

1981

Bernard Lintot: A Connecticut Yankee on the Mississippi, 1775-1805

Robin Fabel



Part of the [American Studies Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq>

University of Central Florida Libraries <http://library.ucf.edu>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Florida Historical Quarterly by an authorized editor of STARS. For more information, please contact STARS@ucf.edu.

Recommended Citation

Fabel, Robin (1981) "Bernard Lintot: A Connecticut Yankee on the Mississippi, 1775-1805," *Florida Historical Quarterly*. Vol. 60 : No. 1 , Article 8.

Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol60/iss1/8>

BERNARD LINTOT: A CONNECTICUT YANKEE ON THE MISSISSIPPI, 1775-1805

by ROBIN FABEL

DECIDING where one's allegiance lay and adhering to it in the era of the American Revolution was not always easy. Changing it was common but Bernard Lintot changed his an extraordinary number of times.¹ He was successively a citizen of the colony of Connecticut, a loyalist inhabitant of British West Florida, a subject of the king of Spain, a citizen of the state of Connecticut, and finally a founding member of the United States Mississippi territory. He represented unusual continuity. His was one of the very few of the old families of Mississippi to establish itself there during the period of British rule.

Lintot's origins are obscure. In the early 1760s he lived in premises on Wall Street, New York, where he traded in an amazing variety of goods, most of them imported from England. He sold mainly luxury items; jewelry, fine china and silverware, but also shoes, horse whips, brandy, and, occasionally, slaves. The amount of stock he carried suggests a high volume of business but in January 1765, he announced his intention of selling out and he auctioned off what then remained of it on April 14. Afterwards, he moved from Wall Street to a more obscure address near Oswego market. In August he showed public spirit by selling a consignment of medicines for the benefit of the asylum and the Magdalen charities.

In the early 1770s he lived in the Connecticut town of Branford, where he was a prosperous property owner. Nevertheless he

Robin Fabel is associate professor of history, Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama. The author wishes to express appreciation to Auburn University for a grant enabling him to do his research for this article.

1. The main source of information for Lintot's activities in New York and Florida is his petition to the General Assembly of Connecticut, January 16, 1784, in Connecticut Archives, Revolutionary War, 1763-1789 (unpublished manuscript material, Hartford, Conn.: Connecticut State Library), Series 1, vol. 27, 64-74 (hereinafter cited as Lintot's "Petition"), but additional New York material is in *New York Mercury*, March 5 and September 9, 1764 and January 21, April, and August 5, 1765.

had a large family and, like many another Connecticut parent, feared that if he stayed in the colony, he would be unable to provide adequately for his children.

The population of Connecticut was dense and increasing. Its soil was being worn out by incessant cropping and backward farming methods. It was difficult for a small farmer either to prosper or to acquire more acreage for himself. Much of the usable farm land was of unreachably high price or was held by absentees for rent or as a speculation. Benjamin Trumbull estimated that over 2,000 Connecticut men a year were leaving the colony in the decade before the Revolution in search of better economic opportunities elsewhere. Of these, something like 400 families migrated to West Florida under the auspices of the Company of Military Adventurers headed by General Phineas Lyman. The Adventurers was an organization composed primarily of New England veterans of the Seven Years War, hoping to benefit from the land bounty which they thought had been promised.

Lintot was not one of the Adventurers but, like them, his motives for emigration were economic, or so he alleged, and he may be believed because his subsequent career does not make considerations of adherence to the British crown a likely reason for his move from revolutionary Connecticut to loyalist West Florida. It is not difficult to accept that concern for the future of his seven children moved him.

According to a fellow Connecticut emigrant there was, in the early 1770s, "much talk about the goodness of the country near the Mississippi," and Lintot would have needed no special connection with West Floridians to know that there was an abundance of crown land available gratis or cheaply in the new British province.² The head of a household could obtain free from the colonial government 100 acres for himself, fifty acres for his wife, and an extra fifty acres for each member of his "family" – which meant not only offspring but also slaves and indentured servants. Additional acreage to round out a sizable plantation could be easily and inexpensively purchased from the government: the normal charge was five shillings, or just over one dollar, an acre.

In fact Lintot did have a contact who was knowledgeable about West Florida. He was a New Yorker, Dr. John Jones, whose

2. Matthew Phelps, *Memoirs and Adventures* (Bennington, 1802), 14.

brothers, Evan and James, were prominent from at least 1765 in the trade, law, and government of West Florida. Dr. Jones urged the advantages of establishing an indigo plantation.³ It was not bad advice. Thanks to the bounty of sixpence a pound offered by the king's ministers to aid the British woolen industry, indigo had proved a profitable crop, since it was first introduced to South Carolina in 1748, in areas where the climate and soil favored its growth. West Florida was one such area. On a small scale, indigo was grown there on the Amite and Comite rivers which ran in a north/south direction a few miles to the east of the Mississippi.⁴ Both ran into the Iberville which was connected with Lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain. Indigo was grown much more extensively on the other side of the Mississippi in the comparable but older colony of Louisiana.

Lintot was persuaded, and entered into communication with James and Evan Jones at Pensacola. In 1774 he sold his Connecticut farm on mortgage to Ralph Isaacs of Branford and in 1775 set sail for West Florida, arriving at Manchac on the Mississippi some time in the fall. Whether deliberately or by luck his timing was good, because unseasoned immigrants from cooler regions, who arrived earlier in the year, all too often succumbed to summer fevers and fluxes.

If any of British West Florida's few settlements, Pensacola, Mobile, Natchez, New Richmond (Baton Rouge), and Manchac, had a future, Lintot's choice was intelligent. Not only was there suitable plantation land at Manchac, but water communication with markets and sources of supply were then good and potentially excellent. Location on the Mississippi gave access southwards to New Orleans and northwards to the Illinois settlements. Because Manchac was also situated at the fork of the Mississippi and Iberville rivers the future seemed to promise the opening, by means of a canal or dredging, of a river route navigable by sizable vessels to the Gulf of Mexico by way of Lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain. Had such a development ever occurred, Manchac might have replaced New Orleans as the major port on the Mississippi.⁵ In 1765 a small fort had been built at Manchac on the

3. Lintot's "Petition," 64a.

4. Thomas Hutchins, *An Historical Narrative and Topographical Description of Louisiana and West Florida* (Philadelphia, 1784; facsimile ed., Gainesville, 1968), 61-62.

5. How and why it came to nothing is discussed in Douglas Stewart Brown,

orders of Governor George Johnstone, a great believer in Manchac's economic and strategic potential. To the chagrin of all those who wanted to attract settlers to the Mississippi, its garrison was withdrawn in 1768. Notwithstanding the lack of military protection, the township at Manchac thrived, so much so that the comptroller of customs at Pensacola urged the British government to establish a customs office there in 1771.⁶

It seemed sure that a major town would develop, not necessarily at the junction of the Iberville and the Mississippi, where it was swampy and where it had become obvious that the river could erode the banks unpredictably, but somewhere in the general area. In 1771 the West Floridian authorities planned a township on the Mississippi a few miles above the remains of Fort Bute which they hoped would be called Harwich. On November 2 alone, a dozen different inhabitants applied for waterside lots there, in each case using the familiar name Manchac in their petitions. These included Richard Carpenter, a Quaker from Rhode Island; George Castles, a New York ship's captain; Francois Pousset, the speaker of the West Florida Assembly, and several, like James Willing and David Williams, who already had plantations in the vicinity.⁷ The development of Harwich depended on the cutting of a proposed canal between the Mississippi and the Iberville. The cut was never made, and in the end Harwich came to little, but the plan was far from dead when Lintot arrived in West Florida in 1775. As late as 1777 lots were being marked and a levee cleared at the site, and on February 4, 1778, a grand jury of the general sessions of the peace was convened at Harwich.⁸ Lintot was one of the twenty-three principal planters and merchants of the Manchac district who sat on this jury.⁹

In 1775 another town, Dartmouth, was planned in the vicinity of Manchac, about twenty miles to the east of the fort's original

"The Iberville Canal Projects: Its Relation to Anglo-French Commercial Rivalry in the Mississippi Valley, 1763-1775," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 32 (March 1946), 491-516. See also Margaret F. Dalrymple, *The Merchant of Manchac: The Letterbooks of John Fitzpatrick, 1768-1790* (Baton Rouge, 1978), 11-16.

6. J. A. Martin to the Lords of the Treasury, received July 17, 1771, Great Britain, Public Record Office (hereinafter cited as P.R.O.).

7. P.R.O., Colonial Office (hereinafter cited as C.O.), 5/630, Council Minutes, November 2, 1771.

8. C.O. 5/634, 454.

9. C.O. 5/580, 305.

location, at the fork of the Iberville and Amite rivers.¹⁰ Like Harwich the name was intended as a compliment to the secretary of state for the American colonies who, in 1771, had been Baron Harwich and Earl of Hillsborough, but who, after 1772, was the Earl of Dartmouth. The new site was connected to Manchac by a good road suitable for carts which traders used nine months in the year. During the other three— May, June, and July— when the Mississippi was in flood, communication was easier because vessels drawing up to four feet could sail directly between the Mississippi and the Amite without the tedium of transshipping cargo. Once Dartmouth was established, surely, it must have been argued, those ten miles of the Iberville which were only intermittently sailable would be deepened to facilitate permanently water passage between the new town and the Mississippi. It should be noted that it was not only the British who saw great significance and potential in Manchac. Writing to the king of Spain in 1776, Don Francisco Bouligny described its commercial importance: “Boats leave New Orleans for Natchitoches, Pointe Coupée, Arkansas, and Illinois. In New Orleans they take something, but most of their cargo is taken from the floating stores, remote from the city, or at Manchac.” Bouligny seemed to imagine that Manchac was the lynch-pin of the whole colony of West Florida. “If no means are taken to prevent the development of that establishment it will absorb ours and will be a menace to the vast kingdom of Mexico.”¹¹ Thus the chances were that Lintot had chosen to situate himself in West Florida at a propitious time in a most favorable area.

On February 26, 1776, alleging that he had been obliged to leave Connecticut and seek asylum in Florida because of the revolutionary disturbances further north, he applied for a grant of land on the Amite River on the east side of Stuart’s Creek. It was probably no coincidence that the plantation of James Jones was also on the Amite. In addition to 100 acres for himself, Lintot could claim on family right 850 acres because with him he had his wife, seven children, seven black slaves, and two white indentured servants. Added to these 950 acres, he was also awarded 1,000 acres as a bounty for proven loyalism.¹² Once more he had

10. Dalrymple, *Merchant of Manchac*, 15.

11. V. M. Scramuzza, “Gálveztown, A Spanish Settlement of Colonial Louisiana,” *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, 13 (October 1930), 559.

12. C.O. 5/631, Council Minutes for February 26, 1776.

been fortunate in his timing, because this type of bonus had been available for only three months at the time of his application.

Lintot did not settle on the Amite. According to his own statement, he moved because the climate had destroyed his own and his family's health. Exactly ten months after his first petition, he asked for 950 acres on family right on the Ticksaw River, noting his loyalty to England, and stating that he was "well attached to His Majesty's government" and disapproved of the rebellion. His request was favorably received by the West Florida Council.¹³

Once more Lintot sought to change his residence, and again he was fortunate. In the summer of 1777 he had a plantation surveyed eleven miles east of the Mississippi. It was separated from the river by the huge 20,000 acre estate given to the former lieutenant governor of West Florida, Montfort Browne. Lintot's grant was level with the Milk (Browne's) Cliffs opposite Pointe Coupée, and it must have been very close to the Comite River. The formalities of this grant were completed on August 4, 1777. As usual, a number of not particularly relevant conditions were attached to it. Any gold and silver found on the land was reserved for the king, and Lintot was liable to pay an annual quitrent of a half-penny an acre every Michaelmas, the first payment falling due ten years after the initial grant.¹⁴

It is difficult to account for the West Florida Council's unusual indulgence to the indecisive Lintot. The reason was certainly not the influence of James Jones who was in bad odor for having absented himself without permission from council meetings after 1773.¹⁵ Perhaps it was because he was the type of immigrant—prosperous and of large family—that Governor Chester wanted to encourage to settle in West Florida.

In spite of his several land grants, Lintot was still not content. Even while acquiring land in West Florida he was, according to his own account, trying every measure to return to Connecticut. To this end he removed his family to New Orleans in April 1777, but even after six months there he could not obtain a passage.¹⁶ If he had wanted to return alone no doubt it might have been

13. C.O. 5/634, 451.

14. C.O. 6/607, 376-78.

15. C.O. 5/593, 217.

16. Lintot's "Petition," 64b.

arranged. A great deal of shipping voyaged to and from New Orleans at that time, braving numerous privateers in the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean. For example when, on the seventeenth of that same April, the Spanish governor of New Orleans, Bernardo de Gálvez, decided to seize all vessels with English-speaking crews, there were thirteen such boats on or off New Orleans, two of which were American. On his own Lintot might have shipped on an American vessel or, for greater safety, on one of the French or Spanish vessels frequenting New Orleans. From a Caribbean port, he could have boarded a ship flying the neutral flag of one of the Bourbon powers to take him to Connecticut. Lintot was not alone, however, and it is possible that no captain sailing dangerous waters was prepared to encumber his vessel with Lintot's wife and numerous children.

It is likely, however, that Lintot was not trying to leave New Orleans at all, but rather to take advantage of the lucrative trade opportunities available in the city at that tumultuous time. For in spite of Gálvez's seizure of British ships, and his expulsion of some British inhabitants from New Orleans, he was not consistent in his policy. British trading concerns like the firms of David Ross and John Campbell which had been allowed to operate before the April swoop were soon as active as before. One of the standard routes for illicit trade was between New Orleans and Manchac and evidently Lintot used it. For, although for the benefit of the Connecticut Assembly, he alleged that, after disappointment at New Orleans, he returned to Manchac "merely in quality of a planter," he is described in a legal document of February 5, 1778, as "now of Manchac, merchant."¹⁷ Also if he was truly intending to return to Connecticut, his purchase at that same time of 200 acres on the Amite River seems rather strange.¹⁸ Also surprising, if his story were true, was that he allowed himself to be elected to the West Florida legislative assembly later that year, although he never actually attended.¹⁹

A map of Manchac in 1772 shows it as scarcely justifying the name of village.²⁰ Other than John Fitzpatrick's warehouse, the

17. Ibid.

18. C.O. 5/617, 203.

19. Robert R. Rea and Milo B. Howard, *The Minutes, Journals and Acts of the General Assembly of British West Florida* (University, Alabama, 1979), 293.

20. Dalrymple, *Merchant of Manchac*, 197-99.

ruins of Fort Bute, and the old military hospital, there were only eight buildings of any sort, all of them small. It had grown considerably by the time that Lintot moved there in 1777, when William Bartram noted a few "large and commodious" buildings, in particular the warehouses of Swanson and Company, the Indian traders.²¹ In Hukey's tavern would gather the principal inhabitants, William Swanson, the Monsanto brothers, Thomas Bentley, John Fitzpatrick, and the many travelers who stopped at Manchac.²²

Lintot had only recently arrived at Manchac when Captain James Willing in February 1778, came down the Mississippi, terrorizing the British settlements on the east bank of the river.²³ Willing knew the area well. Before the Revolution he had owned a plantation in the Natchez district and a waterside lot at Manchac. In 1777 the Continental Congress authorized him to take an expedition down the Mississippi and to seize whatever British property was available.²⁴ Since this area had been stripped of its military garrison a decade before, Willing's tatterdemalion force, dressed in hunting smocks and armed with cutlasses, pistols, and rifles, was irresistible. Flight from Manchac was singularly easy since it was separated from Spanish Louisiana by a foot-bridge over the Iberville River. Nearly all the inhabitants fled there with their slaves. A party of Americans under Willings's lieutenant, John McIntyre, looted the houses at Manchac, drove off the cattle and set fire to a stock of 40,000 wooden staves. In the process they burned down the dwellings and outbuildings of Thomas Bentley.²⁵ Alone of Manchac's citizens, if his account is to be believed, Lintot stayed behind to welcome Willing and to provide him with accommodation. As a result Lintot's property was not molested.²⁶

Then, in June 1778, the British authorities, in the wake of Willing's raid, sent a garrison of a hundred or so troops, mostly

21. Mark Van Doren, ed., *Travels of William Bartram* (New York, 1955), 341.

22. C.O. 5/631, Council Minutes for March 2, 1778.

23. Elizabeth Conover, "British West Florida's Mississippi Frontier during the American Revolution" (M.A. thesis, Auburn University, 1972), passim; Robert V. Haynes, *The Natchez District and the American Revolution* (Jackson, Mississippi, 1976), 58-72.

24. John W. Caughey, *Bernardo de Gálvez in Louisiana, 1776-1783* (Berkeley, 1934; reprinted., Gretna, 1972), 102-05.

25. John Fitzpatrick to Thomas Bentley, August 1, 1780, quoted in Dalrymple, *Merchant of Manchac*, 359.

26. Lintot's "Petition," 64e.

German mercenaries, to Manchac.²⁷ They turned the one undamaged house in the village into quarters and helped themselves to the stock and provisions that Willing had spared. Lintot and his family were ousted and compelled to live in a cowshed which at times was entirely surrounded by water. They were not the only ones in Manchac displaced, notwithstanding the "marks of esteem and friendship" shown to Willing; loyal John Fitzpatrick and his wife were also moved out of their house by the soldiers.²⁸

William Dutton, a Pensacola merchant who served as commissary for the Manchac garrison, was quartered in Lintot's house together with several officers. Some three months later Dutton died, and Captain William Barker, commander of the detachment, asked Lintot to take over an important part of Dutton's job, the allocation of rations to the troops. In return he would be able to draw provisions for himself and his family from the military ration store. To save his family from starvation, according to his later explanation, Lintot accepted.²⁹ He continued to perform this service until Manchac was captured by the Spanish troops under Gálvez on September 7, 1779.

Unlike the rest of the garrison, Lintot did not become a prisoner of war and was permitted to stay on at Manchac.³⁰ This evidence of recognition of civilian status was later to be of importance to him. Then despite Spanish indulgence Lintot decided to leave Manchac. He seems first to have gone to his plantation at Ticksaw, and then to have returned briefly to Manchac.³¹ On September 14, 1780, he was in Pensacola.³² Next he bought a plantation on the Acadian coast of Louisiana (the Mississippi shore between Manchac and New Orleans) some time before December 1780, from Dr. Samuel Flowers, a former Philadelphian now living in West Florida.³³ Lintot seemed to be confirming his

27. Haynes, *The Natchez District*, 88, 119.

28. Fitzpatrick to John Miller, June 9, 1778, quoted in Dalrymple, *Merchant of Manchac*, 294.

29. Lintot's "Petition," 64f.

30. Nevertheless, although he did not mention it in his petition, Lintot was placed on parole by Gálvez on July 13, 1780. Caughy, *Bernardo de Gálvez*, 162, fn. 50.

31. Fitzpatrick to Lintot, July 16, 1780, quoted in Dalrymple, *Merchant of Manchac*, 356.

32. C.O. 5/580, 305.

33. Fitzpatrick to Daniel Hicky, December 9, 1780, quoted in Dalrymple, *Merchant of Manchac*, 362. Flowers had arrived in West Florida in January 1775, and had acquired joint ownership with Stephan Watts of

desire to be a Spanish subject. Gálvez had been magnanimous in his treatment of settlers in those parts of West Florida that he captured in 1779. Those who chose to remain had to take an oath of loyalty to the Spanish king on Sunday, October 11, 1779, and would thus become Spanish subjects. Those reluctant to take the oath would have eight months in which to dispose of their property. They would then be offered passage to any English port they selected. Since property in the western sections of West Florida was all but unsaleable, undoubtedly there were some inhabitants who elected to become Spanish subjects only because the alternative was economic ruin. Since Lintot still retained some capital he was not one of those willing to leave Florida.³⁴

Lintot was shocked to learn when he returned to the United States in November 1783, that all his property in Connecticut had been declared forfeit and had been confiscated by the state. Acting on what Lintot considered the malicious charge of a certain Mr. Bay, whose identity is unknown but who may have been connected with the prominent West Floridian, Elihu Hall Bay, that he had assisted the enemies of the United States, the selectmen of Branford had initiated a prosecution *in absentia* of Bernard Lintot in October 1781. The legal process was characteristically slow, but on January 10, 1783, a county court at New Haven had ruled that Lintot's Connecticut property should be confiscated.

Lintot quickly petitioned the Connecticut assembly to reverse the decision. He noted that he had punctually paid all the required taxes on his property and that the judgment had been made after signature of the provisional Anglo/American treaty ending the Revolutionary War. He refuted the charge of disloyalty and claimed that he had never committed himself to the British cause during the conflict. He presented an array of testimony to support this contention, including a document designed to show that the Spanish no longer considered him a British subject. It was a certificate of August 23, 1783, from Don Estevan Miró, the civil and military governor of Louisiana, recognizing Lintot as an old inhabitant and giving him permission to come and go in Louisiana, and New Orleans in particular, as he pleased. A second document sought to show that Lintot had re-

a plantation with sixty-four slaves. C.O. 5/631, Council Minutes for October 1, 1777.

34. C.O. 5/635, 69.

mained unwillingly on British soil once the Revolution began. John Jennings, a Philadelphia merchant, testified on December 12, 1783, that he was in New Orleans in the summer of 1777 when the Lintots lived there. They had left, alleged Jennings, only because Governor Gálvez had expelled all the English from the city; the Lintots moved to British Manchac because they could not obtain passage to New England. Jennings probably knew Lintot well; they both served on the Harwich grand jury which met in February 1778.³⁶ When Jennings left Louisiana in June 1783, Lintot was living on his Acadian coast plantation.

Lintot also persuaded Captain Thomas McIntyre who, as a lieutenant under James Willing, had helped despoil Manchac, to write on his behalf. The officer testified that he had been twice in New Orleans between April 1778, and December 1782, and had never heard that Lintot was opposed to the United States. Another deposition was from Dr. John Jones whose testimony was calculated to remove suspicion that Lintot had emigrated to West Florida to avoid involvement in the Revolution. According to Jones, from 1773 he had advised Lintot to make the move for the sake of his children. Samuel Strether asserted that in 1776, while he was living in Pensacola, the Lintots had arrived from the Amite River trying to secure passage back to New England. Failing that, they had sold their personal effects and had gone on to New Orleans in the hope of finding better luck there. Chronologically Strether's testimony might seem misplaced, but Lintot apparently preferred to arrange his supporting documents according to the social rank of the authors, and Strether was a young and struggling goldsmith.

In spite of social considerations perhaps the most persuasive of all his supporting documents were two mass petitions from the inhabitants of Lintot's old hometown Branford, one with 206 names on it and the other with over 100. They described Lintot as "a very honest, humane, moral and worthy citizen," and argued that his estates should never have been confiscated.

Actually this bundle of testimony, although undoubted proof of Lintot's energy and organizing ability, did not fully substantiate what he was trying to prove. The certificate from Miró, for example, was merely a kind of passport according Lintot the same

35. C.O. 5/580, 311.

treatment that the Spanish authorities allowed all inhabitants, even those who had been strongly pro-British, provided, as few did, that they stayed on in Florida accepting Spanish rule.³⁶ Captain McIntyre's statement was a weak endorsement of Lintot's patriotism. Also John Jennings's testimony that Lintot had been compelled to leave New Orleans after Gálvez's expulsion order in 1777 is suspect, in that Englishmen willing to accept Spanish authority were allowed to stay on and many did. Jennings also, perhaps unintentionally, dented Lintot's story that he had welcomed Willing. Jennings claimed that all inhabitants of Manchac had crossed over to Spanish territory at Willing's approach, "not one remaining." Both his testimony and that of Strether, the other witness to swear that the Lintots were anxious to leave West Florida in 1776 and 1777, varied with the petitions for land grants made by Lintot at the time. A condition for these claims was residence in the province. Naturally Lintot did not mention these grants to the assemblymen, and probably they never learned of them. Finally in their list of Lintot's virtues, the inhabitants of Branford had not included patriotism or enthusiasm for revolutionary principles. In another year, the assemblymen might have made much of these deficiencies.

Once again Lintot was lucky in his timing. His petition was lodged after wartime passions had somewhat cooled and after signature of a peace treaty in which Congress had accepted the principle that Loyalist property should be restored. Lintot's application with its supporting documents was submitted on January 16, 1784, and within the month the Connecticut General Assembly had granted his request.³⁷

Instead of celebrating his triumph by settling in Branford, Lintot returned to the Mississippi area to yet another plantation. In the Spanish census of the Natchez district of 1792 Bernard Lintot was listed, together with Samuel Flowers with whom he had once had business dealings, as an inhabitant of the Santa

36. Cf. Fitzpatrick's comment in 1785: "The five English that still remain in the country are treated with great indulgence and civility by the government." Fitzpatrick to John Stephenson, May 23, 1785, quoted in Dalrymple, *Merchant of Manchac*, 418. William Dunbar was one of those five whose inclusion on James Willing's list suggest that, at the very least, he was not known for pro-Americanism. Mrs. Dunbar Rowland, *Life, Letters and Papers of William Dunbar* (Jackson, Mississippi, 1930), 60.

37. Lintot's "Petition," 64g.

Catalina beat.³⁸ He was one of the more prominent citizens of the Natchez district, and later when Governor Gayoso projected a cabildo for Natchez, he nominated Lintot as one of its five members. This plan, however, never became a reality.³⁹

Following the Treaty of San Lorenzo of October 27, 1795, Spain recognized the thirty-first parallel of latitude to the Chattahoochee River as the southern boundary of the United States. Thus the inhabitants of the Natchez district, including the region around St. Catherine's Creek, would become citizens of the Republic. The inhabitants seem to have shown little interest in effecting this transition until the arrival in June 1797 of Andrew Ellicott, the surveyor commissioned by the United States to run the national boundary line. Shortly afterwards, in the face of growing mob activity, responsible citizens elected, on June 20, a committee of safety to preserve order.⁴⁰ Bernard Lintot was a member of the committee, together with Anthony "Hutchins, Cato West, Gabriel Benoist, and William Ratliff. On June 22, the committee submitted a series of demands "to restore tranquility" to Governor Gayoso, who accepted them.⁴¹ These secured during the transition period prior to full United States rule respect for Spanish law in general. It also guaranteed the right of the Natchez inhabitants to elect their own magistrates, to be tried locally, and to exemption from service in the Spanish militia.

The committee, having completed its work, dissolved. Shortly afterwards Gayoso was replaced by Stephen Minor who served as acting governor.⁴² Born in Pennsylvania, Minor had emigrated

38. Dunbar Rowland, ed., *Publications of the Mississippi Historical Society*, 5 vols. (Jackson, Mississippi, 1916-1925), I, 426-27.

39. Jack D. L. Holmes, *Gayoso: The Life of a Spanish Governor in the Mississippi Valley, 1789-1799* (Baton Rouge, 1965), 49-50.

40. Andrew Ellicott, *The Journal of Andrew Ellicott* (Philadelphia, 1803; reprinted., Chicago, 1962), 114-16.

41. The growing unrest centered around an itinerant Baptist preacher (Barton Hannon) who, having been soundly thrashed in an argument with a group of Catholics in the St. Catherine's Creek area, vowed revenge. Taking his threats of violence toward the Catholics to Governor Gayoso, he demanded that either the governor take action or he would. So Gayoso, fearing a threat to the public peace, ordered Hannon imprisoned. This so outraged the citizens of the Natchez district that they threatened to storm the fort where Hannon was being held. The incident was averted when the citizens learned that explosives were being shipped into the fort. See Holmes, *Gayoso*, 190-95.

42. J. F. H. Claiborne, *Mississippi as a Province, Territory and State*, 2 vols. (Jackson, Mississippi, 1888), I, 161-71.

to New Orleans. He served as an officer in the Spanish army at Baton Rouge, Mobile, and Pensacola, and then Gálvez appointed him an assistant in the Natchez district in 1781.⁴³ There he took as his second wife Bernard Lintot's daughter Catherine, who had been born in Connecticut in 1770. She bore Minor five children. He had purchased Governor Gayoso's mansion, Concord, and there the family lived in princely style.

Catherine's older brother, William, married Grace Mansfield of Connecticut and became a successful planter in Adams County, Mississippi. Another of the Lintot girls, Frances, married Philip Nolan, one of the more colorful characters on the frontier. Nolan was agent for General James Wilkinson dealing in tobacco at New Orleans, but he was best known for his several expeditions into Texas where he caught and tamed wild horses. He sold some of them as remounts to the Spanish army, and disposed of others illegally. Daniel Clark thought him "formed for enterprises of which the rest of mankind are incapable," but his promise was never fulfilled because, after revocation of his horse-trading license, he was shot and killed by a force of Spanish troops sent to arrest him in 1801. He had married two years before and a son was born after his death.⁴⁴ Another of the Lintot sisters, Sarah, married Hubert Rowell.⁴⁵

Before his death in 1805, Bernard Lintot's name appeared in several documents concerning the early years of the Mississippi territory.⁴⁶ In 1800 he signed a petition to the United States Congress asking that Mississippi not be advanced to the second stage of territorial government. The following year he was one of forty citizens who signed a tribute to their departing governor, Winthrop Sargent, and in 1802 he joined in a testimonial to the efficiency of Colonel Steele, secretary to the territory. Also in 1802, after a reorganization of the court system in Mississippi, the governor chose Lintot to be a justice of the peace, but he declined the honor. In 1803 he became treasurer of Adams County, Mis-

43. Stanley C. Arthur, ed., *Confidential Dispatches of Gálvez, 1777-1780* (Baton Rouge, 1937), 115.

44. Dumas Malone, ed., *Dictionary of American Biography*, 20 vols. (New York, 1927-1936), XIII, 543-44.

45. Stanley C. Arthur, ed., *Archives of the Spanish Government of West Florida, 1782-1810*, 19 vols. (New Orleans, 1937), X, 103.

46. *American State Papers*, Class 8 Public Lands, 8 vols. (Washington, 1832-1861), I, 784.

issippi, the first permanent post in government he is known to have held.⁴⁷

Bernard Lintot is a difficult man to fathom. Unlike his neighbor, John Fitzpatrick, he left no correspondence. From other evidence one may conclude that he was shrewd, restless, humane, physically tough, and adaptable. Many pioneers had these qualities and perished or failed. Why Lintot survived and prospered enough to provide a rare living link between British Florida and the Mississippi territory of the United States deserves examination. That he had a nose for the prevailing wind is debatable for if it were truly keen he would not have left New England. What is sure is that he had the knack of evoking governmental benevolence, no matter who was in power, perhaps because he lacked ambition for office. Prosperous taxpayers with exclusively private ambitions are sometimes welcome to governments. That he changed his allegiance repeatedly is true, but since, in doing so, being powerless, he harmed nobody; the term turncoat, if applied to Lintot, loses much of its pejorative force. He was probably simply more concerned about family than flags. Although the evidence for his motives is fragmentary, the fact that his petition for the restoration of his Connecticut property has survived, enables us to know almost as much about his life in West Florida as about those few contemporaries in the area; John Fitzpatrick, William Dunbar, and Matthew Phelps who left posterity much more extensive records. If the motive for his travels was, as he asserted, to seek better opportunities for his children, it must have been a source of satisfaction to him that before he died at least some of his family had found and taken them.

47. Clarence E. Carter, ed., *The Territorial Papers of the United States: The Territory of Mississippi, 1798-1817*, 28 vols. (Washington, 1937), V, 117, 123, 249, 254.