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## The Port of St. Augustine During the British Regime, Part II

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## THE PORT OF ST. AUGUSTINE DURING THE BRITISH REGIME

by WILBUR H. SIEBERT

### PART II

#### *The Port During the Revolution*

Loyal to King George III, East Florida soon became involved with her rebellious neighbors to the northward. Wartime was reflected in the shipping at St. Augustine and the privateering in nearby waters. The first hostility of that neighborhood was the seizure of one hundred and eleven barrels and thirty-seven kegs of gunpowder from the English brigantine *Betsy* in July 1775 by a South Carolina sloop outside the bar. The aggressor escaped to the northward.<sup>1</sup>

The town was guarded off shore in early autumn (1775) only by a decked schooner of fourteen tons, Captain Mulcaster's decked boat, and the pilot launch of sixteen oars in two banks. On October 1 the man-of-war schooner *St. Lawrence* (Captain Graves) arrived off the bar and took on the pilots. Under a freshening wind the schooner stood off and on until the next morning, when it sailed in at three-quarters flood tide without touching the bar. Its presence in port improved the people's morale, but could not dispel their fears that the *Prosper* and three other privateers from Carolina would soon invade Florida waters.<sup>2</sup>

On February 2, 1776, Governor Tonyn ordered Major Furlong to take steps for defense, including the requiring of all vessels entering port, except

1. Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida, 1774 to 1785*. DeLand, 1929, 2 vols. I, 21-22.
2. Siebert, "Privateering in East Florida Waters and Northward in the Revolution," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Oct. 1943, pp. 65-66.

king's ships, to anchor at the ballast bank to be searched for arms and armed men. Certain signals would show that vessels might come in. The batteries would fire at any approaching nearer than the place designated.<sup>3</sup> By summer Tonyn was commissioning privateers to operate along the Georgia coast, but people there were expecting General Lee's expedition against St. Augustine to stop such operations. The news of the intended expedition brought by the royal ship *Raven* (Captain Stanhope) caused Tonyn to summon the sloop *Otter* (Captain Squires) from the St. Johns river to anchor off the bar, and the sloop *Tuncastle* was sent to the St. Johns to join two other vessels. The *Governor Tonyn*, private sloop of war, of forty men and ten guns (Captain George Osborne) was ordered up to St. Marys river to accompany the king's ship *Lively* in carrying dispatches to royal ships in the Savannah river. In attempting to drive some rebels from Bloody Point, opposite Cockspur, Captain Osborne was shot through the thighs. A sloop bound for England from St. Augustine was captured early in October by the *Defence* ship of war (Captain George Cooke) from Annapolis, Maryland. From his prize's two passengers Cooke learned that the *Cherokee* of six 4-pounders, the *Raven* of sixteen 6-pounders, and the *Sphinx* of twenty 9-pounders were cruising off of Cockspur. They were from St. Augustine, which was being guarded in part by the *Otter* and her tender, the schooner *Kinderhook*.<sup>4</sup>

In the fall of 1776 Tonyn's provincial expense was increased by caring for twenty-eight prisoners of war and their negroes sent from Virginia by Lord

3. Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida, 1774-1785*, I, 33.

4. C. O. 5/557, pp. 63-64; Edgar L. Pennington in *Florida Historical Society Quarterly*, July 1930, p. 33.  
 Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida, 1774-1785*, I, 44;  
 Siebert, in *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Oct. 1943, p. 69.

Dunmore, also by a stream of loyalist refugees arriving from the neighboring provinces. Part of the Virginia contingent was kept in the fort and part on the sloop *Otter*, which was thus turned into a prison ship. Captain Squires sent a dozen of these patriots back to the fort as "too dangerous to be kept on board." Voyaging northward with the rest of them, he released them near St. Marys river. In February 1777 a double-decked brig for St. Augustine with king's stores and dry goods from London was captured by the armed sloop *American Revenue* from Connecticut. That summer the armed ship *Hinchenbrook* (Lieut. Ellis) took the American ship *Franklin* off Charleston. St. Augustine again lost a quantity of dry goods when the *Judith* was taken prize by the cruiser *Notre Dame*.<sup>5</sup>

Tonyn had earlier commissioned and employed the sloop *Rebecca* (Captain John Mowbray) to anchor in St. Johns river so as to secure the inland water passage to Georgia. This would enable the planters along the river to employ their negroes in cutting lumber and making naval stores both for export and for home consumption. Tonyn made monthly contracts with the *Rebecca*, expecting help from the Naval Department, but when, in April 1777, he feared an invasion from Sunbury through the inland waterway and attacks by sea and land, he signed a four-months contract for that sloop. Lord Howe had already sent the *Lively*, a twenty-gun ship, to place vessels for the protection of East Florida, and the governor had procured a sloop of fourteen guns and some armed boats to keep the rebels from using their small boats in destroying "all our Plantations."<sup>6</sup>

5. Siebert, in *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Oct. 1943, p. 70; C. O. 5/557, p. 717.

6. C. O. 5/557, pp. 2-3, 21-24; Edgar L. Pennington in *Florida Historical Society Quarterly*, July 1930, pp. 28, 30-33; Siebert, in *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Oct. 1943, p. 71.

In May the *Rebecca* and the *Hawke* were ordered to anchor outside the bar of St. Johns river, where they were to be joined by the *Meredith* and the smaller armed vessels. But the anchored ships were blown out to sea, where a rebel brigantine of sixteen guns engaged the *Rebecca*, whose topmast was lost and her mainsail rent. One of her men was killed and nine were wounded. The enemy ship had some killed. At Savannah there was fear, in March 1778, that the coast and its trade would be distressed by the sloop of fourteen guns (Captain Adam Bachop) from St. Augustine. At Frederica three galleys with two fieldpieces and troops of Colonel Elbert on board captured the *Hinchenbrook*, one of the Florida craft, and its prize, an American brig. On the other hand the *Daphne*, *Galatea*, and *Perseus*, all from Florida, made captures, including several French merchant ships. From the latter St. Augustine received as additional prisoners of war the Chevalier de Bretigny, sixteen of his officers, and two hundred of his soldiers. By floating batteries and a few armed vessels the St. Johns river was guarded from its mouth to Panton's Indian store. In the summer the king's ship *Perseus*, the sloop of war *Otter*, the *Dreadnought*, the *Germain*, and the *Thunderer*, acting with the Florida troops, were about to pursue Howe's Continental forces, but the latter and their galleys retreated. The sloop *Tonyn's Revenge* of thirty-five men and twelve carriage guns and swivels (Captain Adam Bachop) and the sloop *Ranger* of an equal crew but only eight guns (Captain George Osborne) were taken off Charleston by the Connecticut ship *Defence* (Captain Samuel Smedley) and the French armed sloop *Volant*. A third privateer sloop from Florida escaped. In early August the *Otter* and the armed schooner *George* were dispatched southward to take a privateer with booty from New

Smyrna, but a violent storm wrecked them off Cape Canaveral.<sup>7</sup>

During the years 1776, 1777, and 1778 naval warfare out of St. Augustine seems not to have reduced the export of native products. These were doubtless increased by the growing immigration of loyalists. The staples for shipment in large volume were pine boards and lumber, oak staves and headings, mahogany, shingles, deerskins and hides, tar, pitch and turpentine; and indigo, coffee, rice, salt, etc., were exported in smaller amounts.<sup>8</sup>

In the spring of 1779 East Florida waters were still infested by privateers, three of which overhauled the *Jason* and its convoy about May 1. In August the privateer sloop *Mosquito* of fourteen guns from St. Augustine was seized by the sloop *Revenge* of eighty men and twelve guns (Captain Nathan Post of Saybrook, Connecticut). The news of the blockade of Savannah by the French fleet and an American force was delivered at New York on November 19 by the Florida privateer *Rosebud*. About the same time Governor Tonyn avoided exchanging some prisoners of war by sending them to England by the privateer *Hero*. In October he had written to Lord Germain of the capture of the sloop *Nuestra Senora del Carmen* off Charleston by the *Carysfort*, the prize being brought into St. Augustine with its Spanish master and crew and several shipwrecked French sailors. Just inside the harbor the prize grounded on a sandbar and Pilot James Smith failed to get her off by jettisoning her cargo of salt. Townspeople confiscated much of her sugar,

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7. Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida, 1774-1785*, I, 53; Siebert, in *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Oct. 1943, p. 72; C. O. 5/557, pp. 482-484; 5/558, pp. 436-437, Edgar L. Pennington, in *Florida Historical Society Quarterly*, July 1930, pp. 42-46.

8. Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida, 1774-1785*, I, 67-68.

molasses, and rum before she broke up in a north-easter.<sup>9</sup>

In August 1780 Cornwallis ordered thirty-eight prisoners of war from Charleston to St. Augustine. Thirty-seven of these, their twenty-six servants, their baggage, livestock, and poultry came in the ship *Fidelity* (Captain Abbot)-Alexander Moultrie and his family in Captain Clark's schooner. Both vessels were without the bar on September 8, when Pilot Smith climbed over the *Fidelity's* side and steered her out to anchor in nine fathoms of water. Clarke's schooner reached town by mid-afternoon. Soon Captain Abbot and a fellow officer landed from the ship's yawl and asked that a vessel or two be sent out to take off the passengers and their property. Twice bad weather obliged the *Fidelity* to weigh anchor and stand out to sea. A large schooner came alongside on the 13th and took off six carronades with their carriages, shot, and fuses, also a quantity of provisions. Next morning another schooner received the prisoners, servants, baggage, animals, and poultry, and on the way up to town grounded on a sandbank's edge, where she spent the night. They must have found relief when a couple of boats took them ashore and William Brown, the commissary of prisoners, marched them to the state house. There they were presented to Governor Tonym, Lieutenant Colonel Glazier, and other officers. They signed new paroles and soon separated into three groups, each with its own quarters.<sup>10</sup>

9. Siebert, *Loyalists, op. cit.*, I, 76; Pennington, *op. cit.*, p. 13, C. O. 5/559, pp. 381. ff; Germain to Tonym, 5/559, pp. 53-60, in *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Oct. 1943, p. 73.

In October 1770 the Carysfort went ashore on a reef south of the present Miami, since when this has been called Carysfort and the lighthouse there is Carysfort Light.

10. "Josiah Smith's Diary, 1780-1781," in *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, Jan. 1932, pp. 1-2.

Josiah Smith, one of the paroled prisoners, kept a diary relating chiefly to their experiences at St. Augustine during the term from early September 1780 to late in July 1781. From this diary we have chosen the port shipping news and the privateering exploits off shore and farther north. Of the sixty-nine vessels in and out-bound at St. Augustine, mentioned by the diarist, thirty-five voyaged to and from Charleston. About a sixth of these took on lumber, turpentine, or naval stores in St. Johns river for that town. Several from there came on military missions. For example, a schooner brought provisions for the garrison, and the sloop *Swift*, delivered victuals and soap for paroled prisoners. When the frigate *Carrysfort* (Carysfort) of thirty-two guns from Charleston, and the vessels under its convoy, were first sighted from the Look-out Tower on March 5, 1781, a flag was shown and a whole string of signal balls indicating a fleet to the south. The town feared it was a Spanish armament from Havana bent on attack. One of the convoyed ships—the brig *Dolphin*—had ordnance stores and provisions for the garrison; another—a scow—was laden with merchandise for the town; still another—the schooner *Maria*—had rice, rum, and other things for sale, and the fourth was the schooner *Hero*. As Savannah had also been warned of a possible attack by the Spaniards, Lieutenant Colonel Allured Clark sailed from thence with a reinforcement of one hundred and fifty men and some Hessians from the garrison. Their baggage was brought up to town on May 1 by the schooner *King of Prussia* (Captain Edward Smith). On May 25 the *Cormorant* man-of-war of sixteen guns (Captain McEwers) anchored off the bar and sent dispatches ashore. These probably refuted the rumors of an invasion from Havana, for on June 4 the *Cormorant* and the *King*



of Prussia, the latter with Colonel Clarke and his detachment on board, sailed for Savannah.<sup>11</sup>

A week later a small pilot boat arrived from that port, after recent capture off Sunbury by two large American whaleboats (Captains McClure and Howell). However, the pilot boat had sunk its English mail, its crew had been paroled, and the boat restored to them out of courtesy to their two women passengers. On the way back from Georgia with a load of poultry and tobacco, a small sloop owned by a few Greeks of St. Augustine had also fallen into the hands of the two whaleboats. The Greeks and an English companion had been paroled and their sloop and tobacco given back to them. A third prize taken by the whaleboats was the fine, large armed ship *Brittanic* (Captain Waide). Then the whaleboats met their fate, being driven on shore by the *Cormorant* and burned by their own crews.<sup>12</sup>

In an exchange of paroled prisoners between St. Augustine and Havana, a Florida sloop was sold in the latter port and a number of chests of Spanish sugar were received without protest in the former. The events were as follows: at the end of October 1780 the sloop *Hornet* sailed for Cuba with twelve Spanish captives, Commissioner Thomas Forbes, and Interpreter Luciana d'Herreira. At Havana she was condemned as unfit for sea and sold. In the following January a sloop from there under a flag of truce anchored off the bar of St. Augustine with forty prisoners of war (soldiers and sailors), Messrs. d'Herreira and Forbes and Captain Rose, besides many chests of sugar and casks of rum. Much of the sugar was taken on shore and the captain and other Spaniards roamed about town at

11. *Ibid.* Jan. 1932, pp. 1, 2, 8; Apr. 1932, pp. 68, 104, 108, 115, 116; July 1932, pp. 197.

12. *Ibid.*

will. Captain Cross's schooner had just come from Savannah with flour for the garrison. She now took on board some of the Spanish sugar and sailed for Savannah on January 22. The schooners *Dove* and *Success* and the sloop *Swift* stored on board some of the casks of sugar, and received a few white passengers and more than a hundred negroes. She left for Charleston on February 10. A few days later Cross's schooner returned to St. Augustine with more provisions and over a hundred pounds of gunpowder for the garrison. It hoisted sail for Savannah on the 28th with a number of white and black people on board. During April and June it made trips to and from Georgia, twice bringing provisions for the garrison and once dry goods for a town merchant. When it sailed north on June 15, it carried some passengers for Savannah. There was no secrecy about the exportation of the enemy's sugar or their free movement on shore.<sup>13</sup>

The sloop *Louisa* (Captain James Taylor) arrived from Charleston on September 29, 1780, with sailors and marines from the privateer ship *Rhodes* of twenty 6-pounders (Captain Buffington) from Salem. They were taken back there early in November by the victualer brigantine *Oak Stick*. In the following January the *Louisa* took her course to Mosquito Inlet and brought back a load of corn; her next voyage was up to St. Johns river with goods for an Indian trading store, whence she returned in March with a load of cedar logs. Later that month she went again to St. Johns to get lumber for Charleston. Another round trip in May resulted in her delivering naval stores.<sup>14</sup>

Early in December 1780 the privateer sloop

13. *Ibid.* Apr. 1932, pp. 80, 95, 96, 101, 104, 112, 113; July 1932, p. 197.

14. *Ibid.* Jan. 1932, pp. 83, 111.

*Trimmer* of twenty men and ten carriage guns went for a cruise off the Virginia coast. Later that month a small sloop brought from St. Johns some men captured there on the 15th in a schooner from Charleston by the privateer brig *Cutter* (Captain Ashby) from Salem. The privateer *Highland Lass* of eight men and two swivel guns (Captain Slough) left on June 2, 1781 to cruise towards the Mississippi. The schooner-rigged galley *Hammond* of less than twenty men, with two 18-pounders in her bow and four carronades and swivels in her waist, had arrived off the bar early in the previous April with five vessels in convoy. Entering the harbor, she moored opposite the fort, which fired a royal salute of twenty-one guns on June 4, the King's birthday. The *Hammond* repeated the salute and also the gunners with their fieldpieces on the parade. The soldiers closed the firing with three volleys from their muskets. The two formal celebrations of the day were the state dinner given by Governor Tonyn and the ball at night for the ladies.<sup>15</sup>

The privateer brigantine *Bellona* of seventy-odd men and sixteen carriage guns (Captain Harrison) from North Carolina, threw out most of her ballast while being pursued in December 1780 off St. Augustine. Drifting on the beach of Anastasia island towards its south end, she bilged. One of her men was drowned, and the others were made prisoners by soldiers from the Look-out Tower. The captives included the ship's officers and some American and European seamen. The Europeans were confined in the guardhouse, while the others were sent to the fort and then back to be kept under military control. The sick were placed in the hospital and supplied

15. *Ibid.* Jan. 1932, p. 23; Apr. 1932, pp. 91, 93, 113; July 1932, p. 197.

with things they desired by the paroled prisoners from Charleston, who also bought shirts, trousers and shoes for the naked. Some of the Europeans entered service at sea and others joined the 60th regiment. Those still prisoners of war were Captain Harrison, his officers, and forty-six of his seamen.<sup>16</sup>

Only four English ships came to St. Augustine according to diarist Smith's record. In December 1780 the ship *Hannah* (Captain Humphries) from London anchored off the bar with a cargo of dry goods. In a few days the sloop *Louisa* was towed from the swash bar to enable her to bring off some of those goods. Some were also ferried in by Captain Alexander's sloop. Thus lightened, the *Hannah* entered port in the evening of the 22nd. Three days after Christmas she sailed for St. Johns to take on naval stores for London. The pilot had the misfortune to ground her on the bar at the river's mouth and she was totally lost.<sup>17</sup>

The two-masted *Expedition* (Captain Davis) anchored off the St. Augustine bar on February 1, 1781, with a full cargo of dry goods and provisions from England. Its appearance was that of a Dutch fishing smack from the North Sea. It reached town two days later, unloaded its goods, and sailed for St. Johns in March to take on naval stores for the mother country. In the previous January the British ship *Loyalist* of twenty guns (Captain Ardesoif), formerly the privateer *Oliver Cromwell* of Connecticut, dropped anchor without the bar, having under its convoy a schooner from Charleston with provisions and rum for the garrison which soon moved up to town. Ten days later another schooner anchored near the *Loyalist* and ran up a pennant,

16. *South Carolina Hist. and Geneal. Magazine*, Apr. 1932, pp. 90, 91.

17. *Ibid.* Apr. 1932, pp. 92, 101, 116.

suggesting that it had intelligence for its neighbor. At any rate the *Loyalist* received on board the late privateer *Bellona's* officers and the forty-six remaining members of her crew. It also took under its convoy two schooners and a sloop carrying some white passengers and more than a hundred negroes. The four vessels sailed for Charleston on February 10 but were obliged by the wind to stand in for shore and anchor. No doubt they got away later under a favorable breeze. In the fall of 1780 the scow *Nancy* (Captain Hastie) left port for St. Johns to load with naval stores and skins for Bristol or London. She returned in January by way of Charleston with provisions for the garrison and a quantity of merchandise. She sailed away in March and after an absence of four months again brought provisions.<sup>18</sup>

Early on October 29, 1780 signals at the Look-out announced two vessels, one at the north and the other at the south, but only one ship anchored off the bar. It carried letters of marque and a cargo of goods and provisions. It was the *Governor Tonym* of forty-five men and twenty carriage guns (Captain Wade) from Liverpool, and had a flag at each masthead. A sloop and a schooner found the sea smooth enough to go and bring off a part of the cargo. That evening Captain Wade journeyed up to town in the ship's barge. Next morning the schooner repeated its excursion, returning with crates of earthen ware and iron pots, firkins of butter and cheese, and a supply of candles. On November 1 the schooner *Hero* got a load of the *Tonym's* goods and came back leaky and with part of its starboard waist stove in from having grounded on the bar the evening before. A heavy sea and strong lee current obliged the *Tonym* to stand out and anchor south-

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18. *Ibid.* Apr. 1932, pp. 102, 109, 101, 104, 105, 108.

east of the Look-out until a favorable wind arose. There it received a load of white oak staves and headings delivered by a schooner from St. Johns. On the 4th the ship anchored abreast of the bar, crossed it at high tide, and early in the afternoon paraded to the middle of the town's water front. Colors waved from the mastheads and a white flag at the mizzen-topmast with a reputed portrait of Governor Tonyn. Having anchored, the ship began the honors by firing seventeen guns. This was followed by three cheers given by sailors and negroes from shore up in the yards. The cheers were repeated by the privateer *Trimmer's* crew, and five guns were fired by the fort.<sup>19</sup>

A week later a grand dinner was given on board for the governor and eighty other gentlemen, including officers of the garrison. His embarkation from shore evoked the firing of seventeen guns by the fort and his appearance on deck a like number by the ship, which fired twenty guns at the end of the repast about four o'clock. The *Trimmer* answered with nine and the fort with twenty-one. The supper at six was marked by fifteen guns on board and five from the privateer. The party broke up at midnight.<sup>20</sup>

The *Hero* conveyed a load of turpentine to the *Tonyn* on Christmas morning, and so did Captain Wallace's sloop several days later. After completing its lading outside the bar, the *Tonyn* set sail for Liverpool on January 5. It had spent two months in port. A little more than the same period at sea was to find it on March 9 in a sharp engagement with the privateer ship *Saratoga* of eighteen guns (Captain John Young) from Philadelphia. The news of the *Tonyn's* capture was brought to St.

19. *South Carolina Hist. and Geneal. Magazine*, Apr. 1932, pp. 79, 80, 81, 83, 86, 87, 91, 93.

20. *Ibid*, *op. cit.*

Augustine by the sloop *Success* late in March. The prize was led into Cape Francois, in the French West Indies, and sold for twenty-eight hundred pounds sterling. Its cargo of turpentine brought a very low price. The *Hero* sailed under a flag of truce on April 9 to fetch back the officers and crew of the *Tonyn*, but returned seventeen days later with only its badly wounded captain and the doctor.<sup>21</sup>

The armed ship *Sandwich* (Captain Davis) convoyed the schooner *Earl of Lincoln* and two sloops from Charleston to St. Augustine late in November 1780. The convoyed vessels brought provisions for the garrison, and the schooner had also six prisoners of war on board. There were twenty-six more prisoners with their servants and baggage on board the *Sandwich*, which anchored some miles down the coast. Several days later all these were brought up to town by the pilot boat and the ship's barge, after which the *Sandwich* sailed for Charleston. More baggage, provisions, and servants for the prisoners arrived on the schooner *Recovery* (Captain Viccari) at the end of December. In at least one of its additional trips to Charleston it carried naval stores from St. Johns. One of the convoyed sloops made that journey northward early in December on a similar mission. The sloop *Recovery* (Captain Seth Dowd), not to be confused with the schooner of that name, brought a load of corn from Mosquito inlet in the latter part of April 1781. Curiously enough, it entered over the bar without being observed by the Look-out men. It sailed again for the Mosquitoes on May 4.<sup>22</sup>

The sloop *Rose* (Captain Canter) and the sloop *Cornwallis* (Captain Redmond) are the only vessels from Jamaica recorded in Smith's Diary as having

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.* Apr. 1932, pp. 86, 87, 88, 89, 91, 93, 113, 114, 116.

visited St. Augustine. After a little more than a month's stay the former sailed for St. Johns to load with lumber and naval stores for that island. The latter arrived along in April, went for the same kind of cargo, and sailed for Jamaica in May.<sup>23</sup>

Late in January 1781 the schooner *East Florida* of sixty tons (Captain Dawes) landed a load of lumber, corn, etc., at St. Johns, which the schooner *Fanny* brought to St. Augustine in April. The following month the *East Florida* arrived in port with a cargo of salt. The *Fanny* brought provisions for the garrison early in July as well as the conclusive order that all prisoners of war in the Southern Department would be exchanged at once. On the morning of July 7 signals at the Look-out Tower announced several vessels to the southward. They could not be seen from town till evening on account of showers and a strong wind. Next morning arrived the ship of war *Otter* of ten guns, a transport brig with recruits for the 60th Regiment, and the brig *Nancy* (Captain Watson). Lieutenant Colonel Beamsley Glazier offered to hire the *East Florida* to convey diarist Smith and his fellow-prisoners to Philadelphia if they would pay a hundred pounds towards the expense. They preferred to charter for themselves the *Nancy* at two hundred pounds. They embarked, sailed for the north, and landed at the foot of Chestnut street on July 30.<sup>24</sup>

In the previous May the prison ship *Torbay* and the prison schooner *Pack Horse* were at St. Augustine, the former with one hundred and thirty-five inmates and the latter with only twelve. (Their exchange may have been effected at Charleston). In April Tonyn had complained that most of the

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 112, 113, 116.

24. *South Carolina Hist. and Geneal. Magazine*, Apr. 1932, p. 115; July 1932, p. 199; Oct. 1932, p. 288.



East Florida merchantmen had been captured, and that the province's correspondence with New York had been interrupted thereby.<sup>25</sup>

From May through December numerous private vessels and occasional fleets of British transports arrived in port with thousands of loyalists and their families and slaves from Savannah and Charleston. About mid-October a vessel sailed from St. Augustine for the latter with two battalions of the 60th Regiment. During the stormy weather of the latter half of October the signalmen on Anastasia island and the pilots of the harbor were of little use in promoting the disembarkation of troops, stores, and provisions. However, these were all ashore by November 1st, including three companies of the 37th regiment from New York. A vessel with clothing for the provincials stranded on the bar and several men lost their lives in going to her aid. Of the fleet arriving from Charleston at the end of December, the galley *Rattlesnake*, two victualers, and six private vessels were lost on the bar, four lives with these last. A number of additional provision ships were at hand by May 19, 1783.<sup>26</sup>

Major Deveaux's little expedition, which sailed from St. Augustine on April 1, was in possession of New Providence island by the 18th. Through that autumn and the subsequent months transports and victualers were inbound and flotillas filled with loyalist emigrants and their dependents outbound for neighboring islands, for Nova Scotia, and for Britain.<sup>27</sup>

In March 1784 the traveler and observer Johann

25. *Ibid.* Oct. 1932, pp. 281, 282; Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida, 1774-1785*, I, 81, 88.

26. Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida, 1774-1785*, I, 106, 108, 113, 114, 116, 129, 143.

27. Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida, 1774-1785*, I, 146, 152, 155, ff.

David Schoepf came to St. Augustine from Charleston in a schooner of twenty-five tons. He remarks that ships were often unable to locate the town for several days on account of the "very flat coast." His schooner stood off and on before the bar awaiting the pilot, for whom it had signaled. The pilot came out in his boat "over the so-called Swash" and guided the vessel over the bar with the help of the incoming tide and a fresh northeast wind. Ordinarily the bar could be crossed by three channels, often by two only. Admitting nothing but small and light vessels, the channels were narrow and crooked and shifted in stormy weather. Hence pilots coming out to take in a ship must examine the passage anew and escort her in at flood tide only. Schoepf was told that within two days after the British surrender of Charleston sixteen craft bearing refugees and their effects had broken up on the bar, many persons losing their lives. Shortly before his own arrival a pilot of twenty years service had ventured out to meet a ship, but being refused his customary fee by the captain had started back, been capsized, and gone down with four negro helpers. The penurious skipper had fared nearly as bad, lost his stranded ship, and barely escaped with his life.<sup>28</sup>

Schoepf went about only in the environs of St. Augustine so as to avoid robbers and not miss a vessel for the Bahamas. The peninsula known as North Beach extended four or five miles north of town, and its south point paralleled the north point of Anastasia or Fisher's island. Ships were often kept from eight to fourteen days unable to pass the bar on account of wind and weather. Our traveler took passage on a sloop which did not leave the harbor until the 29th. Its two seamen were negroes and

28. Schoepf, *Travels in the Confederation*, Morrison's Translation, Phila. 1911. pp. 224, 226, 227, 228.

it was crammed with people, cattle, luggage, household furniture, and negro women and children to be sold in New Providence. It anchored opposite the "light house," as Schoepf miscalled it, "a solid, stone building, in the manner of an ancient Moorish castle, with ports and battlements." On Anastasia island, which he visited several times, he noted that the tower's upper part was "merely of wood and so decayed" that it shook with the slightest wind. A well in the "light house" had been excavated through the shell sandstone (coquina), affording very good water. At many places near the beach the shell rock had been dug out for buildings.<sup>29</sup>

*The Look-out Tower Becomes the Lighthouse.*

It is evident that the wooden superstructure of the Look-out Tower was near collapse when Schoepf saw it in March 1784. Probably it was soon taken down by the Spaniards (if it did not blow down) and replaced by a twelve-sided lantern about seven feet high, including its sloping roof and small chimney.

After Florida was ceded to the United States the old light was taken over in 1824 as a coast light by our government. During the years following the sea tore out the piles and planks and the ground in front and on the south side of the light keeper's house. All of that structure tumbled into the ocean except a part of the south wall and its attached chimney. The lantern was removed from the tower, leaving the circular stone base. Rendered useless, the old light house was discontinued in 1871.

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29. Schoepf, *op. cit.*, pp. 241, 244, 246, 248, 249.