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C. N. Howard



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THE MILITARY OCCUPATION  
OF BRITISH WEST FLORIDA, 1763

By C. N. HOWARD

The military occupation by the British troops of the former French and Spanish forts on the Gulf coast to the east of New Orleans was a movement of continental as well as of local importance. The twentieth article of the Treaty of Paris, 1763, had ceded to His Britannic Majesty all of the French territory to the east of the Mississippi river, except the port of New Orleans and the delta, and all of the Spanish territory of Florida, which extended westward to the Perdido river.

The province of West Florida, to include the posts of Pensacola and Mobile, was erected by the proclamation of October 7, 1763.<sup>1</sup> It was bounded on the east by the Apalachicola river, on the west by Lake Pontchartrain, the Iberville river and the Mississippi river, and on the north by the thirty-first degree parallel. The northern boundary was raised in 1764 by an Order in Council to a straight line running east from the junction of the Yazoo river and the Mississippi river, and intersecting the Apalachicola river. It was, from its beginning, a royal colony, and it was also, a fact of considerable import, the first British colony to be established west of the Apalachian mountains.<sup>2</sup>

1. The text of this proclamation appears in the *Florida Historical Society Quarterly*, III. (4) 36-42. Vide, C. E. Carter, *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, I, 365-369; J. F. H. Claiborne, *Mississippi as a Province, Territory and State*, I, 92, note; *Calendar of Home Office Papers for the Reign of George III*, I, 27.
2. The plan, as it was evolved by Egremont, Halifax, Shelburne, and others, of the extension of royal colonial government into the west, the purchase of Indian lands and the eventual reservation of certain lands for the Indians, was later followed to a marked degree by the United States government in its territorial government and its purchase and reservation of Indian lands.

This fact put West Florida definitely into the pattern of royal colonial government. There were no earlier charters or precedents to be minimized or destroyed. Its location put it definitely into the stream of the Anglo-American westward movement. The question of the period of settlement was, whether the crown would precede the settlers on the frontier, or whether it would let them exploit the western lands in the old individualistic fashion. There is no mistaking that the crown decided distinctly for crown control of westward expansion.

The military occupation of this territory was, therefore, in accordance with the establishment of this province, which fulfilled the long-projected plans of the British to obtain a port upon the gulf. At least as early as 1718 definite plans had been presented to the privy council for the acquisition of a gulf port, which, it was considered, would derive great benefits from the Spanish trade. The British trading interest in the Caribbean was closely linked on the north with the movement of settlement on to the gulf coast and into the old southwest.<sup>3</sup> The continental importance of the military occupation of West Florida lay in the fact that the province was used as a southern base of attack in the British two-year campaign of reconquest of the eastern Mississippi region and the Ohio valley from the Indians of Pontiac's uprising.

The movement of the British to take possession of the province was not long delayed. The final peace dated from February 10, 1763. On April 18 the Earl of Egremont notified the secretary at war

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3. H. E. Bolton and Mary Ross, *The Debatable land*; V. W. Crane, *The Southern Frontier; Some Considerations on the Consequences of the French Settling Colonies on the Mississippi, with Respect to the Trade and Safety of the English Plantations in America*, from a Gentleman of America, to his Friend in London, 1720.

of the dispatch to the American military command of final orders to take possession of the newly ceded provinces.<sup>4</sup>

The operation of occupation was directed from Havana, the base seized by the British from the Spanish during the Seven Years War. It was Havana which the British crown returned to Spain in exchange for the territory of Florida. On July 3 General Keppel at Havana handed instructions for the occupation of Pensacola to Lieutenant Colonel Prevost and supplied him with three thousand pounds sterling for expenses, and with provisions for the sea-passage and for six months of occupation.

Colonel Prevost was to proceed with the Third Battalion of His Majesty's Royal American Regiment of Foot to receive the surrender of Fort San Miguel de Pensacola with all its dependencies from the Spanish governor.<sup>5</sup> In pursuance of his orders Colonel Prevost set sail from Havana on July 6 with the third battalion under his command. Contrary winds delayed his arrival at Pensacola until August 6. A month was consumed in a voyage which in later times with the use of steam and electric power would not require more than two days.

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4. *P. R. O., Sp. Dom., E. B.*, 196, 27-28.

5. The story of the Spanish evacuation of Pensacola has been told by W. H. Siebert. He has drawn upon materials from the Archives of the Indies. He records Prevost's departure from Havana as July 10; that he was supplied with 3000 livres; that he arrived on August 5. There appear to be discrepancies between these records and the British records. The number of men under Prevost's command is recorded as 350. The frigate *Richmond* convoyed the fleet of four transports. The number of inhabitants under Spanish rule is given as 772, including 102 Catholic Indians who left with the Spaniards. Prevost recorded it as 1200, but Professor Siebert surmises that he was including his own forces in this count. All of the Spanish subjects left Pensacola upon its occupation by the British, save one, who was detained for a short time as custodian of the cargo of a wrecked sloop. Vide, *P. R. O., C. O.*, 5, 582; W. H. Siebert, "How the Spanish Evacuated Pensacola in 1763," *Florida Historical Society Quarterly*, XI, no. 2, 48-57.

The first British port upon the gulf is worthy of a moment's description. Pensacola in 1763 was a small village consisting of about one hundred huts encircled by a stockade. It was situated upon the northern shore of its very large harbor approximately ten miles from the sea. The entrance to the harbor was somewhat difficult of navigation for inexperienced pilots because the long island of Santa Rosa formed a breakwater across the mouth of the harbor leaving a channel scarcely four fathom deep, at the extreme western end. This channel twisted like the bend of the letter S. Bayous and lagoons with sand-barred mouths lay on either side of the bay. Upon the point of Santa Rosa on the eastern shore of the harbor's entrance was a small square stockaded fort with two guns in it, which the Spaniards had maintained rather as a signal than as an actual defense. About eleven miles above Pensacola just south of the spot where the Escambia river flows into the northwestern fork of Pensacola bay was the site of the village later established by the British and named Campbelltown.

The country around Pensacola remained still uncultivated at the time that the British took it over, a fact which Colonel Prevost attributed to the insuperable laziness of the Spaniards. The woods had been cleared only a short distance away from the village and the Spaniards had contented themselves with a few domestic gardens for their own use. The soil about Pensacola was sandy but capable of producing as excellent vegetables as are grown in many of our seaside gardens today. Some miles back from the shore the land was better. Colonel Prevost felt that the land was capable of any improvement, but that only years and a number of industrious settlers could make a change upon the then existing face of the colony. There was no

stock about Pensacola, for the Spaniards had been entirely supplied with beef from Mobile, a settlement which the British officers found better cultivated and producing enough for a small export. Game was plentiful in the surrounding forests, and Pensacola bay was abounding in quantities of good fish of different kinds. Of such sort was the not unpromising though undeveloped settlement of Pensacola in 1763.

With no waste of time after an unavoidable delay of a month on the voyage, Colonel Prevost upon his arrival immediately waited upon the Spanish governor, Don Diego Ortiz Parilla, delivered the letters from the court of Spain and demanded the surrender of the place. The Spanish governor readily acknowledged the letters from the court of Spain and handed over the authority of the settlement to Colonel Prevost. He and his garrison did not depart until September 2. The governor-general of the West Indies, the Count de Riola, had not provided sufficient transports for the retiring troops and inhabitants, and while waiting for the arrival of these transports Colonel Prevost was obliged to disembark and canton his troops in some huts without the stockades. The expected transports arrived within a few days, but to Colonel Prevost's disgust "the numerous Stores they had to put on board together with their indolence, even though assisted by the man of war & Troops, detained the Embarkation 'till the 2d of September, & next day they Sailed for Vera Crux."<sup>6</sup>

The Indians were numerous and near to Pensacola. They were for the most part Choctaws and Creeks. Within the few days after the departure of the Spaniards some two hundred individuals of

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6. *P. R. O., C. O., 5,582.*

the five different nations visited Colonel Prevost and the British garrison. Prevost did not have it in his power to make them any present, but he gave them some rum with which they appeared satisfied. At their departure they assured the British of their peaceable intentions and promised to return soon with some of their principal warriors. They asked only that during their absence their young men should not be "insulted" by the garrison troops and when Colonel Prevost very readily agreed to this commitment they departed, leaving white feathers with the British in token of their friendly intentions. However at this time Colonel Prevost wrote to the secretary at war "as I since learn of their Crueltys lately committed in America and putting no great confidence in their promises, I shall put this place in the best situation the Time and weakness of the Battalion will allow to prevent any Surprise." Prevost was referring, of course, to Pontiac's outbreak the news of which reached England early in August. The visiting Indians included Tallapoosas, Apiskas, Creeks and Chickasaws. By way of strengthening himself, Prevost had the woods cleared some distance from the fort. He needed more artillery, so he borrowed six cannon from a merchant, and he hoped to obtain more from the frigate *Richmond*, which had convoyed him thither, and from a Captain Douglas who had promised him some.<sup>7</sup>

While Colonel Prevost was occupying Pensacola, provision was being made for the occupation of the rest of the territory of eastern Louisiana and Florida. On July 19 General Keppel, still at Havana, issued instructions to Major Ogilvie and Major Farmar for the occupation of Saint Augustine and

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7. Vide, *P. R. O.; C. O.*; 5,582 ; W. H. Siebert, *Florida Historical Society Quarterly*, XI, no. 2, 48-57.

Mobile. To Major Ogilvie, who was to effect the transfer of Saint Augustine he wrote in a postscript to his instructions : "On your Arrival at St Augustin you will be able to judge, of the most practicable method to relieve the Garrison of Pensacola, and if upon enquiry it proves impossible to do it by Land, without greatly fatiguing the Troops, then in that case you are to hire a Vessel and Charter her agreeable to the usual Custom, and embarking such detachments as you think proper to send; they are to proceed directly to Pensacola which Vessel by her charter must engage to take ye present Garrison of that Fort (exclusive of the Detachment of Artillery) aboard and carry them to New York." <sup>8</sup>

At the same time General Keppel issued instructions, dated July nineteenth, to Major Farmar for the occupation of the French post of Mobile, which was really the entrepot of West Florida and the gateway to all the territory of the old southwest, the country bounded roughly by the Apalachian mountains, the Ohio river and the Mississippi river, just as New Orleans because of the superior advantages of its water-borne traffic was the natural southern outlet of the Ohio valley and the old northwest territory. In particular did Mobile drain the valleys of the Alabama and the Tombigbee rivers and command at this time a heavy trade in peltry. Some five years after the British took it over, its commerce demanded at least the annual visit of a two-hundred ton vessel filled with British manufactures and carrying skins back to London. <sup>9</sup>

Major Farmar was instructed to proceed with Gage's and Cavendish's, the 22nd and 34th regiments, to take possession of ". . . the River & Port of Mobile, and of all that France possesses on the

8. *P. R. O., C. O.*, 5,582.

9. P. J. Hamilton, *Colonial Mobile*, 2d. edn., 1910, 259, note.

Left side of the River Mississippi, except New Orleans. . .” He was equipped with the necessary letters from the court of France and was authorized to use his judgment in adjusting arrangements to conditions and to draw necessary bills upon the lords of the treasury. Inasmuch as supplies then at Havana were insufficient for the full equipment, the expedition was directed to call at Jamaica where it would be supplemented on the order of Rear Admiral Keppel from the naval stores there. Undoubtedly much of this struggle is emphatically a Caribbean and Gulf struggle. Spain conducted her evacuation from Havana ; France, hers, from Santo Domingo; and the British base was Jamaica.<sup>10</sup>

When he had completed his provisioning at Jamaica station Major Farmar detached from the expedition and sent on ahead two small vessels lent by Rear Admiral Keppel and loaded with three hundred barrels of powder and other artillery stores. These small vessels were under the command of Captain Farmar of the Twenty-second regiment who carried a letter to the French governor of Mobile asking his permission to unlade them before the arrival of the main body of the expedition in order that they might be used in landing the troops and baggage that were in the big transport which drew too much water to cross the bar.<sup>11</sup> The main expedition was convoyed from Jamaica station by H.M.S. “Stag” commanded by Captain William Bayne, whom Major Farmar records as being of every service to them.

Farmar and the main body of the expedition dropped anchors in Pensacola harbor on September

10. *Vide, P. R. O., C. O.*, 5,582; A. S. Aiton, “Spanish Colonial Reorganization Under the Family Compact,” *Hispanic American Historical Review*, XII, no. 3, 269-280.

11. *P. R. O., C. O.*, 5,582.

20. On the next day he despatched Captain John Lind with a letter of authorization to Captain Pierre Nicolos Annibel Chevalier, Sieur de Ville, (or Develle), in command at Mobile, notifying that officer that Captain Lind was empowered on his behalf to make all the necessary preliminary arrangements for the transfer of all the posts and forts east of the Mississippi. He requested that Captain De Ville would forbid for the time being any sale of land or properties to English subjects by the French in the event that these sales might, he said, prove prejudicial to the French.<sup>12</sup> He could admit no such transactions to be valid which should take place before the actual occupation of the province by the British troops. It would seem probable that American land speculators were not unknown to Major Farmar!

As early as July 5 Major Farmar had received a letter from M. De Kerlerec, the governor-general of Louisiana, in which that official urged Farmar to come to New Orleans to consider with him "the movements which the Savages pretend to make for to oppose you, if at least one may believe their designs". The governor continued: "by the most wise reflections, which we will Consert, the respective conduct we ought to hold for to prevent the ends above explained, and to make known to the Indians, the forced dependence, and the necessity in which our common Interest ought to keep them". M. Kerlerec added: "Messrs Develle and Fazend, Commander and Commissary at Mobile, has order to furnish you with everything necessary depending on their Department that is to say if you don't love better to make use of your own Carriages, after demanding of them the usual Customs".

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12. *Ibid.*

Captain Lind carried, beside the letter to M. De Ville at Mobile, a letter to M. Kerlerec, and Instructions from the French court regarding the cession. Major Farmar instructed him to proceed to New Orleans to Governor Kerlerec in case that the lieutenant governor at Mobile should have no definite orders regarding the evacuation. Precisely this proved true and Captain Lind continued his journey to New Orleans where he found Governor Kerlerec somewhat out of sorts, with all of his effects packed up, and expecting to leave for France any day.<sup>13</sup> He received Captain Lind pleasantly but was forced by the circumstances of his imminent departure to hand over the more serious duties of hospitality to an official envoy to his successor, M. D'Abbadie.<sup>14</sup>

Upon Lind's return M. Kerlerec entrusted to his care letters to M. De Ville, Lieutenant governor and commandant at Mobile, and to Major Farmar. In the latter, letter he explained that although M. De Ville had had from him provisional orders concerning the transfer and evacuation, he would now despatch him a more definite order. The commandants at Alibamoux, Tombeche, Natchez and the Illinois posts had their orders. The occupation of the Illinois posts might best be accomplished by river between January and April, the high water season on the Mississippi. It would be feasible to establish a post at Natchez on the way up the river. But in all these matters it would be advisable and indeed almost imperative that he consult with M. D'Abbadie who would probably arrive in Mobile about the twenty-fifth of October for the conduct

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13. *P. R. O., C. O.*, 5,582. *Calendar of Manuscripts in Paris Archives and Libraries*, ed. Nancy Maria Miller Surrey, I, *passim*.
  14. Royal director-general at New Orleans, with combined powers of governor and intendant; *Vide*, Surrey, *Calendar*, 1439, 1440; *P. R. O., C. O.*, 5,582; *infra*, note 19.

of the annual Indian congress. M. D'Abbadie was sending Major Farmar an explicit copy of the plans for the council. There were many other matters upon which Major Farmar might very beneficially consult M. D'Abbadie and he, Kerlerrec, could vouch for this upon eleven years experience as governor of Louisiana. It would therefore be most convenient if Major Farmar would arrange to arrive in Mobile at the same time as M. D'Abbadie. M. Kerlerrec concluded by saying that although Captain Lind seemed somewhat surprised that the French had dismantled and carried off most of the artillery from Fort Conde at Mobile, he must explain that such were their orders. The French military throughout Louisiana have always been very ill equipped with respect to arms and war-like stores. The store of powder in the province has been practically exhausted and the French officials flatter themselves that the English will spare them some in the event of an emergency.

As a matter of historical fact this issue of the state of the French muniments at the time of the surrender of the various forts brought forth much controversy. Farmar wrote : "On my Arrival here I found 6 Cannon lying in the Covert Way with their Trunnions knock'd of, & render'd entirely useless, for which reason I suffer'd them to be carried off, the Carriages were put together without the Works, some of them appear'd to be new, the Evening the French Troops sailed from hence, unknown to me, they set them on fire." The controversy may be traced at some length in the French and British archives. Some of the revelant docu-

ments have been included in various of the published collections.<sup>15</sup>

Captain Lind returned to Mobile on the evening of October 14, where he met Major Farmar who had meanwhile arrived off Mobile harbor on October 9. When passing Fort Conde upon his way to join the main convoy of troops, which, under Major Farmar's command reached Point Mobile that evening, Captain Lind delivered Governor Kerlerec's letter to M. De Ville. In reply, then, to Major Farmar's letter, M. De Ville, having read Governor Kerlerec's letter, wrote briefly declaring his accord with the governor's suggestion that Major Farmar defer his arrival in Mobile until the arrival of M. D'Abbadie on October 25. Which would considerably ease the business of transfer and evacuation.

Meanwhile Captain Farmar in command of the advance convoy of the two powder ships had been unable to carry out his orders without a hitch because M. De Ville, the French lieutenant governor, would not permit the British to land their powder until he was assured that he might at any time remove from the magazine of Fort Conde twenty-eight barrels of powder belonging to the French crown and intended as presents to the Indians who were just then gathering for an annual congress.

As a result of the delay in unloading the small vessels, the main convoy arrived off Point Mobile on October 9 to find that the small vessels were in the inner harbor by the fort and not at the bar where they were needed. They came down, however, to Point Mobile on the evening of the four-

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15. The Military Papers of Major Farmar, *P. R. O., C. O.*, 5,582; *Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library*, ed., C. W. Alvord and C. E. Carter, X; *Mississippi Provincial Archives, 1763-1766, The British Dominion*, I, ed., Dunbar Rowland; *The Correspondence of General Thomas Gage with the Secretaries of State, 1763-1775*, ed., C. E. Carter, I.

teenth and on the sixteenth three of the troop ships got over the bar because they drew less water than the large transport.

On the eighteenth Major Farmar, Major Loftus, Captain Bayne and Captain Lind landed at the Fort upon the invitation of M. De Ville. They were civilly received by the lieutenant governor and his aides, but no lodgings or billets were assigned to them. De Ville pressed the British officers very strenuously to keep their troops on board the transports until after October 27, when the Indian congress would be concluded. He had hoped that Major Farmar would accept M. Kerlerec's suggestion and defer his arrival at Mobile at least until October 25 when M. D'Abbadie was expected. But since Major Farmar had left Pensacola without waiting for a reply to his letter sent by Captain Lind, M. De Ville apparently felt that the next best step was to retain the British troops on board ship until the Indians had departed. On his part Major Farmar represented to the French officials that further confinement on board ship would be injurious to his men and with some apparent reluctance M. De Ville consented to evacuate Fort Conde on the twentieth.

This arrangement was carried out, and the grenadiers of the two British regiments took possession of the French post on the twentieth.<sup>16</sup> A *procès-verbal* acknowledging the delivery and receipt of authority over that part of Louisiana which was ceded to the British crown by the French crown

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16. *P. R. O., C. O.*, 5,582.

was signed by De Ville,<sup>17</sup> Fazende,<sup>18</sup> and D'Abbadie,<sup>19</sup> for France and Robert Farmar<sup>20</sup> for Great Britain.<sup>21</sup> In addition to the usual acknowledgment of the cession and transfer of authority, the *proces-verbal* contained a specific though not detailed inventory of Fort Conde and its state of repair and disrepair. Major Farmar later made a careful inventory of the fort, which he was careful to include in his report to the secretary at war.

Although the grenadiers took possession of Fort Conde on the twentieth, the landing of the British troops was no easy task. The transports were unable to come nearer than within twelve miles of the town, and much time was consumed in landing the men. They had only the transport boats and a very heavy launch which Captain Bayne had brought with him from Pensacola, to transport the men from the ships to the fort. The result was that the Indians, who had been invited to the congress five months before by the French, had assembled at the Mobile post before the British could bring their cannon and stores up to the fort. By the first of November nearly three thousand Indians were encamped within two miles of the fort.

The French troops left Mobile for New Orleans on October 22. Major Farmar had already made

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17. Pierre Annibal Develle Chevalier de l'ordre Royal et militaire de St. Louis, Lieutenant de Roi Commandant du Port de la Mobile.
  18. Rene Jean Gabriel Fazende faisant fonctions d'ordonnateur au dit lieu en consequence des ordres que nous avons recus de Mrs. Kerlerec, Chevalier de l'ordre Royal et militaire du St. Louis, etc.
  19. Dabbadie commissaire general de la marine ordonnatuer en la ditte Province.
  20. Robert Farmar, named by His Brittanic Majesty to command the Port of Mobile and its dependencies and that part of Louisiana ceded in Consequence of the Seventh Article of the Definitive Treaty of Peace concluded at Versailles, the Tenth of February, etc.
  21. The text and the French translation of the *proces-verbal* are published in *P. R. O., C. O.*, 5,582.

appointments among his officers for a temporary staff for the fort at Mobile. Captain John Farmar of the Twenty-second regiment was appointed Fort Major and Captain Lind became Fort Adjutant. A master gunner with three men from each regiment to assist him, since there were no artillerymen among the troops, was appointed. Lieutenant Lindsay, an artillery officer of the Twenty-second (Gage's) regiment was appointed to superintend the landing and mounting of the cannon. Lieutenant Henry of the Thirty-fourth regiment was charged as barrack master. Captain Farmar added the keeping of the ordnance stores to his duties as fort major and Captain Lind served as surveyor of the works in lieu of an engineer. Lieutenant Lancelot Hilton became secretary. Mr. Richard Power was made commissary of provisions, Edward Burt, master gunner, and Sergeant William Kendrick, port sergeant.<sup>22</sup> This staff under Major Farmar's command immediately took charge of the fort at Mobile on October 20.

The same day Major Farmar issued a manifesto at Mobile to the inhabitants of British Louisiana. All suits in civil cases conducted under the French civil law were to be suspended at once by both parties and the cases referred *pro tempore* to the commandant of the local post, if the matter be trivial. The judge advocate (deputy) of the post at Mobile had been appointed by Farmar to assist him in such

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22. An order from General Gage restricted the staff of each fort in the province to a barrack-master and an adjutant. This was to minimize the expense of the empire military establishment. *Vide, P. R. O., C. O.*, 5,582; *Calendar of Home Office Papers for the Reign of George III*, I, 148; *Correspondence of General Thomas Gage*, I, XI, 129, 130; 208-218; *P. R. O., Sp. Dom., E. B.* 191. 42.

cases.<sup>23</sup> This was direct military government, but military government was then the only government in the province. This was, of course, actually true, although the civil government had legally been set up by the Proclamation of October 7. One of the many later controversies of Governor Johnstone with the military authorities centered around the governor's claim to review cases which had been passed upon by the military judges before his arrival in the province, on the ground that his authority began with the date of his commission, and not with his arrival in Pensacola. The military judges declared that appeal lay only to the Privy Council.

All landed estates and all complaints in land cases were to be recorded not more than a year from the issuance of the manifesto, and disposal of lands or real property was not permissible until the title had been verified and approved by the commanding officer. The governor and council set the final time limit for the handing in of land titles and sales for consideration as January 1, 1765.<sup>24</sup> French inhabitants who wished to remain might take the oath of allegiance at Mobile within the next three months.<sup>25</sup> Later delay meant dispossession and ex-

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23. Hamilton says that in 1767 Haldimand found the laws of West Florida to be an astonishing mixture of French and English. Presumably this refers to civil law. *Vide*, Hamilton, *Colonial Mobile*, 258-259 ; Carter, *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, IV, 314-341.

24. *Minutes of the Council of the Province of West Florida*, P. R. O., C. O., 5:632.

25. One hundred and twelve of the French took the oath before the end of the military period. Most of these were accorded land grants upon petition. The French seem to have had little objection to staying if they were guaranteed a reasonable personal and religious freedom. The Spanish professed a fear that the faith of their colonists would be contaminated under an alien government and church. *Vide*, *P. R. O., C. O.*, 5:632; Siebert, *Florida Historical Society Quarterly*, XI, no. 2, 48-57.

pulsion. Frenchmen who wished to leave the province might do so in accordance with the terms of the peace treaty. The manifesto was to be read in the parishes four consecutive Sundays, was to be posted on the church doors and in other public places. The manifesto was dated from Mobile "the present seat of the English government in Louisiana, this twentieth day of October, 1763 :"  
(Donnees a Mobile le present siege du Gouvernement Anglais dans la Louisiane ce vingtieme jour d'Octobre 1763.) The territory during the military, occupation was strictly regarded as former French and Spanish territory, without regard to the fact that both were included in the Province of West Florida by the Proclamation of October 7. The royal proclamation establishing the government had been issued on that date, but news of it had not yet reached the gulf coast.

At the same time that Fort Conde was taken over by Major Farmar it was renamed by him Fort Charlotte in honor of the young queen of England, Toulouse was abandoned temporarily, Fort Tombecbe was renamed York; and a jack and an ensign, borrowed from one of the transports, betokened British sovereignty in the new country. Hamilton adds a very colorful item to the surrender of Mobile. "As the lilies of France descended, a regiment of Highlanders from Pensacola entered, it is said, under Colonel Robertson, to the music of bagpipes, and a royal salute greeted the British flag as it was flung to the breeze." Other writers have followed approximately the same story. There appears, however, to be little substantiation for it. The nearest approach to a highland regiment at Mobile was Farmar's own regiment, the Thirty-fourth, which was a Cumberland regiment. It is possible that members of this regiment, which was

recruited largely, perhaps, in the north of England, were highlanders, but the regiment does not appear in official lists as a highland regiment. The records also show that Colonel Robertson did not arrive in Mobile until almost a month after the surrender of the post to Major Farmar.

The year 1763 included four important events in North America: the evacuation of Havana, the occupation of the gulf coast, the driving out of the British from the Illinois country and the lakes region, and the organization of the imperial troops in North America under a unified command on a peace basis. The last-named movement involved the older colonies particularly, for it compelled the raising of the old quarrel which had been contested during the late war. There was no help for it. A colonial union which did not come about voluntarily in defense against the enemy was forced upon the imperial government by the provisions of that treaty.

If the great valley was to be reconquered from the Indians who had driven the English out in 1763, it was necessary that a force should come from the south to join an expedition down the Ohio at Fort Chartres. Hence, the military of West Florida were concerned during the early winter in preparations for such an expedition, and in February 1764 a fleet of eleven craft under Major Loftus started up the Mississippi from New Orleans; but an ambuscade with the loss of a few men soon turned them back. General Gage was insistent, and after holding a

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26. *Vide*, Hamilton, *Colonial Mobile*, 217; Dunbar Rowland, *History of Mississippi*, 253-254; *The Correspondence of General Thomas Gage*, I, 7, 14-15, 24; *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, I, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131; Carter, *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, IV, 314 *et seq.*; Robert Beatson, *A Political Index to the Histories of Great Britain and Ireland*, II, 209, 210, 220, 231, 232, 247.

congress with generous gifts to placate the Indians and with more careful preparations and a skilful commander, Major Farmar, an expedition from the south at length reached Fort Chartres in December 1765. But meanwhile Louisiana had been ceded to Spain.