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EVENTS AT PROSPECT BLUFF ON THE
APALACHICOLA RIVER, 1808-1818

An Introduction to Twelve Letters of Edmund
Doyle, Trader

By MARK F. BOYD

One of the most important branches of commerce during the American colonial period was the Indian trade. Search of opportunities for barter was a powerful motive in French and British exploration, and the trader was the principal Caucasian emissary with whom the primitive Indian came in contact. After the settlement of South Carolina, Charleston became an important center of the southern trade, a position later shared with Savannah. From these points English traders penetrated to the country of the Cherokees and Creeks and later to that of the Choctaws and Chickasaws, where they successfully competed with the French and Spanish. After the treaty of Paris in 1763 eliminated the latter competition, the English so skillfully cultivated the friendship of the Indian tribes through their trading operations that practically all of these became British partisans in the later revolutionary struggle. The bitter animosity which this stand of the Indians aroused among the Americans greatly contributed to the final downfall of the tribes after the winning of American independence.

*This paper was read in part before the Tallahassee Historical Society on April 15 last.

**The frontspiece map is reproduced from a copy in the archives of the Quartermaster General, U. S. Army, at Fort Myers, Va. It was submitted to headquarters by Capt. Burch to show the general route of his road through this region. (See, *The First American Road in Florida*, *Quarterly* XIV, 73, 139) and also the route of General Jackson. The writing is Burch's. The map is undated, but it was probably drawn about the time of the cession of Florida to the United States. It is of unusual value because of the sites located, as well as the Indian trails and the boundary of the Forbes Purchase, and especially for Burch's addition of Jackson's route.

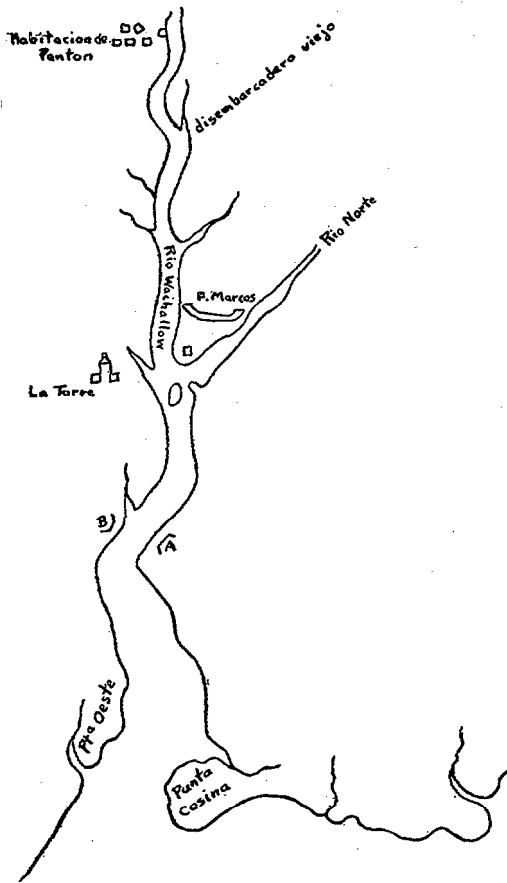
Indian traders in the south endeavored to carry on their operations during the Revolutionary War although under great handicaps. Military operations obstructed the flow of goods through Charleston and Savannah, and many traders, remaining loyal, were obliged to flee. Trading opportunities were still further restricted when Pensacola was captured by the Spaniards in 1781. Before the close of the war the British Indian trade was limited to that carried on through East Florida.

Among the loyal traders who transferred their headquarters to St. Augustine, was the firm of Panton, Leslie and Company, the principal partners in which were William Panton, John Leslie and Thomas Forbes, all related by ties of blood and business. Panton had already, or soon after, secured the close friendship of a rising young half-breed chieftain of the Upper Creeks, named Alexander McGillivray, through whom the influence and opportunities of the firm were later greatly extended ⁵².

The Creek Indians lived in central west Georgia and central Alabama and geographically formed two groups known as the upper and lower. The former lived on or adjacent to the Alabama river and its tributaries, the Coosa and the Tallapoosa. The latter lived eastward, on the banks of the Chattahoochie or in the interior of Georgia. In addition there was a third ill-defined group known as the Seminoles, who lived in the west part of East Florida. It is likely that to all groups the interruption of their trade was annoying, and that the first two groups found the long journey to St. Augustine fatiguing. These circumstances probably prompted the appearance before the British authorities at St. Augustine, of an Indian delegation who petitioned that Panton, Leslie and Com-

pany might be licensed to establish a trading post on the Apalachicola river, a situation readily accessible from the lower Creek towns. At this meeting William Panton agreed, if licensed, to settle a store on this river between the fork of the Flint and its mouth. The petition was granted, and the license issued on Jan. 15, 1783¹. By the time the province was delivered to the Spanish authorities in 1784, the new post was in operation, but for reasons now unknown the Apalachicola river site was abandoned for one on the west side of the Wakulla river, about four miles above its confluence with the St. Marks, which was placed in charge of Charles McLatchey, a partner of the firm. (see map on next page)

The Spanish authorities early recognized the threat the young United States offered to their continued possession of Florida and appreciated the inadequacy of their own resources to defend it. Under these circumstances, it appeared that the cultivation of the friendship of the Creek Indians, even though located in American territory, would afford an effective check to American expansion along the disputed southern frontier. From long experience they fully appreciated that Indian good-will required an abundant supply of goods for trade and presents. The Creeks from sympathy and choice preferred British goods, while supplies of equal quality could not be cheaply supplied through Spanish sources. Thus, first as an expediency and later as a policy, the Spanish government allowed Panton, Leslie and Company, a British firm, to continue operations, and finally through connivance of local officials permitted them to have a virtual monopoly of the Indian trade in East and West Florida, a remarkable departure from the conventional Spanish policy⁵⁹.



Showing the location of the trading house on the Wakulla river. The sharp bend of the river to the west marks the crossing of the lower bridge. The trading house site is about one-half mile above, where high ground comes down to the river margin.

Rio de San Marcos de Apalache formado de los Wachallow y Norte. A: Trincheras que formio el enemigo despues del 19 de Abril de 1800. B: Otra id. que se formio antes del 6 de Maio del dicho An. Arch. Nac. de Cuba. Autos Contra Guillermo A. Bowles, 1800. 5 pieza, Leg. 5, Sig. 1.

At its most flourishing period in the last decade of the 18th century, numerous posts were maintained on the North American mainland with virtual headquarters at Nassau on New Providence in the Bahamas.

At the first conference the newly arrived Spanish officials held with the Indians at Pensacola in 1784, the Greek chief, McGillivray² did not succeed in securing permission for Panton to open a new store in Pensacola, but the continuance of the old post in Apalachee was permitted⁵⁹. Later, as the result of negotiation, the Indians granted to the Spaniards permission to reoccupy the old fort at St. Marks, a license that was not exercised until 1787. The reoccupation of this military post appears to have been prompted by a desire to protect the adjacent trading house and to prevent illicit trade.

Panton's severe losses as a loyalist during the Revolution made him bitter to the United States, and he was probably keenly alive to the opportunities afforded by the political situation. In 1785 the firm opened a store at Pensacola for the upper Creeks and in the subsequent decade rapidly expanded their operations to include the Choctaws and Chickasaws, both living in territory claimed by Spain. The large profits then enjoyed by the firm through their practical monopoly soon became apparent to other British merchants.

A group of these located on New Providence island in the Bahamas, selected William Augustus Bowles³ as their agent to engage in this trade. Bowles had some pretensions to authority among the Creeks, and was openly hostile to McGillivray. He resolved to flaunt the feeble Spanish authority by engaging in contraband trade, and embarked on a policy of ruthless hostility to Panton, Leslie

and Company. In 1788, after an unsuccessful attempt at an armed capture of the firm's store on the St. Johns river, Bowles lead a party across the peninsula to attack the store at St. Marks, but found the fort and store too strong. Continuing to follow the same policy of aggressively hostile competition, Bowles made another attack on the St. Marks store in 1792, and succeeded in capturing and robbing it. Later, falling into the hands of the Spaniards, Bowles experienced a prolonged foreign captivity, from which he finally escaped and made his way back to his Indian allies in Apalachee. Here in 1800 he succeeded in assembling a large force of Indians, descended on St. Marks, again seized and plundered the store and further, probably to his own surprise, captured the fort as well. In a few weeks, however, his force was dislodged by a Spanish expedition. He continued active among the Creeks until 1803 when he was kidnapped in the Creek nation, delivered to the Spaniards and died a prisoner. After this last disaster to the store at St. Marks, Panton, Leslie and Co., abandoned this post and withdrew from Apalachee.

William Panton appears to have been the last survivor of the original members of the firm of Panton, Leslie and Company. Sometime after his death in 1801 the co-partnership was reorganized (about 1805) under the name of John Forbes and Company and continued the operations of the former firm. The original partnership, probably as a result of the previous experience of its principal members, had not been friendly to the United States. After the reorganization there is ample indication that the guiding partners appreciated the trend of events and adopted a more conciliatory attitude. John and James Innerarity, fre-

quently mentioned later in these pages, were relatives of Panton, and junior partners in the Forbes enterprise ⁵².

Meanwhile the treaty of 1795 between the United States and Spain settled on the 31st parallel as the southern boundary between the former and West Florida, which placed the source of nearly all the rich trade outside of the company's bases, and further recognized that each country had the right to regulate the Indian trade within its own territory. When the United States later established trading posts of its own in the Creek country, at which goods were sold at cost, the situation of the company became precarious.

Even before the second raid of Bowles, the company had been seeking indemnification of the losses incurred in the first, which were estimated at nearly \$12,000.00. Governor Gayoso de Lemos ⁴ expressed the opinion that the most likely solution would be the purchase of certain lands from the Indians within the territorial limits of the United States for resale, to which the Spanish authorities, would offer no objection. Negotiations were opened with the Indians, who were favorably inclined, but the lands then offered were not considered suitable. Meanwhile the second raid, with estimated losses of \$16,000.00 had occurred. The total claims of the company, including bad debts and interest on the thefts, amounted by this time to over \$60,000.00.

Further discussions of the matter soon brought a proposal to cede lands upon the Apalachicola within the Spanish limits ¹⁰. Here the matter dragged along for several years, as certain Indian elements were definitely hostile to the idea, and agreement could not be reached as to the size of the cession. The preliminary discussions finally

reached such a stage that Governor Folch authorized James Innerarity early in 1804 to negotiate a cession within Spanish territory.

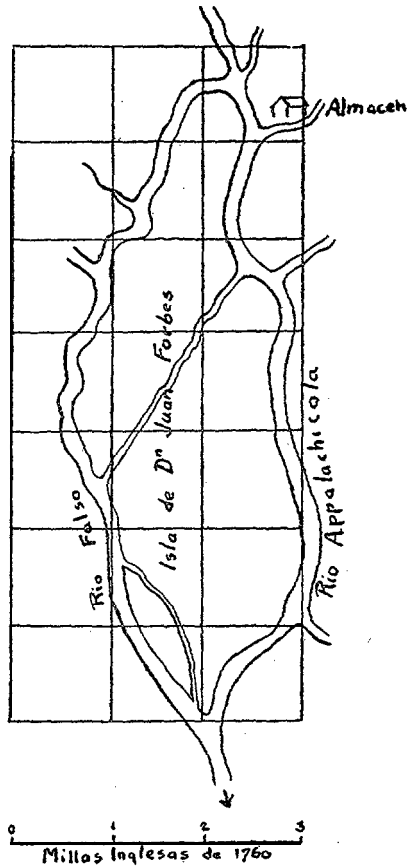
With the support of the Indian known as Tom Perryman, a conference was held at Cheeskatalofa (in Henry Co., Ala., on the west side of the Chattahoochee river) on May 25, 1804 at which twenty-two chiefs agreed to the cession and described the bounds, which act was confirmed on June 20 by the testimony of their representatives before Gov. Folch in Pensacola. Some Indians, headed by Semathly of the Mickosuckees and John Kennaird, a half breed living on the Wakulla river who had been trading at that place since the withdrawal of Panton, Leslie and Company, objected to the bounds, which they argued were excessively generous. Furthermore many Indians were disturbed by the opinion of Benjamin Hawkins, the American agent to the Creeks, that the company intended to settle the lands with low-class Americans⁵. So much dissatisfaction existed that James Innerarity returned to Apalachee where at Achackweithle (Prospect Bluff) on the Apalachicola river, the matter was reopened and he negotiated another cession in the same locality which was signed by thirty-three chiefs on August 22, 1804. Innerarity was forced to agree to a grant with reduced limits⁵. In ceding the land the Indians insisted it was conditioned on the establishment of a store on the Apalachicola river, and on an agreement or tariff on prices in trade⁶. Seeing that no progress could be made without acquiescence, Innerarity agreed to these conditions, with a tariff that provided against further losses. Immediately at the close of the conference, he set out in the company of some Indians to mark the bounds. The Indians furnished confirmation of their act to Governor Folch in Pen-

sacola on Dec. 3, 1804, but the decree placing the company in formal possession was not issued until 1806.

This area, the first Indian grant to the company, was a principality in size. It extended over a vast stretch of country comprising all of the present counties of Franklin and Liberty, as well as a large part of Gadsden, Leon and Wakulla. It did not contain any fixed settlement of consequence in 1804 but was used as a winter hunting and fishing ground⁷. At the time of the cession the only occupied sites were the dwellings of Hannahchela on Little river and of John and William Kennaird on Wakulla river⁸. (see frontspiece map)

The company took immediate steps to comply with the conditions relating to trade, as Peter Alba, a former clerk of the company, says⁹ that in 1804. James Innerarity, with a passport from Governor Folch, arrived at Prospect Bluff with a clerk and five negroes and established a store. Edmund Doyle states⁸ that when he arrived at Prospect Bluff in 1808 (sic) the company had a storehouse, dwelling, skin house, negro houses, granary and other necessary buildings. There were then 30 acres of cleared land at the post and at another place the company had a cowpen and 1200 head of cattle. Land was under cultivation at both places. (see map on next page)

We thus have our first introduction to Edmund Doyle, who figures largely in the events which occurred at Prospect Bluff during the next decade. He is accompanied through these years by a lesser figure, William Hambly. Doyle from his letters would appear to have first come to the post on a temporary assignment as auditor, but remained as bookkeeper and became trader. Hambly was already attached to the post on the arrival of Doyle



Plat accompanying patent for Forbes Island, showing the location of the trading house.

From "Expediente Seguido por Juan Innerarity", etc. 1811. Arch. Nac. de Cuba, Leg. 11, Sig. 6.

in the capacity of interpreter, a circumstance suggesting that he may have been a half breed, and later became an independent trader.

In the immediate years that follow Doyle appears to have lead a lonely life, trading with the Indians that appeared, sending cattle to Pensacola either for the company or on his own speculation, and endeavoring to keep above the devious currents of Indian intrigue and uphold the prestige of the house among its fickle patrons. The post soon became a losing venture ⁶ and it is likely that had it not been for the stipulations of the cession and the interest the firm members and the heirs of former partners possessed in the tract as a land speculation ²⁴, the company would have withdrawn from the river. Doyle's complaints indicate the stocks of trade goods were allowed to decline and were never adequately replenished. The intrigue soon became thicker, the local Indians were openly hostile, and Prospect Bluff felt the reverberations of thunder over distant fields. Despite these circumstances, an additional cession, largely adjoining the old grant on the north, was negotiated in 1811, to pay for bad debts of the Lower Creeks and Seminoles.

For many years after the close of the Revolutionary War, the British government did not view the results of that struggle as decisive. Space does not permit a discussion of this subject, but it does appear that British agents either openly or covertly did much to promote unrest and hostility among the Indians on the American frontiers. Outside of this sphere the drastic measures taken by those governments opposing the ambitions of Napoleon, of which the British was the chief, caused grave damage to American foreign commerce which resulted in much internal repercussion in the

United States. These and other grievances resulted in an ill-advised declaration of war in 1812. Although Spain was nominally neutral in the conflict she actually was a passive ally of Great Britain. At this time Spain was the theater of the Peninsular War and British troops were the support of the legitimate Spanish monarchy whose feeble civil authority was scarcely felt in the New World. Under these circumstances the subsequent British operations in Florida were not surprising.

The earliest outside interference with the southeastern (the old southwest) Indians can probably be attributed to Bowles. Although a private adventurer, he endeavored to secure the intervention of the British government in Creek affairs when he escorted a party of these Indians to London in 1790. Although his efforts to secure official support were unsuccessful, the Indians were much impressed by the attention they received and the presents bestowed on them. Elsewhere, the unrest of the northwestern Indians was intensified by encouragement received from British sources in Canada. Its most important expression was the attempt of Tecumseh, a Shawnee, to unite all of the western Indians in a common front against the American advance. In the interest of this movement, Tecumseh visited the southeastern tribes in 1811. He found the Choctaws unresponsive, but a certain element among the upper Creeks, alarmed by the American encroachment in Georgia, accepted his ideas. These converts, known as Red Sticks, began an intratribal war against those who would not support the movement, and on the outbreak of the War of 1812 became increasingly hostile to the Americans. In the summer of 1813 a large party of these visited Pensacola and secured a considerable quantity of ammunition from the authorities

there and openly declared their intention to make war on the Americans. According to Hambly⁴⁰ these Indians visited Pensacola in compliance with an invitation sent to Thomas Perryman and other chiefs from the Governor. On the return trip they were attacked while in camp by a small force of Mississippi militia under Col. Collier at Burnt Corn creek on July 27. Although the Creeks were at first routed, they rallied while the militia were plundering the camp, and finally disgracefully drove them off. Encouraged by this success, the insurgent Indians resolved to attack the American settlers on the lower Alabama river. A party of nearly 500 alarmed settlers had gathered for protection at a private blockhouse known as Fort Mims, which was surprised and captured by a large party of Indians on August 30th. Most of the occupants were slaughtered without putting up a resistance worthy of the name. The Creek War was now fairly begun, to culminate in the battle of the Horse Shoe Bend on the Tallapoosa river on March 27, 1814, where the hostile Creeks were decisively defeated by United States troops under General Andrew Jackson and forced to sue for peace, as a crushing condition of which they ceded large areas in central Alabama and southern Georgia. Many of the prominent Red Stick leaders escaped and fled to Florida. Among these were the Prophet Frances or Hillis Hadjo and Peter McQueen¹¹.

Up to this time it does not appear that the Indians caused Doyle any unusual amount of annoyance at Prospect Bluff. However in 1812-13, the general unrest began to affect his neighbors, who became troublesome through killing the company's cattle. In an endeavor to prevent these losses, Doyle was obliged to employ rangers to patrol the cession⁸.

So far land operations of the War of 1812 had been carried on in a desultory fashion in the north. But the Peninsular War was now at an end, large bodies of troops were released and the British resolved on a decisive campaign in America. Rumors of the expected arrival of British troops in Florida were communicated to the Secretary of War by Benjamin Hawkins as early as the fall of 1812¹⁴. However, anticipating the likelihood of British aggression in the southwest, President Madison, with congressional authorization, ordered the seizure of the western portion of West Florida. In compliance with these instructions, General Wilkinson occupied Mobile on April 15, 1813, and erected Fort Bowyer at Mobile Point¹².

The first actual British move in the southern campaign occurred in the summer of 1814. On June 17th an American who had left Pensacola on June 8th informed Brig. Gen. Thos. Flounoy from Bay St. Louis that, just before his departure, an unnamed schooner, tender to the British frigate Orpheus, Capt. Pigot, arrived in Pensacola and reported that they had recently touched at Apalachicola and had landed 5000 stand of arms and ammunition in proportion. On departure of the schooner the Orpheus was still at that place, and was landing 300 odd troops on St. Georges island, together with a colonel and nine commissioned officers, and that they further intended to erect a fortification which they had already commenced. He further said that Mr. Innerarity of the house of John Forbes and Co., had been advised by their agent at that place (Doyle) that a store was being erected within about a mile of his factory for the reception of said arms and ammunition¹⁵. These troops likely included detachments from the Royal Marines and from one of the West India regiments.

About the same time Benjamin Hawkins was advising the Secretary of War of these same activities. He was informed by several Indians who were present that the Orpheus frigate and a sloop of war disembarked fifty men on an island at the mouth of the Apalachicola river and left saying they would return in twenty-five days. Four 100 pound kegs of cartridges as well as arms were reported as distributed to several Indians ¹⁶. In a later communication on the 3rd of July Hawkins relates that recent information would indicate that the supplies landed were very limited and probably only what the vessels could spare from their own equipment, which would appear misleading in the light of the other reports ¹⁷. Hawkins was not obliged to depend altogether on chance Indian gossip for news of this development, but actually apprehended a British emissary. He reported ¹⁸ to the Secretary of War on July 13th that he had examined an intelligent runner from the store of John Forbes and Co., east of the Apalachicola, who stated that three British officers had sent him to Coweta and Cussetah to invite the chiefs down to receive arms and ammunition, ostensibly to kill game, and various individual Indians were reported to have already received supplies. He further mentioned that a chief had been sent to invite the surviving hostile Indians from Konocau (Conecuh) to Apalache and had reported they were coming, but so exhausted by famine that many must perish on the way ¹⁸. In a further report dated Aug. 16, Hawkins says that while the British have undoubtedly furnished a considerable supply of ammunition for war, they have deceived the Indians by landing and reembarking men from their armed vessels. They are training the Indians and some negroes for purposes hostile to us. According to

him the Indian training was to fire a swivel, sound the war whoop, fire three or four rounds of small arms, sound (carry) the war whoop to every village who repeated it and are ready to march on the shortest notice. He also reported that some Indians had recently done mischief along the Georgia frontiers ¹⁹.

The British plans for the campaign now swiftly developed. In August there arrived in Pensacola two British war vessels, the *Hermes*, Capt. Percy, and the *Caron*, Capt. Spencer, with troops on board under the command of Col. Edward Nicholls of the Artillery. The expedition sailed from Bermuda and en route stopped at Havana where the Captain General denied the permission sought to land at Pensacola. They nevertheless sailed for this destination and on arrival disembarked the troops without opposition from the Spanish Governor, who on the contrary accorded the fullest co-operation. Refugee Creek Indians soon flocked to Pensacola, who were organized into companies and drilled in military maneuvers by Captain George Woodbine. Space does not permit a sketch of even the main features of this campaign which culminated in an overwhelming American victory at New Orleans, although paradoxically the main actions were fought after the treaty of peace was signed. Mention must be made of the participation of Nicholls, Woodbine and the Indians in the unsuccessful joint land and naval attack on Fort Bowyer on Sept. 15th, and of Jackson's swift descent on Pensacola, his seizure of that place and its fortifications on Nov. 7th and 8th and the precipitate exodus of Nicholls, Woodbine and their men who withdrew to the Apalachicola ²¹, taking with them a large number of negroes belonging to Spanish citizens whom they had seduced from their

owners in Pensacola and East Florida. The main English forces, which had been encamped on Dauphine island and Mobile point since their defeat, left the coast toward the end of March. It may also be mentioned that Bolecks, or Bowlegs, later chief of the town on the Suwannee river, is reported to have been, with several of his warriors, with the British at New Orleans⁴².

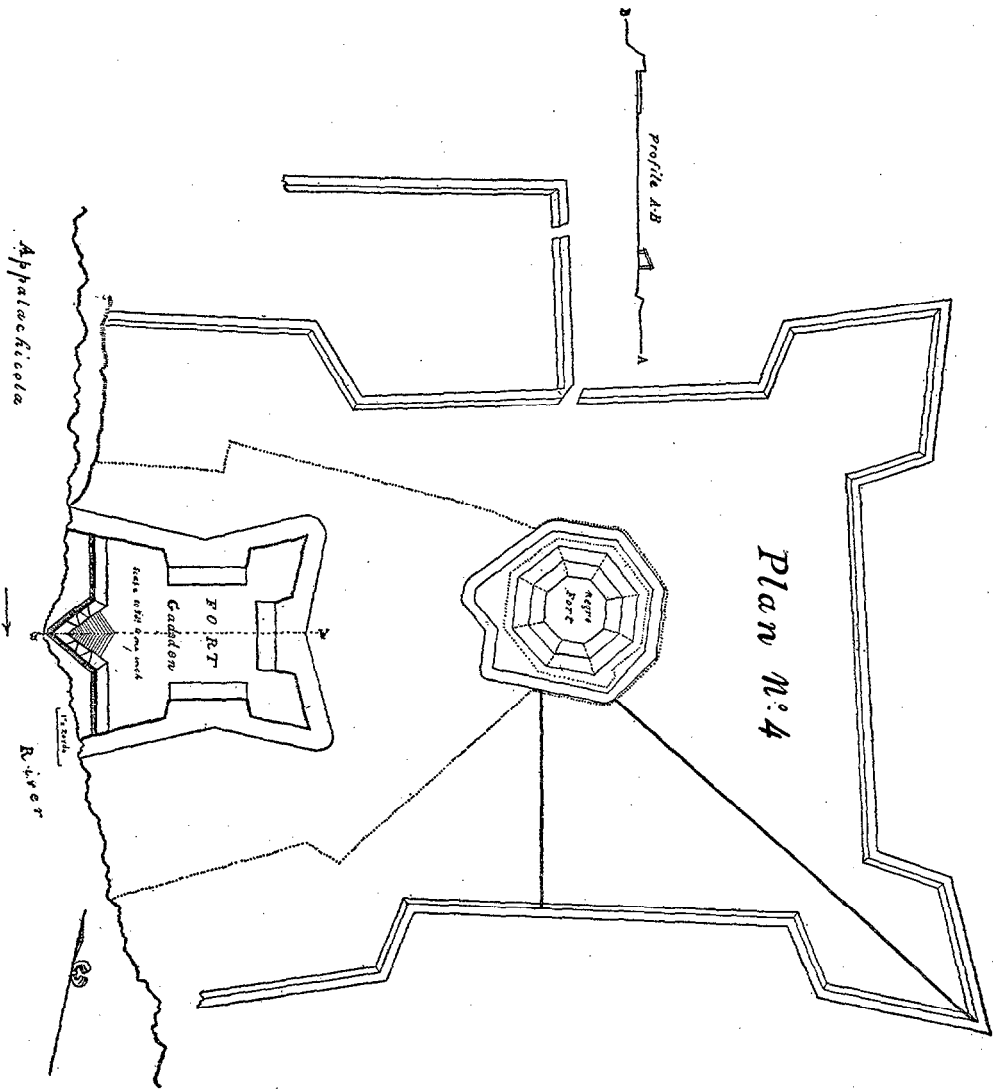
It is likely that the "store" to which Doyle is previously said¹⁵ to have referred, was actually the fortification we shall now notice. This was, according to Governor Mauricio de Zuniga²² to be found on the eastern bank of the Apalachicola river, at about fifteen miles from the sea, and was built by the orders of Col. Nicholls, who by arrangement with Vice Admiral Malcolm, proceeded to furnish it with artillery and munitions. More precisely, it stood on the east bank of the Apalachicola river, north of where the mouth of Fort Gadsden creek discharges into the river, in the east half of the southwest quarter of section 23, T. 6 S., R. 8 W., nearly on the south line of the section. This structure was supplemented by an outwork near the junction of the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers, at about the site of the present village of Chattahoochie. According to Williams⁴⁵ this was about two miles below the fork, and one mile south of the site of the old Spanish fort. According to Zuniga, this outwork appeared to exist no longer at the time of his letter to Jackson in 1816. The former is briefly described and delineated by Capt. Gadsden who visited the place in 1818 and laid out the work on the same site which was later known as Fort Gadsden. It was situated on the lowest bluff to which a land communication can be obtained. Apparently it consisted of an octagonal central earth work located about five hun-

dred feet from the river bank, evidently the principal magazine; and was surrounded by an extensive rectangular enclosure covering about seven acres with bastions on the eastern corners having parapets fifteen feet high and eighteen feet thick ¹³.

Hawkins transmitted to Nicholls at this place on March 19th, orders from Admirals Cochrane and Cockburn to leave the Floridas with the British troops under his command ²⁵. Just when the troops left we do not know, but Nicholls remained behind, despatching saucy letters to Hawkins as late as May 19th, in which the Indians are referred to as in alliance with them, and protesting against alleged American encroachments ²⁶. Nicholls interpreted, and so instructed the Indians, that the ninth article of the treaty of Ghent, which stipulated a return to the status of 1811, nullified the land cession of the treaty negotiated by General Jackson. When he finally left, early in the summer of 1815, he took with him to London the prophet Francis and several other Indians ³¹.

A great protest was raised by Pensacola slave owners (including the partners in Forbes and Company) against the action of Nicholls and Woodbine in enticing their negroes to accompany them to Apalachicola. Among these were said to be many negroes from the United States (Louisiana, Mobile, Creek Nation) and the total was estimated as high as 300. Admiral Cochrane disapproved of this action, and sent Capt. Spencer to Pensacola and Apalache for the purpose of securing their return. He made the trip in the company of Capt. Pintado, Spanish commissioner. These gentlemen were not cordially received by the British officers at Apalachicola, and their attempts to persuade the negroes to return voluntarily were met by threats on their lives. Many were later removed in dif-

PLAN OF FORT GADSDEN, 1818.



Drawing by Captain J. Gadsden accompanying his report to General Jackson on the defenses of the Floridas (see *Quarterly* XV. p. 242) from files of Intelligence Division, Engineer's Corps, War Department, Washington. Shows plan of the fort on the site of the so-called Negro Fort destroyed in 1816, as well as outline of a larger entrenchment. The Negro Fort and the entrenchments were constructed by Colonel Nichols of the British Army in 1814.

ferent British vessels and taken to Nova Scotia, Bermuda and Trinidad²⁷. Although Spencer's mission was unsuccessful in securing the return of the negroes, it probably did deter Nicholls and Woodbine from removing the remainder from Prospect Bluff²⁴.

Meanwhile reports were coming to the Americans that the British, on evacuation of the fort, delivered munitions to the Indians and negroes. A sergeant of marines, who deserted from the British forces at Apalachicola, was apprehended at Mobile in May. He stated that after the news of peace, Nicholls distributed large supplies of arms and ammunition, including artillery, to the Indians and negroes, for the purpose of enabling the Indians to make war on the United States and secure the retrocession of their lands²⁸. An anonymous informant²⁷ at Bermuda confirmed this statement with the further news that the fort would not be destroyed. He suggested the adoption of energetic measures for its destruction, as the Spanish authorities were not in a position to do so.

With the advent of the British, Doyle's troubles intensified. Hambly continued to exercise his profession of interpreter and accepted a commission as first lieutenant in the marines. Doyle was persuaded by Woodbine to relinquish charge of the Forbes store in order to become storekeeper at the fort⁶⁰. Although Forbes and Company's interests suffered from this apparent desertion, as they could not send out a successor, it is altogether likely that Doyle had very little latitude in making this decision. He was solicited to supply beef to the Indians on promises of payment of which he was skeptical¹⁹. Disregarding Doyle's reluctance, the Indians nevertheless rushed in and killed off the greater part of the cattle⁸. Despite Doyle's ad-

herence to Woodbine, he seems to have incurred the enmity of both English and Indians, who charged him with being an American spy. He finally became thoroughly disgusted with Woodbine, and was convinced that he intended to utilize the tricked negroes for personal ends.

These events were a severe blow to the trading post. Innerarity reports²⁴ that the store was broken up with considerable loss over and above the cattle eaten by the plunderers and the negroes stolen from them. He deplors the loss of the company's influence over the Indians, and stated that Prospect Bluff and the lands are in possession of the negroes. Furthermore the negroes were in possession of several small well-armed vessels and were credited with acts of piracy.

Not the least of the damage was done to the prestige of the company through malicious rumors circulated by Woodbine, the most infamous of which was a tale that British presents to the Indians transmitted through the house had been diverted and withheld from the intended recipients.

It would appear that a small Indian force was early despatched by Hawkins to capture the stores and negroes. Little information is available about this but subsequent events indicate that it was unsuccessful. Hawkins advised²⁰ that Major McIntosh marched on the 23rd of Sept. on this expedition with one hundred ninety-six warriors, twenty rounds of ammunition and twenty days provisions. With expected reinforcements he anticipated there would be in all from three hundred to four hundred men, sufficient in his opinion to accomplish this purpose.

The American authorities immediately realized that the continuation of the fort and its horde of armed negroes and Indians was intolerable. On

instruction from the Secretary of War General Jackson in the spring of 1816 despatched Captain Amelung with a letter dated April 23rd, to the Governor at Pensacola advising him of the existence of the fort and of the character of its occupants, and demanding that the Spanish authorities disperse these "banditti" and return stolen property to American owners, or on their failure it would be done by the United States. In reply Governor Zuniga²² disclaimed responsibility for the presence of the fort, stated that the Spanish negroes at any rate, were regarded as rebels, but that he would be unable to act against them until authorized by the Captain General. Amelung on his return reported to Jackson that in addition to the runaway negroes, there were about twenty Choctaws and some Seminoles at the fort. A great number of the negroes were however reported to have left because of scarcity of provisions and to have gone to Savannah (alias St. Joseph's) (Suwannee) river in East Florida²⁹.

Even before the despatch of his letter by Amelung it would appear that Jackson had resolved on the destruction of the negro fort, as on April 8 orders to that effect were sent to General Gaines^{32 61}.

In the spring of the same year, Hawkins organized another Indian party to go down the river, headed by the chief Little Prince, ostensibly to visit the Seminole chiefs near the Apalachicola, but actually to adopt measures for an attack on the fort. On learning of new American posts to be established on the river the Indians, in expression of their disapproval, desisted from the execution of the project³⁰. Another Indian expedition organized some weeks later, again under Major McIntosh, formed a junction with Col. Clinch's forces¹³ and participated in the capture of the negro fort.

Shortly after the receipt of Jackson's orders, Gaines instructed Lieutenant Colonel Clinch, then commanding the posts on the Chattahoochee river, to establish a new post near the junction of the two rivers, as a result of which a post first known as Camp Crawford and later as Fort Scott, was established on the Flint river (early in June, 1816). Gaines also advised Clinch that he had ordered supplies to be sent to this new post from New Orleans^{33 61}. At the same time Gaines wrote also to Commodore Patterson, in command at the New Orleans Naval Station, requesting him to detail one or two small gunboats to convoy the supply boats up the Apalachicola river, prepared to destroy the negro fort should it offer opposition³⁴. Clinch was also instructed to co-operate with the naval party.

Thus under Jackson's initiative events were developing rapidly toward a climax long before June 15 when, on the receipt of Amelung's report, he wrote to the Secretary of War advising the destruction of the fort, proposed the detail of troops and a naval force for that purpose, and stated that he awaited orders⁴⁸.

On June 19, Commodore Patterson directed that gunboats 149 and 154 meet the schooner transports *Semilante* and *General Pike* carrying the supplies for Camp Crawford at Pass Christian, and convoy them to their destination, with orders to co-operate with the military force in the event opposition should be encountered from the negro fort³⁵. The expedition, under the command of sailing master J. Loomis, arrived off the mouth of the Apalachicola river on July 10th. Here Loomis found despatches from Clinch awaiting him, by the hand of chief Lafarka, which requested him to tarry at this point until Clinch could arrive with his party, and to detain all vessels attempting to descend the river.

Clinch left Camp Crawford with one hundred sixteen men in boats on July 17, after learning of Loomis's arrival. On the morning of the 20th he landed in a screened position near the fort and communicated with Loomis. McIntosh's Indians were directed to surround the fort and keep its artillery engaged, in which they succeeded. News of the massacre of Luffborough's party (described below) was received from Loomis on the 23rd, and on that date a deputation of Indian chiefs demanded the surrender of the fort, which was abusively refused. On the 24th a party was sent down to contact Loomis¹³.

Loomis meanwhile was not inactive and, as we shall see, had actually experienced the hostility of the negroes. In the further consideration of the affair we shall largely follow Loomis's account.

For several days nothing occurred to indicate to Loomis the temper of the occupants of the fort. On the 15th a boat was discovered pulling out of the river, whereupon a boat with an officer was despatched to intercept it, which, on approaching the former, was greeted by a round of musketry. This then pulled into the river under ineffectual fire from one of the gunboats.

Becoming short of water Loomis despatched, early on the 17th, two small armed landing parties in search of that necessity, under Midshipman Luffborough and Sailing Master Bassett, respectively. At noon the latter returned with the body of one of the members of the former party, which was discovered near the mouth of the river, shot through the heart. In the afternoon a solitary figure was discovered on a sandbar near the river mouth. A boat was sent to secure him, when it was found to be John Lopez, a seaman, who turned out to be

the only survivor of Luffborough's party. According to his report, they were ambushed from the shore by forty negroes and Indians, while approaching to speak to a negro who had been observed. Three of the party, including Luffborough, were killed on the spot; and one, Edward Daniels, was made a prisoner.

On the 20th a canoe-load of Indians arrived with despatches from Clinch informing Loomis that he with a party of troops and Indians had taken a position about a mile above the fort, and requesting that Loomis join him with the gunboats. He was also informed that Clinch had captured an Indian bearing the scalp of one of the members of Luffborough's party. Two days later heavy cannonading was heard from the direction of the fort. The next day a white man and two Indians arrived with a verbal message from Clinch requesting Loomis to ascend the river to a certain point. Suspicious that this might be a ruse, Loomis retained the white man and one Indian, and sent the other back to Clinch stating that in order to avoid deception he asked for future messages to be sent in writing and transmitted by an officer.

The authenticity of the verbal messages was proven on the 24th, when Lieutenant Wilson with a party of thirteen men came down to assist the transports in getting up the river. The next day Loomis got his vessels under way, and at Dwelling Bluff, about four miles below the fort, encountered Clinch.

These aggressions indicated the necessity for the destruction of the fort and sealed its fate. Loomis and Clinch reconnoitered the area, and selected a site on which to erect a small battery to assist the gunboats. On the next day although Clinch's men had begun to clear the battery site, he concluded

that the distance was too great to do execution, and ordered his men to desist from their operations. On learning this Loomis advised Clinch the gunboats would attempt the passage without his aid.

Early on the morning of the 27th, Loomis's force began warping the gunboats into position, which was reached at 5 a.m. The fort, then flying the English jack and the red or "bloody" flag, opened fire, which was promptly returned from the American vessels. The range having been determined with cold shot, hot shot were prepared. The first one of these fired from gunboat 154 entered the magazine which it blew up, completely destroying the structure.

When the American forces entered a melancholy sight was presented. It was found that its occupants had been about three hundred negroes, men, women and children, and about twenty renegade Choctaws. Of these two hundred seventy were killed outright by the explosion, and of the survivors but three escaped unhurt. Among the prisoners were the two chiefs of the negroes (Garson) and Indians (Choctaws). Upon examination of the prisoners it was learned that Daniels, the seaman captured from the Luffborough party, had been tarred and burnt alive. In consequence of this act, the captive chiefs were executed on the spot- by the friendly Indians.

The fort was found to possess a surprising armament mounted and ready for use. It included 4 twenty-four-pound cannons, 4 six-pound cannons, beside a field piece and howitzer. In addition there were found 2,500 stands of muskets with accoutrements, 500 carbines and 500 swords. The Americans were informed that it also contained 300 quarter-basks of rifle powder and 162 barrels of cannon

powder, besides other stores and clothing; the whole appraised at not less than \$200,000 in value. Nicholls' project had not failed for lack of supplies.

In an unguarded moment before the attack, Clinch had promised his Indian allies all of the captured property, except the cannon and shot. Loomis reluctantly assented to this engagement, but from the inventories of the property recovered by Loomis and Clinch it would not appear that any great amount of arms and munitions were delivered to the Indians, except perhaps a large supply of powder from one magazine which escaped.

The surviving negroes which were captured largely belonged to the Spaniards and Indians. The former's property was delivered into the custody of Hambly. The American negroes had not congregated at the fort but were cultivating plantations along the river bank. On hearing of the approach of the army most of them fled to the Seminoles. Those captured were taken to Camp Crawford¹³.

Having found the river too shallow to permit the heavily laden transports to ascend, the whole cargo of the *General Pike* was transferred to flat-boats, and part of that of the *Semilante* removed, which permitted the latter to ascend the river to Camp Crawford. Clinch received reports that a large body of Indians were gathering to intercept his return passage up the river, but these dispersed without being seen. On the 3rd of August, Loomis set fire to the remains of the fort and village and returned to New Orleans^{36, 37, 38}. On his way out of the river, Loomis encountered an armed schooner of the Spanish government, whose commander sent him a demand for the surrender of the captured artillery and ammunition, which demand Loomis

evaded by promising to transmit it to the United States government.

It would appear that while the American forces were engaged in this activity, a Spanish expedition with the same objective set out from Pensacola in two vessels under Don Benigno Garcia Calderon, on board one of which was our friend Doyle. They arrived one or two days after the American gunboats had blown up the fort. Although Doyle wanted to go up to the fort, Don Benigno would not allow him, and kept the schooners anchored in the bay. In discussing this expedition, James Innerarity³⁹ deplores Benigno's failure to go up the river, as he could have brought away the wounded, and perhaps have secured several of the runaways, some of whom were evidently returned to Pensacola with the vessels. After Benigno's demand to Loomis for the munitions was refused, all the vessels returned along the coast in company.

The successful outcome of the expedition greatly elated Commodore Patterson who commendably reported it to the Secretary of the Navy. It would appear that these events took official Washington by surprise, and that international complications were feared as a consequence³². It led to a presidential order prohibiting further attacks on Indians below the line.

According to James Innerarity³⁹ the effect of this action was to produce immediate submission of the Indians, an opinion probably shared by the Americans, as the troops were withdrawn from Camp Crawford. He was evidently planning re-establishment of the store, and in this connection mentions Pine Bluffs, an unidentified locality, as under consideration. In the meantime Hambly, in the absence of Doyle, was requesting a supply of goods for the use of the American fort. The pay

rolls of the American forces appear to have greatly stimulated trade along the river, but Forbes and Company, now had brisk competition from some smuggling interlopers. Doyle writes early in 1817 that scanty stocks in the Forbes store prevented him from effectively competing with three (other) handsome stores on this river. We do not know to whom they belonged. However by this time Hambly was trading independently, though with goods received from the house of Forbes. Another, mentioned by Doyle is a Mr. Butler who traded at the next camp. Probably the keenest competition came to be felt from the Americans, who, complains Doyle later in the same year, "sell cheaper than we have at any period."

With the departure of Nicholls, efforts of British agents to tamper with and incite to hostility the Indians in Spanish Florida did not cease. Chief among these was A. Arbuthnot who, in 1817 or earlier, opened a store on Ocklockoney bay and was regarded by Doyle as a competitor. He soon was in close association with the disaffected Indians to whom he claimed to be a British emissary, and professed to be their authorized champion in communications addressed to the American and Spanish authorities. Color to the former claim is given by his correspondence with Nicholls and the Governor of the Bahamas ⁴². Arbuthnot later opened another store on the Wakulla river at the site of the old Panton, Leslie establishment, where he received smuggled cargoes from the Bahamas with the apparent complicity of the commandant at St. Marks. He reiterated to the Indians the tale first told them by Nicholls, namely that the United States was withholding from them ceded lands which it relinquished by the Treaty of Ghent. Hambly later testified at Arbuthnot's trial, that

Indian raids from Florida into Georgia were renewed within fifteen or twenty days of the latter's first arrival at Ocklockoney, which he understood was by Arbuthnot's instigation.

Arbuthnot represented that, according to the Indians, Hambly guided the American army down the river to the fort, and had been instrumental in its destruction. He also charged both Hambly and Doyle with having been American spies, even while receiving British pay⁴¹.

Evidently trusting that the destruction of the negro fort would be an adequate lesson to the hostile Indians, the American authorities evacuated Camp Crawford or Fort Scott, in the fall of 1816, leaving the buildings in the care of one of the Perrymans. He was soon visited by hostiles, who removed everything portable, and threatened him with violence if he did not leave. Perryman took the hint and removed to Fort Gaines⁵³. Hostile Indians reengaged in thieving raids on the Georgia frontier and were reported congregating at Fowltown, a village east of Fort Scott. The influence that Doyle and Hambly were previously able to exert in restraining the Indians was now completely destroyed by the agitation of Arbuthnot, and the former lived in daily fear of their lives. The reports of theft were soon supplemented by news of the murder of isolated settlers in Georgia and Alabama. Doyle repeatedly asked Innerarity to be released from his engagement, and Hambly planned to withdraw, but through the arguments of the chief Big Warrior who promised him protection, he decided to remain.

Some time in the month of July 1817 a force under Major Twiggs was sent to reoccupy the site of Fort Scott. By direction of General Gaines, Twiggs sent a message to the Indians at Fowltown

and Mickasukie demanding the surrender of those responsible for the murders. In a conference at Mickasukie the Indians refused the demand and set up a counter claim for the lives of three Indians. The chief of Fowltown warned Twiggs not to cut wood on the east side of the Flint and several hundred Indians were reported gathered at Mickasukie preparing to attack if the Americans crossed the river. Under these circumstances the garrison at Fort Scott was increased, and Gaines arrived there in November. He despatched Twiggs with two hundred fifty men to Fowltown on November 20 to bring in the chief. On arrival the troops were fired upon and the Indians were routed with small losses. Evidence that the Indians had been in communication with the British was discovered. A few days later, Lieutenant Colonel Arbuckle with a large reconnoitering force was sent into the same vicinity and had a skirmish with the Indians near the same town.

It will be recalled that the prophet Francis (Hillis Hadjo) had gone to England with Nicholls on the departure of the latter from Apalachicola. Here he received distinguished consideration, and on his departure received many presents from the king's stores. He returned via New Providence where, according to Arbuthnot, Woodbine assumed his custody and plundered him of most of his gifts. By June of 1817 Francis was back in Apalachee and called a meeting of the Indians at Tallahassee to hear a talk purporting to be from the Prince Regent. Previously he had personally threatened the lives of Doyle and Hambly. The return of the American troops to the forks diminished Francis's outspokenness, and caused Arbuthnot to flee from Ocklockoney bay. When it became apparent that immediate operations across the border were un-

likely their courage was restored and they became increasingly insolent.

The purpose of the earlier operations of Nicholls now became evident. It will be recalled that one of Nicholls's most zealous lieutenants was Captain George Woodbine, who had been largely responsible for enticing the negroes to congregate at Prospect Bluff. Spain's hold upon her American empire was slipping and either Nicholls or Woodbine had conceived the idea of capturing Florida from the feeble hand of Spain, whose weakness they had fully discovered in the recent war. Woodbine planned to raise a force of men from the recently disbanded colonial troops, the negroes and the Indians, which was to assemble at Tampa Bay, whence this force would march across the peninsula, seize St. Augustine and thus make himself master of the whole province^{38 43}. His purpose is not clear but it has been surmised that he hoped after its conquest to sell Florida either to the United States or England. As the plan worked up to a climax, Woodbine sent Robert Ambrister, an ex-companion in arms, to Florida to perfect the final details. Just what relation Arbuthnot bore to Ambrister is not perfectly clear. There is some reason to believe that both may have worked for the same principal or principals, and at any rate Ambrister made free with Arbuthnot's equipment and supplies. Space does not permit further discussion of Ambrister's activities, but with his appearance on the scene the Indians became very aggressive.

In November 1817 Major Muhlenburg was ascending the Apalachicola with three vessels laden with stores brought from Fort Montgomery and Mobile for the posts. Lieutenant R. W. Scott of the 7th Infantry had been sent down the river with

forty men to contact Muhlenburg and assist him in ascending the river. Contact was made, but Muhlenburg, instead of keeping the whole detail, retained only twenty and sent the balance back to Fort Scott as an escort to about twenty sick soldiers and seven women, wives of soldiers. On his way up the river Scott was warned by Hambly that Indians with hostile intentions were assembling about the forks, which stimulated Scott to request reinforcements on the 28th. Nevertheless the lieutenant proceeded. On the 30th about a mile below the forks, at a place where the current obliged the boat to keep very close to the shore, several volleys were discharged into the boat from the shore, at the first of which Lieut. Scott and most of his able men fell. Of the entire party only six men escaped with their lives⁵⁸. It was for having led this attacking party that Homathlemico was later hanged. On receiving Scott's letter, Gen. Gaines despatched two armed boats with forty men to his aid, but they were too late and continued on down the river to Muhlenburg. About two weeks later when Muhlenburg was near the Ocheese bluff with his vessels, they were attacked from both sides of the river by Indians, who kept up such a continuous fire that further warping of the vessels was impossible. Firing was kept up for two days. In this brush Muhlenburg lost two men and had thirteen wounded. He was detained by these hostilities for about two weeks and did not arrive at Fort Scott until about the middle of January⁴⁴.

When appraised of these events, the War Department granted Gaines discretionary authority to cross the line for the purpose of punishing depredations committed by the Indians from that quarter, but not in any case to molest a Spanish post.

The gravity of the aggressions could not be overlooked and, in December 1817, General Jackson was called to the field on the southern frontier. His long experience had convinced him that trouble on the southern frontier might be expected as long as Florida remained foreign territory. On arriving at Fort Scott and superceding Gaines, Jackson resolved on immediate operations under the orders Gaines had previously received. Thus began the first Seminole War. A day or so after Hambly warned Scott of the impending ambush, he and Doyle were captured (Dec. 13th) at his plantation by Indians led by Chenubby, a Fowltown chief, and taken to Ocheese bluff where they were detained while the Indians attacked Muhlenburg's command. Information of the attack reached Arbuckle at Fort Scott on the 20th. He reported to Gaines that the chief, William Perryman, who with a party had gone down to protect Doyle and Hambly, had been killed and his men forced to join the opposite party. Doyle and Hambly were erroneously reported killed and all their property stolen⁵⁵. They were actually taken to Mickasukie and later to Suwannee Old Town, where Kenhagee (King Hadjo, Cappichimico) chief of the Mickasukies, informed them they were taken on Arbuthnot's orders and brought to Suwannee for trial by him. Shortly after their arrival Arbuthnot arrived from New Providence. In one account⁴⁰ Hambly says they were tried by Arbuthnot, who condemned them to torture. In another⁵⁴ he says they were to be given up to the caprices of five or six renegade Choctaws, in satisfaction for those lost in the negro fort. Owing to the friendly interference of a Mr. Cook, clerk to Arbuthnot, and Nero, a negro chief, the sentence was not put into execution. After this they were reconducted to Mickasukie. Kenhagee then went

to Fort St. Marks to ascertain if the commandant would hold them as prisoners subject to Kenhagee's order, which was agreed upon. They were brought down to the fort on February 12, 1818 and kept there under confinement. Soon after their arrival, a friendly Indian conveyed a message on their behalf to friends (evidently the Inneraritys) in Pensacola, who despatched a small vessel to St. Marks. In this they escaped on the night of March 28 and were proceeding to Pensacola when, in Apalachicola bay, they met Captain McKeever on his way to St. Marks with supplies for Jackson. They joined him on the 30th⁴⁰. McKeever arrived off St. Marks on the 1st of April before Jackson, with the British colors at his masthead. On the next day he was visited by the second officer in command at the fort, to whom he gave the impression that he was Woodbine's agent, arriving with succor for the Indians. The Spanish officer expressed much elation, and disclosed that Francis the prophet was in the neighborhood, as well as Arbuthnot, and that he would advise the former of the arrival of this aid. On receipt of this information Francis, considering them English, came on board the next morning⁴⁶ accompanied by Homathlemico, on which occasion both were detained by McKeever. After Jackson's seizure of Fort St. Marks, they were delivered to him and promptly hanged⁴⁷. Arbuthnot, though warned of Jackson's approach⁵⁷, was likewise captured at the fort, and Ambrister later at Old Town. Both were court martialled at St. Marks, convicted of inciting the Indians to hostilities and executed before Jackson began his return march.

In keeping up with Doyle's movements we have been obliged to pass momentarily over other important events that occurred meanwhile. Jackson left Nashville for the Florida frontier on January

22, 1818 where on March 9 he arrived with a considerable body of Tennessee and Georgia militia. With the reinforcements he brought, he found he had available at Fort Scott including the 4th and 7th regiments of infantry, a force of about 2000 men with provisions for not over three days.

Learning that two expected sloops loaded with provisions were off the mouth of the Apalachicola river, Jackson determined to proceed on his campaign and to meet them with his force. The tenth was spent in crossing the Flint river to the south bank. On the 13th contact was made with a provision laden keel boat ascending the river at Alum Bluff, called at the time from this circumstance Provision Bluff. The march was resumed down the east bank of the river and continued down as far as the site of the negro fort on Prospect bluff which was reached on the 16th.

Jackson was so impressed by the eligibility of the site that he directed Lieutenant Gadsden of the Engineers Corps to design and construct a suitable fortification to serve as a provision base. Pleased with the talents and zeal the lieutenant exercised, Jackson named the fortification Fort Gadsden.

This structure was situated directly on the river bank, within the confines of the old negro fort. Its outline and character is clearly shown on the plat submitted by Captain Gadsden (Map 4.)

The army remained at Fort Gadsden awaiting a naval convoy until the 26th when the march to Mickasukie was begun. The naval force conveying provisions under Colonel Gibson and Captain McKeever had arrived off the river in the bay on the 23rd. On the departure of the army the flotilla was ordered to St. Marks, and en route picked up Doyle and Hambly.

On Jackson's return to St. Marks on April 26, after the destruction of Bowlegs's (Boleck's) town on the Suwannee, he professed to consider the campaign at an end and planned an immediate return to Nashville. However on arrival at Fort Gadsden on the 2nd of May, Hambly, who in the meantime appears to have made a very favorable impression on the general, called to his attention information he had just received that hostile Indians were congregated at Pensacola. This caused an immediate revision of Jackson's plans, and resulted in his march to Pensacola, and his seizure of that town and its forts ⁴⁹ ⁵⁶. In his seizure of the Spanish posts at St. Marks and Pensacola, Jackson appears to have exercised his own convictions and judgment, and in doing so exceeded the orders received from the War Department.

On departing from Fort Gadsden he left behind a strong garrison of regulars.

It would appear that Jackson and the members of his staff believed that after this campaign, ²³ possession of Florida would not be relinquished by the United States. Negotiations towards its cession were actually then under way, whose course was materially retarded by the offense these actions gave to Spain.

In August, Calhoun, Secretary of War, advised General Gaines that the President had determined to restore St. Marks and Pensacola to any properly authorized Spanish officer with an adequate force to prevent seizure by hostile Indians. He was instructed that on evacuating these posts he was to make arrangements calculated to hold the Indians in check and protect the frontier. On the east of the Apalachicola he was authorized in his judgment to station troops on either side of the line, as he thought proper. His instructions further read:

“Fort Gadsden, besides of admitting great facility for supplies, appears to be a very commanding position, and ought not to be evacuated. Should you think so, you will retain it, and garrison it with a sufficient force”⁵⁰. It would appear that an American garrison was maintained in Fort Gadsden until the cession of Florida to the United States, as Jackson writing from Pensacola to the Secretary of War on July 30, 1821 says: “On the 22nd I addressed a letter to Major Fanning, the officer commanding at Fort Gadsden, giving the necessary orders for the taking possession and occupation of St. Marks, to which I must refer you, as more fully explanatory of the arrangements made with a view to that operation”.⁵¹

The continuous disorder that had prevailed on the Apalachicola since 1814, the loss of trade at that point, and the problematical attitude of the American government to the title of the grant and its possession by foreigners in the likely event of the seizure of Florida by, or cession to, the United States, appear to have led John Forbes, the surviving partner of Panton, Leslie and Company, and the executor of all the deceased partners, to regard the grant as a liability to be liquidated in the simplest manner. Accordingly it was deeded in May 1819 to Colin Mitchell, a merchant of Havana, for a consideration of \$111,676., less certain small parcels already sold and a 1/15 interest belonging to John and James Innerarity, who also later sold their share to Mitchell. Further transactions probably looking to clearing of the title resulted in a final deed to Mitchell on September 9, 1820. The title was not recognized by the American commissioners. sent to examine the validity of Spanish titles after the cession, and was thrown into the courts for settlement in 1828. The final award was

in favor of the plaintiff and a United States patent covering the grant was issued in 1842.

Of the final fate of Hambly we do not know. Doyle however moved to a plantation in the Lafayette grant on the outskirts of Tallahassee and died in 1831.

Before Florida was transferred to the United States a townsite including the fort was laid out at Prospect Bluff to be called Colinton¹³. The venture was apparently a failure from the outset, as it was not noticed by Williams in his *View of West Florida*. The later successful establishment of a town at West Point in 1829 called Apalachicola, forestalled any further development at Prospect Bluff.

Today Prospect Bluff is deserted, forgotten and unmarked, reached by a dim trail impassable in rainy weather. When steamboat traffic flourished on the Apalachicola river, its river face near the fort site was known as Fort Gadsden landing, now only intermittently used for the shipment of logs. The outlines of the earthworks of Fort Gadsden are perfectly preserved, though overgrown with brush and trees. A low mound to the eastward marks the magazine of the negro fort, in the surface soil of which the finding of an occasional leaden ball recalls the fruition of Nicholls's intrigues. The site of Fort Scott is inaccessible by any road. No traces of earthworks are visible but in the now cutover second growth forest which has appeared on its site, there stands a lonely granite block supporting an erect cannon, probably an eighteen pounder, which bears on its base the following inscription: "Erected by the United States on the site of Fort Scott in memory of the officers and soldiers of the 4th and 7th Regiments, U. S. Infantry, who died during the Indian campaigns 1817 to 1821 and are buried near the fort".

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