo de Indias, minutes, Feb. 28, 1694, Mexico, 61-6-21; Moctezuma to the king, Sept. 18, 1698, Mexico, 61-6-22.

tribes. Not peltry but pine trees for ships' spars formed the only exports from this Mexican dependency. Even after a century of Spanish occupation Pensacola's intendant could think of no food except melons that grew well there, and the governor described his governorship as "a country that produces nothing."¹¹

Arriola and his engineer officer in 1699 reported Pensacola entrance to be so wide that iron artillery, even though mounted on both sides of the channel, could not prevent an enemy squadron from forcing a passage. What Governor Arriola said of his new province the Council of the Indies in Madrid already had said of Spain's other colonial ports in general. It had informed King Carlos II that only "a fleet of ten or twelve ships-of-the-line" could maintain Spanish domination in the Gulf of Mexico and the nearby waters of North America.¹²

On the landward side this new Mexican outpost could and did, again and again through the years, withstand siege by Indian bands; yet only a strong and therefore an even more expensive establishment might long hold out against attack by white men unless help should arrive from Vera Cruz,¹³ or unless Indian allies should aid the Spaniards. Vera Cruz, like Havana, possessed no naval force except her coast guard squadron, and at a time when Pensacola's need was great this *Armada de Barlovento* existed, as the viceroy complained, only in name.¹⁴ The French intruders brought to Biloxi

11. Junta de Guerra, minutes, Dec. 2, 1707, Mexico, 60-5-2; Morales to Gomez Rombaud, June 1, 1807, AGI, PdeC, Legajo 2356; Folch to Someruelos, Dec. 7, 1808, reservado, PdeC, Legajo 1565-b.

12. Sarmiento to the king, July 14, 1699, Mexico, 61-6-22; f. 3; report of the fiscal, Consejo de Indias. Feb. 24, 1700. ff.2-3. annexed *ibid*.

13. Cf. Junta de Guerra, minutes, June 18, 1701, Mexico, 61-6-22.

14. Valero to the king, Sept. 23, annexed to same to Elcorobarutia, Oct. 15, 1719, Mexico, 61-2-1.

bay ample Canadian experience in the treatment of Indians, and most tribes of both new colonies, French and Spanish, learned early to trust the French. Spanish traders from Pensacola bay began their acquaintance with the Thome and the Mobilian tribes by killing an Indian hunter.¹⁵ Within the next few years the Indian nations near Pensacola bay had emigrated from within Spanish influence to live beside their new friends the French.

The French built their first coastal fort within Biloxi bay, where a channel behind Ship island five leagues offshore provided them with a port. In the 30-foot depth of the haven's broad entrance an 80-gun ship-of-the-line might lie.¹⁶ The 21-foot depth in the island's lee offered safe anchorage for 50-gun ships, the largest of those that would compose a squadron of the second class, and no heavier ships might with confidence cross the 20-foot bar in the narrow channel of Pensacola entrance except under the most favorable circumstances of wind and water.¹⁷ Yet the first official inspector from Mexico had represented Pensacola bay as capable of receiving "ships of deep draft,"¹⁸ on equality therefore with the first class port of Havana and that at Vera Cruz.

Pensacola bay looked inviting on the map. Such appearance as Bienville called "tinsel that dazzles at first sight"¹⁹ invited the naval officers who were

15. Sauvole, "Suite de ce qui s'est passe dans le fort de Biloxy," Aug. 4, 1701, ANC, C¹³A, 1:315-322, f. 316.
16. "Carte de la caste du Nouveau Biloxy" (no name; year 1721-1722), BN, GeDD 2987, No. 8817 ; Marigny de Mandeville, "Exacte Description de la Louisiane . . .", ANC, C¹³C, 1:346-356v, f. 347v. This memoir is dated as of 1715 by context, f. 350.
17. "Avis de Mr hubert. . . .", 294.
18. The king to Galve, June 26, 1692, Mexico, 61-6-21.
19. Bienville to the minister, June 20, 1718. Affaires Etrangeres (Paris), Memoires et Documents, Amerique, 1:198-215v, f. 202. Subsequent reference will be made as to "Bienville, Memoire."

Bienville's brothers, Iberville in 1702 and Serigny in 1719, to regard it with professional admiration.²⁰

Bienville himself had in view a different port with a shallower bar for French headquarters when he wrote of the "great ease . . . for making ourselves masters of navigation in the entire Gulf [and] for stopping all aid that is sent from Europe to Mexico and the galleons that they send from here to Europe."²¹ In similar words the viceroy of Mexico had expressed in 1699 a fear of Pensacola bay, as follows :

"If the French had [fortified] it they could have sheltered there as many armed vessels as they might have liked to assemble for attacking those of [our] coast guard, galleons and *flotas*, including the ships serving Caracas, Maracaibo, Campeche, Santiago de Cuba and Havana. Their prizes would not only repay the cost of that settlement but would maintain it and bring to it riches unimaginable. They would cut off from this viceroyalty and that of Peru the benefits of reciprocal commerce, which doubtless would vanish because of the haven provided by that bay. Attacks could be made from that place in two days' time because of the short sailing distance to the waters of the Dry Tortugas, of Campeche, the Straits of Florida and all points on the trade routes from one port to another, without more preparation than that of maintaining coast guard vessels that would act as scouts to give them notice."²²

Governor Arriola at the same time had expressed a different view of the value that occupation of Pensacola bay alone might hold for Spain. Arriola had just discovered that Iberville had investigated

20. Cf. Margry, *op. cit.*, IV, 474, 551; Serigny to the minister (Fleurian), June 20, 1719, ANC, F³, 24.109-111v, ff. 110v-111. Subsequent reference will be made as to "Serigny, Report."

21. Bienville, *Memoire*, 203.

22. Sarmiento to the king, July 14, 1699, ff.4v-5, Mexico, 61-6-22.

Mobile bay and had found there a sheltered anchorage that might serve an intrusive purpose. Sheltered anchorages likewise might perhaps be found among the islands guarding entrance to the lagoon later called Lake Ponchartrain. Though Spain had made good by two months her claim to Pensacola bay it seemed that the French had made good their intrusion. The tinsel of Pensacola bay had dazzled the viceroy, but misgivings for the future occupied the practical mind of Arriola and the mind of at least one Spanish statesman in Europe.²³

Spain in Europe had cemented friendship with Austria by marrying one of its childless king's sisters to the Austrian emperor. Pensacola bay's new fort received in 1698 the name Fort San Carlos de Austria²⁴ in honor of that lady's younger son, Karl, who it was supposed would soon succeed to the Spanish throne. Another sister of the king had travelled north of the Pyrenees mountains to become the queen of King Louis XIV, but France and Spain maintained nevertheless a state of recurrent warfare, whether declared or undeclared, throughout the latter part of the seventeenth century. Not even the English, Spanish Florida's neighbors on the north, would have been more unwelcome trespassers than were Iberville's Frenchmen. These men in 1699 came to seize and to occupy a part of the Gulf coast which they regarded as an adjunct of their own Canada, but which during nearly two centuries past the Spaniards had regarded as an appanage of the Spanish crown.

Yet in November of 1700, a year of Franco-Spanish peace, the Spanish ambassador in Paris exclaimed in astonishment, "The Pyrenees are no more!" This natural phenomenon no less aston-

23. Report of the fiscal, Consejo de Indias, Feb. 24, 1700, f. 7, annexed *ibid.*

24. Arriola to the king, Dec. 1, 1698, Mexico, 61-6-22.

ished King Louis XIV. For the ambassador had exclaimed upon learning that Don Carlos, before taking leave of his warlike life, had bequeathed his crown, his throne, his kingdom and his empire not to his nephew Karl of Austria but to his grand-nephew Philippe, grandson of the French king and youngest brother of the prince whose son was some time to mount the French throne as King Louis XV.

King Louis XIV exacted of his newly Spanish grandson a renunciation of all claims to the French succession, but exhorted him nevertheless to "remember that you were born a Frenchman." Austria remembered that the Archduke Karl held a senior if not better claim to the Spanish throne. In the following year Austria entered with the English into an eleven-year war against the French "usurper" of Spain and his French ally.

Preparing against such a war the French ministry sought early in 1701²⁵ to gain from Spain a cession of Pensacola in order that King Louis XIV might have a naval base to aid (as Frenchmen argued) in protecting the Gulf of Mexico from possible English incursion.²⁶ Iberville, revisiting France, promised the government in July that within two months' time he could fortify Pensacola bay; he announced that even in stormy weather a vessel drawing 19 feet or more of water might safely enter there.²⁷ During four years the Spanish ministry declined to be frightened by an English "chimera" of French manufacture and refused repeatedly to grant the desired cession.²⁸ Iberville, with his brother Serigny, made landfall near Pensacola entrance on December 15, 1701, bearing orders to fortify not Pensacola bay but the Mobile river,

25. Margry, *op. cit.*, IV, 541-542.

26. *Cf. ibid.*, IV, 551.

27. *Ibid.*, IV, 474, 477.

28. *Cf. ibid.*, IV, 553-568.

where he found only 12 feet of water between Dauphine (Massacre) island and the shallower bar over which the river entered Mobile bay.²⁹

The bay opened between Mobile point on the east and, on the west, Pointe a Guillory, the eastern tip of the long, narrow Massacre island, soon to be renamed Dauphine. Off the seaward shore of Dauphine island the crescent islet or Isle aux Espagnols held lightly within its arms a 24-foot anchorage to which large vessels could gain access only from the west through a crooked channel with a controlling depth of 15 to 16 feet. The vessels that linked France to her new colony came during many years to this offshore haven instead of to Pensacola bay.

Iberville stopped on his westward voyage to tell the acting governor of Fort San Carlos that he brought orders to transfer French colonial headquarters from Biloxi bay to the Mobile river. Upon colonial protest against this eastward intrusion Iberville explained on January 3, 1702, that his orders were "only in the interest of the two crowns."³⁰ Upon later protest from the Spanish court the French court explained that France "would maintain soldiers at Mobile during the war because it might be necessary to reinforce Pensacola in case of attack by the English."³¹ With this reason the Spanish ally necessarily remained content in wartime, as with Dauphine island and Biloxi bay for a while Iberville and his successors remained content.

Despite this rivalry for territory, Mobile and Pensacola bays maintained personal relations of

29. *Ibid.*, IV, 505. Cf. Bienville, *Memoire*, 199-199v.

30. *Ibid.*, IV, 576-580; Iberville-Martinez correspondence annexed to the archbishop-viceoy (Juan de Ortega Montanez) to the king, April 12, and annexed also to Junfa de Guerra, minutes, Aug. 1, 1702, Mexico, 61-6-22.

31. Consejo de Indiss, minutes, March 27, 1719, Mexico, 61-6-35.

friendly character throughout the War of the Spanish Succession. Bienville and Pierre Dugue de Boisbriant by letters from Mobile, and also Henry de Tonti in person, warned Fort San Carlos in May, 1704, that 150 leagues distant six Englishmen were teaching the Anglophile Alabama Indians, enemies of both Spain and France, how to shoot muskets. The governor of San Carlos thereupon lent a reinforcement of 30 men to Adjutant Manuel Solano to help him and his 25 soldiers guard the eight families of Florida's San Luis de Apalache against imminent attack from the north.³² In the summer the fort of San Luis withstood an attack made by the Englishmen's pupils, who earlier in the year had destroyed St. Augustine's inland missions. Civilian refugees found sanctuary at Mobile and before the end of the year Solano withdrew the remnants of his garrison,³³ as did the Mexican commandant at St. Joseph bay,³⁴ where the governor of San Carlos after making an inspection in 1701 had established a lookout post.³⁵

The colonial protest from Pensacola bay had not prevented Iberville from transferring his Biloxi headquarters to a high bank 27 miles up the Mobile river. The spring flood of 1711 drowned Fort Louis and the attendant village, and the French officers

32. Arriola to Alburquerque, July 11, and Bienville-Boisbriant letters, annexed to Alburquerque to the king, Sept. 26, 1704, Mexico, 61-6-22; Margry, *op. cit.*, IV, 522.
33. Letter (no name), Fort Louis, Sept. 10, 1704, BN, Manuscripts francais, 9097:140-141v, f. 141; Dunbar Rowland and A. G. Sanders, (eds.) *Mississippi Provincial Archives, French Dominion* (3 v. ; Jackson, Miss., 1927-1932), III, 26-27.
34. Bienville, Memoire, 204; report of the fiscal, Jan. 4, annexed to Junta de Guerra, minutes, March 15, 1708. This file is in disorder ; it begins with Villareal to (the Consejo), Dec. 3, 1707.
35. Junta de Guerra, minutes, July (), 1702, reviewing Arriola to Sarmiento, Nov. 15, 1701; Alburquerque to the king, April 20, 1703; Arriola to the viceroy, Nov. 20, annexed to Alburquerque to the king, Nov. 24, 1703, all in Mexico, 61-6-22.

removed both village and fort to the modern city site on the bayside a mile or so below the river's mouth, distant from Dauphine island at the bay's mouth by some 20 miles of shallow water.³⁶ Antoine de Lamothe Cadillac, the new governor of the new Fort Louis, saw in 1713 that his capital and therefore his colony could not defend themselves against attack from the sea. He wished to fortify Dauphine island and to remove thither his headquarters and its village.³⁷

Governor Lamothe was looking toward the future, since war in Europe had ceased. In 1711 the Austrian claimant to the Spanish throne had succeeded to the Austrian imperial crown. England, though but recently become with Scotland a united kingdom, was unwilling to see Spain united with Austria (or with any other great nation) into a dominating power, and she brought to an end the War of the Spanish Succession. Hostilities were suspended in August, 1712, before Lamothe Cadillac had sailed from Europe. Both in the Peace of Utrecht, April 11, 1713, and in the following treaty of July 13 between Madrid and London, the Spanish King Felipe V confirmed his previous renunciation of the French crown.

Two years and more later, on September 1, 1715, died King Felipe's grandfather, King Louis XIV of France. Of the four grandsons who fifteen years earlier had been King Louis' direct heirs only the youngest survived. That grandson had renounced remote rights to the French succession in order to become king of Spain, but now he saw between himself and the French throne only his honor and the boy prince who was son to Felipe's late oldest brother. The king of Spain broke his word and for

36. Margry, *op. cit.*, IV, 506; Rowland and Sanders, *op. cit.*, II, 60-66; Bienville Memoire, 199.

37. Rowland and Sanders, *op. cit.*, II, 83.

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the sake of his ambition threatened the peace of Europe by laying claim to the French crown. Great Britain, as well as the continent, prepared therefore for war against Spain. Spain and France prepared for war even in the colonies.

Both Spain and France had long known England as an enemy in North America. In the middle of the seventeenth century Spain had driven French settlers out of modern Georgia and South Carolina, but in the course of the years English settlers had pressed the Spaniards southward. The fortifications of St. Augustine repulsed an attack with which Carolina sought to begin in North America the European War of the Spanish Succession. Carolina's attacks upon the Florida missions in 1704 and upon Fort San Carlos in years next succeeding were little more than Indian raids, though made at first with approval of the English government in Charleston.

English colonists had attacked French colonials through aggression upon French commerce with the Indians. As early as 1687 Albany traders intruded as far northwestward as Lake Huron. Eleven years later a trader from Carolina found a welcome in one of the Arkansas Indian villages, and by 1700 the Chickasaw tribes at the head of the Mobile (Tombigbee) river had become friends of the English. During the years of European warfare many tribes between the Mississippi and the mountains took sides, some with the British and some with the French, until in 1715 they fell into a general war out of which the Alabama tribes emerged as French allies. Bienville's nephew Ste. Helene, going without a French passport into British territory, met death in these disturbances.³⁸ A Cherokee band,

38. Lamothe Cadillac to the minister, Jan. 2, 1716, ANC, C¹³A, 4 :509-535, f. 522.

seeking in 1715 to draw the Illinois tribes into British alliance with Charleston, lost five of its members to the French allies, the Kaskaskia ; next year in revenge a Cherokee band killed Bienville's nephew, Ensign Dadoncour, heir to the barony of Longueuil, and a dozen of his companions returning from the Illinois to Detroit.³⁹

Without regard to changing enmities and alliances in Europe, Spain distrusted the British on the Atlantic coast but had little reason yet to fear British invasion into the Gulf of Mexico. France feared actively the aggression of British traders and of Anglophile Indians in all the lands of Canada and Louisiana. Now the rearrangement of interests in Europe gave Spain cause to increase her earlier fear of the French on the coast of the Gulf.

In 1717 Louisiana sent an officer and a dozen soldiers to garrison the stockade that Red river traders had built at Natchitoches bordering Spain's uninhabited region of Texas.⁴⁰ Under dates of January 11 and February 17 King Felipe ordered construction of an additional fort at Pensacola entrance.⁴¹ Under dates of January 20 and March 30 the current governor of Fort San Carlos, Gregorio de Salinas Varona, recommended that his king should fortify La Salle's ancient site within San Bernardo bay "before the French should do so."⁴² On March 23 Salinas wrote to tell that the French were intending to fortify the mouth of the Mississippi.⁴³ An event of springtime at Dauphine island led him to glimpse some appearance of truth in the

39. *Ibid.*, 518; *precis* of Vaudreuil to the Council of Marine, Nov. 16, 1716, same to same, Oct. 12, 1717, AKC, C¹¹A, 37 :44-45v, 124 :41-41v.

40. Margry, *op. cit.*, VI, 254.

41. Fernandez Duran to Valero, March 13, 1719, AGM, *Historia*, v. 298.

42. The king to the viceroy, June 11, 1718, *ibid.*

43. Salinas Varona to the king, March 23, 1717, Mexico, 61-4-26.

rumor that "the French had orders from the Duke Regent to occupy a port in the Gulf of Mexico even if armed force should be necessary."⁴⁴ Application of such force would be the duty of Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne de Bienville, for upon the departure of Governor Lamothe for Europe and the death a little later of Lamothe's successor, Bienville became acting governor of Louisiana by virtue of an appointment as king's lieutenant.⁴⁵

Governor Lamothe had sent out expeditions of Red river traders led by Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, an uncle of Madame d'Iberville, to sell French goods with or without Spanish permission in the Spanish lands beyond Natchitoches. One of Louisiana's last ventures in Lamothe's time was carried out by two pirogues, manned by French traders and laden with trade goods, which had gone along the western coast of the Gulf. These Frenchmen on their return can have given to Lamothe and Bienville no favorable report on Pass Cavallos, but news of their voyage induced the viceroy to foresee a French pincers movement, by land from Natchitoches, by water through Pass Cavallos and the bay that the French called St. Bernard. Therefore the viceroy appointed, a governor of Texas, Martin de Alarcron with a promise of soldiers to come and with orders to found a mission on the San Antonio river, which flows into the waters behind the pass.⁴⁶ Thus he hoped to check aggression on the part of Lemoyne de Bienville.

The Mississippi Bubble

Bienville never had gained the favor of government under King Louis XIV. To some extent he gained the favor of the child king's regent, the

44. Consejo de Indias, minutes, March, 27, 1719, Mexico, 61-6-35.

45. Rowland and Sanders, *op. cit.*, III, 215.

46. The king to Valero, June 11, 1718, AGM, Historia, v. 298.

Duke of Orleans, through the influence of John Law. That Paris banker had organized in the spring and summer of 1717 his Company of the West (known after May 1719, as the Company of the Indies) to colonize and develop the lands in which Bienville since 1699 had served his kings. The Company appointed Bienville and Hubert, the regency's commissaire-ordonnateur (intendant), as its first two directors or agents in Louisiana.⁴⁷ On September 20 the regency issued to Bienville the commission as commandant-general that the Company had asked for him.⁴⁸ On September 26 the Company's charter was registered in Parlement. On September 27 the regency put into the Bastille the home coming Governor Lamothe, since after his arrival in France on August 29 Lamothe had dared assert that the colony possessed fewer wonders than those on the repute and the reputation of which John Law relied for selling the shares of his Company's speculative stock.⁴⁹

Governor Lamothe had sailed from Dauphine island aboard the *Paon* (Captain du Sault), a royal merchant vessel measuring only seventy-eight (French) feet on the keel and a minimum draft of nine and one-half feet. Nine years earlier an officer of Fort Louis had several times made soundings in the haven's narrow entrance channel and reported having recorded usually a depth of from nineteen to twenty feet on the entrance bar at the western end of the Isle aux Espagnols.⁵⁰ Currents

47. "Memoire de Charles Legac cy devant Directeur pour la Compagnie des Indes a La Louisianne," *Aff. Etr., Mem. et Docts., Amerique*, 1:81-129, f. 82. Subsequent reference will be made as to "Legac, Memoire." The Boston Public Library owns a contemporary copy of this document as revised, with different pagination, for distribution in manuscript.

48. Rowland and Sanders, *op. cit.*, III, 224-225.

49. *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*; XXVI (July, 1943), 651-653.

had since reduced that depth, and Captain du Sault in March 1717, like Pensacola bay's first governor in 1700, found only from fifteen to sixteen feet of water and a channel so difficult that the *Paon* ran aground at one point of it and sprang her seams.

In the haven between the islet and Dauphine island Captain du Sault rode out a 3-day storm late in April but learned at the storm's end that the entrance channel had become completely blocked by sand. A week of soundings revealed to him a winding channel with a controlling depth of nine and one-half feet, through which the *Paon*, without cargo or ballast, picked her way to sea among the banks at the islet's eastern end.⁵¹ The ten to eleven feet to which this channel in time deepened itself⁵² would permit entrance only to the smallest of transatlantic carriers. Captain du Sault's assurance, reaching Paris about the first of September, that he could pilot a 30-gun warship through his tortuous eastern pass did not conceal from John Law that merchant vessels no longer might find harbor at Dauphine island.

This misfortune pressed reason upon John Law to feel in early September greater injury than might exist in such truths as the walls of the Bastille a few weeks later forbade Antoine de Lamothe Cadillac to publish. Law's Company wrote in its

50. Marigny de Mandeville, "Memoire sur la colonie de la Louisiane," April 27, 1709, ANC, C¹³A, 2:471-480, f. 478.

51. Jean Frederic Bernard (ed.), *Relations de la Louisiane et du Fleuve Mississippi* (Amsterdam, 1720), 4, 9; Du Sault to the Council of Marine, Aug. 29, 1717, ANC, C¹³C, 2:149-150v; [Du Sault], "Ydee ou plan du chenal par Lequel Est Sorty Le navire La Paix Et le vaisseau du Roy le Pan, du port de Lile dauphine Le 15me May 1717," "Carte de L'Isle Dauphine par le Sr Du Sault Lieut Comandt, le vaisseau du Roy Le Paon en 1717," BN, GeDD, 2987, Nos. 8815, 8815-bis. The former appears to be Du Sault's own sketch.

52. Cf. Bienville to the Council of Marine, June 12, 1718, in Rowland and Sanders, *op. cit.*, III, 229; Bienville, *Memoire*, 203v.

first order to Bienville that, having lost the port of Dauphine island, "it was absolutely necessary to find another one elsewhere."⁵³

The first vessels carrying Company colonists and also criminals transported to be soldiers and laborers in Louisiana sailed from France in November and December, 1717. After the customary three months' voyage by way of Cap Francois in French Haiti they arrived in the roads off Dauphine island, one on February 9, 1718, and another a month later.⁵⁴ On March 14 a new Mexican governor, Juan Pedro Matamoros de Ysla, went ashore at Pensacola bay to succeed Salinas Varona.⁵⁵ On April 4 Captain Joseph Primo de Rivera with thirty-five cavalrymen and fifteen infantrymen ended his march from St. Augustine, cleared away the jungle that covered the ruins of Fort San Luis and prepared to build on the same site Florida's Fort San Marcos de Apalache and to mount upon its walls three cannon.⁵⁶ The second squadron of French transports, three in all, sailed from France on May 25. Before their arrival on August 25⁵⁷ Bienville had carried out Company orders for aggression in time of peace against the territory of a foreign power, but only to retire quickly from this adventure.

The Occupation of St. Joseph Bay

The first Company vessel had brought to Bien-

53. Bienville, Memoire, 203v.

54. Legac, Memoire, 82v ; Justin Winsor, *Narrative and Critical History of America* (8v.; New York, 1889), V, 35.

55. "Extracto de lo acaesido en las entradas y Poblaciones de Franceses en el Seno Mexicano desde el ano de 1684 hasta el de 1719," (Secretaria of the Consejo de Indias, Jan. 12, 1720). Guadalajara, 67-3-28.

56. Ayala Escovar to the king, Feb. 28, Benevides to the king, Aug. 12, and enclosure: Primo de Rivera to Ayala, April 28, 1718, Santo Domingo, 58-1-30 ; Bienville, Memoire, 210v-211.

57. Legac, Memoire, 84.

ville not only advice of his new honors, including the cross of St. Louis, but also Company orders to occupy St. Joseph bay as a substitute for Dauphine island. Bienville knew St. Joseph bay to be useless as a port for Louisiana. He noted that the Company had given him not even a hint of authority from the Regent for such further invasion of the Spanish domain.⁵⁸ Yet the commandant-general dared not disobey the first orders given him by his patron and friend at court. By April 28 Captain Primo knew at Fort San Marcos that the French were about to become his neighbors. Soon he was reporting that on May 12 a French force had occupied St. Joseph bay.⁵⁹

Bienville's younger brother, Lemoyne de Cha-teaugue, returned to Mobile to report that he had built on the mainland at the eastern post, just opposite modern St. Joseph point, the stockaded Fort Crevecoeur with four bastions and had left it garrisoned by a company of fifty men. At the same time arrived an indignant protest from Matamoros of Pensacola bay and also a rumor (of origin perhaps in Bienville's own surmise) that the viceroy was cherishing similar indignation. "As it once belonged to the Spaniards," wrote Bienville of his conquest, "I doubt not that they will try to oust us in turn. . . . I see clearly that this leads straight to rupture."⁶⁰ The commandant-general in his distress presented the situation to the colonial council, which decided with unanimous discretion to burn

58. Bienville, *Memoire*, 203v-204.

59. Primo de Rivera to Ayala, April 28, Benevides to Fernandez Duran, Aug. 12, both annexed to Benevides to the king, Aug. 12, 1718, Santo Domingo, 58-1-30.

60. Bienville, *Memoire*, 204-204v, 215-215v. Cf. Bienville to the Council of Marine, June 12, 1718, in Rowland and Sanders, *op. cit.*, III, 228, 229. For name and site of the fort see "Plan de la Baye de St. Joseph tire par Jean Beranger ce 1r May 1718," BN, GeDD, 2987, No. 8809.

Fort Crevecoeur and abandon St. Joseph bay.⁶¹ On August 20, therefore, Captain Primo could report to St. Augustine that the French had retired from their invasion. The governor of St. Augustine ordered him forthwith to take possession of St. Joseph bay for Mexico with a guard of one officer and twelve soldiers of Florida.⁶²

The Council of the Indies in Madrid assumed on January 18, 1719, that peace still existed officially between France and Spain. Yet, considering the matter of St. Joseph bay, it recommended to King Felipe that, "in view of this latest news and holding ever in mind the supreme importance that in the Gulf of Mexico there shall be no settlements save of Your Majesty's subjects," orders should issue to the viceroy of Mexico to send troops and otherwise strengthen the defences of the coast.⁶³

A few days earlier the king had considered the same news from St. Augustine and other news from Mexico. His viceroy had reported in August that he had ordered Salinas Varona with two *fragatas*,⁶⁴ several smaller craft and eight hundred soldiers to fortify the coasts of the Gulf. Despite the information received from San Marcos the Council of the Indies urged the viceroy now to use all possible resources to expel the French if St. Joseph bay should remain still in their possession. The king promised in any case to add Peninsular warships to support the few small vessels with which Valero

61. Bienville to the Council of Marine, Sept. 25, 1718, ANC, C¹³A, 5:160-166, f. 161v.

62. Consejo de Indias, minutes, Jan. 18, 1719, Santo Domingo, 58-1-24.

63. *Ibid.*

64. A fragata (frigate) was any warship of the second class, mounting from 20 to 50 guns, without reference to rigging or to number of decks. By courtesy the word was applied also to smaller craft more lightly armed.

had begun to form a coast guard squadron.⁶⁵ The king already had taken steps toward fulfilling his promise when he received advice of March 10, 1719, from Mexico that the viceroy had sent Salinas Varona to command at St. Joseph bay for Spain.⁶⁶

Not only to strengthen Fort San Carlos and the nearby coast but also to occupy and to fortify San Bernardo bay of Texas the viceroy had dispatched Salinas Varona and his soldiers in the spring of 1718. In directing his officer first to Pass Cavallos he foresaw orders to much the same effect that his king issued to him in June.⁶⁷ If Bienville had learned that Galveston entrance existed he had little reason to tell the Company of it, but he could not omit telling of Salinas Varona and his men at Pass Cavallos. He reported that "their enterprise at St. Bernard's bay, of which I should not have failed to take possession if I had not been better acquainted with it than they, caused the wreck of two vessels that had come to lay the foundations of a fort, but, having found only six feet of water on the bar, they were constrained to retire."⁶⁸

Bienville may well have hoped that his tale of Spanish failure at Pass Cavallos would divert the thought of the Company from the western coast of the Gulf. To the port that had been La Salle's port would apply equally well the principal objection that Bienville voiced against St. Joseph bay—its great distance.⁶⁹ Informing the French Council of Marine in June that he had obeyed the Company's order concerning St. Joseph bay he had written of Ship island at Biloxi bay as a port suitable in sub-

65. Fernandez Duran to Valero, Jan. 12, 1719, AGM, Historia, v.298.

66. The king to Valero, Nov. 1, 1719, *ibid.*

67. The king to the viceroy, June 11, 1718, AGM, Historia, v.298.

68. Bienville to the Council of Marine, Sept. 25, 1718, ANC, C¹³A 5:163-163v.

69. *Ibid.*, 161v-162; Bienville, Memoire, 204v.

stitution for the vanished haven of Dauphine island.⁷⁰ Three months later he wrote with brief politeness of Pensacola bay⁷¹ in addressing the minister of the Marine, whose views on that Spanish subject would be colored, it might well be assumed, by the four-year negotiation earlier in the century. In the memoir wherein he, described for the minister his hopes for Louisiana's future Bienville stated and developed the idea that, as his words show, long had occupied his mind.

"The foundation of it all, Monseigneur," Bienville wrote, "is to have a suitable and permanent port." Only the bar, one hundred paces in width, that choked the Mississippi river's east pass separated deep water of the river from deep water of the Gulf. Let that barrier once be pierced by the art of the king's engineers, and vessels of the deepest draft might sail up a hundred leagues into the French colony.⁷² In such case Pensacola bay would relegate itself to no more than political consideration. One hundred paces of hard river bottom held in the estimation of Louisiana's commandant-general more importance than was held there by Pensacola entrance, far more than was held there by Pass Cavallos.

The Fight for Pensacola Bay

Failure at Pass Cavallos remained fresh in the mind of Salinas Varona when on August 2, 1718, Great Britain, France and Austria made ready for war against Spain by signing the treaty, so-called, of the Quadruple Alliance. In that same August Admiral Byng destroyed the Spanish Mediterranean fleet. In September Spain began reprisals on British shipping. Early in December Great Britain

70. Rowland and Sanders, *op. cit.*; III, 228.

71. Bienville, *Memoire*, 204v.

72. *Ibid.*, 203v.

declared war against Spain. The French declaration did not become official until January 10, 1719, but a Company order of January 7 anticipated it.

The Company had intended to transfer its headquarters from Dauphine island and Mobile to Ship island and Biloxi bay⁷³ and had sent a director, Legac, to reside at the new port, but now the tinsel of Pensacola bay dazzled John Law and his associates and lured them to seize upon the day of war. Their order of January 7 directed the officers of Mobile bay to make a conquest of Pensacola bay and to transfer thither Company headquarters.⁷⁴ On January 15 the Council of Marine made an announcement, which Bienville received on April 19 with the Company order, that a state of war existed between Spain and, on the other hand, France and Great Britain.⁷⁵ On January 30 the Spanish ministry made an announcement, which the viceroy received by July 13, that France had declared war against Spain.⁷⁶

The European powers were prepared for warfare; not so their colonies. Only three hundred seventy persons composed the Spanish settlement of Pensacola bay. Of these the governor, officers and garrison of Fort San Carlos at full strength accounted for 307,⁷⁷ of whom one-third were colored criminals assigned to labor as engineer troops.⁷⁸

73. Legac, Memoire, 86-86v.

74. *Ibid.*, 89; Bienville to the Council of Marine, Oct. 20, 1719. ANC; C¹³A, 5:274-281, ff. 274-274-v. Subsequent reference will be made as to "Bienville, Report."

75. Cf. the Council of Marine to Bienville, Jan. 15, 1719, ANC, B, 41:611; Bienville, Report, 274; Legac, Memoire, 87-87v.

76. Fernandez Duran to Valero, Jan. 30, 1719, AGM, Historia, v. 298.

77. Cf. Serigny, Report, 110v; Junta de Guerra, minutes, Jan. 25, 1716, Mexico, 60-5-3, list of Spanish officers annexed to Elcorobarrutia to the king, Feb. 17, 1720, Indiferente General de Nueva Espana, 136-4-6.

78. Digest of report of Matamoros de Ysla in "Extracto de lo acaescido," Jan. 12, 1720, Guadalajara, 67-3-28.

The Spaniards enjoyed the support of no Indian allies. Defending them during twenty years past, the walls (sand revetted with pine logs) of their square Fort San Carlos and its four bastions had constantly crumbled.⁷⁹ No outworks protected San Carlos, although Indian besiegers had proved in previous years how dangerously the dunes dominated it. Governor Matamoros found on his arrival in 1718 that of his fort's twenty-eight iron cannon nine were grounded because their carriages were broken.⁸⁰ Early in 1717 Salinas Varona had proposed the building of "a redoubt or fort large enough for fifty men, which can mount eight pieces of artillery of 18- and 24-pound rating" on the opposite side of the entrance channel in order that the fires of the two forts might seem to cross, and on June 20, 1718, the viceroy had reported obedience to the king's orders of the previous years to build such a redoubt.⁸¹

Louisiana in population and in military strength far excelled Fort San Carlos, though its great extent prevented the assembling of its men on short notice. When John Law's Company assumed administration of the colony the entire white population below the Illinois country consisted of about 400 persons, including officers and clerks and the garrisons of the six military posts, three on the Mississippi banks and three on Mobile bay and its river. Since that time two Company squadrons had brought nearly 1,000 troops and colonists, some free and some indentured, and two other squadrons leaving France in the spring of 1718 carried passengers to

79. *Ibid.*; Frank to the king, Jan. 13, 1700, in first *testimonio* annexed to royal cedula, April 19, 1698, Mexico, 61-6-22; Serigny; Report, 110v.

80. *Ibid.*; Junta de Guerra, minutes, Jan. 25, 1716, Mexico, 60-5-3.

81. "Extracto de lo acaescido," cited above; Fernandez Duran to Valero, March 13, 1719, AGM, Historia, v. 298.

increase the total by more than five hundred. Many of the new troops, however, were of the poorest quality, recaptured deserters transported to the colony in punishment for their crime and Parisians mentally incapable of more than the petty offences that caused them likewise to be transported for life.⁸²

About twenty families formed the village of Mobile and occupied the dwellings among the fifty or sixty buildings that clustered about the decaying stockade they called Fort Louis.⁸³ The thirty families looking out toward the Isle aux Espagnols from the village of Dauphine island trusted for protection to the waters of the Gulf and to the ruins of a battery in which as late as 1715 the guns lay unmounted.⁸⁴ But within short distances from Mobile bay lived friendly Indian nations ready to aid their friend Bienville with the strength of hundreds of warriors.

To Dauphine island the Company ships brought troops and colonists far beyond the colony's ability to provide with food. The scarcity of small boats for carrying newcomers along the coast or through the lakes and up the Mississippi forced many to remain on the island. Famine was hurrying into prospect when on March 17 the Company vessel *Philippe* (Captain Dehourse)⁸⁵ of twenty guns⁸⁶ anchored in the roads with nearly two hundred passengers, including a new Company director, Larcebaud, and a small supply of provisions.⁸⁷ On April

82. Legac, Memoire, 82-87v ; Bienville, Report, 276v.

83. *Ibid.*, 82v ; Bienville, Memoire, 199.

84. *Ibid.*, 82-82v; Bienville, Memoire, 199 ; Marigny de Mandeville, "Exacte Description." 346v, 347.

85. [Hubert], "Relation de ce qui sest passe depuis la reprise de Pensacola par les Espagnols," ANC, C¹³A, 5:303-314, f. 305. Subsequent reference will be made as to "Hubert, Relation."

86. Legac, Memoire, 87v, 93v.

87. *Ibid.*, 86v.

19 appeared the 20-gun Company vessels ⁸⁸ *Comte de Toulouse* (Captain Mechin) and *Marechal de Villars* (Captain the Chevalier des Grioux). ⁸⁹ They brought provisions, nearly four hundred passengers and Bienville's elder brother, Lemoyne de Serigny, as squadron commander and also as first commandant-general, superior to Bienville. ⁹⁰ Serigny bore news that France had declared war upon Spain. ⁹¹ He bore Company orders of January 7 to occupy Pensacola bay and as said above, to transfer thither the headquarters of Louisiana's business and government. ⁹²

Bienville came from Mobile next day to Dauphine island, where the two commandants-general held conference with the three directors, Hubert, Legac and Larcebaud. While King Felipe in Madrid was repeating orders to his viceroy to occupy St. Joseph bay and to build "if it should be necessary" the fort that he had previously ordered for La Salle's old site in San Bernardo bay, ⁹³ the French of Mobile began to act against colonial Spain. Planning against the Spaniards of Texas, they dispatched a messenger to warn Francois Blondel de la Tour, the lieutenant commanding at Natchitoches, that France and Spain were at war. On May 12 Lemoyne de Chateaugue set out from Mobile for Pensacola bay with sixty soldiers and three hundred or four hundred Indians. Next morning Lemoyne de Serigny and Larcebaud with the three armed vessels and two hundred soldiers and volunteers, and Lemoyne de Bienville with eighty white men aboard

88. Cf. *ibid.*, 87v.

89. Bienville, Report, 274-274v.

90. Legac, Memoire, 87-87v; Rowland and Sanders, *op. cit.*, III, 230-232.

91. The Council of Marine to Bienville, Jan. 15, 1719, ANC, B, 41 :611 ; Bienville, Report, 274; Serigny, Report, 109v.

92. Legac, Memoire, 87v. 89.

93. The king to Valero, April 22, 1719, AGM, Historia, v. 298.

four open boats, were off on their eastward voyage. A seagoing ketch carried munitions. A sailing barge and a rowboat laden with provisions were bound to the mouth of the Perdido, to await there the coming of Chateaugue.⁹⁴

The first night, under cover of darkness, Bienville's boats passed Pensacola entrance and reached land on the gulfside of Santa Rosa island, the western end of which (Point Siguenza) forms the eastern shore of the pass. Two years earlier Salinas Varona had begged for a redoubt on Point Siguenza suitable for eight heavy guns and fifty men. The viceroy under royal orders had caused to be built only a battery armed with three 12-pounders, and Governor Matamoros maintained there a guard of no more than twenty.⁹⁵ Bienville not only captured by surprise the battery and the guard, but captured also the relief of twenty men who arrived next morning, as usual, from Fort San Carlos, a mile and a half distant beyond the entrance.⁹⁶

That morning (and the next day as well) the wind did not permit Serigny to bring his squadron in, and Bienville's Frenchmen found themselves in a trap exposed to attack by Matamoros and his superior force. Bienville ordered the three cannon to be spiked, and he withdrew his company and his prisoners to the shelter of his brother's vessels. Chateaugue's difficulties with his sixty French and several hundred Indians delayed the arrival of those auxiliaries until after the French flag had risen above San Carlos.

94. Legac, Memoire, 87v-88; Bienville, Report, 274v ; Serigny, Report, 109v. The text follows Legac and Bienville for dates; it follows Serigny only for numbers of troops, since Serigny falsified the time element in his report.

95. Serigny, Report, 110.

96. Legac, Memoire, 88.

Serigny brought the flag into Pensacola bay the morning of May 17.⁹⁷ The "29 guns"⁹⁸ of the fort and the sixty guns of the squadron exchanged many shots as a prelude to negotiation. The French from within the bay took possession of the dunes that dominated Fort San Carlos. Matamoros, protesting that France and Spain were not at war, had no choice but to surrender without conditions before noon of the following day. The inventory that Larcebaud immediately made revealed a scarcity of provisions and a complete lack of money. Chateaugue, arriving one day later after a 6-day journey that he should have made within three days, succeeded to command of San Carlos, and Larcebaud established himself in Louisiana's new capital as resident director for the Company of the Indies.

Learning that St. Joseph bay harbored three Spanish vessels Serigny sailed on May 21 for Salinas Varona's port, but the Spanish craft fled and without entering the bay or surveying the coast of Apalache, farther toward the east, Serigny went back to Pensacola.⁹⁹ There both he and Bienville knew that their conquest remained good only if reinforcements should reach them from France before the Spaniards might find means for an expedition against them.¹⁰⁰ In order not to increase the military strength of Cuba the two French commandants-general and the three directors in conference at Dauphine island had come to agreement that all prospective prisoners should be carried to France. The scarcity of provisions at Pensacola, the scanty supply aboard Serigny's squadron and

97. Legac, *Memoire*, 88. Serigny, *Report*, 110, makes an ambiguous suggestion of May 14, apparently in order to protect his two brothers from censure.

98. Serigny, *Report*, 110v.

99. *Ibid.*, 111.

100. *Ibid.*, 111; Bienville, *Report*, 274v.

perhaps other considerations persuaded the two commandants to decide now upon putting the Spaniards aboard the Company vessels and conducting them under a flag of truce to Havana, whence the *Comte de Toulouse* and the *Marechal de Villars* would pursue their voyage to France. Matamoros had no choice but to accept in the articles of surrender the provision "that the two nations should not commit one against the other any act of hostility within one week after the departure of the French vessels from Havana." ¹⁰¹ On June 26 Serigny sent the laden vessels out. ¹⁰²

Thus the two brothers Lemoyne began Louisiana's war against Mexico.

101. Hubert, Relation, 306.

102. Serigny, Report, 110v-111v; Bienville, Report, 274.

(To be concluded in the next number)

GOVERNOR SALAZAR'S WHEAT FARM
PROJECT 1645-1657

by KATHERINE S. LAWSON

The governors of Florida from the founding of St. Augustine in 1565 to the evacuation in 1763 were continually faced with food shortage, even with starvation; for St. Augustine knew hunger pangs many times, when ships bringing supplies to the Presidio were wrecked, were captured by pirates, or in some years failed to be sent from Mexico with the flour ordered furnished to Florida by the king's command. So of much interest are the records of a project, covering the years 1645 to 1657, for a wheat farm (*trigo hacienda*) the result of the determination of Governor Salazar (who may or may not have been hungry himself) to grapple with this recurring food problem.¹ A summary of the project is contained in a letter dated at St. Augustine, October 8, 1657² and in certain other records cited. A translation of a part of that letter is,

"The Governor Benito Ruiz de Salazar Ballencilla founded some haciendas of wheat in the Province of Apalache, because of the land being fertile and suitable for them. And having sent to seek a miller at the Canary Islands, in this interval he died. . . ."

Thus the checkered life of the wheat farm begins. Later Don Diego de Rebolledo, the first appointed governor after the death of Ruiz de Salazar, reports in a translated description of the project,

"Benito Ruiz de Salazar visiting the Province of Apalache in the first year of his government recognized the goodness and fertility of the land, by virtue of which and consideration of the many and

1. These records are in the Woodbury Lowery Papers (vol. vii), Library of Congress.
2. *Ibid.* Simancas, secular, *Audiencia de Santo Domingo*, 1626-1672. Est. 54, caj. 51, leg. 16.

great miseries which this Presidio feels for lack of sustenance, by its being brought from New Spain and this not having security nor effected with punctuality which the continual necessity demands, and the difficulty which the collection of the subsidy offers, the risk by sea and enemies which have occasioned robberies and losses; so he arranged to found some haciendas of wheat and great cattle in the Province with much expenditure of his treasure, the herds of horses and cattle being shipped from the Island of Cuba and the seed wheat, slaves, farmhands and the rest necessary from the Provinces of New Spain. And having worked the land, he recognized the abundance which the fruits and sowings gave every year by conserving only the seed in the interim while procuring a miller and stones for its milling. And having arranged to sow in sufficient quantity and having sent to seek the miller and stones in the Canary Islands the said Governor died."

It is evident from an unsigned letter dated November 20, 1655³ that Salazar died of some contagious illness, and the government, *ad interim*, fell to the Accountant Nicolas Ponce de Leon. Ponce held a high opinion of the judgment of the dead governor in having inaugurated the growing of wheat, which suggests that Ponce himself might have gone hungry now and then. But the hacienda would not run itself and he reported what was done:

"Among other effects which remained because of the end and death of Benito Ruiz de Salazar Ballencilla, who was Governor and Captain General of these Provinces, there was a hacienda and farm of wheat and maize which was adjoining the village of Asile which although it had been brought many days at auction to see if there was any one to buy

3. *Ibid.*

it, and there had not been anybody because of this country being very poor and that all the Spaniards who inhabit it are soldiers and thus they have not funds nor possibilities to buy it and be able afterwards to benefit from it [therefore] because the said hacienda is already established at very great cost and expense that was made on it by the Governor . . ." and because of the great need for its operation and because the six years growing of wheat had been successful and the mill wright with the mill-stones had arrived and all was ready for him to get to work, the two officials, De Leon and Cigarroa, agreed on its purchase "for the account of His Majesty."

Captain Don Luis de Salazar, son and heir of the late governor, was now called into the conference. Terms were agreed upon for the sale of the hacienda "with the wheat farm and the great cattle for the king's account."

An inventory of all animals, including a pair of large oxen, and of every article was made including all tools and primitive equipment of the farm houses as well as slaves. The sale being consummated, the people of Florida were not expected to have to worry longer about wheat flour.

And then, after serving but five or six months as interim governor, Nicolas Ponce de Leon also died suddenly, presumably of that same contagious disease that had carried off Governor Salazar and others. But trouble was ahead and the translation of an unsigned letter dated November 20, 1655 gives the details:

"According to common talk some soldiers of those who had been officials in this presidio, all relatives as well as being natives of the land, met at night in different places and with great scandal they elected Don Pedro Ruitiner governor with promises

to those who gave him their vote. In the year and a half time that he governed, Senor, he gave twenty three commissions as Captain, the greater part of them in one of the two companies in this presidio, and four as warder of the fort, three as sergeant major and ten as adjutant, three as accountant and one as treasurer, titling himself Governor and Captain General in these forty-four commissions and in the other writings, and having the flags lowered and the artillery fired from the fort when going to visit his plantations."

This name Ruitiner appears in various official documents of the affair as "Horruytiner" and is so signed by him as a royal official with Francisco Menendez Marquez in 1647, second year of Benito Ruiz de Salazar's governing. Also in 1635 to 1638 there had been a duly appointed governor of Florida, Luis de Horruytiner. So the usurper's family had background.

The same unsigned letter describes the arrival of a sergeant major from Spain with a "cedula to govern from His Majesty." He presented the cedula before Don Pedro, Ruitiner ;" but Don Pedro kept on governing as he pleased.

Next Pedro received notice " . . . that Don Diego de Rebolledo was coming as Governor and Captain General of this Presidio and Provinces. He sent some of his particular friends to Havana and he took there a furnished house in that City where they lodged during the time they were there with such friendship has been preserved between Don Pedro and the Governor and Captain General Don Diego de Rebolledo, his position in all he has done and there is not a word spoken of the manner of his election nor of the acts he did nor of his not delivering the government to the sergeant major nor the other disagreements."

But the wheat farm met its fate at the hands of Ruitiner, for the translation of another document from the same source says, "As soon as Don Pedro Horruytiner entered into this government by election, within a few days without awaiting that which Thy Majesty would take in the matter he destroyed and dismantled them [the haciendas] leaving the fruits hanging in the sowings, because of a petition which the Father Provincial Fray Juan de Medina made him and . . . selling all that the said haciendas had, extra judicially contrary to the custom that the Royal Treasury has in this Presidio."

The writer of the unsigned letter may have thought Governor Rebolledo was not criticising Ruitiner for his various actions but Rebolledo writes, "In the residencia I have taken of the said Don Pedro I have condemned him in this. And it is certain the destroying of these haciendas has been a sorrowful thing being the foundation with which the misery of this land was being remedied. And now with the example and the seed which the Religious and the caciques conserved from them they sow and crop sufficient wheat for their sustenance, as I have seen in the visitation that I made, without it being necessary to carry them this sustenance from this Presidio, as they did on the shoulders of the natives."

That is the last word of the wheat fields started so hopefully by Governor Benito Ruiz de Salazar Ballencilla ; and for more long years all in Florida suffered hunger when the flour ships failed to arrive in time, which might have been averted if the growing of wheat had been continued as Governor Salazar had so successfully started it near the Indian village of Asile.

THE SEMINOLE NEGROES OF ANDROS
ISLAND, BAHAMAS

by JOHN M. GOGGIN

In a recent article in this journal, Kenneth W. Porter has raised the question of the identity of the Indian negroes of Andros Island in the Bahamas.¹ As the result of investigations on Andros Island in the summer of 1937, it is possible to clarify the problem, and positively to identify the legendary Indians of Andros Island as Seminole Negroes. A more detailed historical investigation of the problem had been contemplated, but present conditions make it impossible to complete the research as originally outlined. In the summer of 1937 the author spent five weeks making an archeological survey of Andros Island. Incidental to the survey considerable time was spent working with the Indian Negroes at Mastic Point, a small settlement on the northeastern shore of the island.² The problem of the Seminole Negro was considered in some detail in order to determine the relative proportion of aboriginal traits present in their culture. It was thought that if the aboriginal elements were of any importance, these people would be an excellent field for a comparative study of acculturation. Unfortunately only slight vestiges of Seminole culture are found on Andros Island. Certain traits are clearly recognizable as being Seminole, but as a whole the pattern is similar to their other negro Bahaman groups. It is probable that in the original group of migrants there were only a few pure blood Seminoles.

Mr. Porter has pointed out much of the historical

1. Kenneth W. Porter, "Notes on Seminole Negroes in the Bahamas," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Vol 24, p. 56-60.
2. John M. Goggin, "An Anthropological Reconnaissance of Andros Island, Bahamas," *American Antiquity*, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 21-26, 1939.

background of the Seminole movement to the Bahamas. However, the close connections between the British and Seminole probably goes back to the days when Florida was a possession of the British Crown. This period, from 1763 to 1784, was also the period of the development of the Seminole as such. Small bands from various elements of the Creek Confederacy began to form large towns, and that of Cuscowilla was well known to the English. Bartram describes the extent of this town on the Alachua Prairie and the British trading posts on the St. Johns River which served the Indians.³ These Indians were used by the British as supplementary border guards, and in 1780 Governor Tonyn writes, "The Seminole Indians, 800 gunmen, have been employed in scouting parties, along the coast, since the surrender of West Florida. They were well affected, and I can confide in the head men."⁴ We know that in at least one instance a Seminole Negro was enlisted in the British Navy (see below). After the departure of the English in 1784, it is quite probable that some contact was kept with the Seminoles in central Florida, as in the case of West Florida.

With the development of Georgia, many negroes took refuge among the Indians in the Spanish possession to the south. There was increasing agitation by the slave owners for relief from the situation. The first Seminole war, in 1818, ensued as the result of these circumstances, and many negroes fled south towards the extremity of the peninsula, although the American troops did not penetrate be-

3. William Bartram, *Travels Through North and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida, the Cherokee Country, the Extensive Territories of the Muscogulgees or Creek Confederacy and the Country of the Choctaws*, Philadelphia, 1791, p. 153-184. Reprinted, New York, 1940.

4. James Grant Forbes, *Sketches, Historical and Topographical of the Floridas*, New York, 1821, p. 39.

yond northern and western Florida. Cape Florida became an early rendezvous, and in 1821 Forbes writes ". . . . at the Key, which presents a mass of mangroves, there were lately about sixty Indians and as many runaway negroes in search of subsistence, and twenty-seven sail of Bahama wreckers."⁵ It was in this period that a formal effort was made by the Seminole to gain a haven in the Bahamas. It is related by Coe that "A curious circumstance occurred in the fall of 1819, as a result of the severe treatment received by the Seminoles at the hands of the frontier settlers. On the 29th of September in the above year, a party of twenty eight Seminoles arrived at Nassau, N.P., in a wrecking vessel from the coast of Florida, for the purpose of seeking assistance from the commander-in-chief of the British troops stationed on the island. The exiles were entirely destitute, and said they had been robbed and driven from their homes. They were furnished with rations and lodgings at the barracks, to relieve their immediate distress."⁶ The final disposition of these petitioners is not known but it is doubtful that they received much official help. It is probable that the movement began at about this time and extended until about 1840. Most of the Seminole Negroes were probably transported by wreckers, but many made their own way in canoes.

With a dearth of information in historical sources concerning this movement of peoples, it is necessary to turn to the descendants of the early refugees. Fortunately a clear tradition of the migration

5. Forbes, *ibid.*, p. 105.

6. Charles H. Coe, *Red Patriots, The Story of the Seminoles*, Cincinnati, 1898, p. 22-23. The *Bahama Advertiser* for Oct. 2, 1819, is cited as authority for this information. It is very likely that the files of the Nassau newspapers will provide the most complete data for the movement of the Seminole Negroes to the Bahamas.

exists and is remembered by the older generation. My informant was Felix MacNeil of Mastic Point, then 76 years old, and the grandson of Scipio Bowlegs, a "doctor" and leader of the group which came to Andros Island. The Indians who came to the Bahamas were "black Indians," not "white Indians," and they came a long way according to tradition. They were constantly pursued (through Florida) by slave catchers, but sometimes they would stop in one town for three or four years. However it would not be long before they heard "the footsteps of the slave catchers getting closer and closer," causing them to flee again. Finally they arrived at Cape Florida and felt that this was the last place. As far as can be determined, computing the ages of MacNeil's ancestors, the date of arrival was between 1810 and 1820, probably closer to the later date. At Cape Florida the "black Indians" met many wreckers from the Bahamas, one of whom, Captain Simonds, is remembered in particular as "a slave catcher from Nassau." He told them that in the rising sun was a land of freedom, and after a short while a group decided to go to the Bahamas. They sailed eastward in large dugout canoes. The largest group, under Scipio Bowlegs, landed at Red Bay on the northwest end of Andros. Other smaller groups landed on the Joulter Cays, north of Andros, but they later moved to Red Bay. The initial group is said to have included from 150 to 200 individuals, but this figure may be too large. With them they brought seeds of corn, peas, and pumpkins which they planted. For a long time the Indian Negroes stayed aloof from the Negroes on the east coast who were "Congos" and "Longas," but eventually they intermarried.

At the present time (1937) the principal center of

these people is at Red Bay, although many individuals are found on the east coast. The extensive family of Felix MacNeil is at Mastic Point, and a cousin of his, R. Bowlegs, was met at Nicolls Town. These people have been much maligned simply because they are isolated, and no one has taken the trouble to investigate them. They do not live in trees as has been claimed and are no more wild than any other Negroes on the Island.

Although I did not visit their main center, Red Bay, I was repeatedly told that very few Indian customs remain. The use of the bow and arrow had died out except as a toy for children. None were available and a special example had to be made for me. It is a flat self bow, three feet, eight inches long and one inch and three eighths wide in the middle with a slight taper toward the ends. The inside is flat and the back rounded. It is closely similar to the bows of the Florida Seminole. The only arrows seen are the type used for shooting fish. They are rather crude, about four feet long and unfeathered, with a sharpened point on one end and a nock on the other. The only proper wood for a bow is said to be *cassao*, which was not identified. Arrows used for hunting birds are said to have been pointed with brass tacks, and have one or two feathers, never three. Another type of bow not seen is said to be "more curved."

Other recognizable Indian traits are few. The name Bowleg is common, and it is the only name known to have a Floridian origin. The use of fish poisons is an Indian trait but is also widespread among all populations of the West Indies. Thus its occurrence here cannot with certainty be ascribed to Indian sources. The technique of using the bark and leaves of the Jamaica Dogwood *Ichthyomethia* sp. is similar to that practiced else-

where. Bruised leaves and bark are put in tidal pools where fish are trapped by the receding tide. The poison stupifies the fish, and they are easily gathered. The "pole house" or log cabin dwelling was formerly used and is of Floridian origin. It is not found now, for the houses are of wood, stone, or plastered wattle with thatched roofs. Another type of dwelling credited to the Indians is a leanto constructed of stone and wood. The informants were unable to describe this clearly as it is no longer in use. Dugout canoes are also no longer found, but when Felix MacNeil was a boy, the old ones which brought the original group of people to the island could still be observed rotting away.

All of the individuals seen who are considered to have Indian blood are quite black and show little evidence of Indian ancestry. The only exception is Felix MacNeil who is very different in features although quite black, too. His high, prominent cheekbones are very suggestive of an Indian's.⁷

One old man known as a Seminole is George Oliver of Mastic Point. His Seminole ancestry can be traced from Florida although by another route. His half Seminole grandfather shipped on a British man-of-war at St. Augustine and after many years of service settled on one of the Bahama Islands. The family later moved to Andros.

In summary, it can be said that although the legend of Indians on Andros Island is based on fact, anyone expecting to find a functioning Indian culture will be disappointed. A more thorough study of the Red Bay settlement would be interesting from many points of view and is certainly a worthy project. The culture of the Andros Island Seminole is only a variation of the typical Bahaman culture.

7. See a picture of MacNeil in Goggin, *op. cit.*, plate IV.

PIONEER FLORIDA

by T. FREDERICK DAVIS

THE FIRST SESSION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF FLORIDA

Conformably to the law, the first Legislative Council of the Territory of Florida was to meet at Pensacola on Monday, June 10, 1822. On that day several members met, but owing to lack of a quorum occasioned by the non-arrival of the East Florida members they adjourned until the 17th. On the 17th, the East Florida members had not arrived and there was another adjournment. It was not until July 22 that the Council organized with a quorum attained through the arrival of some of the members from East Florida. These bare facts are all that official records show; for the circumstances of the delay we must resort to other sources.

Florida at that time was an unsettled wilderness throughout the route for land travel from East Florida to Pensacola. Many hardships confronted the traveler on such a journey, estimated to take three weeks by horseback under the most favorable circumstances. The East Florida members of the Legislative Council therefore decided to proceed to Pensacola by vessel on a voyage around the peninsula. Concerning this voyage the Mobile Register of July 18, 1822, published the following news item:

Loss of the Sloop Lady Washington

We have received from the passengers who came up to town yesterday morning from ship Island the following particulars of the loss of this vessel.

The Lady Washington of and from St. Augustine, East Florida, bound to Pensacola, sailed on the morning of the 30th of May [1822] with the following passengers on board,

viz ; Messrs. Reynolds, Hanham, Law, (members of the Legislative Council of Florida,) Gaither [also a member of the Council], Hackley and Hines. After experiencing an alternation of calms and squalls, she put into Matanzas [Cuba] on the 22d of June, to get a supply of wood, water and provisions. She proceeded on her voyage the 26th, and made the first land at Cape St. Bias, on the 4th inst. [July] and Pensacola on the morning of the 7th. The gale increasing, she was unable to enter the port, and obliged to lay too [sic]. On the morning of the 9th, she shipped a heavy sea, which stove in her companion way, and threw the sloop on her beam ends, and took in a considerable quantity of water. She righted immediately, and it was considered prudent to scud her, as it appeared that she had not sufficient ballast to enable her to lay too. This was accordingly done, and after scudding three and a half hours under bare poles, (the captain and mate at the helm) she gave a lee lurch and upset. In this perilous situation she remained about 15 or 20 minutes, the crew and passengers clinging for safety to the side of the vessel, when she righted, and two hours after[wards] she run on the beach of Ship Island [off the coast of Mississippi]. All on board were saved.

This is the story of the voyage as reprinted from the Mobile *Register* by the Pensacola *Floridian*. But there is an addendum concerning another member of the Council from East Florida, Thomas Lytle, who embarked for Pensacola in a different vessel. It, too, ran into a storm off the Florida coast and was lost. Mr. Lytle was among those who perished. (*Niles' Weekly Register*, Dec. 14, 1822, p. 226.)

There is an abstract in the *Floridian* of the daily proceedings of the Council through August 13. Further records are lost, but it is known that because of the severe epidemic of yellow fever, already raging in Pensacola at that time,¹ the Council and many of the townsmen fled to the country, and the session was continued at the country home and ranch of Don Manuel Gonzalez, a house well known to Gen. Andrew Jackson, fifteen miles inland. This was at the present village of Cantonment.

The *Floridian* of July 27, 1822, contains the following, presumably an extract from the journal² of the Council:

Monday, July 22, 1822. This day at twelve o'clock the following members of the Legislative Council appeared and answered to their names, viz:-James C. Bronaugh, Richard K. Call, Edmund Law, John Miller, William Reynolds, James R. Hanham, Greenbury Gaither and George Murray-who being a majority of the whole Council, the Governor administered the oath to them, to support the constitution of the United States, so long as they continue citizens thereof, and to discharge the duties of their office faithfully, and to the best of their abilities."

1. Few details have come down to us of this epidemic. But we get a brief view of it in *Niles' Weekly Register*, October 10, 1822 (vol. xxiii p. 99). A summary of that report is in T. F. Davis, "Digest of the Florida Material in Niles' Register, 1811-1849" (manuscript, 250p.) copies of which are in Fla. State Lib., P. K. Yonge Lib. Fla. Hist., Univ. of Fla., Fla. State Col. for Women Lib., and Library of Congress. Summary: "Prevalence and severity of the yellow fever epidemic in Pensacola; worst on record. Names of many prominent residents who died between 15th Aug. and 11th Sept. among them a number of public officials including Dr. Bronaugh, president of the Legislative Council." - *Ed.*
2. None of these early journals were printed. The first printed was the journal of the 1829 session, and the next (so far as known) that for the 1832 session. All subsequent journals have been printed, The Acts of all sessions were printed.

WRITING LOCAL HISTORY

by **LILLIE B. MCDUFFEE**

(A suggestion and a plea: This article is largely from a paper read at the annual meeting of the Florida Historical Society at the University of Tampa on January 26, 1938. Mrs. McDuffee has written from her own experience in collecting and writing local history. Her *Lures of Manatee*, published in 1933 in an edition soon exhausted, has long since taken rank in the highest category of Florida's local histories.

Now that the war is over it is hoped that some of those who are history-minded throughout the State may determine to begin the important task of collecting and writing the history of their town or county. They may be assured of present and future appreciation, and their names will always be linked with the history of their community. - Ed.)

Probably in every one of Florida's sixty-seven counties there is waiting for some aspiring writer of history a wealth of material which could be used effectively in building a county or local history. This is a field of endeavor which in Florida has largely been neglected, and one which should arouse the pride of Floridians over the State who may be history-minded.

Gathering adequate material for even a local history and assembling it into coherent form is no small task and it can be relentless; but, happily, it is a task in which there is ever a glow of enthusiasm, whether it be searching mouldy archives for hidden secrets of the past or making pages come to life with scenes and characters. There is a mysterious lure about it that grips you and keeps you eternally on the job.

I am one of those who revel in hunting through old records. There is no end to what one may find among them and one of its delights is that new and exciting items are continually being discovered. A document may be no more than an old bill of sale, but the very item needed to corroborate an important date or event.

Old church records are admirable. Community life and church life have always been bound up with

each other and those old church registers with their multitudinous entries, births, marriages and deaths -indicate the pattern by which community life is molded. In hunting for historical material one will do well to search out the older citizens of the community, or communities, for first-hand knowledge of early affairs. The toll of time has wellnigh removed Florida's first old settlers, but in nearly every community may still be found men and women of longtime residence whose minds are veritable storehouses of early experiences. The urgency of contacting these persons cannot be overstressed, not only from the standpoint of gaining first-hand information while it is retrievable, but to be successful in one's undertaking it is most essential to enlist the goodwill and backing of old-time citizens.

I was most fortunate in this (if you will pardon the personal reference) and the success of my undertaking, if there was success, I owe largely, I am sure, to the old people of my section who entered wholeheartedly into the spirit of the work, and lent their aid and encouragement. Their attitude carried much weight with our Board of County Commissioners to whom I applied later for assistance in having my book published.

It should be remembered that old people, really old people, I mean those approaching the century mark, think slowly and one requisite for success in consulting them is to have one's own mind atuned to the thoughts and ways of their early days. In order to do this it is necessary to build up a reasonable background of information. One will then be enriched by their reminiscences. The mention of a single name will often touch off a flood of memories and bring to light fragments of events and episodes long forgotten. I say fragments because seldom are their reminiscences complete and not always are

they in exact accord with others when two or more recount the same episode or discuss the same subject. There are instances-and there is no lack of deference here-when the testimony is so widely at variance one is hard put to determine which version to accept.

Situations of this sort require a bit of strategy on the part of the chronicler. One must not only weigh carefully and impartially all the essential facts in the case but often must trust to one's own power of analysis and deduction in avoiding offence. Such entanglements, however, need not discourage or deter you in the pursuit of collecting verbal information. Lively reminiscences, even if not always complete or accurate in every sense of the word, furnish copious material to work on and a close scrutiny of old files or some other hiding place for historical data will usually produce evidences of one kind or another bearing on the subject that may be used to substantiate or refute.

Devious are the ways and places such evidences may be found. Sometimes an obscure old day-book will provide enlightening items, or an old diary with its day to day entries and observations reveal actual happenings that often can be gotten in no other way. They throw light on the moods, the habits, the attitude and manners and sometimes vices of the circle of people represented in them, and help greatly in building up your narrative.

The question arises-is it proper or permissible to edit a letter? Now we know editing old letters robs them of much of the honest flavor which is rightfully theirs, but there are circumstances under which it is neither fair nor wise to present a letter in its entirety, however entertaining it might prove to present-day readers. The type of letter and its contents, I am sure, are the determining factors in

this case. Some old letters are brimming over with shrewd and witty observations which make delightful reading. Some are a bit gossipy about neighborhood affairs, disclosing now and then a meretricious sort of skeleton in the closet. The temptation to include such book-selling data on one's own pages is strong, but the chronicler of local history must refrain from doing so. On all personal aspects that tend to bring embarrassment or pain to some living relative it is wise always to be silent.

Some old letters are long and dry, even dismal, though they may contain a wealth of information. In this case the better plan, perhaps, would be a generous use of excerpts with comments on such items as inform, verify or add interest. The same method might be applied to lengthy quotations which one is prone to use, now and then, principally to substantiate some claim already set forth.

Entire pages of material of this nature tend to irk if not exhaust the patience of today's readers who, to escape monotony or satiety, skip and thus lose much interesting information they would not have missed had it been presented in a livelier manner.

I do not mean to imply it is more important to entertain than to inform. The historian's purpose is to inform. He strives always to present facts, but facts may be softened more or less without impairing veracity or seriousness of purpose. They may still be facts and take on a bit of adornment. Any one can compile data laboriously and correctly as to dates, events, etc., but history, of course, is more than a compilation.

Writers of Florida history whether it be local or statewide in interest are continually having to compete with historical romancers whose prestige and skill at story telling give them great advantage.

Unhampered by facts they find in Florida's fertile fields much to stir their imagination. With avid curiosity and with lavish hand they gather up material of every conceivable nature, blend it together in fascinating style, intertwining historic and romantic episodes with little regard for authenticity.

Florida has many legends. Some are beautiful and no one would want to lose them, and when chronicled as purely legend they do not detract from the historical value of a book. But once the legendary or semilegendary article or story is exploited as truth, it is hard to down. Like the fabled bouncer, Anteus, it rebounds and springs even higher when attacked. It is not easy nor is it always pleasant to tear aside the glamorous aura surrounding these stories and leave exposed only the bare facts. But, unromantic and dull as these facts may be, for the sake of accuracy that is what the historian must do. This may sound a bit contradictory, after my suggestion, regarding dressing up or softening facts; but the adornment could be only in expression, rather than the least alteration of the facts themselves.

This brings to mind another phase of the work that is likely to result in a bad case of jitters. You may check and recheck and be reasonably certain that your manuscript is free from flaws and discrepancies, so far as history is concerned, only to be confronted by doubts that point in a different direction. They aim at your own imperfections and force you to take stock of all your short-comings in this line. In general they play havoc with your writing impulses. Under their dominancy it is easy to lose self-confidence, you want to give up and just chuck the whole affair. Something within you refuses to quit, and so you carry on. And, though you may not possess' the gift of the raconteur, by

diligently piecing together, fragment by fragment, item by item, somewhat as the mason's stone by stone process, you will at last build up your story. Not a great story, perhaps, but a living chronicle of our sturdy, courageous pioneers.

Your history and mine may not relate to the great or the near great. Those we find to write about are mostly unknown. Still, in the old cemetery in my small town are the graves of two signers of Florida's first constitution. Some of their neighbors, relegated to obscurity, were patriots in the truest sense: honest men and women who came into the territory while it was still young and by their own strength and valor and determination, carved out of the wilderness places for themselves and for those who might follow. Their lives may not be deemed wide enough in scope and influence to give them a place in the state's history, but surely there should be a place for some record of their lives.

Perhaps you are the one to record such in your town or district or county.

The suggestion or plea at the head of this article is repeated here: that you or some one of your community, or town, or county, begin now to bring together material and write your local history. Whether you have had any experience or not, a recent book would help you. This is, *Local History, How to Gather it, Write it, and Publish it*, written by Donald Dean Parker, and revised and edited by Bertha E. Josephson for the Committee on Guide for Study of Local History of The Social Science Research Council (230 Park Avenue, New York 17). It is sold by the Council at \$100.

Most of your material must be gathered locally and personally, but for the smaller amount of more general material you will be cheerfully helped by the library of the Florida Historical Society, St. Augustine; the Florida State Library, Tallahassee; and the P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History of the University of Florida.

Write and publish your local history and you will have achieved immortality in your community. (*The editor*)

TIGER TAIL

by KENNETH W. PORTER

The career of Thlocklo Tustenuggee (Fish Warrior), better known by his nickname of Tiger Tail, who was one of the most determinedly hostile of the Seminole chiefs in the war of 1835-42, may be of no great importance. It has, however, already received sufficient attention to justify, it would seem, the addition of new information. The standard account, found in Sprague, is that he died, perhaps of homesickness, shortly after his transportation from Florida. It has, however, been more recently asserted that Tiger Tail never left Florida, but, substituting one of his warriors, who had been beaten into unrecognizability in a drunken brawl, himself succeeded in slipping away into the Everglades.¹

There is no doubt that, as asserted in the article presenting this theory, an Indian known as Tiger Tail was living near Miami in the 1870's. The death of "Old Tiger Tail," at the reputed age of nearly ninety, was reported from Miami in September, 1881.² The insoluble question is whether or not this Tiger Tail was identical with the Tallahassee chief of the Seminole War. The age of the Seminole War chief, reported as about fifty at the outbreak (1835), roughly corresponds with the alleged age of "Old Tiger Tail," who was said to be about ninety in 1881, but the ages of elderly Indians are so uncertain that this is a frail peg on which to hang even a theory.

There is, however, a little additional evidence, which suggests their identity, but also that Sprague may have been correct in stating that Tiger Tail was shipped west, though wrong in saying that he

1. Williams, Isabella M., "The Truth Regarding 'Tiger Tail,'" *Florida Historical Quarterly*, IV (Oct., 1925), 68-75.
2. *Florida Historical Quarterly* IV, 192-194.

died there. "Sylvia Sunshine" agrees that the Tiger Tail of the Seminole War was living in Florida during her day, but asserts that, after being shipped to the west, he escaped into Mexico where he lived as an outlaw, and whence he eventually returned to Florida.³

This "escape to Mexico" and subsequent life in its mountains "as an outlaw" suggests a distortion of Wild Cat's migration to Mexico with his company of Indians and Negroes and the alleged plundering expeditions into Texas which ensued. And there is no doubt that a Seminole named Tiger Tail was one of Wild Cat's companions. A Mexican newspaper describes the visit of a band of Seminole and Kickapoo Indians to the capital, under the command of Wild Cat; "Cola de Tigre" is specifically mentioned.⁴ After Wild Cat's death in 1857 the Indians among his followers drifted back to the United States until by the end of 1861 none were left in Mexico. Among these returning wanderers may have been old Tiger Tail, and it would have been no impossible task, the Seminole Wars finally over, for him to make his way back to his old hunting-grounds.

3. "Sunshine, Sylvia," *Petals Plucked from Sunny Climes*, Nashville, 1880, pp. 256-257.
4. *El Siglo Die y Nueve*, Apr. 30, 1852 (National Library, Mexico, D.F.). "La semana entrante salen de San Luis para esta capital unos indios de las tribus de Seminole y Chikapus, que tienen por gef a *Gato del Monte* . . . Parce que entre los ilustres viajeros viene *Cola de Tigre y Arranca Corazones*."

RESOURCES FOR THE HISTORY OF THE BRITISH FLORIDAS

As is well known, the history of Florida falls naturally and very definitely into periods of nationalities. Of these the British era is the most sharply defined. And this is the only period whose history has largely been written—which means that, except for the details of the general history and for certain subjects, the materials available have mostly been used. For this British occupation these resources are mainly governmental archives in the Public Record Office in London. That mass of documents has been used by writers on specific subjects, but for general coverage there are two works: Professor Mowat's on East Florida,¹ and Professor Johnson's on West Florida.² To these should be added Professor Siebert's work on the loyalists in East Florida.³

EAST FLORIDA

When Spain ceded the Floridas to Great Britain in 1763 the exodus of the Spaniards was almost total, but this was much less of a trial to the inhabitants than might be supposed, for most of them lived in St. Augustine and Pensacola and these were little more than garrison towns. Not many of the military were married, and soldiers are seldom averse to

1. *East Florida as a British Province 1763-1784*, by Charles Loch Mowat. University of California Publications in History, vol. 32. (University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1943. 237 p. ills.)
2. *British West Florida 1763-1783*, by Cecil Johnson, Associate Professor of History, The University of North Carolina. (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1943, 258 p. maps)
3. *Loyalists in East Florida, 1774 to 1785. The Most Important Documents Pertaining thereto.* Edited with an accompanying manuscript by Wilbur Henry Siebert, F.R.H.S., Research Professor in the Ohio State University. Volume I, *The Narrative*, 263 p. illus. Volume II, *Records of their Claim for Losses of Property in the Provinces*. 431 p. (DeLand, The Florida State Historical Society, 1929)

change of scene. For an account of this evacuation one must go to Seville.⁴

The arrival of the British is told of in a report to the Secretary at War;⁵ and what they found there, with conditions and some description of the place, can be had from the report of Lieutenant Colonel James Robertson to General Gage.⁶ The last Spanish census gave St. Augustine and its district 3,046 persons, most of whom were civil servants or part of the military. The British on arrival describe the place as a village overgrown with weeds.

Of the occupation of St. Marks, as well as much relating to its later history there is an account in *Florida Historical Quarterly*.⁷

Soon after the cession William Roberts rushed into print to give some description of the new province, though he had never seen Florida, and his *Account of the First Discovery and Natural History of Florida*, which he published in London in 1763, gives what was then known about the new provinces.

Among other descriptions Professor Mowat in his comprehensive and authoritative work mentioned above notes that William Knox who had lived in Georgia gives his opinion on Florida soil and climate and what products might be expected there in "Hints Respecting the Soil and Culture of East Florida."⁸

4. Archivo General de Indias, Santo Domingo 86-7-11. There are copies of most of these documents in the Library of Congress, and translations of some of them in the library of the St. Augustine Historical Society.
5. *Mississippi Provincial Archives 1763-1766*. English Dominion. Nashville, 1911 I, p. 132. Only vol. pub. in English series.
6. "Report of the State of East and West Florida." Public Record Office, Colonial Office (London) 5/83.
7. Mark F. Boyd: *Letters and Documents Pertaining to San Marcos de Apalache 1763-1769, During the British Occupation of Florida*. XIX 179-212 and the following issues.
8. William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Knox MSS, IX 2 & 3.

James, Grant, the first governor⁹ arrived in August 1764 and set up the civil government in October, and it remained in his charge until 1771 when he returned to England.

Professor Mowat tells something of each member of the new government, especially of James and John Moultrie from South Carolina. Patrick Tonym,¹⁰ Grant's successor, arrived from England in 1774, and during the three year interval Lieutenant Governor John Moultrie held the office. He continues, "The 'infant colony' as Grant often called it, grew slowly. . . its population grew to three thousand, mostly between the St. John's and the Atlantic," with the greater part in St. Augustine. "The aspect of the town, so reminiscent of the Spanish Empire, changed little under the British."

For an account of life in St. Augustine before the Revolution together with references to the sources there is Professor Mowat's *St. Augustine under the British Flag 1763-1775* in this *Quarterly*,¹¹ and John Bartram's *Diary of a Journey Through the Carolinas, Georgia and Florida from July 1, 1765 to April 10, 1766*,¹² which contains a good contemporaneous account of St. Augustine and its Spanish buildings, Anastasia Island and the surrounding country . . . two plans of the town and a view of the Governor's house."

Dr. William Stork also visited East Florida and told of it in his *Account of East Florida*.¹³ Later editions of Stork's work were published with parts

9. See *Florida Historical Quarterly* VIII 112: Philip C. Tucker, "Notes on the Life of James Grant."

10. See *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography* and Siebert, *Loyalists* II 3; also Mowat p. 83 for a biographical note.

11. Mowat in *Florida Historical Quarterly* XX 131-150.

12. *Transactions of American Philosophical Society* XXXIII Pt. I (Phila. 1942)

13. This was first published in London in 1766 as *An Account of East Florida with Remarks on its future importance to Trade and Commerce*.

of John Bartram's journal.¹⁴ Still more noteworthy and much better known than John Bartram's work is that of his son William Bartram: *Travels Through North and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida and the Cherokee Country*. First published in Philadelphia in 1791, it was reprinted in numerous editions in this, country and abroad and was translated into German, Dutch and French. It is so well known as to need no comment.

The rarest as well as one of the most important works for the British period in Florida is Bernard Romans's *Concise Natural History of East and West Florida*.¹⁵

Relations With the Indians

Relations with the Indians are described in Clarence E. Carter's "Observations of Superintendent John Stuart and Governor James Grant . . . for Management of Indian Affairs,"¹⁶

One of the most interesting descriptions in Professor Mowat's book is that of the "congress" held with the Indians at Picolata in 1765 :¹⁷ "Provisions and a large supply of presents were sent ahead . . .

14. [Stork, Wm.] *An Account of East Florida with a Journal kept by John Bartram* London [1766 or 1767]. This was reprinted in Fernandina, 1881, (by George R. Fairbanks ?)

A Description of East Florida with a Journal kept by John Bartram 3rd edition. London, 1769.

The fourth edition, London, 1774, has only slight changes on the title page.

15. There are two editions: New York 1775 and New York 1776. They seem to be equally rare, but the first is more desirable as it contains introductory matter and an appendix which are not in the second edition. However, the second contains an Indian plate which is not in the first. The work was intended to include two whole sheet maps, but no copy has been found containing either. A reproduction of the map, found separate, together with *Notes on the Life and Works of Bernard Romans*, by P. Lee Phillips, were published by the Florida State Historical Society. DeLand (1924).

16. *American Historical Review*. XX 815-831

17. Mowat, *East Florida* p. 21; John Bartram, *Diary* pp. 35-51.

the official delegation was accompanied by an impressive escort of officers, drummers, and fifty privates. . . . It was held in a pavilion constructed of pine branches. The chiefs assembled in front of the pavilion in a column of sixes, flanked by two chiefs on one side carrying dressed buckskins, and two on the other carrying rattle boxes and pipes dressed with eagle feathers. They marched forward with some dancing, singing, and shouting, but halted within fifty paces of the pavilion. The two chiefs with the pipes then came forward in a dance, stroked their beards and heads with the eagle feathers on the pipes, and then retired. All the chiefs entered by twos and fours, shook hands with the governor and superintendent, and took their seats, after which the dressed skins were presented to the two officials. The pipe of peace was then smoked by the governor, superintendent and chiefs ; whereupon all was ready for the serious business of speechmaking.”

A sequel to the Indian congresses was the Indian trade, for the only trump card in the hands of the English was the growing desire of the Indians for manufactured goods-guns, ammunition, cloth of various kinds including blankets, rum, trinkets-an expanding list. Professor Mowat sketches this trade out of East Florida, which on the part of the Indians consisted largely of skins. But the full story of the trade, the most important activity in relations with the Indians, cannot be told until the full story of Panton, Leslie and Company is pieced together from numerous sources: the Spanish archives in Havana and Seville,¹⁸ the Public Record Office in London, in the Cabildo in New Orleans, and the Panton, Leslie and Company papers in the library

18. Transcripts of much of this material are in the Library of Congress.

of the Florida Historical Society, some of the latter of which have been published in this *Quarterly*.

But the military aspect of course was also important from the beginning in relations with the Indians, and Mowat shows it was a large part of the everyday life of the capital at least. "St. Augustine was from the start one of the stations of the imperial military establishment in North America, and in normal times consisted of one regiment of infantry, a company of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, and numerous other officers which he lists. The regiment's strength was usually about two hundred, and small bodies were stationed at Apalache, Picolata, Mosa, Matanzas, the lookout on Anastasia Island, and New Smyrna.¹⁹ For a time General Frederick Haldimand, in command of the Southern District, had his headquarters in St. Augustine. Many of his papers are in the British Museum, with transcripts in the Library of Congress.

The government of East Florida was different from that of the other colonies in two respects: There was no general assembly until 1781, and the expenses of the government were borne by a grant of Parliament. The trend of political thought in Florida was also different from that in the colonies to the north, for example the stamp duties met with no opposition here;²⁰ and Governor Grant proudly reports: ". . . the Licentious Spirit which has appeared in most of His Majesty's American colonies in opposition to an Act of the British Parliament has not spread to East Florida."

19. See also, Mowat, *The Southern Brigade 1763-1775*, in *Journal of Southern History* X 59-77. Also in *Florida Historical Quarterly* XXIII 45-49.

20. Kerr, "The Stamp Act in the Floridas," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* XXI 463-570. Mowat, *East Florida*, p. 34.

Was British East Florida Prosperous?

The great prosperity of British East Florida before the Revolution which has become a tradition is shown to be just a tradition by the evidence which Professor Mowat brings to notice. He says, "Even from the earliest years East Florida's publicity seems to have gone to its head and induced a false feeling of prosperity. Officials like Governor Grant and Lieutenant Governor Moultrie naturally sent home accounts that flattered their province as much as possible. . . . As early as 1768 the *South Carolina Gazette* reported the 'vast rate' of improvement in the infant colony . . . mentioning that settlements at Musketo and at the back of St. Augustine were flourishing. Grant himself, in 1772, after his return to London, remarked 'I may venture to say that East Florida has done more in the time, than any Continental province ever did, since the first institution of the British Empire in America.' Moultrie's letters, those of one who was a successful planter, were equally buoyant, and spoke of the 'busyness' of the planters. Dr. Schoepf, writing in 1784,²¹ said that settlers came in numbers from all parts of North America. Forbes and Vignoles writing later gave the same impression of the rapid development of the country under the British. A picture thus early drawn was naturally reproduced later on, and Fairbanks and Dewhurst spoke of the British period in Florida's history as an era of vigor and prosperity. Whether this impression is accurate . . . may well be doubted. All that is clear is that the British, in their attempts to settle Florida, acted with greater energy than the Spaniards had done previously or did subsequently, though the growth of population

21. J. D. Schoepf, *Travels in the Confederation* (Morrison translation) (Philadelphia, 1911) II. 233.

during the second Spanish period was far from negligible.

"Yet J. F. D. Smyth²² stated that the number of inhabitants rather decreased before the Revolution, many families having removed to West Florida on account of its superior soil. Chief Justice Drayton could find only three plantations south of New Smyrna and only five deserving of any notice between New Smyrna and St. Augustine. There was only one plantation of any consequence north of the capital and a few insignificant settlements between the mouths of the St. Johns and the St. Marys, excepting the considerable plantation on Amelia Island. On the St. Johns itself there were twelve or fourteen plantations of greater or less extent scattered along its length of one hundred and fifty miles. This testimony of a disgruntled witness was borne out by other evidence of a recession of settlement. William Bartram, writing of his journey up the St. Johns in 1774, mentioned seeing the deserted plantations of Dr. Stork and of another British gentleman on Lake George. He compared that district then with its state on his first visit with his father. On the first occasion it had been in Indian possession; since then it had been cleared and planted, but later deserted, so that in 1774 scarcely five acres were under fence."

Though a vast amount of land was granted to many applicants, very few became settlers. At this time these grants were being made in five colonies: New York, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and the Floridas; and East Florida had more applications than all the others put together.

The author continues, "One invaluable source of information on the growth of population is the 'List

22. J.F.D.Smyth, *A Tour in the United States of America* (London, 1784) II. 35-38.

of Inhabitants of East Florida, their Employs, Business and Qualification from 1763 to 1771' which De Brahm included in his 'Report.'²³ This names each inhabitant and gives his marital status. It includes 144 married men, 144 single men or unspecified, making a total of 288. To this De Brahm added: Persons imported from Minorca and Greece 1,400 ; Negroes, upwards of 900. Of the 288 named however, of whom 28 were noted as being dead and 73 as having left the province, only about one-third (107) were planters, the remainder being officeholders, artisans and others resident in St. Augustine. Most of the planters, of whom 32 had died or left the province, were not cultivating large plantations, but really were small farmers. As a whole these figures suggest a population for the province, about 1771, of around 3,000. Smyth stated that before the Revolution there were scarcely one hundred white families in the whole country outside St. Augustine, and about the same number in the capital, if the garrison were not included. If De Brahm's figure is accepted, it will be seen that it indicates a moderate increase over the previous Spanish population, since the figure for the latter, though also around 3,000, included the garrison."

There is of course in Mowat's work a full account of Dr. Turnbull's settlement at New Smyrna which is "the best known episode of the province's history. . . . There are accounts of New Smyrna in all the histories and descriptions of Florida . . . mostly based on the one-sided testimony of Romans' *Concise History* . . . though this was refuted by Turnbull in *Columbian Magazine*, December 1788, printed

23. His report is in manuscript in Harvard University Library as "Brahm's Survey of East Florida, Carolina, Georgia etc." and in the British Museum, of which a photostat is in the Library of Congress.

in Phillips.²⁴ The enterprise was not placed in a favorable light until the appearance of a full narrative in Carita Doggett's *Dr. Andrew Turnbull and the New Smyrna Colony of Florida* based largely on the extensive documents in the C. O. and Treasury papers. New information from the Spanish sources is given by Michael J. Curley, *Church and State in the Spanish Floridas* (Washington, 1940) which seems to support the charges of cruelty against Turnbull and his agents."

A engaging figure, perhaps the most interesting of the period in Florida, is Chief Justice William Drayton. For a study of him and the question of his sympathies during the Revolution, there is Professor Mowat's *The Enigma of William Drayton* in this *Quarterly* (XXI, 3-33).

A chapter is devoted to the continuous bickerings, and worse, of Governor Tonyn under the title "Governor Tonyn and the 'Inflamed Faction'" as the opposition cabal was called. This is based largely on the Council Minutes, Tonyn's reports to the government in London, and Drayton's defense, which is a manuscript volume in the Library of Congress: "An Inquiry into the present State and Administration of affairs in the Province of East Florida."

The Revolution had a profound and at last a fatal effect on British East Florida.²⁵ Mowat says:

"East Florida never became a real theatre of war, though she seemed always to be on the verge of becoming so. In 1776 and 1777 there were raids and counter raids. . . . In the summer of 1777 the Americans began an invasion from Georgia and repeated the attempt on a larger scale a year later." After the conquest of West Florida by Spain "the

24. See note 15

25. See Burton Barrs, *East Florida in the American Revolution*. (Jacksonville 1934)

sister province was in constant fear of a Spanish attack²⁰. . . In 1778 both sides prepared for an invasion by the other." In June the Americans with about 3,000 men crossed the St. Marys, but after some indecisive fighting they retired. It was now the turn of the British to invade Georgia where they, also, met with little success.

An episode of 1781 is the sending of a number of distinguished Charlestonians to St. Augustine as political prisoners, where they were kept nearly a year.²⁷

Mowat says: "The province was changing during the years 1775 to 1782. . . . Proximity to the rebellious colonies, the threat of invasion, the presence of large military forces, and the partisan feelings which the Revolution inspired . . . did not make for placid life. Though the great migration of loyalist refugees which made the closing years of the province's history so hectically abnormal did not occur until the evacuations of Georgia and of Charleston in 1782, there was a gradual and moderate increase in population from the coming of small groups of refugees, especially from Georgia."

The number of settlers in the province in 1782 was about 1,000, with about 3,000 Negroes. The Negroes had quadrupled during the war, but the number of white settlers was not very much larger than De Brahm's figures.

"By 1779 conditions in the province were so altered that Tonyn was emboldened to take up with the home government the old question of an assembly. . . . Germain approved" its summoning, and

26. Kathryn T. Abbey, "Spanish Projects for the Reoccupation of the Floridas During the Revolution." *Hispanic American Historical Review* IX 265-285.

27. There is a full account of this episode in *Florida Historical Quarterly* XXI 3-24: Albert Manucy and Alberta Johnson "Castle St. Marks and the Patriots of the Revolution."

it met first in March 1781.²⁸ The second session, in January 1783, "opened under the shadow of Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown, lived on through the months when Savannah and Charleston were evacuated and the fate of East Florida, crowded with refugees, was in the balance, heard the news of the restoration of the province to Spain, and concluded, never to meet again, when many of the inhabitants had departed for good.

"Assuming a previous population for, the province of 1,000 whites and 3,000 Negroes, the total for East Florida in 1783, before its own evacuation began, was 17,375. . . . Meanwhile, however, the peace negotiations were proceeding in Europe."

The End of British Florida

"Suddenly, out of a clear sky, came word to the people of East Florida of the distant negotiations in which, unknown to them, their fate had been sealed. Almost all of the British population, old residents and refugees, whites and Negroes, prepared to leave rather than remain under an alien government. . . . Apart from those who took the wilderness trails into the back country, over 3,200 went to the Bahamas and nearly as many to the United States, 281 to Europe (that is, to England) 880 to Nova Scotia, about 1,850 to Jamaica, Dominica, and elsewhere. The Minorcans, however, mostly remained, as did a few score of other British residents. A Spanish census of 1786, when the population of St. Augustine and environs is esti-

28. There is an exceedingly rare work *The Case of the Inhabitants of East Florida with an Appendix Containing Papers by which all the facts stated in the Case are supported*, printed in St. Augustine in 1784. This is one of only two books printed in Florida prior to the cession to the United States. There is a copy in the John Carter Brown Library. See *Florida Historical Quarterly* XX 3-46; "Source Materials for Florida History in the John Carter Brown Library of Brown University."

mated to have been nearly 1,700, showed the presence of 539 Minorcans, Italians, and Greeks, and 213 foreigners."²⁹

Professor Mowat concludes, "It was not an orderly evacuation, but the 'utmost confusion.' Robbing and plundering were rife. The people were angry at heart, and there was a fear of some disturbance whenever the Spaniards should arrive. The troops were mutinous at the thought of their enforced departure and planned to burn the barracks, plunder the town, and seize the fort, and then to arm the Negroes and kill every white man who opposed their keeping the country to themselves. The plan miscarried, and a few of the men were killed in an affray one night. The town was full of people from Carolina and Georgia reclaiming Negroes assertedly plundered during the war. The Indians were frequently in town, swearing vengeance against the King for giving away their country, and threatening murder to any Spaniard. On top of this banditti³⁰ from the American states began to infest the frontier and make raids on the plantations." The delivery of the fort on July 12, 1784 marked the end of the British regime, but evacuation continued for another year. "Thus perished the British province of East Florida. It became a brief and almost forgotten episode in the unfolding history of the British Empire, the tale of a province casually acquired, carelessly abandoned. Its foundations had been well laid by Grant, but its growth had been slow . . . cut short by the Revolution. For East Florida the span was too short to produce a firm and reliant society, too short for the roots to take much hold of the soil." (Mowat, *East Florida*, pp. 148-149).

29. *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Lockey, "The St. Augustine Census of 1786."

30. See Lockey, "The Florida Bandetti 1783" in *Florida Historical Quarterly* XXIV. 87-107.

The appendix in Mowat's volume includes several tables with statistics in detail of trade, shipping, officials, the Assembly, the clergy, and the military; and there is an extensive bibliography.

WEST FLORIDA

A volume similar to Professor Mowat's is Cecil Johnson's *British West Florida, 1763-1783* (footnote 2) which likewise comes largely from the Minutes of the Council of West Florida, other archives in the Public Record Office, and the Gage papers in the William L. Clements Library.

Professor Johnson says (p. vii) "This colony was an integral part of the British plan for administering the new territory which had been acquired as a result of the French and Indian War. Adjacent to Louisiana, it had a military importance for defense and offense . . . It was a part of the western movement with immigrants from all of the older colonies . . . all of the territory that it embraced was eventually included in the states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, or Florida. . . .

"The selection of Pensacola, almost in the southeastern corner of the province, as the seat of government was doubtless made with the view of utilizing to the best advantage its fine harbor and favorable location in the Spanish trade ³¹. . . [but there was] a more rapid development of the regions to the west, especially those adjoining the Mississippi . . . [for] the soil surrounding Pensacola was sandy and barren . . . and the Mississippi was a magnet for commerce. . . The land in the west, up the Tombigbee from Mobile, on the Pearl and the Pascagoula, on the Comite and the Amite, and especially on the Mississippi between Manchac and Natchez, was very

31. p. 133. See also Professor Johnson's "Expansion in West Florida" in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* XX 481-496.

fertile and desirable. The, northern boundary was moved from the thirty-first parallel of latitude to a line drawn, east from the confluence of the Yazoo and Mississippi rivers, in order that the region around Natchez might be included in the province."³²

At first the government was military,³³ but within a year Governor Johnstone came from England with his commission³⁴ and instructions,³⁵ which documents, together with the royal proclamation of October 7, 1763,³⁶ are described by Dr. C. E. Carter as the "constitution of British West Florida."³⁷ Professor Johnson continues:³⁸

"The type of government provided was that of the usual royal province, a form which varied only slightly throughout the brief history of the colony. The administration centered. in the governor . . . assisted by a council of twelve men, among whom were the chief justice of the colony and the surveyor general of the customs for the southern district of North America. The other members were to be selected by the governor from the most prominent inhabitants . . . to be laid before the king in council for approval. . . . The governor . . . was to summon

32. See also Clarence E. Carter, "Beginnings of British West Florida" in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, IV 314-341.

33. See C. N. Howard, "The Military Occupation of British West Florida," in *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XVII 181-199; and by the same author "The Interval of Military Government in West Florida," in *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XXII 18-30.

34. *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XXI 181-199.

35. Public Record Office, Colonial Office, 5 :201. Transcripts of these as well as most of the documents in those archives relating to the Floridas, are in the Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.

36. This proclamation (all that relates to the Floridas) is printed in *Florida Historical Quarterly* III no. 4, 36-42.

37. See C. E. Carter, "Some Aspects of British Administration in West Florida" in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* I.364-375.

38. Johnson p. 15

an assembly . . . and determine districts and apportion representatives . . . forming a legislature whose acts . . . should become laws when approved by the governor.

"The Spaniards had departed almost to a man, and now the military composed the largest single element in the population. . . . There were a few merchants engaged in furnishing the troops with supplies' and interested in the possibilities of the Indian trade and commerce with Spanish ports in Mexico and Central America. . . . An occasional indentured servant, a rare slave, and a few wandering, Indians."³⁹

The British had found Pensacola a village of thatched huts and Colonel Prevost, in command of the first detachment to arrive, wrote: "The country from the insuperable laziness of the Spaniards remains still uncultivated . . . but years and a number of industrious settlers can only make a change."⁴⁰

Professor Johnson continues, "Notwithstanding the energy which Johnstone had exhibited in establishing the civil government, opening the province for settlement and encouraging immigration, treating with the Indians, and fostering the profitable Spanish trade, his administration was seriously marred by quarrels with . . . the military."⁴¹

Peter Chester assumed the governorship on his arrival at Pensacola in August 1770 and his administration lasted through the remainder of the

39. Johnson p. 25

40. Dunbar Rowland (ed.) *Mississippi Provincial Archives. English Dominion*, I. 136. This volume contains many important documents relating to British West Florida. Campbell's *Historical Sketches of Colonial Florida* (Cleveland, 1892) has much on British Pensacola that has been printed nowhere else.

41. For an account of this strife see Clinton N. Howard, "Governor Johnstone in West Florida" in *Florida Historical Quarterly* XVII 286-303.

British period.⁴² His activities can be followed in the Public Record Office documents. Principal of these was his relations with the Indians, which are recounted in the works of Shaw and Alden.⁴³ During this time the province was visited by the noted William Bartram, whose "Travels . . ." is as popular today as it was then.

Chester often clashed with the assembly. Johnson says he was highhanded in his relations with that body and that their disagreements were mostly over appropriations and privilege. Possibly for that reason among others no assembly was summoned between 1771 and 1778. At the latter session "the town of Pensacola was allotted four members, the district of Pensacola four, and the districts of Mobile, Manchac, and Natchez four each . . . apparently the town of Mobile was deprived of representation. . . . As a branch of the government the assembly did not play a very significant role in the history of the province. . . . The West Florida assembly, coming into existence as it did near the end of the colonial period, represented the summation of the colonial attitude toward legislative privilege which had developed during the previous century and a half."

Johnson continues, "Towns were laid out in four places in the province: Pensacola, Mobile, Campbell Town, and Manchac. At Campbell Town [near Pensacola] lands were granted to French Protestants who had come to introduce the production of

42. See Mrs. Dunbar Rowland, "Peter Chester," in *Publications of the Mississippi Historical Society, Centenary Series V*. For policy see Alvord, *The Mississippi Valley in British Politics* (2 vols. Cleveland, 1917).

43. Shaw, *British Administration of the Southern Indians, 1756-1783* (Lancaster, 1931) ; but more important is Alden, *John Stuart and the Southern Colonial Frontier* (Ann Arbor, 1944). This volume will be reviewed in the next issue of this *Quarterly*.

wine and silk. . . . The project was a failure and was soon abandoned. Manchac was regarded as a place of importance. Governor Chester, who wrote enthusiastically of the western part of the province, planned a town at Fort Bute and there was a good deal of talk of moving the capital of the province to this place, especially when it was seen that the Spanish trade, for which Pensacola was favorably placed, would not materialize. But the war with Spain prevented its development. . . .

“The movement of settlers from the colonial seaboard to the fertile lands of West Florida assumed substantial proportions. . . . One party of seventy-nine white people and eighteen negroes, mostly from Pennsylvania [came] to settle on the fruitful lands of the Mississippi. . . . A considerable number of families came from the older colonies by means of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers”. . . . A map of the Mississippi from Manchac to the Yazoo “apparently made about 1774, shows more than two hundred claims . . . [with] more than two hundred along the Iberville, Amite, and Comite rivers.”

As an example of the prodigal granting of land Johnson recounts that in 1773 an interesting group composed of Col. Israel Putnam, later to become famous in the Revolution and, largely, other officers of the late war, applied for grants, and nineteen townships of about twenty-three thousand acres each were reserved for them, half to be granted on family, rights and half on purchase.⁴⁴ “Thomas

44. This and a large part of similar data are from Minutes of the Council.

Hutchins⁴⁵ and associates petitioned for the reservation of a tract of twenty-five thousand acres near Natchez on the ground that they intended to bring in a number of families from Pennsylvania and New Jersey." Another grant of the same size was reserved for prospective settlers from New York, and "there were numerous other instances of large tracts reserved during this period."

"The Revolution stirred Governor Chester who . . . issued a proclamation setting forth the availability of West Florida as a place of refuge, and made plans to have copies distributed throughout the disaffected colonies. The granting of land was resumed on a larger and more reckless scale than before, and immigrants flowed into the province as a result of the disorders in the older colonies. . . . All came pledging allegiance to the crown; some had numerous slaves, white servants, and cattle; others were without property, a condition which they usually asserted had been brought on by their loyalty to England. Though most of the colonies were represented, the majority of the refugees were from Georgia, South Carolina, and Virginia, and practically all requested land in the western part of the province. . . . The granting of land along the Mississippi continued until the fall of this part of the province to Spain in the latter part of 1779. . . . It is difficult to determine accurately the population

45. We are indebted to Hutchins for one of the few descriptions in print of British West Florida: *An Historical Narrative and Topographical Description of Louisiana and West Florida* (Philadelphia, 1784). A better-known volume is Bernard Romans, *A Concise Natural History of East and West Florida*, (New York, 1776, 2nd ed.) Copies of Hutchins and Romans are available in the P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida. See also, Pittman, *The Present State of the European Settlements on the Mississippi*, (London, 1770). This is equally rare, but it has been reprinted (Cleveland, 1906). It unexpectedly contains a description of Pensacola.

of the western part of the province. In 1771 Durnford said there were few settlements on the Mississippi, but in 1774 he estimated the population of the region at 2,500 with 600 slaves . . . it is not improbable that the population doubled in the succeeding five years." ⁴⁶

For a description of agriculture in the region the diary of William Dunbar "is a mine of information in regard to agriculture, slavery, and plantation life." ⁴⁷

High expectations were held in the beginning for trade out of Pensacola with the Spanish colonies to the south. Says Johnson, "Several Spanish ships visited Pensacola in the period before 1770, and for a short time the trade flourished. ⁴⁸ Then, for reasons that are not quite clear, it was interrupted, and apparently was never resumed in appreciable proportions . . . [though] the hopes of the Spanish trade induced many people to settle in Pensacola at great expense." Romans blames "the perfidy of the Spanish, the decline in prices, underselling by the Dutch and French, and overstocking by the English merchants."

The Willing raid down the Mississippi and the conquest of West Florida by the surprisingly able young Galvez are recounted in full in Johnson's volume and a list of sources given includes several in the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*: James, "Spanish Influence in the West During the American Revolution," IV, 193-208; Siebert, "The Loyalists in West Florida and the Natchez District," II, 465-483; Kathryn T. Abbey, "Peter Chester's Defense of the Mississippi after the Willing Raid,"

46. Johnson, p. 149.

47. Johnson, p. 171. Mrs. Dunbar Rowland, *Life, Letters and Papers, of William Dunbar*, (Jackson, Mississippi, 1930).

48. Johnson p. 188. For this and more especially the military aspect of the period see also C. E. Carter, *The Correspondence of General Gage*. 2 vols. (New Haven, 1931).

XXII, 17-32; and her "Efforts of Spain to Maintain Sources of Information in the British Colonies Before 1779," XV, 56-68. For first-hand descriptions of the final act, the capture of Pensacola, there are three printed journals, that of Galvez himself, and Farmar's and Miranda's. For the whole episode there is Caughey's *Bernardo de Galvez* (Berkeley, 1934). For the entire British epoch Hamilton's *Colonial Mobile*, (New York, 1898 and 1910) should not be overlooked, as well as his "British West Florida" in *Publications* of the Mississippi Historical Society.

A series of three articles by Clinton N. Howard in the *Florida Historical Quarterly* (XIX, 109-127, 246-269, 368-398) "Colonial Pensacola : The British Period," as well as the two, also in this *Quarterly*, mentioned heretofore, and another, "Some Economic Aspects of British West Florida," in the *Journal of Southern History* add much of interest to the picture. Of them Johnson says, "Dr. Howard has published a series of articles relating to various aspects of the history of the colony . . . written with erudition and discernment."

Other printed, as well as a few manuscript, sources are to be found in Johnson's "Bibliographical Note" at the end of his volume. He includes also a map of British West Florida, drawn for the work by Lucia Porcher Johnson, showing the boundaries, the rivers, and the location of all the towns; and another, "West Florida as it related to other parts of the colonial world."

THE FLORIDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FLORIDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY HELD AT THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY.

IN ST. AUGUSTINE ON DECEMBER 7, 1945

President Bickel called the meeting to order at 10:20 p.m. following the Hotel Bennett banquet of the Florida Academy of Sciences and the Society.

Mr. Bickel read a letter from past president Philip S. May of Jacksonville, praising the work of Dr. Mark Boyd of Tallahassee as general chairman of the Centennial Committee.

Mr. Albert Manucy of St. Augustine submitted a bill covering certain expenses incurred in promoting and recording Centennial observances, and moved that said bill be approved and the treasurer authorized to pay it. Dr. Webster Merritt of Jacksonville seconded. The motion passed.

Mr. Bickel read a letter notifying the Society that U. S. Engineer Office files contain a copy of the 1818 "Memoir on East and West Florida", by Capt. Hugh Young. Dr. Boyd stated that the text of this memoir has already been printed in the *Quarterly*, and it was decided to recommend to the Engineer Office that the manuscript be sent to the National Archives for preservation without delay.

The President explained the need for action in securing a suitable home for the Society, pointing out the inadequacy of present quarters. He said that if the Society is to be revitalized and increase in membership, a dignified home and effective working quarters are essential.

Dr. John Davis said that a membership campaign might be regarded as preliminary to a campaign for securing building funds, and suggested several new classes of memberships that might increase Society revenue.

Mr. Lewis G. Scoggin of Tallahassee, director of the Florida Forest and Park Service, offered the Society a permanent home. at Fort Clinch State Park, Fernandina. He said further that he could promise one membership in each State park, and a working organization in each park to solicit new members.

Miss Emily L. Wilson of St. Augustine reviewed the advantages of the Llambias house in St. Augustine as potential Society quarters. This house has been offered to the Society virtually as a gift for a 10-year period or longer. Mr. X. L. Pellicer of St. Augustine explained the background of the offer of the Llambias house, and called for the report of the committee studying the matter of a permanent home.

Miss Dena Snodgrass of Jacksonville read "A Report of Three Members of the Consultation Committee", explaining that Mr. Gaines Wilson of Coconut Grove, chairman of the committee, had suggested that the Jacksonville members of the committee meet with the trustees of the Llambias house. The report submitted was a result of the latter meeting. Discussion of this report and other previously submitted reports followed.

Mr. Winder Surrency of Sarasota moved :

- 1) that the submitted reports be received for consideration and presented for action at the next annual meeting ;
- 2) that the President appoint seven members to study the matter of permanent quarters; and that this committee be instructed to take into account all offered locations and make a full report to the Society at the next annual meeting ;
- 3) that the past presidents be constituted a committee on membership; that this committee inaugurate a drive for membership ;

and that no limitations be set on the use of funds derived from new memberships.

Mr. Davis seconded.

As a preliminary to discussion of the motion, Dr. Boyd cited the need for appraisal of the Society's policy for future advancement. If the Society is to grow, said Dr. Boyd, tangible objectives need to be established :

1) Collection of historic objects; 2) study of the accumulated archives of the State; and 3) diffusion of historical knowledge.

Before attempting to raise money for the purpose of building a permanent home, continued Dr. Boyd, it would be wise to consider these fundamental objectives. What are the Society's needs, and what can be done to realize them with the slender resources at hand? In the matter of a location for the Society, Dr. Boyd urged that the committee consider the site best suited to service for the State.

As ways to achieve the objectives of the Society, Dr. Boyd mentioned the possibilities of investing Society funds and using income to provide fellowships; or grants enabling travel to other collections and the production of monographs on Florida history ; and the use of revenue from sustaining memberships for publication of monographs on a business-like, basis. He also suggested that the committee appraise the general historical situation in the State, and develop a correlated program with other similar organizations.

Mr. Surrency's motion was acted upon *ad seriatum*.

The first section of the motion was passed.

The second section of the motion was amended to read:

2) that the President appoint seven members to study the matter of permanent quarters;

and that this committee be instructed to take into account all offered locations ; and further this committee shall make recommendations for future objectives of the Society, with special regard to correlation of the needs of the State of Florida with the potential services which the Society can supply, and report to the Society at the next annual meeting. The amended motion was seconded and passed.

Section three of the motion was withdrawn.

Dr. Carita D. Corse of Jacksonville moved the appointment of a membership committee with special regard being given to appointing local historical society members on this committee. Miss Daisy Parker of Tallahassee seconded.

Dr. Boyd recommended that the committee should study the relationship of local societies to the Florida Historical Society, and suggested that local societies could become chapters of the State Society, perhaps with part of membership dues being remitted to local societies. Mr. Herbert Corse of Jacksonville called attention to a previous resolution introduced at the last annual meeting of the Society recommending that presidents of local historical societies be made honorary members of the board of directors of the Florida Historical Society.

The motion passed.

Miss Snodgrass asked that the June 9, 1945 resolution of the State Library Board; offering its facilities and assistance for housing the Society's library under the auspices of the State Library of Florida, be read as a matter of record and brought to the attention of the housing committee. The secretary read the resolution.

Dr. Boyd moved that the former Permanent

Home Committee be thanked for its activity and discharged. It was seconded and passed.

Mr. Bickel suggested that the Society request the Governor to recommend to the legislature the establishment of a historic sites commission to have the function of marking and protecting historic and archeologic sites.

Dr. Davis moved that the President, the Director of the Florida Forest and Park Service, and one other member of the Society, confer with the Governor on the matter of protecting and marking historic sites in the State of Florida. Dr. Merritt seconded.

Mr. Scoggin stated that basic laws had already been passed authorizing such protection, marking, and interpretation; and the position of state archeologist is also provided. The archeologist could work in the Florida Park Service, which is empowered to administer historic sites. The Service could mark and maintain sites if the State furnished operating monies.

The motion passed.

In bringing the meeting to a close, President Bickel said that he recognized the differences of opinion on the question of a permanent home for the Society, and expressed his opinion that the Society could live and function where it could be most effective in carrying out the fundamental ideals of the Society.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ALBERT C. MANUCY
Recording Secretary

Approved :

KARL BICKEL
President

President Bickel has appointed David E. Smiley of Tampa as a director of the Society to serve the

remainder of the term of Kenneth I. McKay. Mr. Smiley has been a newspaper man throughout his life, having been editor-in-chief of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger* and the New York *Evening Post*. He came to Florida in 1933 and has been president and editor of the Tampa *Daily Times* since then. He is a trustee of the University of Tampa, and a leader in numerous Tampa civic activities.

GIFTS TO THE LIBRARY

- Grape shot, dug up near Ft. George, Pensacola. Donated by John Hobart Cross, Pensacola.
- Governor's message. Robert Raymond Reid, January 11, 1841. Inscribed: "With the Gov's Respects." Donated by the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pennsylvania.
- Spanish-American War scrap-book. Newspaper clippings, pictures, etc. Donated by Miss Abbie K. B. Avery, Jacksonville, through former president Herbert Lamson.
- Antiques*, issue of October 1945. Containing St. Augustine Antiques by Carita Doggett Corse, and Prince Murat House by Kenneth Dow.
- "The Landing of Ponce de Leon in Florida, 1513," by George A. Zabriskie, president, New York Historical Society. Donated by the author.
- A large collection of views and other pictures of Florida has been donated by Miss Nettie Caldwell of Waynesboro, Virginia. There are sixty-eight photographs taken about 1886: scenery, floral, phosphate works at Bone Valley and Dunnellon, St. Cloud cane fields, orange groves after the freeze, pine apple fields, a 4th of July celebration of 1887 at Ocala, etc. etc.
- Florida Highways*, Centennial number. Donated by Capt. E. E. Damkehrler, Fort Myers.

NEW MEMBERS

- Mrs. John Steele Porter, Jacksonville.
Walter S. Hardin, Bradenton.
Mrs. John A. Beals, Jacksonville.
Robert Angas, Jacksonville.
Lt. Com. Wm. Frank Evans, Sarasota.
Justin P. Havee, Miami.
Edward C. Williamson, Gainesville.
W. J. Winter, St. Augustine, (renewal).
Lucille A. Johnson, St. Augustine.
Dr. Annie Popper, Florida State College for Women,
Tallahassee.
- Lewis G. Scoggin, Tallahassee.
George W. McRory, Marianna.

Mrs. Wilbur Smith, Palm Beach.
J. William Decker, Fernandina.

Subscribers to the Quarterly
Jacksonville Junior College Library, Jacksonville.
Louisiana State University Library, Baton Rouge, La.

Contributors to this number

Stanley Faye attended the University of Chicago and the Faculte des Lettres de l'Universite de Toulouse. He is a corresponding member of the Academia Nacional de la Historia of Venezuela. He has contributed several articles to this *Quarterly* and to a number of other historical publications.

Mrs. Katherine E. Lawson is well known to all the history minded in Florida as librarian of the St. Augustine Historical Society. She has contributed several articles to this *Quarterly*.

Lillie B. McDuffee of Manatee, a former director of the Florida Historical Society, has written *Lures of Manatee*, a history of the Manatee region.

T. Frederick Davis, historian of Jacksonville, has contributed numerous articles to this *Quarterly* including our Ponce de Leon number which has long since been exhausted.

John M. Goggin, a Miamian, is Assistant in Research, Department of Anthropology, Peabody Museum, Yale University. He is engaged in archeological investigations in Florida, the results of which are now being prepared for the press.

Kenneth W. Porter is a member of the history department of Vassar College. He has contributed several articles to this *Quarterly* and numerous other historical publications.

To the reader:

If you are not a member of the Florida Historical Society you are cordially invited to come with us. There are no obligations except the annual dues of two dollars, and this includes the *Quarterly* which is sent to all members. Our headquarters and library are in St. Augustine, and our secretary and librarian is Mrs. Alberta Johnson.