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THE SPANISH ST. AUGUSTINE COMMUNITY, 1784-1795: A REEVALUATION

by SHERRY JOHNSON

WHILE documentation is available, historians have not accurately defined the community in St. Augustine after the return of Spanish rule in 1784. Community studies abound for towns in Europe and North America, but community study techniques, which have been so successful in reinterpreting North American colonial history, have been underutilized by Latin American historians.¹ Eighteenth-century St. Augustine presents an opportunity to investigate one frontier settlement and the origins of its inhabitants. However, the point of beginning for any such study must be a definition of the structure of the community itself. Research reveals that St. Augustine resembled other Spanish American cities in more ways than previously believed. The dominant society was represented by the Spanish administration, and was reinforced by Cuban civil servants and returned Floridano families. Minorcans and others who identified with the Minorcan community welcomed the return of Spanish administration, and "foreign" persons who chose to remain under Spanish rule were assimilated into the dominant society.

Like many cities of the Spanish empire, the physical layout of St. Augustine conformed to the gridiron pattern, a legacy of its sixteenth-century founding. Constrained by the limitations of usable land on the peninsula on which the town was located, St. Augustine's physical appearance had changed little in its 200-year existence. In the center of town was the plaza, where most municipal activities took place, and in close proximity were major public buildings. The governor's house fronted on the

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1. John E. Kicza, "The Social and Ethnic Historiography of Colonial Latin America: The Last Twenty Years," *William and Mary Quarterly* 45 (July 1988), 487-88. See also, Darrett B. Rutman, "Assessing the Little Communities of North America," *ibid.* 43 (April 1986), 163-78.

plaza, as did the royal treasury building and the residence of the treasurer. Also on the plaza was land set aside for the construction of a cathedral. The public slaughterhouse was located at the east end of the plaza near the waterfront, and the public market was held there on market days.² The distribution of St. Augustine's private residences exhibited the same tendencies of other Spanish American cities. Elites and wealthy families, regardless of ethnic origin, clustered in the core area of the city, preferring to follow Spanish custom and be located near the center of the town. High Spanish officials; merchants of British, Spanish, Corsican, Italian, or Floridano origin; wealthy Minorcan widows; and less wealthy, but no less prestigious, Spanish or Cuban civil servants also lived in the area close to the plaza and along San Carlos Street.³ Geographic clustering also was exhibited according to occupation. Persons employed by the government as garrison or hospital employees tended to live in the southern end of town close to the barracks. Alongside the employees of the hospital and barracks lived those who catered to the military trade—the petty merchants, artisans, and wineshop keepers.⁴ Merchants engaged in the coastal trade made their homes close to the waterfront, despite chief engineer Mariano de la Roque's warning that the harbor was in need of a seawall to protect the city from the high tides of winter storms.⁵ At the north end of town was the Castillo de San Marcos, and

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- 2 . Mariano de la Rocque [Roque], "Plano de la Ciudad de San Agustín, 25 de abril de 1788," and "Descripción del plano de la ciudad de San Agustín de la Florida del año 1788," typescript copies in the P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida, Gainesville. See also, Kathleen Deagan, *Spanish St. Augustine, 1700-1763: The Archaeology of a Colonial Creole Community* (New York, 1983), 45-46, and Albert Manucy, "The Physical Setting of Sixteenth Century St. Augustine," *Florida Anthropologist* 38 (March-June 1985), 47-48.
 - 2 . De la Rocque, "Plano de la ciudad," identified houses occupied by royal treasurer Gonzalo Zamorano, chief guard Emanuel Fernández Biedicho, and former British tailor/planter Edward Ashton located along the first two blocks of San Carlos Street.
 - 4 . Ibid. Doctor Bernardo de la Madrid, wineshop keeper Pedro García, and hospital baker/shopkeeper Gerónimo Alvarez lived in the southern end of town.
 - 5 . Mariano de la Rocque to Luis de Unzaga, July 30, 1784, in Joseph B. Lockey, *East Florida, 1783-1785: A File of Documents Assembled, and Many of Them Translated* (Berkeley, 1949), 244-45. De la Rocque, "Plano de la ciudad," located the houses and warehouses of Miguel Ysnardy, Francisco Felipe Fatio, and John Leslie along the waterfront.

close to it lived another group of military families, including many widows of old Floridano soldiers and the commander of the troops in the fort.⁶ On the fringes of town to the northwest lived the marginal families. Most were clustered in one area along present-day Cuna Street in an area that historians have dubbed the Minorcan Quarter.⁷

Except for its smaller size, St. Augustine's society was similar to that in other Spanish American cities. Because it was only a provincial capital, St. Augustine had no titled elites.⁸ Nevertheless, like other urban centers, St. Augustine's society divided into distinct strata. Spanish authority in the province was represented by the governor, treasury officials, military members, and a cadre of support personnel— such as secretaries, notaries, and hospital employees— who accompanied the bureaucracy. Members of the clergy were active in St. Augustine, but their numbers were never as large as they were in other Spanish cities, either in absolute numbers or as a proportion of the total population. Persons engaged in varied mercantile activities constituted a large proportion of the community, and artisans were plentiful. Making up the poorer classes were those with menial jobs— persons who tilled small plots of land outside the city limits, or the ubiquitous fishermen and sailors of a maritime community. A few widows and abandoned women joined the ranks of those who barely eked out an existence. At the bottom of the social scale were the black slaves who toiled for their masters.⁹

6. De la Rocque, "Plano de la ciudad," identified the properties occupied by Floridana widows Lucia Escalona, Juana Montes de Oca, and Maria Castañeda, more recently married to Juan Sánchez. See also, Charles W. Arnade, "The Avero Story: An Early St. Augustine Family with Many Daughters and Many Houses," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 40 (July 1961), 19.

7. Patricia C. Griffin, "The Minorcans," *El Escribano* 25 (1988), 70-71.

8. Allan J. Kuethe, "Los Llorones Cubanos: The Socio-Military Basis of Commercial Privilege in the American Trade Under Charles IV," in Jacques A. Barbier and Allan J. Kuethe, eds., *The North American Role in the Spanish Imperial Economy, 1760-1819* (Manchester, 1984), 146-49.

9. Census Returns, 1784-1821, East Florida Papers, reel 148, bundle 323A, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, microfilm copies in P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History and John C. Pace Library, University of West Florida, Pensacola (hereafter cited as EFP with appropriate reel and bundle number).

Certain criteria for determining a person's or a family's status were implicit. Government officials and employees, especially those of Spanish origin, and their families were accorded a high degree of prestige, but simply being a native of Spain was no guarantee of social advancement. Deference was also accorded to persons of long residence in the community, especially widows of soldiers who had served in Florida before 1763 and members of old Floridano families. Wealth was an important determinant of social status. Regardless of the origin of the holder, wealth generally allowed entry into the higher levels of society.¹⁰ However, regardless of the amount of money or property one possessed, certain standards of behavior were demanded.¹¹ Like other areas of the Spanish empire, persons of African or mixed blood were consigned to the lowest stratum, yet sufficient wealth could help remove the social barriers attached to being of mixed parentage.¹²

In spite of its appearance of conformity, St. Augustine did not resemble other cities of the Spanish American empire in one significant way: it did not have a large indigenous or mestizo (casta) population close by. Because of the change in national sovereignty twice in twenty years, Florida's population was drastically altered. During the first Spanish period, from its founding in 1565 to 1763, St. Augustine was primarily a military outpost. Unions between soldiers and Indian women were commonplace, as they were throughout Spanish America during

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10. Documentary materials assign the honorific titles Don and Doña to persons of importance in the community. In the case of Minorcans or former British who were accorded this honor, they can be recognized as possessing more wealth than their peers. "Padrón de Mahoneses," "Padrón de Británicos," EFP, reel 148, bundle 323A, and throughout other documentation in the East Florida Papers.
 11. Patricia C. Griffin and Eugenia B. Arana, "Mary Evans: Woman of Substance," *El Escribano* 14 (1977), 61-65.
 12. Examples of the Hispanoamerican custom that sufficient money allowed persons of color to overcome social barriers are the mulatto children of wealthy Francisco Xavier Sánchez and his free mulatta companion, Beatriz de Piedra. Two of the Sánchez daughters, María Beatriz and Ana, married Spaniards, and the records of their ceremonies were entered in the parish records under the designation White Marriages. Cathedral Parish Records, Diocese of St. Augustine Catholic Center, Jacksonville, microfilm copies in the P. K. Yonge Library, reel 284K, White Marriages 125, 129 (hereafter cited as Parish Records with appropriate reel number). The special permissions for the Sánchez daughters' marriages are in EFP, reel 132, bundle 298r9, Marriage Licenses.

the colonial era.¹³ A mestizo population was a consequence of conquest and colonization, and persons of mixed blood were considered to be members of the population in general, although without the same privileges of those elites of racial purity (*limpieza de sangre*).¹⁴ By 1763, when Britain assumed sovereignty, the total Spanish population of St. Augustine, including whites, mestizos, mulattos, and Indians, was tabulated to be 3,124 persons, including approximately 500 soldiers in the garrison.¹⁵ With few exceptions, the Spanish inhabitants chose to evacuate the city and be resettled on the island of Cuba. Some of the evacuees resided in Havana and its environs, while others were relocated on donated plots of land in Ceiba Mocha, close to Matanzas, east of Havana on the north coast of the island. Among this group of refugees were sixteen free mulatto families, nineteen Christian Indian families, and five free black families.¹⁶

Perhaps the black, mulatto, and Indian families sensed that their lives would be preferable as Spanish citizens, even though it meant abandoning their homes, for British colonial policy included neither acculturation, accommodation, nor toleration. Rather than attempting to assimilate the indigenous populations into British society, the government of the North American colonies pursued a policy of separation and/or removal. In the colonies to the north, Indian tribes under British rule were pushed further back into the interior of the continent. Florida tribes that had coexisted with the Spanish until 1763 were removed to lands in the interior of the peninsula under the terms of a treaty concluded with the new government at a congress at Picolata in 1765.¹⁷ Blacks under British rule fared equally poorly. In British society, people with any percentage of mixed

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13. Deagan, *Spanish St. Augustine*, 103; Juan Marchena Fernández, "St Augustine's Military Society," Luis Rafael Arana, trans., *El Escribano* 14 (1985), 69.
 14. Magnus Mörner, *Race Mixture in the History of Latin America* (Boston, 1967) is the leading work on the phenomenon of mestizaje.
 15. Wilbur H. Siebert, "The Departure of the Spaniards and Other Groups from East Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 19 (October 1940), 146.
 16. Robert L. Gold, "The Settlement of East Florida Spaniards in Cuba, 1763-1766," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 42 (January 1964), 222.
 17. Charles Loch Mowat, *East Florida as a British Province* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1943; facsimile ed., Gainesville, 1964), 21-27.

blood were considered to be black. Most blacks were slaves, manumission was rare, and the majority of the members of the small free black population engaged in artisanal activities, mostly in the larger northern cities.¹⁸

Reconstructing a profile of the free population during the British period is difficult because the government did not maintain population records as accurately as did the Spanish. Only estimates of persons living in or around St. Augustine can be deduced from travelers' accounts. In the closing years of the American Revolution, these sources estimated that the population had swelled to 17,375 persons— mostly loyalist refugees from Georgia and South Carolina. The resident population of East Florida never approached a figure that high; approximations of 1,000 white persons with 3,000 black slaves are more likely.¹⁹ Between 1783 and 1785, most of the loyalist refugees left the colony for the Bahamas or England, taking their slaves with them.²⁰ After twenty years of British rule, there was no sizable indigenous population living closer than the west bank of the St. Johns River. With the exception of the handful of families that chose to remain, the Spanish government returned to a virtual *tabula rasa*. From that position, it would attempt to populate the colony.

Shortly after assuming control, the Spanish administration conducted several censuses of the inhabitants in an effort to determine how many former British subjects had chosen to remain in East Florida. On October 20, 1784, Governor Vicente de Zéspedes reported to Minister of the Indies José de Gálvez that, of the 1,992 persons in and around St. Augustine at that time, 656 planned to remain, 155 were undecided, and 1,181 would return to their former homes in what had become the United States or would resettle in Britain or in one of her col-

18. The debate over the relative treatment of slaves began with the publication of Frank Tannenbaum's *Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas* (New York, 1946), which concluded that slaves in Catholic countries experienced better treatment than those in Protestant countries. Carl Degler, *Neither White nor Black* (New York, 1971), and Robert W. Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, *Time on the Cross: Volume I: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (Boston, 1974), added fuel to the debate.

19. Mowat, *East Florida*, 137.

20. Wilbur E. Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida, 1774-1785*, 2 vols. (DeLand, 1929), I, 181-210.

onies.²¹ The initial survey of 1784 was followed by a more comprehensive padrón in 1785. This enumeration identified one polyglot group of Britons, French, Germans, and Swiss, and another relatively homogeneous bloc of persons designated as "Mahoneses," that included persons from Minorca, Mallorca, Corsica, Italy, and several other principalities in Europe. This padrón also included returned Floridano families, many of whom considered themselves to be Cuban, and newly arrived civilian Spaniards.²² After the transition period of eighteen months, during which most of the Britons departed, Father Thomas Hassett, one of two Irish-born priests sent to facilitate the re-establishment of Catholicism, conducted another census in 1786. He needed a list of white families in order to establish a school for boys, and his census identified a total free, urban population of 652 persons.²³

As indicated by Father Hassett's census, the majority of free persons were white. However, at least thirty free persons of mixed blood, or castas, lived in and around the town. Nevertheless, castas in Florida, unlike most areas of Spanish America, comprised only a minimal 4 percent of the urban population.²⁴ Included in this group were Juan Bautista Collens, a trader from New Orleans; Catarina Aguilar, a female free black who was a St. Augustine native; and Guillermo, a free Protestant mulatto who stated that he was from America and was residing with the Minorcan community in the household of Italian farmer Fernando Falany. The mixed blood persons included

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21. "Padrón comprehensibo de todos los [h]abitantes Británicos," EFP, reel 148, bundle 323A; Vicente Manuel de Zéspedes to José de Gálvez, October 20, 1784, in Lockey, *East Florida*, 285-86.
 22. "Padrón de Mahoneses," "Padrón de Británicos," EFP reel 148, bundle 323A.
 23. Joseph B. Lockey, "Public Education in Spanish St. Augustine," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 15 (January 1937), 148-57; Joseph B. Lockey "The St. Augustine Census of 1786: Translated from the Spanish with an Introduction and Notes," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 18 (July 1939), 11-39.
 24. Lockey "St. Augustine Census," 18-39. See also, Philip D. Rasico, "The Minorcan Population of St. Augustine in the Spanish Census of 1786," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 66 (October 1987), 167-84. Counting the number of free blacks, mulattoes, and mestizos from Lockey's and Rasico's figures yields a figure of thirty persons of mixed color. Calculating the percentage of these castas in the population, the new total of 772 persons was used. Thus, the 4 percent total casta population derives from $30/772 = 0.039 = 4$ percent.

the household of wealthy longtime Floridano resident Francisco Xavier Sánchez, who lived with his free mulatta companion, Beatríz de Piedra, and their eight mulatto children. Seven unidentified free blacks—three males and four females—lived in the household of sacristan Lorenzo Capó, a member of the Minorcan community. Only one person of indigenous origin is listed as living in the household of Spanish tailor Francisco Roche.²⁵ In contrast to the small number of free persons of color, black slaves were numerous. Hasset's census estimated that 460 black slaves lived in and around the town.²⁶

For the historian, the absence of a large *casta* group removes one significant problem in analyzing St. Augustine's society. A recent historical debate for other areas of the Spanish empire in the late eighteenth century centers around the importance of class (wealth and status) versus caste (racial origin) as a barrier to success or as an avenue for advancement. For the core areas of Mexico and Peru, excellent source materials provide fuel for this complex and intense debate that involves methodological, lexicological, and ideological arguments.²⁷ For Florida, because the *casta* population was so small, the debate over racial identification in a free society is irrelevant; there simply were too few free persons of mixed blood to have a significant effect on society as a whole. In St. Augustine, black slaves, some free persons of color, some members of the Minorcan population, or some impecunious former Britons were assigned to levels of low social status similar to the status of *mestizo*, *mulatto*, or other mixed-blood persons in other Spanish American communities.

With the question of ethnicity removed from the social equation, the strata question as applied to St. Augustine still includes determining wealth and social position. However, Florida's historians are forced to address different problems than those encountered in other areas. Defining society in other parts of Spanish America is a difficult task because of the ethnic diversity of the population. Nevertheless, core area historians agree that

25. Rasico, "Minorcan Population," 167-84; Lockey "St. Augustine Census," 18-39.

26. Lockey "St. Augustine Census," 18-39.

27. Kicza, "The Social and Ethnic Historiography," 468-70; Fred Bronner, "Urban Society in Colonial Spanish America: Research Trends," *Latin American Research Review* 21 (January 1986), 30-31.

the dominant influence in urban society was largely Hispanic with some surviving indigenous characteristics. Thus, the problem facing these scholars is to place one or another group into an established social framework. For researchers of St. Augustine, the task is also difficult because, as yet, no consensus opinion exists about which ethnic group exerted the greatest influence in St. Augustine's community. Depending on an investigator's particular point of view and whatever school of historical thought was fashionable, scholars have offered conflicting versions of which group was dominant in the town.²⁸ Paradoxically, these varying interpretations were extrapolated from data gleaned from census materials, the tools that social historians usually prize the most and which usually are the most accurate representation of an area's inhabitants.

Ever since Joseph B. Lockey introduced the historical community to Father Hassett's census of 1786, historians have accepted its contents as irrefutable evidence of the numbers and composition of St. Augustine's population after the return of the Spanish. Lockey's filiopietistic, ethnocentric search for the "real settlers," specifically those few persons of Anglo descent, allowed him to dismiss the Spanish occupants as being of "little concern," since "few of these ever came to form a part of the permanent population."²⁹ Based upon the names and numbers taken from Hassett's tabulations, succeeding historical studies concluded that there was a continuing turnover of Spanish/Cuban inhabitants—mainly government officials—while the influential former Britons and the resident Minorcans became the foundation of St. Augustine's permanent society. These precipitate judgments could be substantiated by comparing the 1786 census, the 1788 map of the city drawn by chief engineer

28. John R. Dunkle, "Population Change as an Element in the Historical Geography of St. Augustine," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 37 (July 1958), 3-32; Helen Hornbeck Tanner, *Zéspedes in East Florida, 1784-1790* (Coral Gables, 1963); Pablo Tornero Tinajero, *Relaciones de dependencia entre Florida y Estados Unidos* (Sevilla, 1979), 32-63; Pablo Tornero Tinajero "Sociedad y Población en San Agustín de la Florida," *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 35 (1981), 233-63; Abel Poitrineau, "Demography and the Political Destiny of Florida During the Second Spanish Period," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 66 (April 1988), 420-33; Griffin, "The Minorcans," 61-83. Only Rascio, in "Minorcan Population," 164-67, came close to determining the error in the 1786 effort.

29. Lockey "The St. Augustine Census," 18.

Mariano de la Roque, and another census taken in 1793.³⁰ Indeed, a direct comparison of the Spanish surnames in these sources revealed that a great discrepancy existed between Spanish and Cuban families who were listed as living in St. Augustine in December 1786, persons who were there in April 1788 (a year-and-a-half later), and an even greater difference five years later in the census of 1793. By implication, it appeared that the Spanish/Cuban group was transient since few names appeared on all three documents. In contrast, the names of members of the Minorcan community and former Britons appeared in all three documents and clearly could be recognized as stable members of the community.³¹

Working backward from the 1793 census, but utilizing other primary documents for evidence, reveals that many of the Spanish/Cuban families enumerated in the 1793 census materials did, in fact, reside in St. Augustine in 1788 and 1784. Their names did not appear on Mariano de la Roque's 1788 map because only the actual landowners or those who held the property in usufruct with royal permission were listed in the index to the 1788 plat. Many government officials occupied, but did not own, the houses in which they lived. Their occupancy of the premises was specified in de la Roque's accompanying text, but they were not listed as owners, since the properties they occupied belonged to the crown.³² Continuing to work backwards, an examination of the parish records of the diocese of St. Augustine for the years 1784, 1785, and 1786, confirmed that these same government officials, hospital employees, and some garrison personnel and their families lived in St. Augustine as early as 1784 and were omitted from the 1786 census.³³ In actuality, the majority of the men sent as administrative personnel arrived in 1784 with the first occupation forces and either were accompanied by

30. Census of 1786 and 1793, EFP, reel 148, bundle 323A; de la Rocque, "Plano de la Ciudad." It is possible that the census was not solely the work of Father Hassett. A comparison of Hassett's handwriting on other documents (e.g. baptismal certificates) reveals a discrepancy between the style in the census and these other materials which Hassett signed.

31. De la Rocque, "Plano de la ciudad."

32. *Ibid.*

33. Parish Records, White Marriages, reel 284K, White Baptisms, reel 284I, White Deaths, reels 284K and 284I.

their families or were joined soon afterwards.³⁴ Accordingly, Hassett's 1786 census is an anomaly, and reliance upon its calculations alone as evidence of the population produced an inaccurate portrait of those East Florida inhabitants.

Even Hassett himself recognized the shortcomings of his work. Like the conscientious civil servant that he was, Father Hassett prefaced his tabulations with a disclaimer admitting that he did not include government employees or members of the garrison.³⁵ The discrepancies between actual residents and persons enumerated in Hassett's tabulations stem from the purpose of the census itself— to establish a school.³⁶ Hassett had no reason to include anyone except nongovernmental employees. Few common soldiers arrived with their families, so they were in little need of a school. In addition, the Spanish administration in Havana already knew the number of soldiers and high-level government employees living in St. Augustine. With the Bourbon determination to effect fiscal efficiency, it is inconceivable that the equally conscientious intendant of the exchequer in Havana, Juan Ignacio de Urriza, did not know that at least 100 employees and their families were assigned to the town, especially since the treasury expended over 14,000 pesos annually for their salaries and provided rations and housing.³⁷ By 1786, the period of transition was over and consolidation of Spanish rule had been accomplished. It was at that point that Father Hassett could move ahead with royal plans to inculcate non-Spanish children with traditional Spanish values.³⁸ Thus, it was necessary for the priest to know how many children and their families, former subjects of a heretic nation, required instruction to become good Spanish citizens.

A revised analysis of the number of inhabitants indicates that government employees and their families (excluding garri-

34. Juan Ignacio de Urriza, "Employees for the Hospital at St. Augustine," June 1, 1784, in Lockey *East Florida*, 198-99; Urriza, "Government Employees Destined for St. Augustine," *ibid.*, 202-04.

35. Lockey "The St. Augustine Census," 19; Rascio, "Minorcan Population," 167.

36. Lockey "Public Education," 147-68.

37. Government employees were to receive 7,784 pesos per annum, and hospital employees were to receive 6,588 pesos per annum. Urriza, "Employees for the Hospital," 199; Urriza "Government Employees," 204.

38. Griffin, "Minorcans," 75-76.

son soldiers) constituted at least ninety-eight additional persons in a revised total free population of 772.³⁹ Hassett's calculations also omitted some families of old Floridano origin. At least three additional families can be established as living in the town in December 1786. Hassett possibly omitted two of these families because the patriarchs, Joaquín Escalona and Diego de Miranda, were employed by the government as pilot boat captains in St. Augustine harbor.⁴⁰ One person who was born in Spain but was not in government service can also be added to the total.⁴¹ Hassett counted 652 residents of the city including eighty-seven white foreigners (13.3 percent), 469 Minorcans (71.9 percent), and ninety-six Floridanos and Spanish persons (14.7 percent). By adding the 120 additional persons who can definitely be placed in the city, a new calculation of inhabitants reveals that at least 772 persons resided in town. White foreigners numbered eighty-seven persons, Minorcans numbered 469 persons, but people of Floridano/Spanish/Cuban extraction totaled 216 people, more than twice their original numbers.⁴²

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39. Father Hassett overlooked some persons whose presence was obvious, e.g., Carlos Howard, Mariano de la Rocque, and even Governor Zéspedes and their families. The number of additional people was calculated by counting the government employees that arrived in 1784. For some, it could be determined that they were married by comparing the census of 1793. Thus, the family members (wives and children born before 1787, since the census was dated as of December 18, 1786) were added to the total. EFP, reel 148, bundle 323A. For others, parish records demonstrate that some men married soon after arrival. In this case, one extra person is counted for each man for whom a marriage certificate is recorded between June 1, 1784, and December 18, 1786. Parish Records, White Marriages, reel 284K. In addition, the continuous presence of these extra persons is corroborated by their sponsorship of newborns and converted former Protestants. Parish Records, White Baptisms, reel 284I.
40. Joaquín Escalona can be placed in the city by the testimony of Juan José del Toro in the padrón of 1785 who declared, "vivo con el práctico Joaquín Escalona." EFP, reel 148, bundle 323A. Escalona's presence can also be corroborated by his death on December 26, 1786, eight days after Hassett finished his tabulations. Parish Records, White Deaths, reel 284K, 36. Diego de Miranda and his family can be established to be in the city from the testimony in his daughter's marriage license petition of June 30, 1786. EFP, reel 132, bundle 298r9.
41. Spaniard Andrés de Ben was listed in the "padrón of 1785." EFP, reel 148, bundle 323A. His continued presence is indicated by his involvement as a defendant in an assault case in 1790. EFP, reel 111, bundle 263n13.
42. The totals do not add up to 100 percent because of rounding errors.

As before, Minorcans were clearly the majority. However, the new calculation of inhabitants changes the makeup of society from one in which foreigners were roughly an equal percentage with Floridano/Spanish, to one in which Floridano/Spanish residents outnumbered the foreigners by more than two to one. Combined with the Minorcan majority, the Spanish/Floridano/Cuban group formed a solidly Spanish-oriented bloc.⁴³ Consequently, whether expressed in terms of percentages or absolute numbers, the figures indicate that the dominant influence in Florida during the period 1784-1795 was unquestionably Hispanic (approximately 88.6 percent Spanish, Cuban/Floridano, and Minorcan Catholic as compared to 11.4 percent Anglo Protestant). Thus, the inhabitants of St. Augustine had more in common with the rest of Spanish America than previously believed. The figures also raise questions about the validity of prior interpretations that maintain that society in St. Augustine was American or British oriented, while desperately trying to maintain its Hispanic identity.

A second rationale for excluding government employees and high-level military personnel was the belief on the part of many historians that most civil servants were transient and few had a permanent impact upon society. This also was not the case. Enlisted soldiers in the garrison were transient, and many lower echelon personnel did not become permanent members of the population or form ties with the province as they had before 1763.⁴⁴ Moreover, the men of the Third Battalion of Cuba assigned to the Castillo de San Marcos after 1789, when the Hibernia regiment of Irish-born volunteers was recalled, were the dregs of Spanish and Cuban society and included deserters, vagrants, thieves, and criminals. These soldiers were hardly ideal prospects for husbands of Floridana daughters and were unwelcome as settlers.⁴⁵ Officers were more desirable, but special per-

43. Griffin makes it clear that Minorcans prospered under Spanish rule and welcomed the Spanish regime as an opportunity to advance their economic and social positions. Griffin, "Minorcans," 77-83. Jane Landers examined the important role of free blacks in "Black Society in Spanish St. Augustine, 1784-1821" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Florida, 1988).

44. Marchena, "St. Augustine's Military Society," 56.

45. Janice Borton Miller, "Juan Nepomuceno de Quesada, Spanish Governor of East Florida, 1790-1795" (Ph.D. dissertation, Florida State University, 1974), 76-80; Jane Landers, "Jorge Biassou, Black Chieftan," *El Escribano* 25 (1988), 93.

mission was necessary before an officer could marry while serving on active duty; no person was exempt from these rules. The elopement of Lieutenant Juan O'Donovan of the Hibernia Regiment and María Concepción de Zéspedes, the daughter of Governor Zéspedes illustrated the stringent nature of military discipline. Immediately after learning of his daughter's elopement, Don Vicente arrested his new son-in-law and sent him, shackled in chains, to Havana for trial. There he was chastised for his impetuous and presumptuous behavior. After his father-in-law intervened with Bernardo de Gálvez, governor of the Floridas and Louisiana, on his behalf, O'Donovan was allowed to rejoin his bride in St. Augustine.⁴⁶ The threat of similar punishment undoubtedly influenced other soldiers' decisions against contracting a clandestine marriage, especially since few Floridana brides could boast familial connections as influential as those of María Concepción de Zéspedes. If for no other reason, this regulation excluded many officers from marrying in their posts.

The transient nature of the common soldiers did not extend to the higher echelons of command, or to those administrative persons in charge of artillery stores or the military hospital. In Spain's colonial bureaucracy, when a man was assigned to a post, family members were included in his retinue, and frequently they, too, accompanied their husbands and fathers, either sailing on the same ship or quickly following behind.⁴⁷ Accompanying guarda almacén (keeper of military provisions) Manuel de Almansa were his wife, Luisa Pérez, his children, and his nephew, Mariano de Almansa, who held an assistant guarda almacén position.⁴⁸ Hospital superintendent Domingo de los Reyes was accompanied by Doctor Bernardo de la Madrid, who was soon to become Reyes's brother-in-law.⁴⁹ Another govern-

46. Zéspedes to José de Gálvez, June 3, 1785, in Lockey *East Florida*, 34.

47. Indicative of the large retinue that accompanied some military members was the "family" attached to caudillo Jorge Biassou, who sought refuge in St. Augustine after the Haitian Revolution. Landers, "Jorge Biassou, Black Chieftan," 89.

48. Manuel de Almansa arrived in 1784. Urriza, "Government Employees," 199. His wife, undoubtedly accompanied by their young children, and nephew can be established to be in St. Augustine by their testimony in Mariano de Almansa's petition for permission to marry María Ramona Miranda, June 30, 1785. EFP, reel 132, bundle 298r9.

49. Domingo de los Reyes and Bernardo de la Madrid arrived with the other hospital employees in 1784. Urriza, "Hospital Employees," 198. Bernardo

ment employee, Fernando de la Maza Arredondo, arrived in 1784 and was joined by his younger brother, Pedro.⁵⁰ Once established, these large kin groupings were relatively stable. Perhaps Bourbon parsimony kept high officials from leaving to assume other posts, or conversely, perhaps those men assigned to the community developed roots like many had before 1763.⁵¹ Also, the nuisance and danger of traveling, especially after 1793 when warfare was almost continuous, may have deterred many from abandoning their Florida homes and property. In any case, excluding the governors whose terms in office varied in length, fourteen of twenty-four government officials (58.3 percent) and ten of twenty-three hospital employees (43.4 percent not including servants) who arrived in St. Augustine in 1784 were listed in the 1793 census. Moreover, at least four of the original arrivals were present to be counted in the 1813 census, and many more children of Spanish officials had become Floridanos by the time their security was threatened by North American invaders in 1812-1813.⁵²

In keeping with Spanish policy of centralization, and not trusting the difficult new administration to creoles (men born in America), the crown awarded the highest positions to peninsulares (persons born in Spain). Treasurer Gonzalo Zamorano was born in Castille (Castilla la Vieja); treasury official Dimas Córtes was from Seville as was pharmacist Rafael Espinosa de Saavedra; and the assistant keeper of the commissary, Francisco

de la Madrid married Paula Pastora Chacón on February 7, 1786. Paula was the sister of Maria Belen Chacón, the wife of Domingo de los Reyes. It is also probable that the sisters were members of the powerful Chacon and Herrera family network of Cuba (see note 8), since both were natives of Havana. Parish Records, White Marriages, reel 284K, 13.

50. Fernando de la Maza Arredondo, another hospital employee, arrived in 1784. Urriza, "Hospital Employees," 199. No record has yet been uncovered as to when his brother arrived, but his death certificate, dated October 15, 1791, attests to his presence in the city. Parish Records, White Deaths, reel 284K, 107.
51. Marchena, "St. Augustine's Military Society," 56, 77. For one example of how soldiers in Florida before 1763 developed ties with the city, see Arnade, "The Avero Story," 1-34.
52. This information is extracted from the several censuses. EFP, reel 148, bundle 323A. The four remaining men and their families were Fernando de la Maza Arredondo, Domingo de los Reyes, Ramón de Fuentes, and Joaquín Sánchez. See also, Historical Records Survey, *Spanish Land Grants*, 5 vols. (Tallahassee, 1940-1941).

Antonio de Entrealgo, was from Asturias.⁵³ An exception was Irish-born Carlos Howard whose competency as a captain in the Hibernia Regiment and ability to speak both English and Spanish made his assignment as secretary of the government a sensible choice.⁵⁴ In addition to the highest royal administrative officials, a contingent of mid-level support people arrived from Havana. Some of these were peninsular, but many others were creoles. Pharmacist Ramón de Fuentes, and Governor Zéspedes's assistant secretary, Manuel Rengil, were both natives of Havana.⁵⁵

Many persons who obtained positions in government service had or developed strong ties to St. Augustine. Spaniard Luciano de Herrera, who had remained in St. Augustine during the British period, became superintendent of Indian affairs, a post he held until his death in 1788.⁵⁶ Some Floridanos who had evacuated to Cuba in 1763 returned to the province as government employees. In addition to Joaquín Escalona and Diego de Miranda, who arrived back from Havana with their families, Antonio Fernández, an intern with the hospital staff and a captain in the royal army, returned with his wife Victorina Guillén, a member of the Avero family network.⁵⁷ Daughters of Floridano families married peninsular officials with regularity.

53. Parish Records, White Marriages, reel 284K, White Baptisms, reel 284I, White Deaths, reels 284K and 284I, from 1785 onward contain information about the origin of St. Augustine's inhabitants. Specifically, White Baptisms contains the baptismal certificates of children of Gonzalo Zamorano, 82; Dimas Cortés, 27 1; Rafael Espinosa de Saavedra, 323; and Francisco Antonio de Entrealgo, 130.

54. Lockey, *East Florida*, 35-36; Miller, "Juan Nepomuceno de Quesada," 91-94.

55. Parish Records, White Marriages, reel 284K, contains information about the origin of Ramón de Fuentes, 15, and Manuel Rengil, 63.

56. Luciano de Herrera's place of origin is specified in his sponsorship of Mary Evans's conversion to Catholicism on November 23, 1786. Parish Records, White Baptisms, reel 284I, 92. His death certificate is in White Deaths, reel 284K, 63.

57. Antonio Fernández arrived in 1784. Urriza, "Employees for the Hospital," 199. According to de la Rocque's "Descripción del plano de la ciudad," by 1788, Fernández held at least three city properties. Victorina Guillén's presence can be established by her baptismal sponsorship of Elizabeth Hill on July 8, 1787 (Parish Records, White Baptisms, reel 284I, 135) and can be corroborated by her petition to determine the status of her properties in 1794 (EFP, reel 112, bundle 265). See also, Arnade, "The Avero Story," 17-26.

In addition to María Ramona Miranda, who married assistant guarda almacén Mariano de Almansa, at least three Floridana daughters married government employees.⁵⁸ On February 3, 1785, María Rafaela Rodríguez of the Rodríguez clan, married guarda mayor (chief guard) Emanuel Fernández Biendicho.⁵⁹ On October 3, 1785, Antonia Perdomo, daughter of Floridana widow Nicholasa Gómez, married Fernando de la Maza Arredondo, and a month later, November 7, 1785, María Gonzales, daughter of Floridana widow Juana Montes de Oca, married Rafael Espinosa de Saaverdra.⁶⁰ Thus, many men became involved in their community and were integrated into kinship networks by marriage to daughters of Floridano families. More importantly, by allying themselves with peninsular officials, Floridano families enjoyed increased prestige in the community as a whole.

Government officials and their extended families were important members of the community. Their impact upon the local economy was substantial since most of these families were well-to-do before arriving in Florida. The prestige accorded these people was implicit by virtue of their government positions and accompanying salaries and perquisites.⁶¹ Universally, the government officials and their wives were addressed as Don or Doña.⁶² Another measure of their importance was the frequency with which officials and their wives became padrinos (godparents) of newborns, even extending to include sponsorship of community members who renounced the Protestant religion and embraced Catholicism.⁶³ Consequently, government and hospital employees, along with private Spanish/Cuban/Floridano citizens, were a powerful factor in the promotion and

58. Parish Records, White Marriages, reel 284K, 17.

59. *Ibid.*, 1.

60. *Ibid.*, 9, 10.

61. Urriza, "Employees for the Hospital," 199; Urriza, "Government Employees," 204, details their salaries. Houses provided to government officials are identified in de la Rocque, "Descripción del plano de la ciudad."

62. Throughout the documentation Spanish officials and civil servants are addressed as Don or Doña.

63. María Rafaela Rodríguez and chief guard (guarda mayor) Emanuel Fernández Biendicho frequently sponsored newborn children, especially those belonging to soldiers in the garrison. Another couple who actively sponsored newborns was Bernardo de la Madrid and Paula Pastora Chacón. Parish Records, White Baptisms, reel 284I.

perpetuation of Hispanic society, if simply because of their numbers alone. In keeping with Spanish custom, elites sent to the provinces in governmental service often integrated themselves into local society. For the officials sent to St. Augustine, not only were they integrated into the existing society, but they also helped perpetuate the customs and mores of their native culture.

In addition to government and hospital employees and their families, fifty former Floridanos and forty-six civilian Spaniards contributed to St. Augustine's Hispanic identity.⁶⁴ The order of listing in the *padrón* of 1785 suggests that a distinction was drawn between persons who were Spanish subjects (Cubanos y Floridanos, and Españoles, listed first and second, respectively), those who probably would become good subjects (Mahoneses, listed third), and those whose transition possibly would be difficult (Británicos, listed last). Cubans and Floridanos were listed together, which further suggests that those taking the census did not draw a distinction between them. The Españoles were listed separately. It appears that the census takers may have been concerned with a peninsular/creole dichotomy, but they were even more concerned with the property and position of the foreigners and the Mahoneses who were to become new subjects of Charles III of Spain. Although not of elite status, the Cubans/Floridanos and civilian Spaniards were accorded the same privileges granted to all Spanish citizens, and it is clear that their status was different from Mahoneses or Británicos.⁶⁵

The 1785 effort was not without its own degree of ambiguity. The example of the family of merchant and ship's captain Lorenzo Rodríguez illustrated the difficulty of ascribing cultural identification with certainty. Don Lorenzo was a native of St. Augustine from an old Floridano family (he is enumerated with the Españoles), but his household was truly international.⁶⁶ Don Lorenzo's wife, Ysabel Piuma, was a native of present-day Germany.⁶⁷ Their older children, Nicolás, María Rafaela, and Ysabel Casemira, were natives of St. Augustine, but the remainder of their children, María del Carmen and Teresa de Jesús,

64. "Census of 1786," EFP, reel 148, bundle 323A.

65. "Padrón of 1785," *ibid.*

66. *Ibid.*

67. *Ibid.*

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were natives of Havana.⁶⁸ To further complicate matters, the Rodríguez household contained four unrelated lodgers, including a nephew, Joseph Gonzáles of Havana; an *agregado* (person attached to the household), Ricardo Bustan, formerly English; an unidentified free mulatto whom Don Lorenzo had recently manumitted; and another unidentified white shopclerk.⁶⁹ In the absence of letters or diaries, it is difficult to speculate upon the cultural orientation of the members of Don Lorenzo's household. Nevertheless, it is safe to assume that old Floridano families, like the Rodríguezes, the Escalonas, and the Mirandas owed their trust and allegiance to their Spanish monarch. If their belief in the "buen gobierno" (good government) of the Spanish system had wavered, they never would have evacuated in 1763. Similarly, they would not have followed the Spanish flag back to St. Augustine in 1784.

The *buen gobierno* of the crown included making immigration attractive to Spanish citizens, be they creole or peninsular. Thus, the government implemented a policy of granting land to persons in accordance with their station in life. A person of peasant origin would receive a town lot fifty feet by 100 feet and land capable of producing 100 fanegas of wheat and ten fanegas of Indian corn, or land that twenty oxen could plow in a day, and pasture for eight breeding sows, twenty cows, five mares, 100 sheep, and twenty goats. A gentleman would receive five times a peasant's share, plus a town lot 100 by 200 feet in size.⁷⁰ For former Floridanos, this policy included a provision under which many persons who were forced to relinquish their land in 1763 would be able to recover their lost properties. If their former properties had been granted or legally sold to another person, Floridanos would be compensated with a grant of land of equivalent value that belonged to the crown.⁷¹ Widows and

68. Nicolás, María del Carmen, and Teresa de Jesús are listed in Hassett's census. To determine that María Rafaela and Ysabel Casemira are Rodríguez's daughters, consult the "Census of 1793," *ibid.* Further corroboration is available in their marriage certificates. Parish Records, White Marriages, reel 284K, 1 and 11, respectively.

69. "Padrón of 1785," EFP, reel 148, bundle 323A.

70. *Spanish Land Grants*, V, xviii-xix; William W. Dewhurst, *The History of St. Augustine, Florida* (New York, 1885; reprinted., Rutland, VT, 1968), 135. A fanega was roughly equal to 1.6 bushels.

71. Duvon C. Corbitt, "Spanish Relief Policy and the East Florida Refugees of 1763," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 27 (July 1948), 75-76.

daughters of soldiers who had served in Florida prior to 1763 received additional concessions. A special pension, the *limosna de Florida*, was implemented when Floridana women were forced to evacuate to Cuba.⁷² If these women returned to East Florida, their pensions would be increased, their former properties would be restored if they could prove prior ownership, and they would receive farmland to cultivate and be provided with a slave and implements to help with cultivation. However, the most important concession was granted to former Floridanos on March 18, 1791, in article twelve of a comprehensive regulation designed to stimulate immigration to the province. This regulation granted Floridanos priority in the selection of government employees.⁷³ This concession would be unthinkable for the mainland colonies where peninsular officials were the rule. Some might argue that this concession was necessary to appease republican murmurings or to encourage immigration to a destitute province. More likely, in the light of similar concessions to Cuba, the Spanish government felt secure in granting privileges to citizens who had experienced the recent, mutually beneficial prosperity in Havana and whose identification was Hispanic, even though they subsequently had relocated to St. Augustine.⁷⁴

Joining the newly arrived Spaniards, Cubans, and returning Floridanos in creating St. Augustine's society, were the British residents who elected to remain under Spanish rule. As defined in Article V of the Treaty of Paris of 1783, the terms under which Britons could remain in Florida were generous.⁷⁵ A royal *cédula* of March 8, 1786, reiterated that foreign persons were required to swear allegiance to the king of Spain, and (ideally) covert to Catholicism.⁷⁶ Foreigners also had to declare the value of their property for taxation purposes and pay their own settlement costs.⁷⁷ However, this generous settlement policy posed a

72. The *limosna* for Floridana widows and daughters began under the provisions of a *cédula* of 1731. *Ibid.*, 70.

73. *Ibid.*, 75.

74. Kuethe, "Los Llorones Cubanos," details the concessions made to the Cuban elite.

75. Arthur Preston Whitaker, ed. and trans., *Documents Relating to the Commercial Policy of Spain in the Floridas, with Incidental Reference to Louisiana* (DeLand, 1931), 53.

76. *Spanish Land Grants*, V, xvii-xviii; Richard K. Murdoch, "Governor Céspedes and the Religious Problem in Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 26 (April 1948), 327.

77. EFP, reel 119, bundle 278o13; *Spanish Land Grants*, V, xx-xxi.

problem for local officials. The expressed goal of the government was to populate its colonies, but these Protestant former subjects of a hostile country were a less-than-ideal group of settlers.

In spite of the misgivings of many, including Governor Zéspedes, the Spanish government actively sought to integrate the foreigners into Spanish society. In an effort to accommodate those who sought protection under Spanish rule, many key positions in the new administration were filled with persons who were bilingual. Two days after he acquired the reins of government, Zéspedes addressed the inhabitants delineating the provisions for remaining in St. Augustine. He ordered that his proclamation be translated into English for the benefit of those who did not understand Spanish.⁷⁸ Carlos Howard served as liaison officer between the Spanish and British administrations, and even after the Hibernia Regiment was reassigned, he remained in Florida serving as secretary of the government, translator, and as a member of the junta de hacienda of the second governor, Juan Nepomuceno de Quesada.⁷⁹ Miguel Ysnardy, a Spanish merchant, served as public interpreter for persons who needed to petition the governor or higher officials in Cuba.⁸⁰ In a further spirit of conciliation during the transition period, John Leslie, a partner in Panton, Leslie & Company, and Francisco Felipe Fatio, a Swiss merchant/planter, were empowered to act as arbitrators in disputes between British subjects to ensure further that justice would be administered equitably to all.⁸¹

The Spanish crown also was faced with the question of British property. In keeping with its generous policy, the government allowed the majority of Britons to retain their land and slaves if they fulfilled the necessary royal requirements for remaining in Spanish Florida. The few others who refused to convert to Catholicism were usually allowed to retain their homes, provided that they complied with the other provisions of the

78. "Proclamation of Governor Zéspedes," July 14, 1784, in Lockey, *East Florida*, 233-35.

79. *Ibid.*, 35-36; Miller, "Juan Nepomuceno de Quesada," 91-94.

80. *Ibid.*, 121, 179.

81. Tanner, *Zéspedes in East Florida*, 51; Susan R. Parker, "I Am Neither Your Subject Nor Your Subordinate." *El Escribano* 25 (1988), 43-60.

Treaty of 1783 and did not commit infractions of Spanish law.⁸² However, persons who were recalcitrant had their property confiscated. Such was the punishment meted out to the followers of the banditti leader, James McGirtt, and the men who participated in the rebellion of 1793-1795. Even then, the Spanish administration proved itself to be compassionate when many wives and widows of the insurrectionists petitioned for the return of their husbands' confiscated properties for the maintenance of their families.⁸³ Another problem involved land that was abandoned by British subjects which would devolve to the Spanish crown. In a letter to José de Gálvez, Zéspedes suggested that Minorcans be granted plots of land in accordance with the size of their families.⁸⁴ Several Minorcan families took advantage of this policy, including Pablo Sabate, who increased his holdings from one and one-half acres that he reported as rental property in the padrón of 1785, to some 2,000 acres that he was able to purchase by 1809.⁸⁵

By 1786, only eighty-five free persons— forty-eight adults and thirty-seven children, totaling twenty-three households— were left as the remnant of the former British community that once numbered over 1,000 permanent residents. Eleven British heads of household living in St. Augustine were planters or farmers, two were merchants, four engaged in trade, and one was an innkeeper.⁸⁶ Many Britons who had remained in Florida were relatively well-to-do, and because they conformed to Spanish policies, they lived peacefully under the new regime.

82. *Spanish Land Grants*, V, xvii-xviii; Murdoch, "Religious Problem," 332. The decision was not so much enlightened as pragmatic since only two priests were available to serve the colony of East Florida.

83. Seizures of property of those who violated Spanish law are well documented in the East Florida Papers. Such was the case of John Hudson and Mary Evans, whose property was seized to pay Hudson's creditors. Griffin and Arana, "Mary Evans: Woman of Substance," 62-65. The case of Louisa Waldron, whose property was seized solely because she was accused of a crime, is documented in Lockety, *East Florida*, 414-17, 601-04, 660-66. Many women whose male relatives participated in the rebellion of 1795 petitioned Governor Quesada for the return of the property for their maintenance. These cases are contained in EFP, reel 130, bundle 296. These cases also include the petitions of the rebels' creditors, who sued for the use of their slaves in repayment of debts.

84. Zéspedes to José de Gálvez, July 14, 1784, in Lockety, *East Florida*, 286.

85. Griffin, "Minorcans," 79-80.

86. Lockety, "The St. Augustine Census," 19-24.

Tailor/planter Edward Ashton remained in the city to continue his trade and protect his property. He converted to Catholicism on February 1, 1786, an event given special significance by the presence of Governor Zéspedes as one of Ashton's sponsors.⁸⁷ Widow Honoria Clarke, who was already Catholic, claimed "2500 acres of land in different parts of the province held under authentic British documentation, and three houses within the city limits." In addition, Doña Clarke owned fifteen slaves, three head of cattle, and four horses.⁸⁸ Widowed midwife Mary Evans inherited a considerable estate from her husband Joseph Peavett. On November 26, 1786, she converted to Catholicism, possibly to be able to marry Irish immigrant John Hudson. Her desire to preserve the 3,000 acres of farmland under cultivation, the house and grounds in the city limits, fifty-seven slaves, four horses, a cow, and three calves of her deceased husband's estate probably also influenced her decision to adapt herself to the status quo.⁸⁹

Contrary to historical opinion, Americans were neither the majority of inhabitants nor the majority of immigrants in St. Augustine. Those persons of "foreign" origin were overwhelmingly former British loyalists, either long-standing Florida residents or refugees from Georgia or South Carolina. Residents of the United States to the north were not welcome in East Florida and were prevented from immigrating except under certain special circumstances. One example was Don Juan McQueen, a planter from Georgia who immigrated to Florida around 1790. Don Juan's loyalty and support of the Spanish administration earned him numerous land grants and a commission in the royal militia which was personally signed by Charles IV on December 20, 1798.⁹⁰ Less well known was the Ferreyra-Bentley-Nixon family. Portuguese merchant Juan Bautista Ferreyra and his wife Elizabeth Bentley Nixon, arrived in St. Augustine with their children, her mother Ana Ursula Andrade, and her sister Ana

87. Ibid., 21; Parish Records, White Baptisms, reel 284I, 48.

88. "Padrón de Británicos," EFP, reel 148, bundle 323A.

89. Ibid.; Griffin and Arana, "Mary Evans: Woman of Substance," 61; Parish Records, White Baptisms, reel 284I, 92.

90. Juan McQueen, *Letters . . . to His Family Written from Spanish East Florida, 1791-1807* (Columbia, SC, 1943), 49-50.

Magdalena Bentley Nixon sometime in 1787 or early 1788.⁹¹ The Nixon women were Lutheran and born in Charleston, as were the Ferreyra children.⁹² Nevertheless, because Ferreyra and his mother-in-law were already Catholic and well-to-do, the family became residents of the town. Ferreyra appears on the de la Roque "Plano" as owning two adjacent city properties— a wooden house and one constructed of shellrock.⁹³ The Nixon women and the Ferreyra children converted to Catholicism shortly after their arrival, with important Spanish officials and their wives standing as their sponsors.⁹⁴ The Ferreyra family was living in St. Augustine in 1793, and in 1805, Juan Bautista petitioned Governor Enrique White for 325 acres of land, a request which White approved.⁹⁵

Although a few North Americans became St. Augustine residents, the prejudicial attitude against American immigrants within the Spanish government included José de Gálvez, who felt that an American influence in Spain's colonies would breed republican ideas and foster discontent.⁹⁶ Americans furthered their undesirable status by their blatant contraband activities in Havana during the American Revolution. Their activities resulted in Cuban officials trying to banish all Americans from the island.⁹⁷ Governor Zéspedes was no more kindly disposed to allowing Americans into Florida. To José de Gálvez he wrote, "It would by no means be advisable to admit natives of the said America," but he encouraged the immigration of Irish Catholics, whom he felt would "soon become useful members of the community."⁹⁸

91. A date cannot be established with certainty because the Spanish government did not begin to keep accurate immigration records until 1797. Tornero, *Relaciones de dependencia*, 32, 56.

92. Parish Records, White Baptisms, reel 284I, 215-17, and 220.

93. De la Rocque, "Plano de la Ciudad de San Agustín," 120-21.

94. Parish Records, White Baptisms, reel 284I, 215-17, and 220.

95. Census of 1793, EFP, reel 148, bundle 323A; *Spanish Land Grants*, III, 246-47.

96. Kuethe, "Los Llorones Cubanos," 148; James A. Lewis, "Anglo American Entrepreneurs in Havana: The Background and Significance of the Expulsion of 1784-1785," in Barbier and Kuethe, *North American Role in the Spanish Imperial Economy*, 118.

97. *Ibid.*, 118-23.

98. Zéspedes to Marqués de Sonora, May 12, 1787, in Whitaker, Documents, 53; Zéspedes to Bernardo de Gálvez, July 29, 1785, in Lockey, *East Florida*, 572.

More important than Britons or Americans, and considerably more welcome, were the Minorcans, Greeks, and Italians whose numbers totaled 469.⁹⁹ Most of these people, some 1,500, had arrived in Florida during the British period to work at Dr. Andrew Turnbull's plantation in New Smyrna south of St. Augustine. Held in a state of near-slavery, 964 Minorcan workers died at Turnbull's colony from 1768 to 1777. In a general revolt caused by intolerable conditions, approximately 450 indentured workers and their families fled to St. Augustine in the summer of 1777 where Governor Patrick Tonyn granted them asylum.¹⁰⁰ Minorcans comprised the poorer classes of the town and had performed most of the menial tasks. Many remained in a similar situation after the return of the Spanish. Census data reveal that the majority of Minorcan men were fishermen or sailors, but a few were carpenters, coopers, hatmakers, shoemakers, caulkers, bakers, masons, and apprentices. Others rented and tilled plots of approximately five acres of land close to the city.¹⁰¹

While the majority of Minorcans were poor, a few families and several men who were married to Minorcan women had accumulated considerable wealth. Zéspedes noted that some "have a capital of from one to eight thousand pesos and some own sloops and schooners."¹⁰² In the 1785 padrón, merchant Bernardo Seguí declared his property to be "three houses in town, a store selling provisions, thirty acres of farmland, and three negro slaves." Similarly, Minorcan shopkeeper Ysabel Perpall, whose husband was absent, declared that she owned "two houses in town, 500 acres about five miles out of town, six slaves, two horses and a cow." Corsican merchant Pedro Cosifacio, married to Minorcan Ynez Quevedo, owned a "store selling clothing and provisions, four slaves, and about forty to fifty acres of farmland."¹⁰³

In spite of their business acumen and ability to improve their lot, during the British period the Minorcan families were considered to be "second class citizens."¹⁰⁴ After the return of the

99. Rasico, "Minorcan Population," 184.

100. Jane Quinn, *Minorcans in Florida: Their History and Heritage* (St. Augustine, 1975), 76.

101. Rasico, "Minorcan Population," 166-67.

102. Zéspedes to José de Gálvez, July 14, 1784, in Lockey, *East Florida*, 285.

103. "Padrón de Mahoneses," EFP, reel 148, bundle 323A.

104. J. Leitch Wright, Jr., *Florida in the American Revolution* (Gainesville, 1975), 11.

Spanish, their potential as productive members of society was acknowledged by the new administration, and they, in turn, recognized their welcome. The potential for land ownership, the freedom to worship as Catholics, and the realization that they would be accepted into the community were inducements for them to remain in Spanish Florida.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, whenever the security of Florida was threatened, Minorcans were conspicuous as militia captains, defending their gains under Spanish rule.¹⁰⁶ Thus, when Zéspedes accepted their petition declaring their pleasure at being “reunited with their rightful sovereign,” he was not simply confirming the professed loyalty of displaced former Britons.¹⁰⁷ Rather, he was welcoming persons whose cultural identity was closer to their new sovereign than their old, whose presence in St. Augustine would reinforce the Hispanic identity, and whose allegiance to Spain would be unwavering.

As early as 1786, Charles III could not help but be pleased at the progress accomplished by Zéspedes in re-Hispanicizing St. Augustine. The major mechanisms of colonial government were in place, the Catholic religion was again predominant, Spanish was the mother tongue (even if concessions were made to those who spoke English), and the youth of the town were being inculcated with Hispanic values. Moreover, St. Augustine’s society resembled that of other Spanish American cities to a great degree. Charles’s frontier bureaucracy, staffed with peninsular elites and creole support personnel, was functioning with only the usual intergovernmental bickerings common to Spanish colonial government. Like other cities in the colonial empire, the marginal people of the lower classes, regardless of ethnic origin, functioned as domestic servants, food producers (fishermen and subsistence farmers), unskilled day laborers, and sailors.

The greatest degree of ambiguity in St. Augustine’s society was in the upper-middle, the middle, and the lower-middle classes. In these levels, no clear-cut distinction was made on the basis of origin or race as a measure of prestige, and no ethnic

105. Griffin, “Minorcans,” 66-67.

106. *Ibid.*, 81-83.

107. “Memorials of the Italians, Greeks, and Minorcans,” July 12, 1784, in Lockey, *East Florida*, 232-33.

group could claim any one social level as their exclusive province. Mercantile or artisanal activity encompassed persons of Spanish, Cuban, British, French, Minorcan, Corsican, Italian, and even Hindu extraction. Only one distinction was implicit. If not peninsular elite or part of an old Floridano/Cuban family network, then wealth, combined with proper behavior and acceptance of the new regime, determined one's degree of influence. Persons of greater wealth, especially merchants and landowners, although these activities were often combined, were accorded the honorific titles Don or Doña. Many of these persons could afford to live in the core area of the city with others of high status, thus reinforcing their prestige. Moreover, their claims to ownership of town properties and plantations in the hinterlands were legitimized by the new regime. Men of high prestige from the mercantile/artisan class were often appointed captains in the militia when danger threatened, a reflection of the degree of trust the government had in their loyalty and of their ability to command respect.

For St. Augustine's eighteenth-century citizens, no ambiguity existed over what represented the dominant influence in society. If numbers alone were not sufficient reminder of the Hispanic nature of the city, then the mechanisms of societal control (government, language, and religion) could not help but emphasize that society was mainly Spanish in character. Certainly, no question existed for Spanish bureaucrats who made their homes in the community, for Cuban civil servants who sought positions in the new government, or for Floridano families who returned to claim their lost properties. Neither did the Minorcan community question the legitimacy of the Spanish regime which promised the potential for advancement. Among the remnants of the British regime, most recognized that success came from cooperation and co-optation, not from fractiousness and rebellion. Persons intent on pursuing success declared their loyalty to Charles III, converted to Catholicism, and were welcomed into the dominant society.

Only ambiguity on the part of historians has perpetuated the portrait of St. Augustine's society as being ethnically heterogeneous and culturally divided. Florida's annexation into the United States allowed North American historians to interpret Spanish Florida's history as if it were their own. Common sense dictates that St. Augustine's inhabitants did not languish

in their courtyards from 1784 to 1821 preparing to welcome North Americans as their cultural, political, and economic saviors. It is equally implausible to believe that Spanish citizens could foresee the disintegration of the Spanish empire even as late as 1800. The evidence indicates that the people of Florida looked to their future as Spanish citizens with optimism. The actions of persons from all sectors of the community represent attitudes of acceptance and support of the returned regime rather than passive acquiescence to Spanish rule. Thus, the time has come for scholars to reinterpret St. Augustine's history within its proper Spanish context.