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Colonial Land Claims in East and West Florida

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COLONIAL LAND CLAIMS IN EAST AND WEST FLORIDA

The Florida Historical Records Survey (Works Progress Administration) is engaged in translating, abstracting, and indexing the manuscripts relative to land claims in East and West Florida in the Field Note Division of the Department of Agriculture at Tallahassee. These manuscripts constitute the archives of the Boards of Commissioners for the settlement of claims based on English and Spanish land grants in the Floridas, which Boards sat at Pensacola from 1822 to 1825 and at St. Augustine from 1823 to 1826. Although certain portions of this material, chiefly of a legal nature, are summarized and published in *American State Papers*, *Public Lands*, in the several reports of the Commissioners, and in those of the Committee on Public Lands relative to land claims in Florida, much important social and economic data on the second Spanish occupation, 1783-1821, are as yet unpublished.

The archives consist of original papers filed in evidence before the Commissioners and books of record containing minutes, transcripts of original papers, and translations of some of the transcripts. The original papers are in two groups, confirmed and unconfirmed grants, with all papers relative to a grant filed together in a single bundle or dossier. The Survey is abstracting every paper in each dossier, giving the names of all persons mentioned, all geographical data, such as names and locations of creeks, roads, and Indian trails, and many other facts of interest to the historian, as well as the basic information on size, location, and basis of the claim. These abstracts are being collated with the published material mentioned above. The abstracts will be supplemented by indexes of personal and place names.

This phase of the Florida Historical Records Survey program has been in progress for the last year under the direction of Professor E. V. Gage, and it is expected that another year will be required for its completion. Publication of the results, in mimeographed form, is contemplated. Inquiries concerning material in the land claims archives may be addressed to the State Office, Historical Records Survey, 301 Consolidated Building, Jacksonville, Florida. The Florida program is conducted by Mrs. Sue A. Mahorner, State Director, under the supervision of Dr. Luther H. Evans, National Director, Historical Records Survey.