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THE FLORIDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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* * * To explore the field of Florida history, to seek and gather up the ancient chronicles in which its annals are contained, to retain the legendary lore which may yet throw light upon the past, to trace its monuments and remains, to elucidate what has been written, to disprove the false and support the true, to do justice to the men who have figured in the olden time, to keep and preserve all that is known in trust for those who are to come after us, to increase and extend the knowledge of our history, and to teach our children that first essential knowledge, the history of our State, are objects well worthy of our best efforts. To accomplish these ends we have organized the Historical Society of Florida.

GEORGE R. FAIRBANKS.

Saint Augustine, April, 1857

GENERAL GREGOR MacGREGOR



Engraving by Lizars of Edinburgh

This portrait of MacGregor was probably painted in 1821; it appears in Strangeways' *Sketch of the Mosquito Shore*, published in London in 1822.

MACGREGOR'S INVASION OF FLORIDA, 1817.

By T. FREDERICK DAVIS

Gregor MacGregor was the grandson of Gregor MacGregor, the Scotchman, who enlisted in the Black Watch, then Semphill's Highlanders, and was called in Gaelic "Gregor, the Beautiful." When the regiment was first ordered to England, in 1743, "Gregor, the Beautiful" and two others were sent on in advance to London, so that the king of England, who was on the point of starting for the continent, might see some soldiers of the regiment before leaving. One of the men died en route, but MacGregor and the other were paraded before the king at St. James's and gave an exhibition of their dexterity with the broadsword and Lochabar axe. Both afterwards rose to commissions. MacGregor subsequently joined another regiment. He finally left the army and became Laird of Inverardine.¹

Gregor MacGregor, the grandson, was born in 1786. At one time he was in the British army.² According to his own accounts,³ he went out to Caracas, Venezuela, in 1811, to settle and aid in the struggle for South American independence from Spain. There he married Senora Josefa Lovera, a South American lady, who accompanied him in his subsequent adventures. He lost most of his property in the terrible earthquake that destroyed Caracas in 1812. Soon afterward he became colonel and adjutant-general to General Miranda, and then commandant-general of the cavalry and general of brigade in the Venezuelan army. In the renewed struggle for independence under General Simon Bolivar, MacGregor repeatedly distin-

¹ All numbered notes appear on pp. 70-71.

guished himself, particularly in the severe battles of 1816, when he was promoted to the rank of general of division in the Venezuelan army and received the special thanks of Bolivar and the insignia of the order of Liberadores. ³ About this time there arose among the South Americans a prejudice in favor of their own people, and MacGregor, observing this and anticipating the ruin of the patriotic cause, quitted South America for the United States with the intention of organizing an expedition for a descent upon Spanish Florida, an undertaking which he assumed would not be opposed by this government. ⁴

The first record of MacGregor in the United States was in March, 1817, the date of his commission ; which, no doubt, he procured immediately upon his arrival as a necessary preliminary to his contemplated conquest. This is a copy of his commission: ⁵

The deputies of free America, resident in the United States of the North, to their compatriot Gregor MacGregor, general of brigade in the service of the united provinces of New Granada and Venezuela, greeting:

Whereas it is highly important to the interest of the people whom we have the honor to represent, that possession should be taken, without loss of time, of East and West Florida, and the blessings of free institutions and the security of their natural rights imparted to their inhabitants, in pursuance of our instructions, and in conformity to the desires of our respective governments, we have commissioned Brigadier General Gregor MacGregor, for the purpose of carrying into execution, either wholly or in part, an enterprise so interesting to the glorious cause in which we are engaged:

Therefore, taking into consideration your zeal and devotion to the republic, we request you, in the name of our constituents, to proceed on your own responsibility and that of the above-named provinces, to adopt such measures as in your judgment may most effectually tend to procure for our brethren of both the Floridas, East and West, the speedy enjoyment of those benefits to which they are invited by the importance of their geographical situation; and for that purpose we authorize you, without departing from the usages and customs of

civilized nations in like cases, and the due observance of the laws of the United States, and particularly those *regulating* their neutrality with foreign powers, to cause vessels to be armed without the limits of their jurisdiction, and provisionally to grant rank to naval and military officers, until the government to be established by the free will of said people can provide in the most suitable mode for the arrangements of their several departments; in the execution of all which, the instructions issued to you of this date will serve as your guide.

Signed, sealed, and delivered in the city of Philadelphia, the 31st of March, 1817.

LINO DE CLEMENTE,
Deputy for Venezuela.

PEDRO GAUL,
Deputy for New Granada, and as
Proxy for F. Zarate, Deputy from
Mexico.

MARTIN THOMPSON,
Deputy from Rio de la Plata.

With his commission in his pocket, MacGregor solicited aid in Philadelphia. He was impenetrably reserved and circumspect as to his plans, without disclosing his specific object or the point against which he proposed to make his attack. Consequently his effort to collect funds for his enterprise failed in Philadelphia. The United States government was apprised of his presence, and warned that he might be in the service of the British government. MacGregor then went to Baltimore and sought an interview with the postmaster, J. Skinner, whom he supposed had influence with the United States government. For two months he visited Skinner almost daily, and little by little unfolded his plans to him in confidence. MacGregor's plans and intentions as disclosed to Skinner and afterward reported by him to the government, in compliance with the request of MacGregor to do so in case events should make it necessary, were substantially as follows: ⁶

MacGregor declared his object to be, in the first

place, to take possession of Amelia Island ; thence to wrest the Floridas from Spain, when he should immediately call on the inhabitants by proclamation to designate some of their most respectable fellow citizens to form a constitution on the model of some of the adjoining states. So far as it might depend on him, he would encourage the existing disposition of the people in that section to confederate with the United States, leaving it to the will and policy of the government and to political circumstances as they might arise, to indicate the most favorable time for their admission into the Union. In the meantime, he would endeavor to hold them as the most eligible depot to collect and organize the supplies necessary for the completion of South American independence. In connection with that object he was inclined to view the temporary possession of the Floridas under a provisional government as of the highest importance and utility.

MacGregor was of the opinion that it would be compatible with the best policy of the United States to connive at the occupation of the Floridas by a patriot force, because in that way the patriots might have access to the resources, and profit by the enterprise, without necessarily involving a positive violation of neutral laws. To any complaint from Spain, he thought the United States might sufficiently answer, that they were not responsible for any operations conducted beyond their jurisdiction in a territory claimed by Spain. Thus he was of the opinion that the United States might be relieved from any embarrassment that might result, and enjoy the satisfaction of seeing that assistance rendered to the patriots indirectly, which is forbidden to be directly offered by their actual relations with Spain. Besides, he believed that nature had so decreed the Floridas to the United

States, that any attempt to hold them by any other power was manifest folly, unless as a pretext to engage in war. He thought that the United States would coincide with him in his views, at least to the extent of not interposing any obstacles.

Such were the plans and ideas of MacGregor as related to the postmaster at Baltimore.

In the North, MacGregor was successful mainly in procuring backers for his enterprise, who were to furnish funds and reinforcements on condition of themselves having a share in the profits of the undertaking. With the few who had joined the standard there, MacGregor proceeded to Charleston, S. C., about the first of June. Here he enlisted quite a number, some of them very respectable citizens, including young men who had been in the army during the late war with Great Britain. ⁷

At Charleston, MacGregor purchased under a borrowed name a schooner of considerable size and cleared her for New Orleans presumably, but in fact for the mouth of the Altamaha River, where he planned to concentrate for the descent upon Amelia Island. He then went to Savannah, where he recruited the balance of his force. The Savannah recruits were of a lower class than those secured at Charleston, being any and everybody that would enlist at a pay of ten dollars a month with an advance of twelve dollars. They were composed mostly of sailors and stevedores hanging loose upon the society of that port.

In Savannah, MacGregor succeeded in interesting a large mercantile establishment in his cause, which, relying upon the successful conquest of Florida, consented to purchase thirty thousand acres of Florida land at the price of one dollar an acre. This firm also induced a number of its friends and patrons to contribute to the enterprise. ⁴

With the means thus provided for, MacGregor and his associates, in all about one hundred and fifty, concentrated at the mouth of the Altamaha, near Darien, Georgia, for final instruction. Here there were many defections on account of the imperative system of discipline that MacGregor demanded, which was little to the liking of many of his recruits. ⁴

When the expedition at length was in a sufficient state of forwardness, a partner in the mercantile establishment at Savannah preceded it to Amelia Island for the purpose of preparing the minds of the inhabitants against resistance, by representing to them a magnified and fabulous account of MacGregor's forces, which he described as one thousand strong and fully equipped in every way to accomplish their object. ⁴

THE NORTHERN DIVISION OF EAST FLORIDA

MacGregor firmly believed that if he conquered Amelia Island there would be nothing more to do but display his standard, fill up his ranks, and march to the possession of St. Augustine and the whole province ; and under this impression he enlisted in advance several sets of officers. ⁸ Let us leave MacGregor a moment and examine the prevailing conditions in East Florida as they existed at the time, and upon which he based his hopes.

East Florida, was left in a deplorable state by the failure of the "patriot" invasion organized by General George Mathews, of Georgia, in March, 1812. When the United States troops co-operating in that attack against Spanish Florida were withdrawn from Fernandina on May 6, 1813, there was a complete breakdown of law and order everywhere outside of the fortified town of St. Augustine. The country was occupied by adventurers who possessed no property except a horse and a rifle and perhaps a few hogs,

and whose main occupation was taking Indian cattle to be sold on the other side of the St. Marys River, in Georgia, without regard to the revenue law, or any other law of either country; each man was a "law unto himself," and a menace to his neighbor. Altogether they were a collection of roving frontiersmen who deemed it advisable to make it as uncomfortable for the Dons and the Indians, and everybody else, as possible. As a consequence, there was little attempt to occupy the country for legitimate and peaceable pursuits. The main stamping-ground of this class of people was the territory between the St. Johns and St. Marys rivers, eastward of the King's highway, which led from the cow-ford (now Jacksonville) to the St. Marys River at Colerain, Georgia.*

In the summer of 1816, several influential gentlemen in Florida undertook to work out a plan of rehabilitation for this, the most turbulent part of the province. George I. F. Clarke, surveyor-general of the province, Henry Yonge, and Zephaniah Kingsley, representing the Spanish governor, Coppinger, met the inhabitants of northeast Florida at Waterman's Bluff, on the Spanish side of the St. Marys River, not far from the town of St. Marys, Georgia. At that conference the territory outlined, except Amelia Island, was divided into three districts called Upper and Lower St. Marys and Nassau. A constitution based on that of Georgia, with some changes necessary to fit the situation, was submitted to the mass of the people assembled and agreed to. A magistrate court and a company of militia were provided for each district. Three magistrates and nine officers of militia were elected on the spot by popular vote and immediately commis-

*The present highway from Jacksonville, through Callahan, to the St. Marys River (State road No. 4), follows practically the same route as the old King's highway.

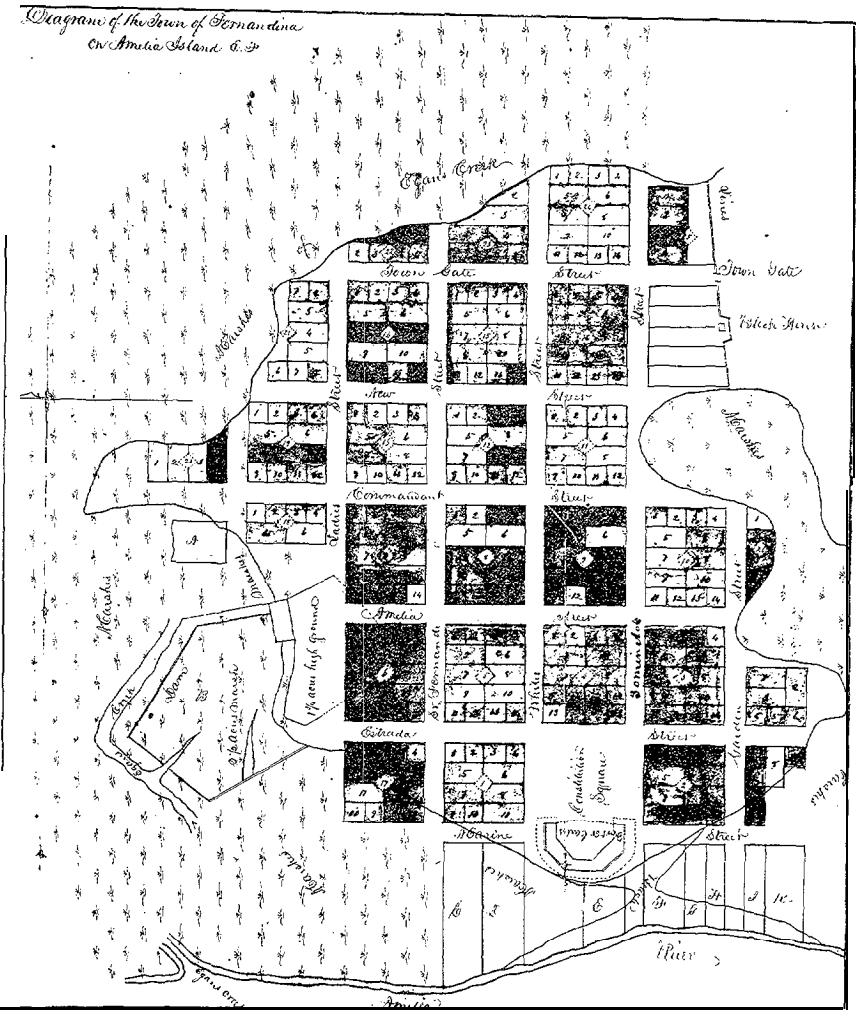
sioned, instructed, and provided with copies of the laws.⁹

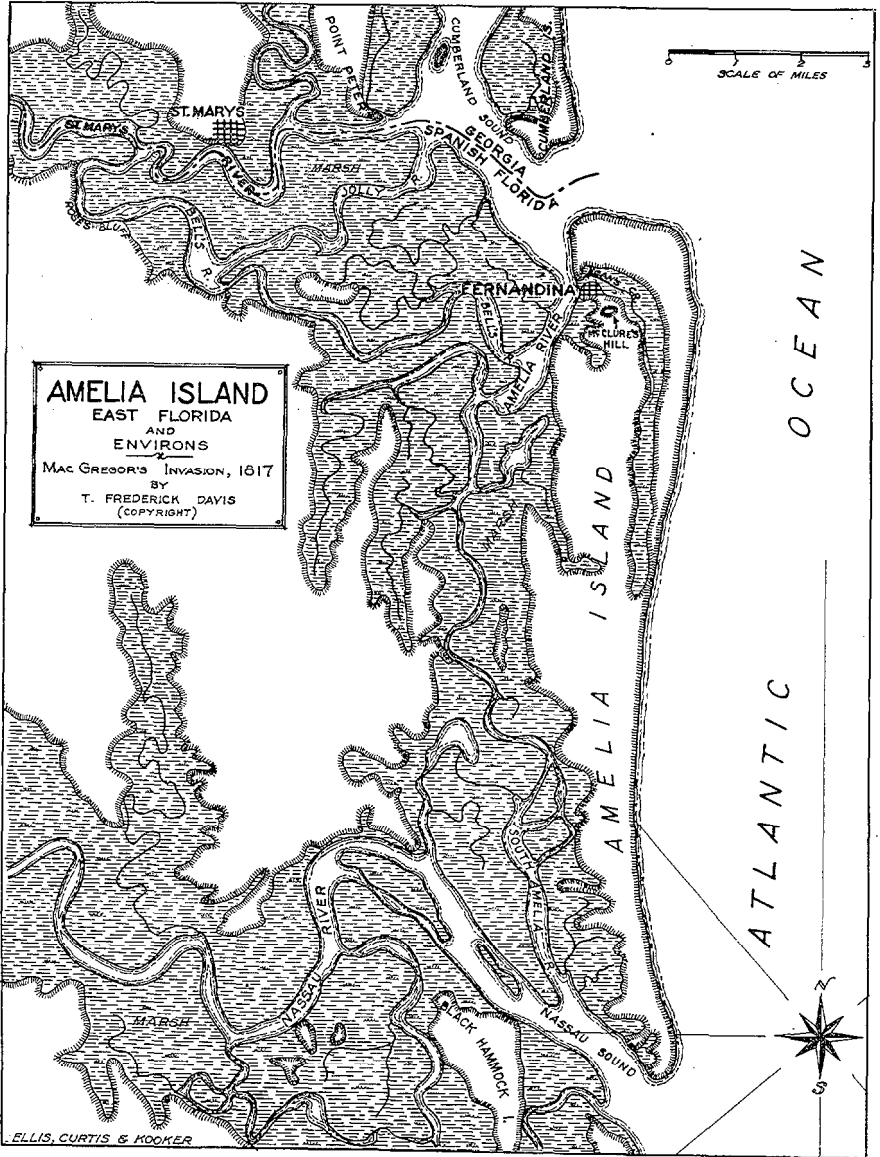
Thus on that day a republic was born within Spanish territory and with the consent of and holding allegiance to the Spanish government—a unique chapter in the varied history of Spanish Florida. The official designation of this republic was, The Northern Division of East Florida, usually referred to as the “Northern Division.”

The officers of the republic took up their duties in good faith under the general supervision of George I. F. Clarke, an Englishman born at St. Augustine. Governor Coppinger, glad to wash his hands of the turbulent element in those parts and save his own Dons the mischief of their misdeeds, approved the entire proceedings. The people of the republic paid no taxes and were subservient to no regulations except as made for their own defense and self-preservation. No military commander or any other officer had the power to arrest an inhabitant beyond the jurisdiction of his own district and all trials were to be held in the district where the arrest was made. Each district had its judge or justice of the peace, who tried all cases by a jury of twelve men of that district, and imposed penalties, except that of capital punishment, which cases were to be referred to St. Augustine for approval.⁹ Occasionally Lynch’s law, then popular in Georgia, was resorted to with efficacious results. Gradually the people become comparatively quiet. It must be said, however, that their laws did not contemplate the business of smuggling, and the old system of taking cattle from the Indians still continued.

The inhabitants of the republic were principally domiciliated Americans, with a small mixture of British and German. All spoke English entirely, with the exception of two, and these had American wives

FERNANDINA IN SPANISH TIMES





**AMELIA ISLAND
EAST FLORIDA
AND
ENVIRONS**

MAC GREGOR'S INVASION, 1617
BY
T. FREDERICK DAVIS
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SCALE OF MILES

ATLANTIC OCEAN



ELLIS, CURTIS & HOOKER

and families. About two hundred families were settled in this territory in 1817.¹⁰ These were the people that MacGregor expected to flock to his standard as soon as he put foot on Amelia Island.

AMELIA ISLAND

Amelia Island was not included in the Northern Division, because the Spaniards maintained a garrison there to look after their affairs, and the republic wanted no dual government locally.⁹

Amelia, a long, narrow, seacoast island, lying south of Cumberland Island, Georgia, was separated from the Northern Division by the Amelia and Nassau rivers, the former forming most of the boundary. The St. Marys River empties into the Atlantic Ocean at the northern end of the island, and the Nassau River likewise at the southern end; the Amelia River connects the two. At the confluence of the St. Marys and Amelia rivers, near the northern end of the island, nature provided one of the best natural harbors along the south Atlantic coast. Here sprang up a settlement about 1808, afterward named Fernandina, now called Old Fernandina or Old Town.

Under date of May 10, 1811, the Spanish governor of East Florida directed G. I. F. Clarke to make a survey of the town of Fernandina. The accompanying map of the town is an Anglicized copy of that survey.* The town in 1817 was composed of about forty houses, some two-story, and all built of wood. The streets had been set out with Pride of India trees.¹¹ The town was located on rather high, rolling ground with an imposing bluff on the Amelia River side.

* See the foregoing map. Many of the town lots on this map are in color, hence the mottled appearance of the blocks in the reproduction. The map is the property of Arthur T. Williams, President of The Florida Historical Society, and is here reproduced through his courtesy.

Egan's Creek and marsh on the north and east and a marsh south of the town made the location a peninsula with a narrow neck at the southeast. The road entered the town at that point. From marsh to marsh across the neck there was a strong picket, and the entrance was protected by a small block-house mounting two 4-pounders. Another block-house, recently built, flanked the town ; it mounted one 4-pounder. On the bluff facing Amelia River Fort San Carlos commanded the anchorage as far as the middle waters of the St. Marys River. The fort mounted four long Spanish 16-pounders, five 4-pounders, and one 6-pound carronade.¹²

The Spanish garrison at Fernandina comprised fifty-four men in all, including officers; they were mostly men worn out in the service, as many of them had been in the Spanish armies thirty years. The resident population was less than two hundred, not more than fifty of whom were able to bear arms. There was also a shifting population consisting principally of slave traders, smugglers, and other undesirables, many of whom were Americans.¹³ Considerable deviltry was already being carried on at Fernandina when MacGregor appeared.

MACGREGOR CAPTURES AMELIA

MacGregor embarked his force from an island at the mouth of the Altamaha River, near Darien, Georgia, and proceeded down the inside passage along Cumberland Island. He had two schooners and a few rowboats or galleys. Crossing the channel of the St. Marys, they anchored in the Spanish waters of Amelia near the northern end of the island. Here a force of fifty-five musketeers was landed.⁴ They marched to the heavy woods bordering Egan's Creek across from Fernandina, where final plans were made for the assault. It was Sunday, June 29, 1817.

Led by Col. Thornton Posey, late of the U. S. Army* and MacGregor's second in command, the column broke from the woods and began to cross Egan's Creek and marsh. On they came in open order, in twos and threes— a strategy designed to deceive the Spaniards into believing that the string of men crossing the marsh was only the advance guard of a large force concealed in the woods, whereas in reality they comprised MacGregor's entire force. They were directly exposed to the guns of Fort San Carlos. A handful of brave men on the Fernandina side could easily have exterminated them as they floundered across the marsh above their knees in mud and water. ²⁷

The propaganda of the emissary from Savannah, however, had succeeded. The Spanish commander of Amelia had issued orders not to fire a gun, but MacGregor did not know it. His strategy was hazardous and foolhardy and the cowardice of the Spanish commander alone saved the force from complete annihilation. During the whole proceedings one gun only was fired— from one of the blockhouses, and that against orders. ⁴

MacGregor and his troops all reached the Fernandina side in safety. Wet and muddy, they marched up to the fort and demanded its surrender. Without the slightest pretense at resistance, the Spanish commander, Francisco Morales, struck his flag.

These were the articles of capitulation. ¹⁴

Brigadier General MacGregor, commander-in-chief of all the forces, both naval and military, destined to effect the independence of the Floridas, duly authorized by the consti-

* Lt.-Col. Thornton Posey resigned from the U. S. Army in 1815. He was the son of Gen. Thomas Posey, of Virginia, who distinguished himself in the American Revolution, and who afterwards removed from Virginia, and finally became territorial governor of Indiana.

tuted authorities of the Republics of Mexico, Buenos Ayres, New Granada and Venezuela, offers to Don Francisco Morales, *captain del regimento de Cuba*, and commandant, civil and military, of the island of Amelia, the following terms:—

1st, The commandant, civil and military, Don Francisco de Morales, shall forthwith surrender the garrison of the Island with all the arms and munitions of war belonging to the King of Spain.

2dly, All the officers and troops of the garrison shall surrender as prisoners of war, to be sent to St. Augustine or to the Havana, with their private baggage, which shall be respected.

3dly, The lives and property of all private persons, whether friends or foes to the system of independence, shall be sacred and inviolate; and to those who do not choose to join the standard of independence, six months shall be allowed to sell or otherwise dispose of their property.

4thly, The General also offers to the inhabitants of Amelia, whether friends or foes, who have absented themselves on account of the present circumstances, the privilege of returning to their homes and enjoying the benefits of the third article of capitulation, and passports will be freely granted to all who wish to depart.

The preceding were agreed to between the Commandant Don Morales and the Secretary of General MacGregor.

Fernandina, 29th June, 1817.

FRANCISCO MORALES
JOSEPH DE YRIBARREN

Attest, Bernado Segin

Approved, GREGOR MACGREGOR.

Then the “Green Cross of Florida,” MacGregor’s flag, was run up over the fort and the farce of the surrender was ended.

The “Green Cross of Florida” was a white flag, with one vertical and one horizontal green stripe across the field, intersecting in the center and forming a St. George cross.¹⁵

MacGregor immediately sent the Spanish prisoners to the mainland, whence they embarked for St. Augustine. Governor Coppinger received their report with astonishment and mortification. He put Morales in

irons, and directed a court-martial to try him for cowardice along with his second in command. Morales was condemned to death and the other to imprisonment. It was, however, necessary to submit the decision through the captain-general of Cuba for the approbation of the king of Spain. A year afterward the sentence had not been imposed, and it is probable that it never was.⁴

Nearly all the respectable inhabitants of Amelia Island had departed with their movable property in anticipation of the attack. In his proclamation to the people, MacGregor asked them to return, and also invited the inhabitants to join his standard, with a hint that, if successful, America would then be placed in a high rank among the nations—a statement that apparently greatly offended the United States government. MacGregor's proclamation to the inhabitants follows:¹⁴

PROCLAMATION
Of the Liberating Army

Gregor MacGregor, Brigadier General of the armies of the United Provinces of New Granada and Venezuela, and General-in-Chief of the Armies for the Two Floridas, commissioned by the Supreme Director of Mexico, South America, &c.

To the Inhabitants of the Island of Amelia:

Your brethren of Mexico, Buenos Ayres; New Granada and Venezuela, who are so gloriously engaged in fighting for that inestimable gift which nature has bestowed upon her children, and which all civilized nations have endeavored to secure by social compacts—desirous that all the sons of Columbia should participate in that imprescriptible right—have confided to me the command of the land and naval forces.

Peaceable inhabitants of Amelia! Do not entertain any danger of oppression from the troops which are now in possession of your Island, either for your persons, property or religion; however various the climes in which they may have received their birth, they are nevertheless your brethren and friends. Their first object will be to protect your rights; your

property will be held sacred and inviolable; and everything done to promote your real interests by co-operation with you in carrying into effect the virtuous desires of our constituents, thereby becoming the instruments for the commencement of a national emancipation. Unite your forces with ours, until America shall be placed by her high destinies to that rank among nations that the Most High has appointed—a country, by its extent and fertility, offering the greatest sources of wealth and happiness.

The moment is important. Let it not escape without having commenced the great work of delivering Columbia from that tyranny which has been exercised in all parts, and which, to continue its power, has kept the people in the most degrading ignorance, depriving them of the advantages resulting from a free intercourse with other nations, and of that prosperity which the arts and sciences produce when under the protection of wholesome laws, which you will be enabled properly to appreciate only when you will have become a free people.

You who, ill-advised, have abandoned your homes, whatever may be the place of your birth, your political or religious opinions, return without delay, and resume your wonted occupations. Deprecate the evil counsels your enemies may disseminate among you. Listen to the voice of honor, to the promises of a sincere and disinterested friend, and return to the fulfillment of those duties which nature has imposed upon you. He who will not swear to maintain that independence which has been declared will be allowed six months to settle his affairs, to sell or remove his property without molestation, and enjoy all the advantages which the laws grant in such cases.

Friends or enemies of our present system of emancipation, whoever you be, what I say unto you is the language of Truth; it is the only language becoming a man of honor, and as such I swear to adhere religiously to the tenor of this proclamation.

Dated at Head Quarters, Amelia Island, June 30th, 1817.

GREGOR MACGREGOR

Joseph De Yribarren, secretary.

Following the proclamation to the people, MacGregor issued one to his soldiers and sailors, offering to lead them to glory in South America, after the Florida business should be completed. His grandiloquent appeal was designed to sink deep into the hearts of his followers and create there, forever, the spirit

of human liberty and justice. We have already examined the class and character of the people who joined MacGregor in the United States, and those in Florida from whom he expected to draw his reinforcement; therefore it is scarcely speculative as to what they thought about having their names made a by-word in South America. MacGregor said: ¹⁴

Soldiers and Sailors!

The 29th of June will be forever memorable in the annals of the independence of South America. On that day, a body of brave men, animated by a noble zeal for the happiness of mankind, advanced within musket shot of the guns at Fernandina, and awed the enemy into immediate capitulation, notwithstanding his very favorable position. This will be an everlasting proof of what the sons of freedom can achieve when fighting in a great and glorious cause against a Government, which has trampled on all the natural and essential rights which descend from God to man. In the name of the independent governments of South America, which I have the honor to represent, I thank you for this first proof of your ardor and devotion to her cause; and I trust that, impelled by the same noble principles, you will soon be able to free the whole of the Floridas from tyranny and oppression.

Then shall I hope to lead you to the continent of South America to gather fresh laurels in freedom's cause. Your names will be transmitted to the latest posterity, as the first who formed a solid basis for the emancipation of those delightful and fruitful regions, now in a great part groaning under the oppressive hand of Spanish despotism. The children of South America will re-echo your names in their songs; your heroic deeds will be handed down to succeeding generations, and will cover yourselves and your latest posterity with a never-fading wreath of glory. The path of honor is now open before you. Let those who distinguish themselves look forward with confidence to promotion and preferment.

To perpetuate the memory of your valor I have decreed, and do decree, a shield of honor to be worn on the left arm of every individual who has assisted or co-operated in the reduction of the Island of Amelia. This shield will be round, of the diameter of four inches. made of red cloth, with this

device, "Vencedores de Amelia, 29th of June, de 1817, 7 y. I.,"* surrounded by a wreath of Laurel and Oak leaves, embroidered in gold for the officers, in yellow silk for the men. The colors of the corps of national artillery, the first squadron of cavalry, and the regiment of Columbia, will have the same device embroidered on the right angle of the colors.

Long live the Conquerors of Amelia!

Dated at Head-Quarters, San Fernandino, 1st July, 1817, 7 & 1.

GREGOR MACGREGOR

Jos. De Yribarren, secretary.

Feeling himself firmly seated in his conquest, MacGregor began to arrange his system of government at Fernandina. He established a post-office department and ordered a printing press for the publication of a newspaper. The acquisition of a port on the Atlantic so near the United States was of great importance to the swarms of buccaneers that at that time infested the ocean and the islands of the West Indies and who sailed under the various flags of the "republics" of Mexico, Buenos Ayres, Venezuela and Granada. They were invited to make Amelia Island the depot of their prizes and the vent of their cargoes. A court of admiralty was established, with John D. Heath, formerly a lawyer at the bar of Charleston, as' judge. Upon the cargoes of such prizes the government of Amelia was to levy an impost of sixteen and a half per cent of the gross amount of sales, together with the charges of the admiralty court, etc., to meet the current expenses of the establishment and the replenishment of the military chest. ⁴ All of this was in the first week of the occupation.

In the meantime foraging parties had been despatched to the St. Johns country, one of which crossed the St. Johns River and established itself near the

* Meaning the 7th year of the independence of Venezuela dating from the first declaration, and the 1st of Florida.

site of Fort San Nicholas. San Nicholas was a Spanish block-house on the south side of the St. Johns. near the ford (South Jacksonville, the exact site being in what is now known as Locarno). Fearing an advance by MacGregor, the Spanish garrison at San Nicholas, on July 4th, burned the block-house, spiked the guns, and destroyed a few small arms and military stores that they could not conveniently carry with them, then embarked in two small gunboats, known as the "boats of the Royal Domain," and proceeded to St. Augustine.¹⁶

ANTAGONISM OF THE FLORIDIANS

The whole province of East Florida outside of the fortress of St. Augustine was undefended now and at the mercy of the invaders. MacGregor's out-parties were sent into the country to procure horses and supplies for the government. They soon began excesses upon the planters and inhabitants, which nullified any sympathy for the cause that might otherwise have been created by a different course. It does not appear that MacGregor authorized or was in sympathy with these depredations upon the inhabitants, but he and his cause, nevertheless, got the blame. His first blunder was in not pushing on to St. Augustine at once, for it is probable that in the enthusiasm of an unopposed advance the Spanish-Americans would have joined his standard in sufficient number to make his force respectable. But he tarried at Fernandina, issuing proclamations, organizing his government as though the conquest were complete, and incidentally entertaining in lavish style.

He made another mistake when, immediately upon his arrival at Amelia, he seized thirty-one slaves found at the island and sold them for the benefit of the government.²² This greatly alarmed the planters, in whose

memory the excesses of the Georgia patriots in 1812-13, were still fresh. Says the *Charleston Courier*, of July 19, 1817:

We have several letters from St. Marys and Amelia Island received by yesterday's mail, dated July 12th., which confirm the verbal accounts received here a few days since, from the same quarter, that the prospects of the patriots were by no means so flattering as at first represented. Had MacGregor pushed for St. Augustine immediately on his landing at Amelia, while the Spaniards were panic-struck and flying before him, he might perhaps have gained possession of that fortress, but he has lost that opportunity by delay; his followers are becoming dissatisfied, while the inhabitants of Florida are taking the alarm from the misconduct of his outposts. The planters are petitioning the officers of the American government on that frontier for permission to take their negroes into our territory for safety.

The out-parties degenerated into roving bands, plundering on their own account. We have a vivid narrative of one of these which, authorized by MacGregor to capture small Spanish vessels along the coast turned pirates and met their fate. The affair was described by a respectable citizen of St. Augustine: ¹⁷

The Challenge, an open boat, thirteen men, one swivel, eight muskets, fifteen pairs of pistols, sabres, and the necessary ammunition, was fitted out at Amelia under MacGregor's commission, with license to rob and plunder the inoffensive inhabitants of Mosquito. His excellency, the governor of this province, [Coppinger] having had early information, despatched a force from this place [St. Augustine] and on the 28th inst., [July] between 12 and 1 o'clock p. m., engaged the banditti in an open field, killed ten of them; took three, who begged for quarters; the boat armament; MacGregor's flag and papers. These desperadoes succeeded to land at Mr.'s plantation, nor had they more than entered the house when they commenced to break open doors, a chest of drawers, one trunk, and had every part of the house in complete search-when in about fifteen minutes of their being allowed to land, the King's troops came up. These fellows, thinking they were but a few plantation negroes, left the house to give battle, in hopes

of catching some of them, their object being negroes, but they soon discovered their mistake, and after firing one musket shot, attempted to regain their boat, which was already cut off from them. The following are the names of the killed: Capt. Morrisson, Sandford, Robert Wilson, Wm. Wilson, Ledlow, Thomas Williamson, Wellibey, Thomas Osman, Alexandro, and a Frenchman. All were Irishmen, Scotchmen, and citizens of the United States, except the Frenchman. From the language of one of the prisoners the most of them were deceived by the captain and Sandford, who led them to believe that their object was rather more discreet than eventually proved. It is really surprising that the Americans will continue to molest this country, that has never caused them the least offense. It is most degrading to rob the quiet planters of Mosquito, who have saved many and many of your countrymen who have had the misfortune to get cast away on this coast. Such is the gratitude and good return. The inhabitants of this country are Spaniards, whose homes are not to be plundered with impunity. A line of signals will henceforth communicate from the Mantanzas to Mosquito, and assure that the next attempt will meet the same well deserved, but unfortunate fate.

The King's troops mentioned were a company of a recent reinforcement of black troops from Cuba.

In another quarter, MacGregor had sent a boat up the St. Marys River to enlist such recruits as were willing to join the standard. As the boat approached the shore it was fired on and one of the crew killed.¹⁸ There were a number of brushes of this kind, enough to indicate plainly that the assistance of the Spanish-Americans, so heavily counted on in the beginning, had been lost to the cause of South American liberty.

AFFAIRS AT AMELIA

With the additions of the garrison from Fernandina and the seventy men from San Nicholas on the St. Johns, together with the arming of private citizens, Governor Coppinger could muster in the neighborhood of four hundred loyalists at St. Augustine, with provisions ample for a siege of six months.

The force at Amelia under MacGregor averaged about one hundred. At times it was less, from frequent desertions for one reason or another. Then a few recruits would arrive and the process would be repeated. Notwithstanding the fact that the Spanish force at St. Augustine and the open antagonism of the Floridians virtually confined his jurisdiction to the small island of Amelia, MacGregor continued his preparations for an advance as soon as the reinforcements that had been promised should arrive from the North. A local government for Fernandina had been established, for on July 25, 1817, an ordinance was passed, entitled "For the Better Regulation of Slaves," which was signed by Farquhar Bethune, as Mayor, and Wm. P. Yonge, as Secretary; this was a curfew ordinance, which also provided for fine or imprisonment for enticing slaves away from their owners.¹⁹

Several privateers were commissioned by MacGregor, but they had positive orders not to interfere with any neutral vessel,²⁹ which meant no vessel except Spanish. About the middle of July a French prize was brought to Fernandina. Judge John D. Heath, of the admiralty court, and General MacGregor had different opinions as to the right to claim her as a prize; a heated discussion followed and Judge Heath resigned. A commission of five was then appointed to fill the office and Jared Irwin* was made president. The Commission insisted that a part of the vessel's cargo was Spanish and could be condemned, and a third of her cargo was condemned as Spanish property contrary to the protest of General MacGregor, Colonel Posey, and other high officers of the command.²⁰

* Jared Irwin was formerly an officer in the American militia, and U. S. congressman from the state of Pennsylvania, 1813-15. (*Charleston Courier*, Oct. 13, 1817.)

July went and August came, and still no reinforcement from the North and none of the promised funds. The company at Savannah, seeing no prospect of gain, and doubtful of the capacity of those at Amelia to obtain any serious or valuable results, withheld further payments upon their promised assistance. The people of Georgia, who had supplied MacGregor with provisions, grew impatient at the uncertain mode of payment, and at length positively refused to furnish rations unless paid for in specie. Private loans were then resorted to, and every expedient, however destructive, seized upon to support the vanishing credit. In the midst of this desolation, Jared Irwin was appointed chief of the Amelian treasury, and in this capacity issued notes negotiable upon the faith of the government; but this experiment, as may be imagined, had little effect in reviving credit. ⁴

With scarcely enough money in the treasury to procure rations and none to keep up the payroll, MacGregor's force gradually melted away. A Spanish officer from St. Augustine had secretly found his way into Fernandina and ascertaining the number of MacGregor's followers and the amount of his resources, departed before his mission was discovered. Not long afterward, authentic information was received that the Spaniards, aided by the Florida militia, were planning an attack upon Fernandina. MacGregor then assembled his men, laid before them in a candid manner the hopes of victory and the disaster attending defeat, and left it to their decisions to follow his fortunes or depart. Many of them departed. ²¹

Seeing his hazardous situation, having but twenty-five men left, MacGregor had his baggage and that of his remaining officers put aboard a brig, for in ease reinforcements did not arrive in time to repel the expected attack, he intended to abandon his conquest of

Florida. ²¹ A day or so afterward, Commodore Taylor arrived from the Chesapeake in the privateer *Patriota* bringing a small reinforcement for MacGregor. About this time news reached Amelia that a large reinforcement was leaving New York, headed by Ruggles Hubbard, high-sheriff of New York City. New life was thereby infused into the affairs of Amelia, and MacGregor set about strengthening the defenses of Fernandina. ²³ On August 21st, he ordered a blockade of the entire Florida coast from the southern end of Amelia Island around to the Perdido River, effective September 15th. The enforcement of the blockade was placed in the hands of Commodore Taylor, chief of the Amelian navy. The proclamation was printed in Spanish by R. Findley, printer to the government; ²⁴ the printing press had been received and set up, but the newspaper does not seem to have appeared. ²⁵ The blockade never became effective.

MACGREGOR ABANDONS AMELIA

The resources of Amelia, both in men and money, were still unequal to any enterprise, whether offensive or defensive, but MacGregor held on in expectation of the arrival at any time of the expedition from New York. He believed that at last his backers were about to fulfill their obligations. Indeed so firmly had he relied on the faith of his engagements with the people at the North that he declined the acceptance of an adequate force from Georgia for the reduction of the Floridas, because it was offered on terms incompatible with his original compact. ²⁶ Reinforcements, under one pretense or another, had been delayed from time to time, but now he thought they were not only on the way, but would arrive at almost any hour.

Ruggles Hubbard, high-sheriff of New York, sail-

ed into the St. Marys River about August 28th, in the privateer brig *Morgiana*, owned by himself and flying the Buenos Ayrean flag. Hubbard brought no men, no money, nor munitions of war for MacGregor. And this was the expedition upon which he had based all his hopes of late! The only thing that it brought to MacGregor was an understanding that his supposed supporters in the North contemplated nothing further than the retention of Amelia Island as a rendezvous for their privateers.²⁸

Indignant at the deception, MacGregor called a council of his remaining officers-Colonels Posey and Parker, Captains Lynch, Beverly, Rouse, and others.²⁹ They discussed what was best to do. The Spanish-American army, said to number five hundred men, was already assembling on the main for an attack upon Amelia. We have no record of the "inside" proceedings of this council; no doubt it was pathetic in a way. The decision was to abandon the cause. Colonel Posey, together with most of the other high officers resigned on September 3d.* Wishing to be the last to resign General MacGregor waited until the next day, September 4th, to give up his command, turning it over to Irwin. The general, with his wife, went aboard a brig lying in the harbor.³⁰ Henceforth his movements were shrouded in mystery at the time, but it afterward developed that in abandoning Amelia he did not disappear from Florida's history, as we shall later see.

On the 16th of July, the United States government ordered the armed brig *Saranac*, Captain John H. Elton, to the St. Marys, because:³¹

The recent occupation of Amelia Island by an officer in the service of the Spanish revolutionists occasions just appre-

*Colonel Thornton Posey died two weeks later at Wilmington, N. C., on September 17, 1817, age 29 years. (*Charleston Courier*, Sept. 26, 1817.)

hension that, from the vicinity to the coast of Georgia, attempts will be made to introduce slaves into the United States contrary to existing laws, and further attempts at illicit trade in smuggling goods in violation of our revenue laws.

Owing to an accident at Charleston, the *Saranac* did not arrive at the St. Marys until September 4th, the day that General MacGregor abandoned Amelia, but in time to witness subsequent events of much interest to a naval vessel.³²

General MacGregor, as we have seen, turned affairs at Amelia over to Jared Irwin. Irwin called a council of soldiers to decide upon the question of risking a battle with the Spaniards or abandoning the island peaceably. A check-list showed eighty men and fourteen officers still at Fernandina; and in the harbor Hubbard's privateer *Morgiana* of eighteen guns, the Amelian privateer St. *Joseph* of ten, and the armed schooner *Jupiter*, with their crews. The decision of the council was to fight it out with the "Damn Spaniards of the Main," as they were called.³³

When this decision became known the greatest confusion prevailed among the remaining inhabitants of Fernandina. They, together with all the women of the town, went over to St. Marys, Georgia, many of them with their movable property. Amidst this confusion, Irwin and his men, with feverish activity, prepared for the Spanish attack. Irwin's force had neither talents, resources, nor popularity, being composed principally of sailors out of a job.⁴ All of the officers and best men of the original force had left the cause with MacGregor.

BATTLE OF AMELIA

Governor Coppinger, the son of an Irishman, inheriting the native gallantry of his paternal ancestry and already seasoned by his participation in the Peninsula campaign in Europe, chafed at the characteristic

Spanish delay in furnishing reinforcements from Cuba. Toward the end of July he received a small reinforcement of black troops from Havana, but the naval cooperation promised to assist in expelling MacGregor had not arrived. Feeling ashamed that the trifling force at Amelia should so long profane the province under his command, and tired of waiting, Coppinger issued a call for volunteers from the white militia of East Florida, to be supported by the black troops in garrison at St. Augustine.⁴ In answer to this call there was a spontaneous response. The militia of the Northern Division turned out, well equipped at their own expense, almost to a man, including the superannuated.⁹

The militia rendezvoused at Cedar Point on the mainland, about eighteen miles south of Fernandina ; afterward they moved over to the Harrison plantation in the southern part of Amelia Island, and there awaited the arrival of the force from St. Augustine.³⁴

In the night of September 9th, an advance party of twenty-seven volunteer militia from the Northern Division landed about a mile south of the town of Fernandina. On the morning of the 10th, at a near-by plantation they met a force three times their number, commanded by Irwin in person. This small body of Florida militia drove Irwin's force back into the town with a loss of seven killed and fourteen wounded, themselves sustaining no loss whatever. Irwin's dead were left upon the field and were buried by the Florida militia.⁹

On the 11th, Irwin sent the *St. Joseph* a mile up the Amelia River to burn the houses on the plantation where the fight had occurred. After plundering all they could carry off, the crew set fire to the two-story dwelling house of an old and inoffensive man, together with all the other buildings on the plantation. As

they were finishing the desolation, the Florida militia appeared and drove them off, without loss to either side in the skirmish.³⁶

The main body of Florida militia, about one hundred in number, was at Harrison's plantation, awaiting the arrival of the force from St. Augustine. Here on the 12th they were joined by that force, numbering about one hundred and fifty, mostly trained black troops.

To co-operate with the land force, Governor Copinger sent two small "boats of the Royal Domain," manned with light artillery. These came by the inside passage and arrived on the 13th, when the mutual advance against Fernandina began. The troops moved up, apparently unobserved, to within range of the guns of the fort, but were screened from them by McClure's hill,⁴ a commanding elevation about a quarter of a mile southeast of the town. A Spanish battery of four brass pieces took up a position on top of the hill. The Spanish gunboats advanced to within a mile of the town and opened the battle at 3 p. m., when the battery on McClure's Hill likewise came into action. The privateer *St. Joseph* and Fort San Carlos and the two block-houses, replied. The Spanish gunboats had the range perfectly and dropped their shot around the *St. Joseph* and at the fort, while the battery on McClure's Hill got a number of shot into the town.³⁸

It seems that the *St. Joseph* confined her attention mostly to the Spanish gunboats, but her gunners overshot their mark, their shot falling far beyond. Only two of the big guns of San Carlos could be brought to bear on McClure's Hill, and these likewise overshot their mark, but with a strange result. The *Morgiana* lay off Fernandina in a position to bombard the town in case the Spaniards captured it, but she did not fire a gun during the action.³⁹

The firing was described as incessant, and continued until dark. Irwin reported no loss as a result of the bombardment, but toward dusk the *St. Joseph* hoisted sail and headed for the St. Marys, which would indicate that it was getting too hot for her.

The shot from the two guns at San Carlos went over McClure's Hill and accidentally fell among the troops concentrated below, two of whom were killed and a number wounded. The commander of the troops, who held the rank of major in the Royal Regiment of Cuba, became panic-struck at this unexpected situation. Instead of shifting his position to the obscurity of the woods in the rear of the town where no preparation for resistance had been made, thence advancing under cover of the night, the Spanish commander ordered a retreat, in spite of the entreaties and remonstrances of the officers of the militia. The militia of Florida was a brave and active race, and its officers and men were maddened by the cowardice of the Spanish commander; but there was nothing else to do, as the orders to retreat were imperative.⁴

The Spanish gunboats, which covered themselves with glory, held their positions until ordered to retreat. The troops retreated to Harrison's, whence the volunteers in disgust returned to their homes and the Spaniards to St. Augustine.

The expedition comprised about three hundred men in all and its success had never been doubted by Governor Coppinger. He received the report of the failure with the utmost indignation and immediately placed the commander under arrest. A court martial acquitted the officer of the charge of cowardice, but declared him incompetent and relieved him of his command. The laws of Spain unfortunately did not permit the governor of the province to command in person a mil-

itary operation beyond the immediate confines of his garrison ; had it been otherwise, this expedition without doubt would have closed the career of Irwin and his followers at Amelia Island. ⁴

RUGGLES HUBBARD AND JARED IRWIN

The High-Sheriff of New York and the former Congressman of the United States appear to have had some understanding with respect to the destiny of Amelia before the battle took place, although Hubbard was at St. Marys while the fighting was going on. The "understanding" between Hubbard and Irwin is hinted at in an account of the correspondent of the *Charleston Courier*, September 29, 1817:

One of the principal leaders at Fernandina comes out with the following declaration: That his friends want only Fernandina and Pensacola, as ports to fit out privateers and bring in prizes, and that they are very indifferent as to the fate of the rest of the Floridas; that if the inhabitants will keep themselves at home, or will not act with hostility toward them, they may retain or promise their allegiance to whom they please. ⁶³

The first notice of Hubbard as actively engaged in the affairs of Amelia was after the battle. He was then at the head of the civil department and Irwin was chief of the military.

The reconstruction of Amelia under Hubbard and Irwin had been in progress two days, when there arrived in port two privateers with a valuable prize. The mere fact of the arrival of a privateer or two at Fernandina, in itself, was not an unusual occurrence ; but this was the arrival of Luis Aury, the famous pirate, and it had a most important effect upon the affairs of Amelia, as well as upon those of the neighboring Northern Division.

LUIS AURY

Luis Aury was a Frenchman, ⁶⁵ a graduate of the French revolutionary school. ⁴ Little is known of him until he made his appearance on the Spanish Main, where he seems to have gone to cast his lot with the South American revolutionists. There he no doubt became acquainted with MacGregor, who was then enlisted in the same cause.

Aury had concentrated his ships in the harbor of Cartagena, (Colombia) where he was surprised by a Spanish squadron. Rather than surrender and perish by the sword, he ran the blockade with a part of his fleet and sailed for the island of Santo Domingo. It was probably here that he decided to lay aside his patriotism for the South Americans to become an outright pirate for himself. From Santo Domingo he set sail for Galveston Island, then known as Snake Island, on the coast of Texas, arriving there some time in July, 1816, with a prize or two that he had captured in the meantime. On this uninhabited island, Aury soon collected a gang of desperate vagabonds, including Frenchmen, some of whom had been with Napoleon in Europe; Barratarian refugees, remnant of Lafitte's pirate band ; freebooters and smugglers ; and in short outcasts of every country, together with a considerable body of vicious mulattoes from Santo Domingo Island. ⁴⁰

With the consent of one Manuel de Herrera, so-called minister plenipotentiary of the Republic of Mexico to the United States, Aury set up a government on Galveston Island. Herrera appointed him civil and military governor; with power to issue letters of marque and institute a court of admiralty, all of which Herrera had no real authority to do. Nevertheless, a first-class piratical rendezvous was soon established on Galveston Island. ⁴⁰

Aury's privateers sailed under the Mexican flag, when it was deemed expedient to display one, and claimed to be in the service of the "Republic of Mexico" in its struggle for independence ; but no vessel containing booty, whether merchandise or slaves, was safe along the Spanish Main or in the Gulf of Mexico, unless convoyed by a warship. There are several instances of record where Aury's privateers captured both the merchantman and the convoy. Slave ships were eagerly sought for as an especially valuable prize. At Galveston the captured cargoes were appraised by the "court of admiralty" and sent usually to the vicinity of New Orleans, where they were disposed of, often with little attempt at concealment. Slaves were sold to speculators along the Texas coast, who in turn sold them to planters in the outlying districts of Louisiana.

The bar and harbor at Galveston proved unsatisfactory and dangerous, and Aury with his "government" abandoned the island on April 5, 1817, and moved farther west to Matagorda. The new headquarters, likewise, was unsatisfactory. Receiving intelligence that MacGregor was planning a descent upon Florida, Aury decided to go there and if MacGregor was not in possession at the time, to take Fernandina with the force under his own command. Aury had no idea of conquering Florida ; all he wished for was to establish a "government" on the order of that of Galveston, and Fernandina offered many inducements. He left Matagorda, touched at Galveston to collect his fleet, and sailed for Amelia Island in July, 1817.⁴⁰

Where Aury went or what he did in the next month or so we do not know. On the 11th of September he was reported off Charleston,⁴¹ and on the 17th he arrived at Amelia Island with two privateers and a prize valued at \$60,000.⁴² Sailing into the harbor of Fernandina

on board his flagship, the Mexican Congress, a formidable brig mounting twelve long 18-pounders, Aury proposed a salute with Captain Elton of the U. S. S. *Saranac*; but Captain Elton took no notice of the offer. He met a warmer reception, however, from Governor Hubbard. There had been a rumor for many days that Aury was on his way to Amelia, and his arrival was not unexpected, though his purposes were unknown. Hubbard at once appealed to him for financial assistance.

AMELIA ANNEXED TO MEXICO

Aury sized the situation up immediately and refused his aid unless he should be made chief as at Galveston. To this arrangement Hubbard and Irwin strongly protested, and it was not until Aury threatened to leave Amelia that a compromise was effected.⁴

It was finally agreed that Hubbard should be the civil governor of Amelia, and Aury the commander-in-chief of the military and naval forces. Irwin entered the arrangement as adjutant-general under Aury. The flag of the Republic of Mexico should fly, Aury claiming the authority to hoist it as a chief of the Mexican republic. In the arrangement, Aury was to pay the arrearages to MacGregor's men who would consent to remain in the "cause."

The stage thus set, the following proclamation was issued :⁴³

PROCLAMATION

Fernandina, East Florida, September 20th - The inhabitants of the Island of Amelia are informed, that tomorrow the Mexican flag will be hoisted on the fort with the usual formalities. They are invited to return as soon as possible to their homes, or send persons in their confidence to take possession of the property existing in the houses, which is held sacred. All persons desirous of recovering their property are invited to send written orders, without which nothing will be allowed to be embarked.

Proclamations for the organization of the place will immediately be issued.

AURY, Commander-in-Chief
R. HUBBARD, Governor, &c.

So, amidst the boom of cannon, and with the buccaneer nobility of the high-seas and the land forces of iniquity lined up at attention, Amelia Island on September 21, 1817, was annexed to the "Republic of Mexico."⁴³

As we have seen, the last of the respectable inhabitants of Amelia, who had the courage to remain after MacGregor captured the island, left in anticipation of the Spanish attack. None of them returned permanently by virtue of the proclamation, to mix with the heterogeneous assemblage then occupying Fernandina, comprising many nationalities and languages, but no Spanish Americans. The population at that time was wholly composed of those who had come ostensibly to aid the cause of the South American patriots, but with the real motive of subsisting by plundering and privateering. Among them were found American, English, Irish, and French adventurers and derelicts, together with Aury's trained desperadoes, the cream of the Galveston establishment,⁶⁴ including one hundred and thirty mulattoes, known as Aury's "blacks" and described as a "set of desperate, bloodthirsty dogs."⁶⁵ A conglomerate mass of this kind, thrown together in anticipation of spoil, under a compromise agreement between leaders who sought exclusive power for themselves, could hardly be expected to remain quiet, and it is not surprising that factions arose to fight among themselves.

CIVIL COMMOTION

In the very beginning there was trouble between Hubbard and the Americans and Aury and his blacks over the question of the latter being in garrison at

Fernandina - it was a color-line question and it resolved itself into two parties, one headed by Hubbard, known as the "American party," and the other by Aury, as the "French party." On October 8th, a proclamation bearing upon the matter of runaway slaves and imposing a fine of \$100 upon anyone enticing a slave away from its owner, was issued by the "Supreme Junta or Council of State," the advisory body that had been created, composed of eight members including Hubbard and Aury. It was hardly more than a curfew law, but it was inspired by Hubbard and gave Aury an opportunity to bring up the question of authority at Amelia. The affairs at Amelia were at once thrown into a whirlpool of confusion, the party lines becoming clearly drawn between the English-speaking people, who gravitated to Hubbard, and the others to Aury.⁴⁴

The bitterness became intense and the situation at times amounted to almost open warfare between the parties. Such was the instability of the government that one day Hubbard's party would prevail to the exclusion of the military under Aury, only to be overturned the next day by the military to the exclusion of the civil authority. So it went - no business of any kind, no sales of prize goods, and everything else in confusion.⁴⁴

DEATH OF RUGGLES HUBBARD

Hubbard, already in poor health after a month of strain and worry, finally contracted the prevailing fever, which had all of the ear-marks of yellow fever. Seizing the opportunity, Aury, with a body of armed mulattoes, marched to Hubbard's quarters and forced him to make concessions. Hubbard survived this mortification only a short time - he died October 19th.⁴⁵ Had he lived a week longer he would have witnessed an unexpected and strange reinforcement.

In August, 1817, one hundred British ex-officers sailed from England for South America to enlist in the cause of South American independence. On their arrival at St. Thomas, West Indies, they learned that MacGregor had captured Amelia Island, and thirty of them at the suggestion of the American consul at St. Thomas, decided to change their plans and join their countryman, MacGregor. Hiring a schooner to take them to Fernandina, they arrived there October 25th. The pirate Liers, captain of Hubbard's privateer *Morgiana*, presented them to Aury, who entertained them at a banquet that night. In his speech Aury informed them that he was sorry they had not brought privates to his standard, as he already had more officers than he could use, many of whom had to do duty in the ranks of the garrison. ⁴ ⁴⁶

In the meantime, following the death of Hubbard, the American party was merely a mob of men without a head. The ring-leaders approached Irwin on the subject of becoming their chief; but the adjutant-general of Aury, though now without influence, held the offer in abeyance, suggesting that subsequent developments should decide the matter. ⁴ This was the situation at Amelia when the British officers arrived. Disappointed at finding that MacGregor had departed, and not being favorably impressed with the idea of doing duty in the ranks, as intimated by Aury, most of them left the island immediately. One, a Colonel McDonald, with a few fellow officers, remained and attempted to organize a party of their own to oust the other parties of Amelia. There were some defections from the American party to McDonald, which weakened that party and strengthened Aury's. While this was going on, Aury seized the opportunity and combined the civil authority with his military supremacy. ⁴

AURY IN SUPREME COMMAND

Lining his privateers along the waterfront, with their guns trained upon Fernandina, Aury declared martial law. His proclamation was a good example of his diplomatic chicanery : ⁴⁷

INHABITANTS OF FERNANDINA

For days past you have witnessed the scandalous transactions of a faction, composed of men, who existing and tolerated on this island by our generosity, have solely been engaged in subverting social order. They are mercenaries, traitors or cowards, who abandoned the cause of republicanism in the hour of danger, and who either hired by our enemies or misled by the intrigues of a few aspiring individuals, have attempted to involve us in all the complicated horrors of civil war.

Citizens, we are republicans from principle; our fortunes have been spent and our lives are oft exposed for the most glorious, cause. We have come here to plant the tree of liberty; to foster free institutions; and to wage war against the tyrant of Spain, the oppressor of America and the enemy to the rights of man. We are ever ready to pay obedience to the principle of republicanism, but firmly determined never to adhere to the dictates of a faction.

When the heat of passion shall be no more; when public peace and tranquility shall be restored, we shall see with a lively pleasure the establishment of a provisional government most suitable to our common interest, and to the advancement of our glorious cause.

Americans, Englishmen, Irishmen, and Frenchmen, men of all nations, we are freemen; let us forever be united by the love of liberty and hatred to tyranny.

Soldiers and sailors, martial law is declared to be in force for ten days. Let us give to our brethren of the state of the Floridas proofs of our military discipline, and of our respect for the properties of the inhabitants.

LUIS AURY

Headquarters of Fernandina,
November 5th, 1817.
8th and 1st of the independence.

Now firmly seated upon the throne, Aury proceeded to remove any possibility of further disturbance to "our common interest and the advancement of our glorious cause." He banished some of the ring-leaders of the American party, designating in special cases that they should not settle south of the dividing line between South and North Carolina. He arrested the British officers of McDonald's party and brought them to trial before a court martial. Aury's court, selected by himself, was composed of buccaneers who had been faithful to him in the recent trouble. They listened to the evidence without interest, as their verdict was predetermined and that was death. The counsel for the defense was one of the British officers who had left Amelia, but being at St. Marys at the time, he returned to Fernandina to represent his countrymen at the trial. He had been a lawyer of some note in England. Realizing that evidence and pleading meant nothing in this case, he delivered a master-stroke in a final statement, that if the verdict was for conviction England would leave no stone unturned for their extermination. This aroused the court; those swarthy pirates sat up, put their heads together and began to whisper among themselves. They returned a verdict of banishment from the island. The lawyer in the case published a book in 1819, in which he described this trial.⁴

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TAKES ACTION

The United States government was fully aware of the situation at Amelia, as the public press of the country carried news items in almost every issue. The *National Intelligencer* and *Niles' Weekly Register*, both considered semi-official organs of the government, devoted considerable space to the subject. Captain Elton, of the U. S. brig *Saranac*, the watchful eye of the government at St. Marys, reported regularly and often

to the Navy Department. The *Charleston Courier* and the *Savannah Republican*, newspapers, the former a daily paper, likewise kept the public informed. Private citizens also furnished the government with information. One in particular is worthy of note—John H. McIntosh, famous in Florida's history as a leader in the Patriot invasion of 1812. General McIntosh wrote a lengthy account under date of July 30, 1817, and sent it to William H. Crawford, secretary of the treasury. In this account he said: "Aury's blacks make their neighborhood extremely dangerous to a population like ours [in Georgia] and I fear if they are not expelled from that place [Fernandina] some unhappy consequence might fall on our country. It is said they have declared that if they are in danger of being overpowered [by the American party] they will call to their aid every negro within reach. Indeed, I am told that the language of the slaves in Florida is already such as to be extremely alarming."⁴⁸

Seeing at last that the establishment at Amelia was in no way calculated to result in a conquest of Florida from Spain, the President directed that it be broken up. In January, 1811, congress had passed a secret act giving the President power to expel by force any foreign power that might occupy Spanish Florida—aimed mainly at the British as a preliminary to the war of 1812. The act remained unpublished until now when President Monroe invoked the law as his authority for expelling Aury from Amelia Island. The War and Navy departments issued their orders as follows:⁴⁹

War Department, November 12, 1817

Sir :

I am instructed by the President to direct you to repair immediately to Point Peter with the effective force under your command, leaving only an officer and a few men as a guard at Forts Moultrie and Johnson. Captain Wilson has been ordered

to repair with his company now at Fort Johnson, N. C., to Point Peter; and a detachment of new recruits under the command of Captain Hook, who was on his route to join the 4th infantry, has also been ordered to that place. The troops enumerated above and those now stationed at Point Peter, will constitute a force of more than 200 men, of which you will take command, until the arrival of General Gaines. A remittance of five thousand dollars has been made to your battalion quartermaster, whom you will take with you, and you will make requisitions for the necessary supply of provisions on the contractor's agents. It will be advisable to take from Charleston a supply of salted meat, and a sufficient quantity of flour and hard bread to serve 250 men for thirty days at least.

It appearing to the satisfaction of the President that the persons who have lately taken possession of Amelia Island have done it without the sanction of any of the Spanish colonies, or of any organized government whatever, and for purposes unfriendly to and incompatible with the interests of the United States, he has decided to break up that establishment and take temporary possession of Amelia Island. For this purpose the troops ordered to assemble at Point Peter will cooperate with the naval force which has been ordered to St. Mary's under the command of Captain Henley.

It is the anxious wish of the President that this should be accomplished without the effusion of blood; and he confidently hopes that the force destined for the purpose will be of such an imposing character as to induce those persons who now have the military occupation of the island to abandon it without the exercise of force; but if it should be found indispensably necessary, force must be used. You will therefore immediately on the arrival of Captain Henley at St. Mary's, and in conjunction with him, despatch an officer to demand the abandonment of the island by those who now exercise authority there, and to take such other measures as may be deemed proper to obtain the peaceable possession of it; also for the preservation of the property of those persons who were residents of the island when it was first captured by General MacGregor. Should your demand for the evacuation of Amelia be complied with, you will then occupy with a part of your force the position of Fernandina, and take care that the cannon and other implements of war which belonged to the port when it was captured by General MacGregor are not taken off.

If peaceable possession of the island, however, cannot be obtained, and it should be the opinion of Captain Henley and

yourself that your joint forces are not competent to the prompt and certain reduction of the naval and military forces which may then occupy the harbor and post of Fernandina, you will, in that event, make a requisition on General Floyd, or such other officer as may command that division of the militia of Georgia in which Point Peter is situated for a force not exceeding five hundred men, to be held in readiness to march at a moment's warning, and await the arrival of General Gaines, who has been ordered to Point Peter for ulterior measures.

You will take with you from Charleston the necessary military stores and such heavy cannon as may be required for the reduction of the fort on Amelia Island, in the event of resistance.

As no answer has been received to the communication addressed to you from this department on the 17th of July last, it becomes necessary to request that the receipt of this may be acknowledged, and that you also advise this department regularly of your movements.

I have the honor to be &c,

GEORGE GRAHAM

Major James Bankhead,
Commanding at Charleston, S. C.

Navy Department, November 14, 1817.

Sir:

Having been appointed to the command of the U. S. ship John Adams, you are hereby ordered, in conformity to the wishes of the President of the United States, to proceed forthwith to the port of St. Mary's in Georgia, taking with you the U. S. brigs Enterprize and Prometheus, and the schooner, Lynx, if the two latter have arrived in New York, and are in a state of readiness to accompany you; but you will not procrastinate the departure of the ship John Adams on account of these vessels, as any of them not fully prepared to proceed with you shall be ordered to join you *as soon* as practicable at St. Mary's, at which place you will find the U. S. brig Saranac, Captain John H. Elton, and gunboat No. 168, Lieutenant Commandant R. McCall, both of which vessels will act under your orders.

The object of the President of the United States in ordering this naval force to the St. Mary's is to remove from Amelia island the persons who have lately taken possession thereof, and, it is understood and believed, without authority

from the colonies or any organized government whatever, and to the great annoyance of the United States. It has therefore been determined that these persons shall be removed from that island, and that possession shall be taken for the present, by the land and naval forces of the United States.

On your arrival at St. Mary's, you will consult with the officer commanding the military force, who is instructed to co-operate with you in the performance of this service.

It is hoped that these persons will withdraw without bloodshed; and you will, for this purpose, should your relative rank be superior to that of the commanding officer of the land forces, make known to the chief commanding in Amelia the determination of the government of the United States to take possession of the island; and if the said chief, and the armed forces under his command, will peaceably quit the island, you will permit them to do so, taking special care that no depredations be committed on the inhabitants, whom it will be your duty to protect from violation or injury, either in their persons or property.

Should the force, however, now in command of the island, contrary to all expectations, resist and refuse absolutely to give up and abandon the same, you are, in co-operation with the military force of the United States, to proceed and take possession of the island in the name and by the authority of the United States.

Should you fall in with, on your way to St. Mary's, or find in Amelia any vessels from the United States, armed and equipped by American citizens, acting as privateers, contrary to the laws of the United States, you will capture such and send them to Savannah in Georgia, to be dealt with according to law.

You will detain all prizes, or other vessels having slaves on board, as the presumption is strong that they are intended to be smuggled into the United States. You will report from time to time to this department the operations of the force under your command.

I am respectfully, &c.,

B. W. CROWNSHIELD

Commodore J. D. Henley.

P. S. These orders are not to be delivered to any person.

Presently we shall see how Major Bankhead and Captain Henley carried out their orders.

Aury, down on Amelia Island, of course knew nothing of these orders. He had seen the United States gunboat No. 168. come in and join the *Saranac* off St. Marys on November 6th, but he attached no significance to that fact, for he had no idea that the United States government would intervene in the affairs of Amelia. Had not the United States hitherto backed up morally, or actually aided with its armed forces, other attempts against Spanish Florida? Did not President Monroe, when secretary of state, show an active interest in the invasion of East Florida by the Georgia patriots in 1812; and had not the United States attempted to plant its own "tree of liberty" here at that time? Could President Monroe doubt for an instant the high ideals expressed in the proclamation issued at Fernandina on November 5th? Had not MacGregor been suffered to organize in and depart from the United States on the same mission of liberty for the oppressed? Then what further right did the United States have to interfere now? So thought Aury, and firm in this belief he proceeded to duplicate the Galveston establishment on Amelia Island and hide it behind a paper government sailing under the name "republic."

DISPOSITION OF PRIZE CARGOES

For a month, while the English and French parties were at loggerheads, privateers continued to arrive with their prizes. Finding everything in turmoil most of them hoisted sail again and left for ports unknown, though probably for Baltimore or New York. The Spanish minister repeatedly reported to the United States government that privateers were illegally disposing of their cargoes in those ports, but there seems to have been little or no attention paid to his protests.⁵⁰

Upon gaining full control of the affairs of Amelia, Aury soon whipped the establishment into comparative quietude with respect to civil strife, and simultaneously the activity of the port of Fernandina increased. At one time there were eight large prizes in port, with full cargoes of sugar, coffee, etc., some with silks and cloth goods, others with miscellaneous merchandise, and all taken upon the high-seas in piratical manner. A Spanish prize in the harbor included in her cargo one thousand boxes of cigars made expressly for the king of Spain. But the most sought after prize of all was a shipload of Africans.

The clatter of anchor chains being drawn aboard and the rushing about of crews now spoke plainly of some new depredation upon the high-seas, or the departure of a prize ship to dispose of cargo in some Atlantic port of the United States. Alongside of others could be seen little boats of less than five tons burthen, loading goods. The revenue laws of the United States at that time were applicable to vessels of greater than five tons, therefore a boat of less tonnage needed no clearance. This loophole in the law was known to Aury and he took advantage of it in a local way. He used large rowboats, with Africans at the oars, and sent them to nearby points, where the goods were disposed of and the Africans sold to slave traders. Captain Elton of the U.S.S. *Saranac* saw them go and return, but he could not legally stop them; he had already made a test case of one, and the collector at Savannah had turned her loose for the reasons stated.⁶⁴ This, though, was not the principal manner in which Africans were disposed of by Aury.

The residents of the Northern Division, however, amenable to their own laws, had no conscientious scruples about making money through the medium of slave traffic. To them it was all wrong to steal a neighbor's

cow, and the punishment therefor was severe; but it was all right to take an Indian's cow, smuggle it across the St. Marys and sell it in Georgia. To them the only difference between a cow and a negro was physical—both were property. When Aury met them and offered to sell them boatloads of Africans, the arrangements were perfected on the spot. So the people that had been antagonistic to MacGregor quickly turned to Aury to their great pecuniary advantage.⁵¹

It was estimated by a careful observer⁵² that Aury disposed of more than a thousand Africans in this way in less than two months. They were taken up on the Spanish side of the St. Marys River fifty or sixty miles, to avoid the vigilance of the revenue officers, and finally sold at a great advance in the back parts of Georgia and the adjoining states.⁵¹

In all of this we easily recognize the general system pursued at Galveston. Aury had come into his own. We can safely picture him standing on the ramparts of Fort San Carlos, smoking a cigar intended for the king of Spain, his keen eyes sweeping the harbor of Fernandina and its activities. Off to the left he notes a boat going up Bells River, loaded with its human freight to be delivered to the slave traders of the Northern Division. Along the waterfront he views the bales and cases of goods waiting appraisal. A privateer and a prize ship, square-rigged, are hoisting sail to leave the harbor—the former to sweep the Atlantic for such as she could capture; the latter for a port to dispose of cargo. In the distance, off Point Peter, he observes the *Saranac* and the little gunboat No. 168, riding at anchor; but what of that, when the whole Atlantic coast remains unguarded as to smuggling? Feeling like the king he wishes to be, he puffs at his cigar and looks upon the situation with contentment, little dreaming that a United States squad-

ron is preparing to sail down the coast with orders to run him out.

THE "REPUBLICANISM" OF AMELIA

Aury realized that to perpetuate the establishment at Amelia, something must be done to convey the impression that a legitimate government existed there. In all of his proclamations-and like MacGregor, he was fond of issuing them, but with the difference that Aury's were camouflage, while MacGregor's were sincere-the words "patriotic cause," "republicanism," and "independence" were shrewdly played-up for the benefit of the outside world.

Aury called a meeting of his officers for the purpose of holding an election of members to constitute a legislature. From the minutes of that meeting we have :⁵³

ELECTION

A Meeting of the Officers of the Republic of the Floridas, convened by General Order of 16th November, 1817, at the house of the Commander-in-chief, having assembled, the session was opened by the General as follows:

Gentlemen:-When the dangers that threatened the existence of our infant Republic required that effectual measures should be taken to establish order and tranquillity, I was the first to recommend them, though contrary to the sacred rights of the Citizen. The Martial Law which was proclaimed for ten days has expired, and the tranquillity that now exists allows the citizens peaceably to elect their representatives. In my humble opinion it would be dangerous to extend any longer the empire of this law, as it can merely tend at the present moment to check the progress of our operations.

I therefore suggest that an Assembly of Representatives be called to frame and constitute a Provisional Government, adapted to the present situation of the State, well understood that while they are exercising so precious a right, the present military establishment must be supported in order not to suffer our existence to be impaired by the intrigues and treacherous machinations of our common enemy.

The members of the meeting having taken the subject into serious consideration, unanimously, agreed on the following resolutions :

1. That on Wednesday, the 19th inst., the inhabitants of the Island of Amelia be summoned for the purpose of electing Representatives, whose duty it will be to frame and constitute a provisional government, to continue in force until a constitution for the state be framed by a convention legally called and composed of delegates of the people of the Floridas, free and independent from the King of Spain, his heirs and successors.

2. Every free inhabitant who shall have resided fifteen days previous to this on the Island shall be entitled to vote, but previous to giving his vote he shall take and subscribe the following oath :

"I swear that I will truly and faithfully and as far as it is in my power support the cause of the Republic of the Floridas against its enemies. I renounce all allegiance to any State not actually struggling for the emancipation of Spanish America: So help me God."

3. No military officer, non-commissioned officer, or private on actual service, shall be entitled to vote, but may be elected as a representative..

4. There shall be nine Representatives. Every voter shall give in writing the names of the nine he votes for, to the officers to be appointed for the purpose.

5. Every free person intending to vote, shall call before the election at the Treasury Office in Washington Square, for the purpose of subscribing and taking the above-mentioned oath. Major M. Walsh and V. Pazos are appointed to administer the same.

6. The polls shall be open from twelve o'clock noon to sunset, and the next day, the 20th, from sunrise to sunset.

Fernandina, November 16th, 1817 - 1 of the Independence of the Floridas.

LOUIS COMPTE

Secretary of the Meeting.

This proclamation is a specimen of the sort of liberty advocated by Aury and his followers. The oath of allegiance amounted to an absolute exclusion of Americans.

Heralded by a discharge of artillery, the Assembly of Representatives met on December 1st, and Irwin was elected president.⁵⁴ Here we have a former congressman of the United States renouncing his allegiance to his country, which he unquestionably had to do, to become president of this august body of thieves. At that first meeting a committee was appointed to draft a constitution for the "Republic of the Floridas." This committee was composed of Pedro Gaul, whom we recognize as the deputy from New Granada signing MacGregor's commission and who had become persona *non grata* to the United States; V. Pazos, likewise banned by the United States; and one M. Minder, whose record is unknown, but doubtless of the same character as his associates.⁶⁴

The first issue of *El Telegrafo de las Floridas*, off the press early in December,⁵⁵ carried an account of the proceedings on December 1st. There is no record or inference that a newspaper was published at Fernandina while MacGregor was there, though he used his printing press to run off his proclamations.

El Telegrafo de las Floridas was probably the first newspaper ever published in East Florida outside of St. Augustine. It was published in Spanish.

The committee may have framed some kind of constitution for the "Republic of the Floridas," but it never became operative, for just at that time the intentions of the United States became known at Amelia. Aury, on learning that the United States had determined to break up his buccaneering establishment and occupy the island, was greatly perturbed. His first impulse was to offer resistance. This impulse, however, was only momentary. He then considered abandoning the island.³⁷ On December 12th, he issued a long harangue to his "Assembly of Representatives of the Re-

public of the Floridas," dealing mostly with the legitimacy of his activities and the history of his adventures.⁵⁶ But because of the condition of his vessels, all that Aury could do was to quietly remain and surrender to the United States forces.

AURY SURRENDERS AMELIA

The troops ordered concentrated at Point Peter were all there soon after the first of December, awaiting the arrival of Captain Henley's squadron. Captain Henley, in the corvette *John Adams*, accompanied by the gun brigs *Enterprize* and *Prometheus* and the schooner *Lynx*, came to anchor off Point Peter on December 20th. The *Saranac* and gunboat No. 168 dropped down the St. Marys and joined the squadron. Captain Henley and Major Bankhead met in conference and soon had their plans perfected. The following chain of correspondence between the United States officers and Aury tells the story:⁵⁷

U. S. Ship John Adams, off Amelia,
December 22, 1817.

Sir :

We have received orders from our government to take possession of Amelia Island, and to occupy the port of Fernandina with a part of our force, which will be moved over as soon as it will be convenient for your troops to evacuate it.

To avoid unnecessary delay, we think proper at this time to inform you, in the event of your acquiescence in this demand, that you will be at liberty to depart with the forces under your command, and such property as belongs unquestionably to them will be held sacred.

You are to leave the public property found by General MacGregor at Fernandina in the same condition as it was when taken, and the property of the inhabitants of Amelia Island must be restored to them, where they have been forcibly dispossessed of it; and no depredations on private property from this period will be permitted with impunity.

Should you, contrary to the expectations of the President of the United States, refuse to give us peaceable possession of the island, the consequence of resistance must rest with you.

We have the honor to be, &c.,
 J. D. HENLEY, Captain in the navy, and
 commander-in-chief of the naval
 forces of the United States off Amelia.
 JAMES BANKHEAD, Major 1st Battalion
 artillery, United States army, and
 commanding military forces.

General Aury,
 Commander-in-chief of the forces at Fernandina.

Headquarters, Fernandina, Island of Amelia
 December 22, 1817
 (8th of the Independence)

Gentlemen :

I have had the honor to receive your official letter of this date. The nature of its contents requiring mature deliberation, I have submitted the same to the representatives of the republic, and as soon as I shall have obtained their opinion, it shall be immediately sent to you.

I can, however, state to you, gentlemen, that no opposition will be made to surrender the island of Amelia on the part of this government.

I have the honor to remain &c.,
 AURY, Commander-in-chief.

Commodore J. D. Henley, Major Bankhead,
 On board the U. S. ship John Adams.

Aury at once convoked his "legislature." The imagination easily places them in the same room, seated at the same table where a short time before the court martial sat. The conditions were, however, reversed. Here Aury and his pirates drew up the most remarkable paper perhaps ever drafted in any such surroundings. President Monroe got a copy of it by special messenger from Aury, and we may wonder what he thought of the argument advanced. Here is Aury's reply to the summons to surrender Amelia Island: ⁷¹

Headquarters, Fernandina, Island of Amelia
December 22, 1817, (8th of the Independence.)

Gentlemen :

I have received your official letter of this day, by which, in the name of the Government of the United States, you summon us to evacuate this place with the troops under my command, as possession thereof is to be taken by the forces under your commands, under certain conditions therein specified.

This republic, that of Mexico, nor any other of South America. being at war with the United States, obliges me to state to you that the contents of your letter have greatly surprised this Government and the people of this state. You have, nevertheless, intimated that, in case of our acquiescence to your demand, we shall be permitted to evacuate this island, which never was nor ever has been a part of the United States. Allow me, gentlemen, to observe to you, that, from the moment we took Fernandina by the force of our arms, we entered into the full possession of all the rights appertaining to our enemy, and that to this day we have supported these rights at the risk of our lives and fortunes. The boundaries of the Floridas and the United States having been fairly settled by the treaty of friendship, limits, and navigation, on the 27th of October, 1795, leaves us at a loss to ascertain your authority to interfere in our internal concerns.

Our surprise increases when we reflect that your communication comes as authorized by the government of a people who glory in their respect for the rights of nations, whether great or small, and who, no doubt, sympathize and wish success to their southern brethren in the struggle for liberty and independence in which they are engaged, as were the United States forty years ago.

On the other side, you promise to hold sacred such of our property as *unquestionably* belongs to our citizens. Who is to be the judge in this case? The United States, who can by no means claim any kind of jurisdiction from the source of the river St. Mary's down to the ocean, on this side of the center of the channel? We entertain too much veneration for your constitution to believe for a moment that you, supposed already in possession of this island, which has never been ceded by the King of Spain, or by its inhabitants, to the United States, can bring with you a competent tribunal to decide upon this question. The only law you can adduce in your favor is that of force, which is always repugnant to Republican Governments and to the principles of a just and impartial nation. The

same observation may be applied to your interference with the property of the inhabitants, which we have always respected and considered sacred.

You order us, also, as if we were subjects of your Government, to leave behind, when Fernandina is evacuated, all the public property that was found at its surrender. This demand is directly contrary to the public rights by which all public property captured by the enemy is avowedly that of the captors, when not otherwise stipulated. Are you acting in the name of the King of Spain or his allies? As we consider the people of the United States as unquestionably the only free people on the surface of the globe, we cannot admit that you have now become the adherents of a tyrant; otherwise, your demand is inadmissible and unjustifiable in the eyes of the world; and if we must yield to it, all the blame rests with you.

Permit me, therefore, gentlemen, to request of you to lay before the President of the United States these remarks, in order that a matter of so serious a tendency may be reconsidered. We have read his excellency's message at the opening of Congress with the utmost concern, and I have concluded that the political situation of this republic has been greatly misrepresented in the United States, through the intrigues of our enemies. We have certainly a right to be heard, for which purpose I shall have the honor of forwarding to your Government the necessary documents. If you are not disposed to let things remain in *statu quo* until the President's further determination be known, I am authorized to assure you that we respect and esteem too highly the people of the United States to carry matters to extremities.

I have the honor to remain, &c.,

AURY, *Commodore-in-Chief.*

S. L. Holmes, Secretary.

J. D. Henley, Esq., Captain in the United States Navy, &c.,
James Bankhead, Esq., Major of the 1st battalion of artillery, &c.

To the foregoing letter, the American officers replied tersely :

U. S. Ship John Adams, off Amelia Island,
December 23, 1817.

Sir:

We have had the honor to receive your communication of the 22nd instant, and will briefly remark, that, as officers in

the service of the United States, we are bound, to obey the orders emanating from the authorities of our government, without any discussion or animadversion on our part as to the correctness of them. We have been ordered by the President of the United States to take possession of Amelia Island; and as the President has expressed his solicitude that the effusion of blood may be avoided, if possible, it must be gratifying to us to be informed by you that no resistance will be made to us. We will again remark that private property will be sacred, and that our orders extend only to the public property captured by General MacGregor at Fernandina.

We propose to land a force today and to hoist the American flag; under that flag no oppression or unjust measure will ever be witnessed. And we feel assured that there will be no difficulty in the arrangement made by us. The squadron will immediately sail into the harbor, when the commanding officer of the land forces will wait on the commander-in-chief to make the necessary arrangements for the landing of the troops.

We have the honor to be, &c.,

J. D. HENLEY, Captain in the navy, &c.

J. BANKHEAD, Major, 1st battalion artillery.

General Aury,

Commander-in-chief of forces at Fernandina.

Headquarters, Fernandina, Island of Amelia,

December 23, 1817, and 8th of the Independence.

I have had the honor to receive your letter of this date. I am ready to surrender this place to the forces under your command, whenever you may judge proper to come and take possession thereof.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

AURY

J. D. Henley, Esq., Captain in the United States Navy, &c.,
James Bankhead, Esq., Major of the 1st battalion of artillery, & c.

Early in the afternoon of December 23d, the American squadron sailed across the channel of the St. Mary's River into the Spanish waters of Amelia, and in conjunction with this movement Major Bankhead landed at Fernandina with about two hundred troops. As the American troops landed on the beach, Aury ordered a gun loaded with a blank cartridge to

be fired, and immediately hauled down the Mexican colors. The Americans marched up to the tunes of "Hail Columbia" and "Yankee Doodle" and took possession of the fort without the slightest resistance.⁵⁸ The United States flag was instantly hoisted over the fort and again * Amelia Island became the ward of the United States-

IN TRUST FOR THE KING OF SPAIN

Upon assuming command of Amelia Island, Major Bankhead immediately embarked all of the black troops on board one of Aury's ships lying in the harbor. The white troops were placed under strict surveillance, and Aury and his officers were permitted at large upon parole.⁶⁷

Many novel cases presented themselves to the American officers with respect to claims against Aury, who did not seem disposed to comply with his engagements. A more serious question arose as to the manner of disposing of cargoes in the port under the new authority of United States revenue laws.⁶⁷ General Gaines and his attorney arrived at Fernandina on December 26th, and remained several days engaged with this question. The American officers were permitted to proceed as circumstances presented themselves, and with good judgment they soon had the operation of the port in order. The former residents began to return, shops were opened and trade resumed under the impression that had gained credence that the United States had occupied Fernandina permanently.

The condition of Aury's ships prevented his immediate departure. The black troops were the first to leave ; they were sent probably to Santo Domingo.

*United States troops held possession of Amelia Island from March 18, 1812, to May 6, 1813, in co-operation with the Georgia patriot invasion of Spanish East Florida.

The white troops were on the island for almost a month after their surrender. The lawyer who defended the Englishmen at the court martial returned to Fernandina about the middle of January ; at that time, he said, "Aury's people were entirely crestfallen ; they had lost those daring characteristics of the corsair evident on my former visit, and appeared mortified at their fallen consequence. Irwin appeared the most dispirited of the gang." ⁴

Most of Aury's followers departed about January 24th, 1818, and Aury himself a few days later; he having been detained to answer a process for civil debt. ⁶⁸

After leaving Amelia, the next we hear of Aury was from the twin islands of Old Providence and St. Catalina, about one hundred and fifty miles off the coast of Nicaragua in the Caribbean Sea, where on July 10, 1818, he issued a proclamation as "Commander-in-chief of the forces that have opened their campaign against New Granada in the name of the Confederated Republics of Buenos Ayres and Chile." ⁶⁹ As usual, his proclamation was deceptive, as he held no commission from either Buenos Ayres or Chile. Old Providence and St. Catalina were celebrated in the annals of buccaneering in the Gulf of Mexico ; at intervals for many years they had been headquarters for piratical depredations upon commerce in those waters. At the time of Aury's arrival they seem to have been unoccupied. Aury built a town there and called it Isabella. ⁶¹ Aury's subsequent history is unknown. It is not known what became of Irwin.

As soon as news of the surrender of Amelia Island to the United States forces reached St. Augustine, Governor Coppinger sent an officer there to ascertain whether the Americans came as friends or foes. The

political phases of this occupancy by the United States are discussed hereafter.

POLITICAL PHASES

When we unfold and untangle the mass and maze of diplomatic expressions upon the subject of the occupation of Amelia Island by MacGregor and his successors, we find that the event had an important bearing on the subsequent acquisition of Florida by the United States ; while the focusing of the side-lights throw a beam upon our diplomatic procedure that reveals some interesting facts. In this drama we shall use largely the very words of the principal actors, namely, James Monroe, president, and John Quincy Adams, secretary of state, of the United States, and Luis de Onis, Spanish representative in the United States. Unless otherwise stated, the extracts and summaries are from *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, Vol. IV, with the page numbers, in parentheses, indicated.

James Monroe was secretary of state until March 4, 1817, when he became president. Richard Rush was acting secretary of state until the arrival of John Quincy Adams from London in the fall of 1817.

(184) *Onis to Monroe, January 2, 1817:*

Complains of injury to Spain occasioned by illegal armaments within the United States, specifying some of the vessels and persons engaged in them and suggesting preventive measures.

(186) *Onis to Monroe, January 15 & 16, 1817:*

Adverts to piratical depredations upon the commerce of Spain by persons assuming a belligerent flag, and the readiness with which their prizes are received in the ports of the United States.

(187) *Onis to Monroe, February 10, 1817:*

Refers to instances of illegal armaments within the United States.

(187) *Onis to Monroe, February 11, 1817:*

Alleges that officers of the United States are not sufficiently faithful in the detection and punishment of parties concerned in piratical armaments.

(188) *Onis to Monroe, February 12 & 22, 1817:*

States specific instances as conclusive proof that American citizens are actually engaged in depredations on the commerce of Spain, now carried on under a belligerent flag.

(188) *Onis to Rush, March 11, 1817:*

States that while his notes remain unanswered, the depredations by armed privateers upon the commerce of Spain continue without interruption ; that indemnities will be claimed from the United States for damages thus sustained, and that he wishes to be informed of the measures of the United States government to repress these robberies.

(189) *Rush to Onis, March 13, 1817:*

Encloses, by order of the President, a copy of the act passed by Congress on March 3, 1817, entitled, "An act more effectually to preserve the neutral relations of the United States," with the remark that the President trusts that the Spanish government will perceive in it a new proof on the part of the United States of a desire to cultivate just and friendly dispositions towards Spain.

(189-90) *Onis to Rush, March 26, 1817.* Three letters of this date:

1. Acknowledging receipt of copy of recent act of Congress.

2. Reports that two piratical vessels have entered the port of Norfolk, and asks legal proceedings against them under the late act of Congress.

3. States that a piratical vessel has entered Baltimore.

(190) *Rush to Onis, March 28, 1817:*

Acknowledges notes relating to the infractions by armed vessels of the laws of the United States, and gives assurances of the readiness of the American government to provide every proper means of redress.

(193) *Onis to Rush, April 18, 1817:*

States that the court at Baltimore has declared its incompetency to take cognizance over an illegal armament, and that notwithstanding the recent act of Congress, a pirate is at full liberty and his vessel has been released.

(193) *Onis to Rush, April 19, 1817:*

Incloses further proof of violation of United States laws on piracy at Norfolk.

And so on and on for months, Onis protesting and the United States government ignoring or side-stepping.

We have seen that the United States had notice of MacGregor's presence and activities by a warning from Philadelphia in March, 1817. The act of Congress bearing upon such cases had already become a law. Onis was bombarding the government with protests because of the illegal armaments being organized within the United States for operations against Spanish possessions and commerce in general. The first specific official notice by Onis of MacGregor's activities was :

(442) *Onis to Secretary of State, July 9, 1817:*

It is my duty, also, to call your attention, and that of the President, to the conduct of the adventurer, Sir Gregor MacGregor, who since he was in arms with bands of insurgents in the province of Venezuela, has come to these States, and been constantly engaged in enterprises to invade or disturb the tranquillity of His Catholic Majesty's possessions in that part of

the world. He lately recruited at Charleston a great number of adventurers, and among them several persons of note, His subsequent proceedings and hostile preparations in the bosom of this Union against the possessions of the Spanish monarchy, are notorious and announced with scandalous publicity in many papers of these States.

(184) Remarking upon this letter Secretary Adams said:

The tardiness of Mr. Onis's remonstrance is of itself a decisive vindication of the magistrates of the United States against any imputation of neglect to enforce the laws; for if the Spanish minister himself had no evidence of the project of MacGregor, sufficient to warrant him in addressing a note upon the subject to this Department, until ten days after it had been accomplished, it cannot be supposed that officers whose authority to act commenced only at the moment of the actual violation of the laws, and who could be justified only by clear and explicit evidence of the facts in proof of such violation, should have been apprised of the necessity of their interposition, in time to make it effectual, before the person accused had departed from this country.

Secretary Adams's explanation seems rather far-fetched in view of the publicity given MacGregor's contemplated descent upon Florida prior to the actual occupation.

About the middle of November, the United States government decided to break up the establishment on Amelia Island and issued orders to the War and Navy departments to that effect. President Monroe explained the reasons for this action in his message to Congress.

(130) *Monroe to Congress, December 2, 1817:*

In the summer of the present year, an expedition was set on foot against East Florida, by persons claiming to act under the authority of some of the colonies,* who took possession of Amelia Island, at the mouth of the St. Marys river, near the boundary of the State of Georgia. As this province lies eastward of the Mississippi, and is bounded by the United States

and the ocean on every side, and has been a subject of negotiation with the government of Spain as an indemnity for losses by spoliation, or in exchange for territory of equal value westward of the Mississippi, (a fact well known to the world,) it excited surprise that any countenance should be given to the measure by any of the colonies. As it would be difficult to reconcile it with the friendly relations existing between the United States and the colonies,* a doubt was entertained whether it had been authorized by them, or any of them. This doubt has gained strength, by the circumstances which have unfolded themselves in the prosecution of the enterprise, which have marked it as a mere private, unauthorized adventure. Projected and commenced with an incompetent force, reliance seems to have been placed on what might be drawn, in defiance of our laws, from within our limits; and of late, as their resources have failed, it has assumed a more marked character of unfriendliness to us; the island being made a channel for the illicit introduction of slaves from Africa into the United States, an asylum for fugitive slaves from the neighboring states, and a port for smuggling of every kind. A just regard for the rights and interests of the United States required that they* should be suppressed, and orders have been accordingly issued to that effect.

Not a word had been said to Onis or the Spanish government in regard to the contemplated action of the United States,. Upon reading the President's message, Onis wrote Adams:

(450) Onis to Adams, December 6, 1817:

It is my duty to remind you, sir, that the expedition which took possession of Amelia island was formed and armed at Charleston and Savannah, under the command of the adventurer, Sir Gregor MacGregor, and wholly composed of citizens of this republic, in violation of the laws of the United States, the law of nations, and the existing treaty between Spain and the said States. I denounced this expedition to you at the time, and invoked the efficacious authority of the Federal Government to prevent it, and punish the offenders. The expedition proceeded, notwithstanding, from the limits and ports of the

*The colonies of South America, then in revolt against Spain.

*The piratical establishments at Amelia and Galveston.

Union, to invade that island, and there committed the excesses on which the President touches [in his message to Congress of December 2.]

After MacGregor had left Amelia island, the district court of South Carolina issued a bench writ to apprehend him wherever he might be found within the American territories. This writ could not certainly be issued without a legal evidence of the offense, nor could the offense be more enormous or more notorious in the face of the whole Union.

Adams never replied to this letter directly. Spain thus "perceived a new proof on *the part of the United States of a desire to cultivate just and friendly dispositions*" with her.

Amelia Island was taken possession of by the United States on December 23, 1817. Onis's first notice of it was:

(463) Onis to Adams, January 8, 1818:

In the National Intelligencer of the 6th of this month, I have seen published the official notice of the occupation of Amelia Island by the troops of the United States. I had already anticipated this unpleasant event, by the note which I had the honor to address you on the 6th of last month, in which I remonstrated, in the name of His Catholic Majesty, against the measures announced in that part of the President's message to both Houses of Congress which manifested an intention to invade and forcibly seize on places and territories belonging to the crown of Spain. Having received no answer to that note, I now feel myself obliged to repeat its contents to you, and to protest, as I now do strongly protest, in the name of the King, my master, against the occupation of Amelia Island, effected by the naval and military forces of this republic, destined to operate against that island, forming a part of East Florida, one of the possessions of the Spanish monarchy on this continent. Whatever may have been the motives on which the government of the United States have founded their adoption of this measure, it cannot but be considered by all nations as a violent invasion of the dominions of Spain at the time of profound peace, when His Catholic Majesty omits nothing to give the most generous proofs of his perfect friendship and high consideration for the United States.

The Congressional Committee on Foreign Relations, to which that portion of the President's message of December 2, 1817, relating to Amelia, had been referred, reported :

(133) *Committee on Foreign Relations, January 10, 1818.*

It is matter of public notoriety; that two of the persons who have successively held the command at Amelia Island, whether authorized themselves by any government or not, have issued commissions for privateers, as in the name of the Venezuelan and Mexican governments, to vessels fitted out in the ports of the United States, and chiefly manned and officered by our own countrymen, for the purpose of capturing the property of nations with which the United States are at peace. One of the objects of the occupation of Amelia Island, it appears, was to possess a convenient resort for privateers of this description, equally reprobated by the laws of nations, which recognize them only under the denomination of pirates, and by several of the treaties of the United States with different European Powers, which expressly denominate them as such. It was against the subjects of Spain, one of the Powers with which the United States have entered into stipulations prohibiting their citizens from taking any commission from any Power with which she may be at war, for arming any ships to act as privateers, that these vessels have been commissioned to cruise; though as the committee have observed, no flag, not even that of our own country, has proved a protection from them.

Note this from the same report and compare it with the complaints of Onis made long before, and with the satisfaction he got at the time:

The immediate tendency of suffering such armaments, in defiance of our laws, would have been to embroil the United States with all the nations whose commerce with our country was suffering under these depredations, and, if not checked by all the means in the power of the government would have authorized claims from the subjects of foreign governments for indemnities at the expense of this nation, for captures by our people in vessels fitted out in our ports, and, as could not fail of

being alleged, countenanced by the very neglect of the necessary means of suppressing them.

President Monroe sent a special message to Congress, from which the following extracts are taken :

(139) *Monroe to Congress, January 13, 1818.*

I have the satisfaction to inform Congress that the establishment at Amelia Island has been suppressed.

The path of duty was plain from the commencement, but it was painful to enter upon it while the obligation could be resisted. The law of 1811,* lately published, and which it is therefore proper now to mention, was considered applicable to the case, from the moment that the proclamation of the chief of the enterprise was seen; and its obligation was daily increased by other considerations of high importance already mentioned, which were deemed sufficiently strong in themselves to dictate the course which has been pursued.

In expelling these adventurers, . . . it was not intended to make any conquest from Spain, or to injure in any degree the cause of the colonies.

The "cause of the colonies" was independence of Spain, and they were in open revolt at that time. But President Monroe did not wish to hurt anybody's feelings, so he specified them both. As a matter of fact, the United States government was beginning to realize that serious complications might result from its action, as indicated later in President Monroe's special message to Congress.⁷²

Secretary Adams now condescended to answer some of the letters of Onís; answering them in one long letter covering several subjects, adroitly and carefully worded, and principally indicating that Spain ought to cede East Florida to the United States, to be rid of all the troubles which that colony was causing the mother country. In this letter, he took occasion to include a reply to Onís's letter of January 8th, stating :

*That no foreign power shall occupy Florida.

(464) *Adams to Onis, January 16, 1818.*

The measures which this Government found itself under the necessity of adopting in relation to that island [Amelia] were taken not with a view to conquest from Spain. You well know that if Spain could have kept, or recovered the possession of it from the trifling force by which it was occupied, the American government would have been spared the necessity of the measure which was taken, and which was dictated by the duty of protecting the interests as well of this country as of those with whom we are in friendly commercial relations, including Spain herself. But Spain cannot expect that the United States should employ their forces for the defense of her territories, or to rescue them for her exclusive advantage, from the adventurers who are projecting and in the act of executing expeditions against them from territories without the jurisdiction of the United States. Neither can the United States permit that the adjoining territories of Spain shall be misused by others for purposes of annoyance to them.

Under these circumstances, the President is persuaded that you will perceive the necessity either of accepting the *proposals herein contained as the basis of an adjustment of the long-standing differences between the United States and Spain*,* or of offering such as can, by any possibility, be acceptable to this government, without reverting to a course of proceeding the only result of which must be further procrastination.

Accompanying this threat was a direct proposal from Adams for the cession of Florida to the United States, the articles of the proposed cession being specifically stated. Onis replied with a long recital, proclaiming the impossibility of any such thing as a cession on any such terms as suggested by Adams. However, there followed an exchange of notes between the two, each parrying like a fencing antagonist, until finally an agreement was in sight, when Andrew Jackson appeared in West Florida in the spring of 1818, and the negotiations were all off for awhile. Afterward they were resumed, and *the basic proposals of Adams developed into the treaty whereby the United*

*Italics by the author.

*States acquired Florida east of the Perdido River on practically their own term.*⁷⁰

Meanwhile, since December 23, 1817, United States troops continued to occupy the Spanish island of Amelia. In June, 1818, Major Bankhead suggested the withdrawal of the force on account of the prevailing sickness, but he was instructed by the secretary of war on June 27, 1818, that the "President does not contemplate removing the troops from Amelia Island this summer," and was ordered to make them as comfortable as possible. The ill health of the troops was again reported by the commanding officer at Fernandina on March 23, 1819, yet the island continued to be held and our troops were there certainly as late as November 30, 1819, at which time Fernandina was garrisoned by forty-four men of the First Battalion of Artillery, under the command of Captain Payne.⁶⁶

MACGREGOR'S SECOND ATTEMPT

After MacGregor abandoned Amelia on September 4th, 1817, we lose track of him for ten days. It seems certain that he remained in seclusion on board his brig in the neighborhood of Fernandina, and was a spectator of the battle of Amelia. From the Newport, R. I., *Mercury* of October 4, 1817, we have this account :⁵⁹

The armed brig General MacGregor, Captain French, arrived off Block Island on the 26th ult., in ten days from Amelia. From several seamen who were landed from her, we learn that a few days previous to their sailing from Amelia, General MacGregor and lady came on board, for the purpose of leaving the island, he having resigned the command. The brig sailed from Amelia on the morning of the 16th September, with General MacGregor and lady and Mr. Ferguson, the harbor-master, on board. The British schooner *Venus*, on board of which was the famous Colonel Woodbine, who was the owner of the schooner, sailed from Amelia in company with the brig. The second day out, Colonel Woodbine sent his boat to the brig, with an invitation to General MacGregor and lady, and Mr. Ferguson, to take

passage on board his schooner, which they readily complied with.

This was the notorious Captain George Woodbine, famous in West Florida history during the late war between the United States and Great Britain (1812-15). Woodbine had come up from Nassau to offer assistance to MacGregor. After the transfer was made out at sea, Woodbine's schooner was headed for New Providence, Bahamas.

Woodbine persuaded MacGregor that he could find friends and funds at New Providence, and that a conquest of Florida was yet possible. He stated that a British regiment of colonials had lately been disbanded there; that from these and the negroes and others who would join them they could gather quite a large force; and that then they could sail for Tampa Bay, where they would be joined by fifteen hundred Indians already engaged to Woodbine. With the force thus assembled they could invade Florida from that point and march across and attack St. Augustine with a good prospect of success.⁶⁰

At New Providence, MacGregor met with considerable encouragement in enlisting a force. Before sailing for England on December 27, 1817, to arrange his private affairs, he issued instructions for making a settlement at Tampa Bay, stating that he expected to be there the last of April or the first of May, 1818.

He prepared a proclamation to the inhabitants of Florida, to be displayed by the person selected to make the settlement at Tampa, announcing in advance his, MacGregor's, approach and stating that his purpose was to liberate them from the despotism of Spain.⁶⁰

The person charged with making the settlement at Tampa was Robert Christie Ambrister, who arrived there sometime in March, 1818. This is the same Am-

brister, who upon arrival at Tampa ransacked Arbuthnot's storehouse, stole his schooner and sailed to the Suwannee River, to collect Woodbine's Indians. The student of Florida history is already familiar with the famous trials and execution of both Ambrister and Arbuthnot by General Andrew Jackson near St. Marks in April, 1818. Ambrister was the subaltern of Woodbine and held a commission in the proposed army of MacGregor. The activities of General Jackson in Florida at the time caused the abandonment of the MacGregor-Woodbine plans for the invasion of the province.

MACGREGOR'S SUBSEQUENT CAREER

We next hear of MacGregor at the small island of St. Andrews, in the Caribbean Sea off the coast of Nicaragua, where on April 4, 1819, he established his headquarters for a proposed attack on Porto Bello, Province of Panama, he being at that time in the service of New Granada (now Colombia). In the attack on Porto Bello, Woodbine led the advance and captured the place. For this service MacGregor promoted him to brigadier-general and decorated him with the "military order of the Green Cross." A Spanish fleet soon ran MacGregor out of Porto Bello, and he returned to St. Andrews Island, where he established a government with Woodbine as governor.⁶¹

In 1820, MacGregor abandoned St. Andrews for the Mosquito Shore in the eastern part of Honduras, where he pre-empted a large tract of fertile country and adopted the title "His Highness, Gregor, Cazique of Poyais." Woodbine was "Vice-Cazique." The country was inhabited by the Poyais Indians.⁶²

In April, 1821, MacGregor issued a proclamation to the effect that he was leaving for Europe to procure religious and moral instructors for his subjects, implements of husbandry, and persons to assist and

guide in the cultivation of the soil. He declared that no person but the honest and industrious should find an asylum in the Poyais territory. ¹

MacGregor made some attempt to establish a colony in the Poyais territory. He sent out several vessels, but he himself remained in England. The colony proved a complete failure, and he became unpopular in England. He then went to France, with a like result, there spending seven months in jail. ⁶²

Woodbine abandoned the cause of MacGregor as soon as he suspected its failure. ⁶² Woodbine and his family were murdered by negroes in 1837, in Campeche, Mexico. ⁷³

About 1839, MacGregor applied to the Venezuelan government for naturalization -in the republic and restoration to his former military rank, referring in his memorial to the misfortunes that had befallen him. The Venezuelan government granted his requests, and directed that, in view of the very eminent services he had rendered to South American independence, he be restored to the rank of general of division with his former seniority, and that a sum of money be granted him. He died in Caracas in 1845. ⁶²

The life of this Scotchman was one of exciting romance, but filled with disappointments. His Florida adventure was intended as a diversion in the general cause of South American independence. If Florida were conquered, his idea was to encourage the inhabitants to form a free government and then voluntarily annex themselves to the United States, when he would lead his victorious army to South America to complete the independence of those colonies. ¹³ That he was deceived by his financial backers in the Florida enterprise is certain; that he made many mistakes of policy is also certain-and from these resulted his failure here.

SOURCES

In this history of MacGregor and his successors, Irwin, Hubbard, and Aury, on Amelia Island, East Florida, in 1817, the record has been taken almost wholly from accounts and documents written or printed within the period covered, first-hand, 'eye-witness accounts-contemporaneous source material ranking highest in the scale of value for historical writing. Research having revealed matter of importance, it was thought proper to cover this episode in Florida's history in detail, and for that purpose the author has drawn from these primary sources:

American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. IV, containing numerous official documents and letters; the work, *Narrative of a Voyage to the Spanish Main in the Ship Two Friends*, published in London in 1819, by an English lawyer who spent some time on Amelia Island during the Aury regime; *Niles Weekly Register*, a Baltimore periodical generally considered the semi-official organ of the United States government; the contemporaneous newspapers, *Charleston (S. C.) Courier*, and *Savannah (Ga.) Republican*, both of which had correspondents at St. Marys, Georgia, to cover the Amelian field, these papers being now in the Library of Congress at Washington; and finally, semi-official and private letters written by reliable people, the originals being, some in the Bureau of Index & Archives, others in the War, State, and Navy departments at Washington, and some in the files of The Florida Historical Society.

The author is indebted to Dr. James A. Robertson, of Takoma Park, Maryland, for helpfulness in the research work, and to T. Hurd Kooker, of Jacksonville, for the excellent drawing of Amelia Island and environs.

SPECIFIC SOURCES

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² *Charleston Courier*, Oct. 13, 1817.
³ *Exposician Documentado*, Caracas, 1839; *Dictionary of National Biography*.
⁴ *Narrative of a Voyage to the Spanish Main in the Ship Two Friends*, London, 1819.
⁵ *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, Vol. IV, p. 415.
⁶ J. Skinner to Secretary of State, July 30, 1817. *Florida Historical Society Quarterly*, July, 1926.
⁷ *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, Vol. IV, p. 442.
⁸ *Observations on the Floridas*, Vignoles, New York, 1823, p. 26.
⁹ G. I. F. Clarke to Capt. J. R. Bell, July 25, 1821, in *Florida Historical Society Quarterly*, July, 1925.
¹⁰ *Niles' Weekly Register*, Baltimore, Nov. 15, 1817.
¹¹ *Sketches of the Floridas*, Forbes, 1821, p. 73
¹² *Savannah Republican*, July 26, 1817.
¹³ *Charleston Courier*, Oct. 13, 1817.
¹⁴ *Savannah Republican*, July 10, 1817.
¹⁵ Design shown in engraving of MacGregor, frontispiece.
¹⁶ *Savannah Republican*, July 17, 1817; *Charleston Courier*, July 28, 1817.
¹⁷ *Charleston Courier*, Aug. 4, 1817.
¹⁸ *Charleston Courier*, Aug. 6, 1817.
¹⁹ *Savannah Republican*, Aug. 28, 1817.
²⁰ *Charleston Courier*, Aug. 6, 1817; Aug. 14, 1817; *Savannah Republican*, Sept. 18, 1817.
²¹ *Charleston Courier*, Aug. 18, 1817.
²² *Charleston Courier*, July 19, 1817.
²³ *Charleston Courier*, Aug. 20, 1817.
²⁴ *Charleston Courier*, Aug. 30, 1817.
²⁵ *Savannah Republican*, July 24, 1817; *Charleston Courier*, Aug. 14, 1817.
²⁶ *Savannah Republican*, Sept. 18, 1817.
²⁷ *Savannah Republican*, July 26, 1817.
²⁸ *Charleston Courier*, Sept. 5, 1817; *Savannah Republican*, Sept. 11, 1817.
²⁹ *Savannah Republican*, Sept. 18, 1817.
³⁰ *Savannah Republican*, Sept. 11, 1817; Sept. 18, 1817; *Charleston Courier*, Sept. 13, 1817.
³¹ *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, Vol. IV, p. 142.
³² *Charleston Courier*, Sept. 13, 1817.
³³ *Charleston Courier*, Sept. 13, 1817; Sept. 16, 1817.
³⁴ *Charleston Courier*, Sept. 13, 1817.
³⁵ *Savannah Republican*, Sept. 18, 1817; *Charleston Courier*, Sept. 19, 1817.
³⁶ *Savannah Republican*, Sept. 18, 1817.
³⁷ *Savannah Republican*, Dec. 4, 1817.
³⁸ *Charleston Courier*, Sept. 19, 1817; Sept. 29, 1817; *Savannah Republican*, Sept. 18, 1817.
³⁸ *Savannah Republican*, Sept. 18, 1817.

- ⁴⁰ *Niles' Weekly Register*, Baltimore, Jan. 24, 1818; *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, Vol. IV, pp. 134-137.
- ⁴¹ *Charleston Courier*, Sept. 13, 1817.
- ⁴² *Charleston Courier*, Sept. 29, 1817.
- ⁴³ *Savannah Republican*, Sept. 25, 1817; *Charleston Courier*, Sept. 29, 1817.
- ⁴⁴ *Savannah Republican*, Oct. 13, 1817; Oct. 20, 1817; *Charleston Courier*, Oct. 21, 1817; Oct. 24, 1817.
- ⁴⁵ *Savannah Republican*, Oct. 23, 1817.
- ⁴⁶ *Savannah Republican*, Nov. 4, 1817.
- ⁴⁷ *Charleston Courier*, Nov. 14, 1817.
- ⁴⁸ *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, Vol. IV, p. 128.
- ⁴⁹ *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, Vol. IV, pp. 141-143.
- ⁵⁰ See numerous letters Onis to Secretary of State, *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, Vol. IV.
- ⁵¹ Belton A. Copp to Secretary of State, April 1, 1818-No. 1112, Bureau of Index and Archives, Washington.
- ⁵² Belton A. Copp, Collector of Port of St. Marys, Ga.
- ⁵³ *Charleston Courier*, Nov. 28, 1817.
- ⁵⁴ *Charleston Courier*, Dec. 19, 1817.
- ⁵⁵ *Charleston Courier*, Dec. 19, 1817.
- ⁵⁶ *Charleston Courier*, Jan. 9, 1818.
- ⁵⁷ *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, Vol. IV, pp. 139-141.
- ⁵⁸ *Charleston Courier*, Jan. 5, 1818.
- ⁵⁹ Copied by *Savannah Republican*, Oct. 20, 1817.
- ⁶⁰ *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, Vol. IV, pp. 603-604.
- ⁶¹ Strangeway's *Sketch of the Mosquito Shore*, London, 1822.
- ⁶² Alfred Hasbrouck in November, 1927, *Hispanic-American Historical Review*.
- ⁶³ See also *Savannah Republican*, Oct. 9, 1817.
- ⁶⁴ *Niles' Weekly Register*, Baltimore, Jan. 3, 1818.
- ⁶⁵ J. H. McIntosh to W. H. Crawford, *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, Vol. IV, p. 128.
- ⁶⁶ *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. II, p. 37.
- ⁶⁷ Official reports of Major Bankhead and Captain Henley, *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, Vol. IV, pp. 142-144.
- ⁶⁸ *Niles' Weekly Register*, Baltimore, Feb. 21, 1818.
- ⁶⁹ *Niles' Weekly Register*, Baltimore, Vol. XV, p. 90.
- ⁷⁰ All of the correspondence between Onis and his successor and Adams on this subject will be found in *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, Vol. IV.
- ⁷¹ Published in *American State Papers, Foreign Relations; Niles' Weekly Register*; Charleston and Savannah papers, all varying slightly in wording, but exactly alike in meaning; this is a composite copy.
- ⁷² President Monroe to Congress, March 25, 1818, *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, Vol. IV, p. 134.
- ⁷³ *Territory of Florida*, John Lee Williams, 1837, footnote p. 206.

AN EARLY POEM ON FLORIDA

In the Bodleian Library at Oxford, there is to be found in Ashmolean Manuscript 48, ff. 140b, 141, a poem on Florida. The penmanship suggests the early part of the seventeenth century; certain stanzas are of prior origin. In *The Stationers' Register* (ed. Arber, i. 237), "a ballet intituled the preme Rose in the grene forest" was entered by Thomas Colwell, about June or July, 1564. Stanzas six, one, two, and three of the seven given below, were printed by C. H. Firth in his *American Garland*, Oxford, 1915. The same had already been printed by Thomas Wright in *Songs and Ballads Chiefly of the Reign of Philip and Mary* (Roxburghe Club, 1860), p. 213. Evidently stanzas four and five belong to the middle of the sixteenth century. They contain no mention of Florida; and in all probability they have been telescoped into another ballad, with a different refrain and local application. The poem is submitted as a whole, as it is one of the first poetical descriptions of this part of the New World in the English language. The scribe wrote in a free, bold hand; he omitted obvious words and suffered several lapses of versification to enter. The stanzas have been made uniform and regular punctuation has been introduced, but the old spelling is retained. The full refrain at the end of the third stanza was probably sung after every one.

| | | |
|-------|------------|------------|
| EDGAR | LEGARE | PENNINGTON |
| CLARK | SUTHERLAND | NORTHUP |

The night of my fall in every day
 I do not see the sun and well
 do so

Had at he walked towards poles of mich
 a fard of mynys nose take by the sand
 and founde that droght a great of nose
 moster upon shall give pinge never of for
 at eyes absode myr somwell. vns 3.

Sawe eyes not good of Florida
 a coaine fair benest nose save
 pepell of lande west by nature and base
 noly by the mols fond of the same of the and
 of four byfeld fall. vns 3.

we all bloude by water side nose
 of dose of and floure the knacker
 founde our nose nose all do galle
 in opter of adance and of the land do dide
 flaut nose be by do well vns 3
 Gocky Gocky no Gocky no must a wallet
 do well

The promise of in eye of parent forest
 The complete of fawn of
 The dubbel the sayst in eye of
 Gombawly Dale of
 Commothe my fowles of
 like fowles mount at eye be in eye

The sweets of the night
 The sweet and the
 the dogge a fowle and in eye of
 fowle every day to buy
 and as fowles do in eye of
 fowle every day to buy

have over the water to Florida
 fowles of land of nose
 of nose and delib by land and
 I am by the of the nose
 the fowles of the nose in a nose
 of nose and many nose Dale of
 eye nose a wallet do well

nose of the fowles nose of
 my nose and fowles nose
 and every fowle nose of
 the nose of the nose of

THE POEM

(Possibly an initial stanza has been lost)

And as I walked toward s poles ¹
 I met a frend of myne,
 Who toke [me] by the hand and sayde,
 “Com drynk a pynt of wyne,
 Wher you shall here
 Such news, I fere, ²
 As you abrode wyll compell.
 with hy!

“Have you not hard of floryda,
 A coontre far bewest,
 Where savage pepell planted are
 By nature and by hest,
 Who in the mold
 Fynd glysterynge gold
 And yt for tryfels sell?
 with hy!

“Ye all alonge the watere syde,
 Where yt dothe eb and flowe,
 Are turkeyse founde and where also
 Do perles in oysters growe,
 And on the land
 Do cedars stand
 Whose bewty do[th] excell.
 with hy!
 trysky, trym, go trysky, wun not a wallet do well?

¹ St. Paul's.

² in company.

"The prymerose in the greene forest,
 The vyolets the ³ grow gaye,
 The Dubbell Dayses with the rest
 So merryly deks the waye
 To moove my Sprytes
 Through fond delygths
 Lyke pretty wons as the ³ be.
 with hy!

"The sweete record, the nytyngale,
 The leveret and the thrushe,
 Which whyps & skysps & wages ⁴ there tales
 From every bank to busshe
 And chyrrpyngly
 Do pas the day
 Like prety wons as the ³ be.

"Have over the water to floryda,
 Farwell, gay lundon, nowe,
 Throw long deles ⁵ by land and sese,
 I am brawght, I cannot tell howe,
 To plymwoorthe towne
 In a thredbare goowne
 And mony ⁶ never Dele
 with hy!
 wunnot a wallet do well?

"When Aprell sylver showers so sweet
 Can make may flowers to sprynge
 And every pretty byrd prepares
 Her wystlyng throte to synge,
 The nyghtyngale
 In every Dale
 They dothe ther duty well.
 with hy!"

³ they. ⁴ wags. ⁵ delays. ⁶ money.

THE SEMINOLE INDIANS OF FLORIDA

[Through her book on the Seminole Indians ¹ and because of her many years' work in their behalf, Mrs. Willson is well known to all who take an interest in the remnant of the tribe now living more or less precariously in the Everglades. She is looked upon as more than a friend of these people-she is their guardian; and as a result of her long and earnest efforts their lives and their prospects have brightened much in the past quarter of a century. Years of mutual respect and friendship have by degrees opened a way for her through the wall of reserve and suspicion built up by the misunderstanding and frequent injustice of generations of white men. This intimate contact, in her own home and in theirs, gives to her writings the genuine ring of authenticity, and through her knowledge of them we come to know much of the Seminole as he is today, with a clear glimpse now and then into the past of the race. This paper was prepared for, and read by Mrs. Willson at the last annual meeting of the Historical Society. - Ed.]

Looking backwards for nearly two centuries we see a band of red Americans, who are to become the Seminoles, separate themselves from the Creek Confederacy of Georgia and Alabama and cross the boundary into Florida. Subjects now of the Spanish crown, they become a nation to themselves, and under the sunny skies of the peninsular establish their golden-rule tribal government-characterized throughout by independence, kindness, and honor.

¹ Minnie Moore-Willson, *The Seminoles of Florida*. New York, Moffat, Yard and Company, 1920. Revised, illustrated, 281p. This work was first published in 1896, and seven editions have appeared. Mrs. Willson has also written: *The Least Known Wilderness of America, The Everglades of Florida*. Kissimmee, Florida, 1917. Illus. 15p.; *Snap Shots From the Everglades of Florida, Jungle Life of the Seminole*. Tampa, Florida, 1917. Illus. 16p.; *The Birds of the Everglades, And Their Neighbors the Seminole Indians*. Tampa, Florida, 1920. Illus. 20p.; and magazine and press articles on these subjects. She has spoken before numerous organizations in Florida and elsewhere in behalf of the Seminoles. - Ed.

Here for three-quarters of a century these dusky patriots live and prosper-owning small plantations, slaves and cattle. Listen, and you may hear the tinkling bells of their little ponies as they travel, caravan style, carrying wares from village to village, and sometimes bartering with the Spanish inhabitants for their trade with the Cuban markets. Here in the secluded fastnesses of the wilderness this aboriginal people live in peace and prosperity-happy, red Americans!

A vision of them in the days so long ago would show the palmetto-thatched wigwams, the red wheel campfire, the ever-ready sofka kettle-the Seminole tribal dish-and a gathering perhaps of the braves and squaws, who with the faith of little children keep fresh the mystic religion of their fathers while they worship before the Great Spirit. Peace and happiness was the heritage of the Seminoles in those days when the "manna of the wilderness" never failed and they lived doing no harm, seeing God in the skies and hearing Him in the winds.

Then came that fateful day in 1821, when the Spanish flag was hauled down and in its stead floated the stars and stripes. With this transfer of Florida we read the death sentence of Seminole independence-an Iliad of tragedy.

The rights of the Seminoles to their lands was made a part of the treaty with the Spanish crown, and the Indian population came under the protection of the American government. All are familiar with the tragic, bitter days that followed for the helpless Indian; broken treaties, violated pledges, confiscation of their fields, the destroying of their homes, the shooting down of their cattle by American soldiers ; men, women, and children pursued by bloodhounds, with a bounty for every Indian captured alive. Vessel-load

after vessel-load left Tampa with the heart-broken exiles torn from their homes, their hunting grounds, and the graves of their fathers.

A few small bands hid themselves in the Everglade fastnesses and these were the ancestors of the present Florida Seminole ; so they occupy the unique position of never having been conquered nor subdued. Hence they have no legal existence, nor allegiance to the United States. Like their ancestors they had lived a troubled life, having been driven on and on by the encroaching whites with that merciless staccato cry of "move on, move on" ever ringing in their ears. There in the Everglades we find today seven hundred frightened people, pushed to the extreme southern part of the State, till they can go no further, eking out a pitiful existence, too proud to beg, too honest to steal.

This remnant of the old turbaned tribe is the State's most native and historic possession. We may lay aside the musty parchments of antiquity and in the heart of the Everglades study an ancient people through living records.

The Seminoles, through all their vicissitudes, have never relaxed in their ancestral teachings. The youth are constantly taught the stern tribal laws, while their joyous festivals and their religious ceremonial gatherings keep their unwritten, traditional history fresh in the hearts of the tribe.

HONOR AND RELIGION

The endeavor to show the Seminole what Christianity stands for and at the same time get into the depths of their own ancient religion has been the most complex problem encountered.

You may well appreciate the startled emotion experienced, when, after trying to tell a stalwart, honest

Indian something of civilization and Christianity, he, with all the deference of a chieftain answered: "Me no think me want to be civilized. Me think me get civilized, me lie, steal, cheat like white man. Someday big sleep come. Me want to go to Happy Hunting Ground. Me want to see Great Spirit. Me want to see my grandfather. Me no think white man go to heaven."

How would you answer such philosophy?

The Seminole does have a belief and it is sacred to him. He not only believes in the Great Spirit, but he believes in God's Son, who came to the Indians long ago, to live with them, to make them good Indians and to prepare them for the Big Sleep, when E-shock-ee-tom-e-see (the Supreme Being) calls him hence.

The Seminole tradition of Christ coming to live with the Indians is that the Son of God stopped at the most southern point of Florida, at which place he was met by three medicine men, who carried him around the peninsula on their shoulders while he sowed the koonti seed which is God's gift to the red man.

During the Seminole War, when starvation threatened many times, the koonti saved the tribe. This koonti is wild cassava, and is found only in the extreme southern portion of Florida.

With reference to the Bible, the Indian's idea is vague, because he understands it as the work of the white man. The Seminole says: "White man got book, him good one day, he steal, cheat, next day. Book, no like 'em. Injun no make book ; him see no hunting ground, him no go and come back. Big Sleep no come back, Indian no lie about it. Me think good Injun find hunting ground all right. Me think me find it. White man, big sleep come, me think In-like-ta (heaven) no find it easy."

In some mysterious way the Seminole's conception of the Decalogue, "neither to lie, nor steal, nor cheat, and to think with God," is the foundation stone upon which he builds his character, principles and honor. It is taught to the race all through life, from the cradle to the grave.

The simple form of tribal government is held inviolate. Here is a community of seven hundred souls, living in the open palmetto camps, with no locks, no doors, no courts, no officers to keep the laws; here is a people who for centuries have lived pure in morals, with no thieving, no profanity-for the Seminole has no oath in his language and his reverence for the Deity will not permit him to take the name of the Great Spirit in vain.

To meet the Seminole in the white man's home is to meet a courteous guest, whose manners mirror those of his host. At the white man's table he conducts himself with an easy, faultless decorum. He listens to the returning of thanks with most reverent attitude, and with the question, "Billy, do Seminoles talk with God and ask him for food and homes?"—"Munks-chay" (no), replied the Indian, "No ask him." Then, as if a light dawned as to the nature of our query, he told of a hunting experience of a few weeks before, when he had acted as guide for a Northern tourist. For three days the red huntsmen had sought all the savannas for deer, but deer "hi-e-pus" (all gone). "Man feel sorry ojus (plenty). Night come ; me wake two o'clock, moon shine bright. Me hear water laugh, me see big echo (deer) swim across the river. My gun me take, kill big deer, me tell Great Spirit 'Me thank you.' White man glad ojus (plenty) ; he go back to New York, take big buck antlers, he say he kill big deer in Everglades."

He thanks the Great Spirit for blessings received, but does not beseech favors.

The Seminoles regard honesty with such a commendable sacredness that during all the years of acquaintance with him not a single deviation from truth has been observed. Pertinent was the reply to the white hunter when he asked if it were safe to leave his gun in the wigwam. "Yes," replied the Indian, "there are no white men within fifty miles of this camp."

There comes to memory a visit that a chieftain, Tom Tiger, made to Kissimmee in the days when the open saloon flourished. Like many of his race, Tom had a love for whiskey and knowing this he was asked by his host to drink no whiskey while in Kissimmee ; he promised, "Urn-gah" (all right).

A day or two afterwards the white friend saw the tall form of the Indian passing into a saloon headed by three cowboys. Tom returned to the office, and his white friend, truly indignant, showed his displeasure by ignoring him. The Indian sensed the cause and becoming too uncomfortable to endure the silence longer, with some trepidation approached his friend "Jimmee, Jimmee, whiskey me no take 'em ; lemonade me take. Cowboys my-o-mee take." The white friend's trust had not been betrayed.

When the National Editorial Association was making a tour of Florida the train made a stop at a small station on the East Coast. A few Indians had come into the town to trade at the stores. Tiger Tail had brought with him a load of sour oranges which grew wild in the region of his camp. The oranges were beautiful to the eye; but oh, how sour and bitter. The merry editors saw the golden fruit and immediately offered to purchase. The Indian was glad to sell, and

asked only one cent a piece for the fruit. But the editors would not take advantage of the Indian's ignorance of the price of the oranges, so they paid him twenty-five cents per dozen for them. At this the load of oranges was quickly disposed of and the chief with perfect honesty in the transaction, was the proud possessor of about twenty-five dollars. Those of the party who first tasted their fruit said nothing until all the oranges had been bought, then they were told to taste their oranges, and a laugh, long and loud, went up from one end of the car to the other; and as the train rolled away the good-natured but victimized passengers treated Tiger Tail, the chieftain of the Seminoles, to a shower of sour oranges. The Indian was dumbfounded. The wild orange is an article of barter in Florida, but not until the idea dawned upon Tiger Tail that the white men had mistaken his fruit for the sweet orange, did he awaken from his bewilderment.

Later, recalling the sale of the oranges, he said "White man no like Indian's orange-sour too much. Me tell white man one orange, *one* cent. White man tell me one orange *two* cents. Indian no cheat white man."

MUSIC OF THE SEMINOLES

Music is not a genius. with the Seminoles. Their songs are monotone and rythmical, and to be complete they need the aboriginal setting, where life and love steal forth in fanciful ecstasy. Their tunes are full of a wild, weird melody that harmonizes with the forests and the wigwams and the shadowy flicker of the camp-fire.

The songs they sing are centuries old, and the Seminole does not seem to improvise nor add new

tunes to his ancient folio, but adheres to those of his fathers. ²

An incident, linking old Seminole history with the present, is full of interest:

When the great chieftain Osceola was captured ninety years ago, near St. Augustine under a flag of truce, with him was another chief, John Jumper. Of Osceola's life and death we know. Of John Jumper's little is known except in government records. Jumper was taken, a prisoner, to Indian Territory. Many years after, he was converted by a missionary; and being a musical leader among his tribe, naturally grasped the white man's melodies. Later he composed a religious hymn in Seminole.

When the Seminoles visit Kissimmee, attending the church service is one of their great treats, for here it is that these visitors are greeted with a genuine, tender interest, and they receive this attention with the shyest but most childlike delight. So the ringing of the church bell always means church attendance.

Once at the close of the service, the minister gave a little talk to the Indians and then sang a hymn in the Seminole tongue. This was very rythmical, so much so that when once in the brain, the tune refused to be dislodged. The minister, Dr. A. J. Holt, of Arcadia, explained to the congregation and the Semi-

² In 1916 Professor Albert Gale, a musician of training and experience, visited an encampment of these Indians and through Mrs. Willson gaining the confidence of the tribe, heard and recorded a number of Seminole melodies which, apparently, had been handed down unchanged for generations. Among them was a Hunting Dance, a War Song, The Quail Dance, and The Night Love Song. Upon the latter melody Professor Gale wrote a song with that title, dedicated to Mrs. Willson, which was sung at the last annual meeting of the Historical Society. These melodies, together with Professor Gale's Night Love Song, all taken from copies in the possession of Mrs. Willson, will appear in the next number of the QUARTERLY.

noles that he had learned the hymn, more than forty years ago, from Col. John Jumper in Indian Territory, when he was a missionary to the Indians there. This chieftain had enlisted in the Civil War, where he was promoted to the office of colonel under the Confederate colors.

Returning from the church service we were eager to know from the Indians if they had understood the Seminole song. One Indian, very musical, said, "Yes, me sing it good," which he did to perfection. It was an interesting moment. How did the Seminole learn the words and tune so quickly? He explained, "Me sing it in Everglades." Certainly a remarkable incident, but easily understood when we learned that an educated Oklahoma Indian missionary visited the Everglades the year previous and had taught the song to these Seminoles.

BILLIE BOWLEGS AND THE MUSIC BOX

A few years ago, in one of the trading posts near the Everglades, a storekeeper had purchased one of those old fashioned, paper roll organettes that played just five tunes.

Billie Bowlegs, always progressive and musical, listened to the "box of music" and was entranced with the melodies. Soon after, the organette refused to play and the trader told his friends that unless he could stick it on Billie Bowlegs he would be out thirty-five dollars.

A few days later Billie, with another Indian, came back to the store, bringing produce to sell. The storekeeper wanted the Indian's goods and suggested that Billie trade for the music box, telling the innocent Seminole that "music no more play-wake up by and by and play good-him tired now." Billie, with mechanical knowledge, looked the organette over and

making the trade, proudly left with the "tired out" music box under his arm. The next day the Indians returned, bringing with them the music box to show to the store-keeper.

"That box, him no more tired" and winding up the machine, which the ingenious Seminole had put into working order, played the whole five tunes, to the astonishment and chagrin of the trader.

"Him play good at Green Corn Dance down Okeecho-bee."

A few years later the organette was still doing service in the Seminole village. The picture recurs - a camp scene with its storm-beaten wigwams in the background, Billie sits in the center of the square, the brown-skinned people move hither and thither in the dim shadows of the camp fire, while the musician entertains the white friend visitors with the organette grinding out the melodies of Home, Sweet Home, Hail Columbia and Nearer My God to Thee. As these melodies floated out upon the stillness of the night, telling the story of the white man's inheritance - happy homes, a free government, and his ennobling religion, they contained no more sentiment to the Seminole than the murmur of a brook; for the Seminoles are a people without a home, without a country, and without a God in the sense of these songs.

LOVE OF HOMELAND

Love for his Everglade home has been instilled into every Seminole. He loves this land of his ancestors, this gift of the Great Spirit to his Florida children, with a love that is frenzied in its demonstration.

Even now the whites are continually encroaching upon the Indians' hunting camps. With the order to move on, and fearing the power of the white man,

the Seminole will do nothing to arouse his anger; he packs his little belongings and without a protest pushes on into other trackless wilds.

The century-long fear of removal is ever uppermost in his thoughts, for the Seminoles would choose death rather than exile.

The last Green Corn Dance, the annual Indian Festival, was held in the deep and almost inaccessible region of the "Big Cypress," a few months ago. In the stillness of the forest and beside the sacred festival fire, Cart-son-e-go-tee (Josie Billee), the newly elected head medicine man of the Indian Council, made his first judicial "talk" to his three hundred tribesmen, instilling into the band the age-old thought-fear of the white man, and avoidance of contact with him—saying in substance:

"The encroaching of the white man on our homeland means only that we shall push farther into the Glades. What the white man wants from the Seminole he will take. We have kept the pledge made by our fathers to the Great White Chief at Washington. We are still the unconquered Seminoles. We are a nation unto ourselves and we will so continue.

"We love this land more than all the rest of the world. An Indian who would not love the land that holds the graves of his fathers is worse than the beasts of the forest."

Shall the State of Florida deny these home-loving Seminoles their inheritance? For the Indians' priceless contribution to American history in his legends, his mythology and his ethnological secrets, we, his conquerors, have given him nothing in return. Instead we have taken his homes, his forests, his game, and life itself. The Seminole suffers and endures with-

out complaint, yet he still retains his old-time pride and independence.

The Seminole Indian is with us today. He is Florida's problem. He is not a lost hope. He is not a finished chapter. He is wholly in the hands of Florida's people to help or to exterminate. All that he desires is a safe abiding place, where he may place his wigwam without fear of molestation and where he may live in peace without fear of white intrusion.

When Florida accepted the gift of the Everglades country from the national government in 1855, she accepted the Indian as part of the possessions. Until Florida is ready to repudiate her title to this grant of "swamp and over-flowed lands" she cannot repudiate her obligations to her Seminole population. That gift was the most priceless of all the vast possessions of the government. Here were the retreats of the forest animals, and the homes and breeding places of millions of birds, not only Florida's native birds but the winter homes of the countless migrating birds of the North American continent. All was a prehistoric, scenic wonderland, a tropic jungle teeming with its wild life, mysterious and full of drama-the only one of its kind in the world-truly a priceless heritage.

During the centuries when the red inhabitants had been the custodians of this sanctuary no change had come to its primal beauty. Now development, with her great engines and blasts of dynamite has entered. Forests are destroyed, thousands of the drained acres have been burned, the crystal waterways with their millions of fish, the gorgeous butterfly colonies, the animals in their retreats, birds with their nestlings-all have been caught and destroyed by the flames.

But the State of Florida still owns a million acres

of the Everglade country, so there is still time to preserve a part of nature's primeval wonderland for ourselves and our posterity; and in giving it into the keeping of those who would use it without desecration, we should in part right a wrong done them and their ancestors by Florida and by the Nation.

MINNIE MOORE-WILLSON

LETTERS OF SAMUEL FORRY, SURGEON U. S.
ARMY, 1837-1838

PART III

(Written to Lieut. J. W. Phelps, Black Creek)

St. Augustine, October 19th, 1837

My dear Phelps,

In the first place, I thank you very much for your kind attention in sending me a letter. My order to proceed to Fort Peyton has been countermanded; and I now remain here until further orders.

I have delayed writing a day or two, in the hope of giving some definite information in regard to the Indians. Coa-cuchee returned day before yesterday; and yesterday, Gen. Hernandez went as far as Hewlitt's mills, carrying provision for about 100 of Philip's people, who are approaching from different points. The Gen. met about 50 Indians, and brought to Fort Peyton 79 negroes. My friend, Joe Hicks, was there, and Powell and Coa-hadjo, they say, will be at Fort Peyton today. The Indians have not the least idea of emigrating. Tomoka John has no doubt held out false hopes to them, declaring that a portion of this territory will be assigned to them. If these people once get into our power, they will be held as fast as the old Fort can make them. They come with the view of having a talk and a ball-play, and eating and drinking.

Gen. Jesup and staff got here yesterday, doubtless concocting some direful plans to entrap the poor savage.

I can of course give you nothing new or interesting in regard to this fishing village. Last night we had a grand party at Gen. Hernandez. Waltzes and

Spanish dances were the order of the day. After midnight we had quite a splendid supper. About sixty ladies were in attendance, and some of them were passably handsome. I have never, however, participated in such amusements; but last night I most anxiously wished that I could waltz, for no other reason than merely feel and be felt by the ladies. Coa-cuchee was the lion of the night, attracting the special attention of the ladies. His remarks were always to the point, prompted by the impulses of nature. A lady and gentleman being introduced to him, he enquired if they were married. Being answered that the pair had lately been yoked, he added that she was very pretty, and that her husband no doubt enjoyed her very much, but that after bearing several children, she would be scarce worth having.

I have found amusement in rambling about these crumbling walls. Much food for reflection is presented everywhere. The fort, the chapel, the Plaza de la Constitution, are all invested with pleasing associations.

A considerable number of negroes are now at Volusia, for whom it is intended to despatch a steamboat.

Last evening King Philip's brother got so drunk that it was necessary to carry him off. When he saw the display of liquors, he was really transported to the third elysium. He gulped down draught after draught, and finally drew from his pocket a black bottle, thumped it upon the table, and cried out to have it filled. Coa-cuchee also drank immensely; but by being led between two men, he contrived to maintain the perpendicular; and thus he continued to receive the applause of the ladies. Coa-cuchee has the countenance of a white man—a perfect Apollo in his figure—dresses very gaudily, and has more than the vanity of a woman.

You may have heard of the loss of the Steamer "Home," bound for Charleston from New York. It is said that 80 passengers out of 200 perished. No further particulars. Disasters by sea are now every day occurrences. Half a dozen vessels are now off this coast, one of which left the mouth of the St. John's 15 days ago, bound for Charleston.

More troops are concentrating. Major Ashby, Capt. Bell, and a cracker company have just arrived, destined, I suppose, for Fort Peyton. Soon, ah soon, will the rusty hinges of the old Spanish fort close upon the devoted head of the mighty chieftain, Powell! Major Ashby's force number about 200.

Yours truly,
Samuel Forry

Lieut. Phelps

* * *

(Written to Lieut. J. W. Phelps, Black Creek)

St. Augustine, October 21st, 1837

Dear Phelps,

I have just time to say that the Indians have been seized. Among the Chiefs taken are Powell, Coa-hadjo, Micopotoka, John and Joe Hicks, John Cowaga, and old Tustenug.

In the midst of our talk, Major Ashby closed in upon us with about 300 horsemen. No resistance was made by the Indians; their rifles were seized, and they were marched off to St. Augustine. Gen. Hernandez conducted the talk, whilst Gen. Jesup remained at Fort Peyton. Powell's camp was about a mile from the Fort, and he received us standing beneath a white flag. The whole number captured are, perhaps, seventy, all warriors with the exception of half a dozen women. The Indians bore it like philosophers.

A man, supposed to be a deserter, has been killed between Tampa and Fort King.

Yours truly,
Samuel Forry

* * *

(Written Lieut. J. W. Phelps, U. S. Army, Fort Heileman,

St. Augustine, October 31st, 1837.

Dear Phelps,

Yours of the 23d reached me yesterday at Fort Peyton on my return from an expedition to the South. I was ordered to accompany Gen. Hernandez, who set out on the morning of the 25th. A mounted force of 250 accompanied him, whilst 120 men escorted forage and provisions to Bulow's.

As preliminary to the account of our march, I may mention that on the second day after the seizure of Powell, we captured 30 Indians, of whom 18 were male adults. They were met down the road by small parties of our people, who shook them by the hand very cordially-dealt out to them the contents of their haversacks, and invited them to the fort. Arriving at the fort, unsuspecting of treachery, their rifles were seized, and they were marched off to St. Augustine. Of Powell's party, two men and one woman, who were a considerable distance from the main body, escaped; but as these took the road to Spring Garden, and the former came by the route of Tomoka, they fell into the same snare. I will also correct an error in my last: -instead of 300, Ashby's force was about 200; and the number of captives then taken is 82, including not more than half a dozen women and children.

But to return. This expedition proved the most unpleasant I have yet undergone. We took the field without tents and the nights proved very cold. On the third day our route lay thro' a succession of cypress bogs,

and we were obliged to swim the three Haw creeks. This trail had never been travelled by a white man; it has been made since the war, and led through these bogs, with a view to favour escape in the event of being surprised by horsemen. The first creek, filled with haw trees, runs through the centre of a marshy prairie about two miles wide. Our passage was quite an amusing spectacle. The distance to be swum was not more than 20 ft. and it reminded one of a crowd of boys rushing to a certain point to take a dive into the water. Each one plunged thro' the haw bushes in rapid succession. Every Irishman lost his cap, and every Dutchman saved his.

We had not only excellent white and negro guides, but also Tomoka John and Blue Snake, who have now completely identified their interest with ours. Our guides were always in advance examining trails, and at night proceeded several miles looking for the fires of the enemy. I forgot to say that on the first day we met an Indian, his wife and three children, who were sent under guard to Fort Peyton. The third night we encamped at a point, six miles from Volusia, and seven from Spring Garden. The Gen. had intended going to the former place, but as recent trails led to the latter, he changed his course. Early in the morning we surprised the enemy at Spring Garden, and captured 16 negroes and 16 Indians, mostly women and children. Had the Gen. possessed a better knowledge of the locality, all might have been taken; but there were two camps, separated by an extensive and almost impenetrable oak scrub communicating with a large swamp. Some of our men were close to three Indians, but would not fire without orders. We captured the Creek who ran away from Paddy Carr, and who was not killed when Uchee Billy was taken; or rather we did not capture him, as he could have escaped, but hear-

ing the voice of Blue Snake, he surrendered. Had our Indians been better mounted, it is very probable that all would have been induced to surrender. We found about 100 lbs. of lead, cut from a sugar boiler.

Our course was now directed to the ruins of Bulowville. Early next morning, the advance guard met two Indians, who retreated to a Cypress bog. Our lines were immediately extended around it, but the soil was so marshy that it could not be entered by horsemen. At several points, horse and rider disappeared beneath the surface. Even in the trail we were following, the water came to the skirts of the saddle, sometimes for the distance of half a mile. Several men being ordered to dismount and enter the bog, overgrown with cypress trees and tall grass, the Indians, as our men approached, instinctively brought the rifle to the eye; but as Tomoka John and Blue Snake cried out lustily that they should not fire, they finally surrendered. They proved to be the first and last born of King Philip, waiting for the return of their brother Coa-cuchee. The younger one, called Capt. Sam, escaped when his father was taken.

Nothing more worthy of notice occurred. We met the train at Bulowville, and returned to St. Augustine. At Bulow's a splendid steam sugar-mill lies in utter ruins. I had no idea, before seeing these plantations, of the devastations committed by the Indians.

The negroes captured say that the two Indians, who escaped when Powell was taken, passed Spring Garden post haste, terror and dismay depicted on their countenances, bearing tidings of woe to the nation. They stated the fact of the seizure, but added that all were bound with cords. The next day, the woman brought up the rear, with of course increased exaggeration. She stated that seeing horsemen as far as the eye could reach, she fled; and that shortly after-

wards she heard the roar of big guns, and that consequently all were slaughtered.

One of the negroes, named Titus, will prove an excellent guide. He gives a favourable account of the exertions of Coa-hadjo after his return from Fort King. At a council of chiefs, he addressed old Yakky, (Abiaka) from morn to midnight, and that Yakky became so mad that he several times left the council. Powell coincided in the views of Coa-hadjo, stating that they could not maintain the war another year, and that he for one would make peace with the whites. Sam Jones replied that he would not give up as long as he had a single ball and a charge of powder-that when he could no longer shoot game, he would live on fish-when his lines are worn out, he will make others of horse hair-and when his hooks are broken, he will cut up his old tin pans and make others. He concluded by saying that he had 700 warriors, and that he would fight as long as they would stand by him; and that if every other Indian should leave Florida, he would find a retreat among the islands of the Everglades, remote from the face of white or red man. Sam Hicks, a son-in-law of old Yakky, now ventured to advise a contrary measure; but Yakky became exceedingly enraged-demanded back his daughter, and actually drove him from his camp. But Sam had another wife in three days. So saith Titus.

Titus thinks Sam Jones the only obstacle to the making of peace, and that he possesses a hundred times the power and influence that Powell did. He thinks that he has 400 men. As an evidence of the number of the Indians, Tomoka and Blue Snake advised Gen. Hernandez several times not to cross the St. John's (he had had that object in view). They declared our forces of horsemen to be but a handful

compared with the number of Indians in that region.

In regard to Powell, I cannot tell you much. If it were possible to comprehend Indian character, I would say that they do not regret their being captured, and that their only anxiety consists in getting their families. Powell is doubtless a patriot, and the evidence of his physiognomy and the testimony of all go to prove that cruelty makes no part of his character. You may hear many false rumors. It is [in (?)] correctly reported that he attempted to poison himself. This report arose from a soldier's running thro' town after Dr. Russel, saying that Osceola was dying. He now labours under intermittent fever. A few nights ago, the Indians had a dance in the fort; the whoops and yells alarmed the city-the Mayor ran to Gen. Jesup and hoped that he would send for more troops, for Oseola would take the city before daylight. The Indians are perfectly secure, and do not dream of escape. Their large knives were taken from them the morning after imprisonment, and a barricade was erected to prevent a rush upon the passage leading to the door. Gen. Jesup on leaving, gave a positive order that no man, except officers on duty, shall have any communication with the Indians.

The Indians are very anxious to send several persons into the nation to apprise them of their situation, and bring in their families. The selection was in fact made the morning after their capture ; but our Generals concluded that it were better first to make all the captures possible.

Tomoka John advised the course that has been pursued in regard to Powell. He went into the nation holding out false hopes to the Indians; but Coa-cuchee followed with a true account of matters. Powell, Coa-

hadjo, and others, however, determined to come at all hazards.

Yours truly,
F o r r y

* * *

(Written to Lieut. Phelps.)

Fort Taylor, January 24th, 1838

Dear Phelps,

I am exceedingly obliged to you for your note of the 19th inst. After every officer had eagerly devoured his letter, and I was mentally cursing you for your supposed neglect, the Express-rider approached me and drew forth a transparent document, looking for all the world as though it had lain twelve months in the chandler-shop of Dr. Franklin's father. It bore, indeed, a close resemblance to a parchment found in the pocket of a deceased dragoon—a commission signed by Oliver Cromwell in 1650. This 'soldier had also a Major's commission to his father signed by John Adams, and a Diploma from Princeton College when the famous Witherspoon was President.

Have you yet found Sam Jones in the fabulous islands of the undiscovered Ochee-chubee? Have you yet discovered Ponce de Leon's fountain of perpetual youth, and the mines and pearl fisheries of Pamphillo de Narvaes?

The gallant Navy, how has she signalized herself! What a thorn it will prove in her side! She who rides the mountain-wave, rival of the fast anchored isle, beaten and routed by whom? Old *Naked-arse!*

Our position here is, indeed, melancholy. After each rain, we resemble Noah on the top of Mount Ararat. Clouds of crows and blackbirds then hover around, waiting for the waters to subside, to resume their daily vocation of picking up corn. Turning your

eye to the earth, you then behold a score, of glandered and sore-backed mules! Now a mosquito buzzes in your ear, and next a flea bites you between the shoulders.

Major Lomax and Ross' command serves as an escort to the waggon-train. I have given Martin a certificate of inability to march. At his suggestion, I send you a bottle of molasses by Capt. Waite.

Write by every opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

Forry

* * *

(Written to Lieut. J. W. Phelps)

Fort Taylor, March 4th, 1838

Mon Cher Phelps,

As I am unable to give you anything in the way of sense, you will be obliged to accept nonsense. But first let me thank you from the bottom of my heart for your kind favour of the 28th. ult., which reached me yesterday. We live here almost isolated from the world; so much so, indeed, that your letter is viewed by all as constituting an epoch in our history. By the way, we have become the most religious community imaginable; aye, we even rival those primitive Christians, who were so minute as to prescribe how often a husband ought to stroke his wife. We have a Bible class that meets every evening to hear the word of God expounded in familiar lessons, and on Sundays we have a regular dove-tailed sermon. The gentlemen who officiate on these pious and interesting occasions the Rev. Brevet Major John L. Gardner and Capt. J. R. Vinton. The congregation consists of the other officers, the soldiers, and two negro guides, *one of which never attends*. As Sampson guided us in pursuit of the Indians, the least we can do is to guide him to heaven. To carry out the parallel might prove an in-

teresting subject, that is, to determine which guide is the better acquainted with the country to which he professes to pilot the other.

By yesterday's express we also learned that this post and Fort Lane are to be abandoned in several weeks. Col. Crane says that the Artillery are to be ordered to the Canada frontier. I am an applicant to go to the North, and spend the summer at the falls of Niagara. I wrote to Dr. Lawson about 20 days ago, but I have not yet received a reply. I also touched upon the same subject in making my monthly report to Dr. Finlay; but unfortunately I sent the letter via St. Augustine, the day before yesterday.

Dr. Byrne has been ordered to Fort Pierce. As the Dr. sent me a newspaper occasionally, we got now and then a glimpse of the busy world without; but since then we have breathed an atmosphere of Egyptian darkness; (always barring spiritual enlightenment).

The letter referred to in your last has not arrived. It contains, I presume, an account of the fight in which Jesup had his goggles shot from his nasal protuberance. Pray, my dear fellow, could you not give me a general narrative of the sayings and doings in the Everglades? I know very little about Col. Taylor's operations and nothing in regard to Smith and Lawson. Bullock and Gilpin gave us just about a tithe of what you might furnish.

As you have discovered the Carib girl's fountain of perpetual youth, it is not improbable that you may also find the pearl fisheries of Pamphillo de Narvaes. Is not the Ochee-chubee Lake Macaco?

I examined our mound several days ago. I found many human bones and pieces of old iron in the shape of harpoons and tomahawks almost destroyed by oxidation. Silver ornaments, beads, and other Indian relics were also discovered.

I also found a small iron box with trinkets, one of which looks very like a pearl. These discoveries would indicate a more recent origin for the mounds than I had been led to suppose. As these relics, however, are only found near the surface, it is possible that they may have been deposited by the present race of Indians many years after the erection of the tumulus.

I received a few days ago a letter, written in December, from a book-seller in New York. He says that the Florida war is so unpopular that any work on the subject, however interesting and well-written, would fall still-born from the press. This remark he makes in reference to purchasing the manuscript. The fellow then adds the hope that I will finish the manuscript, and favour him with the job of publication at my own expense.

I do not comprehend Gen. Jesup's present policy. He must be influenced by motives behind the veil of public view. How else can he justify himself in again halting in the midst of his operations to parley with the Indians. He has, doubtless, secret instructions from Washington to use his own discretion in closing this unfortunate contest.

We have here the greatest abundance of game. A few days ago, Brent and I sent out our cooks in the morning, and they returned with fifteen curlew and ducks, in time to cook them for dinner. We consequently had a great feast of all officers, including Bullock and Gilpin. Col. Harney's wine enlivened the feast with great effect.

As the Express returns to-morrow from Fort Lane, I will apprise you of anything new.

Yours sincerely,

Forry

March 6th. Nothing new-your letter has not arrived. The 1st, 2d, 4th Artillery, it is said, will certainly be distributed along the sea coast from Eastport to Mobile. We are preparing to abandon this post, that is, we are sending down the River our supplies, reserving several days' forage for several hundred horses, which are to be brought here from your post. Benton's Army bill, which passed the Senate, will, it is now thought, pass the lower House. I have seen Col. Taylor's official report: it is such a *jumbled-up* affair that it gives one a pretty good idea of the fight.

Later- Capt. D. Lagnel says the 1st, 2d, and 4th Artillery and six companies 2d Infantry are to go to the North. Of the 3d Artillery, one company is to be stationed at Savannah, one at St. Augustine, one at Key West, one at Tampa, two at Santa Rosa, and one at Mobile point, and the other three to remain in the Territory. The 1st, 4th and 6th Infantry, 2d Dragoons, and some Volunteers are also to remain under command of a Brigadier General, as an Army of observation. Gen. Hernandez has gone to Washington to solicit the command!

Yesterday the Express went South about 20 miles, and found the road impassible. Today they went towards Fort Christmas, and found it equally impracticable. The bridges were raised up from their foundations, and choked the streams. Gen Eustis' camp ground here is overflowed, and our position has become insular. We have not had ten hours continuous rain. The Major is about to despatch an Express-boat. Were he certain that the Dragoons could not return this way, he would take the responsibility of abandoning the post.

Forry

March 9th. The Major has now resolved to despatch the Express across the Lake in search of Fort Pierce. The Lake is still rising, and will soon reach the foot of the mound. I shall continue to thrust one of these bulletins into the package every day. You can assort them at your leisure.

Forry

* * *

(Written to Lieut. J. W. Phelps, Fort Jupiter)

St. Augustine, Mar. 25th, 1838

My dear Phelps,

The Sutler Dopson and Gen. Scott are both dead—Martin commands Picolata, and *thou art the man*, as Nathan said unto David, who wrote the very famous letter signed “An officer of the 4th Artillery.” What a melancholy sound was borne upon the gales of Tampa’s shore, as the poor dogs howled after their rod masters!! It is believed by many that Major Gardner is the author; and he has written to Gen. Jesup denying the vile imputation.

Gen. Scott’s reported death wants confirmation. It is said that he was shot by a militia man.

Old Dr. Weedon is about publishing the life of Osceola. Powell has quized (I don’t know how to spell that word) him most sublimely. The Dr. has Osceola’s head here in his possession.

We abandoned Fort Taylor on the 13th. Fort Lane is also abandoned. Major Gardner is at Fort Harlee, to which post I am also ordered.

I had intended to write a long letter, but delayed until I am just setting out for Picolata. The “Poinsett” is in view, and looks as though she were pregnant with news—a letter from yourself, etc.

My letters were sent to your post a few days ago—

I wish you would have them sent back. Write often.
Nothing new, except the report of Indian depredation
in Alachua.

Yours truly,
Sam Forry

* * *

(Written to Lieut. J. W. Phelps, Fort Jupiter)

Fort Harlee, E. Florida,
April 12th, 1838

My dear Phelps:

Although I may have nothing else than Indian murders to communicate, yet I am resolved to keep you in my debt. My two last letters were addressed from Fort Taylor and St. Augustine.

You may have heard of the manslaughter near Miconopy. A family, claiming a 100 acres in the Are-dondo grant, arrived there from New York. It consisted of three men and a woman. Building a temporary shelter on the edge of the prairie just beyond Miconopy, two of the men, (who chanced to be at work as the Indians passed by), fell victims to Indian indignation.

An express between Forts Dade and King has been killed, scalped, and deprived of his ears, nose, and genitals.

About Newnansville, Forts White and Fanning, and from this point to Fort Dade the country is literally alive with red-skins. On the 9th two men were killed about 12 miles from here, north of the Newnansville road. A woman, who is the wife and sister of these two men, has been brought in to this post. She is accompanied by six young pledges of mutual love. About twenty persons have lately been killed on this frontier. A messenger arrived here begging assistance to bury the dead, as the families had congregated in several houses for self-defense. The whole frontier is

being abandoned, there being now more than 30 families around us. The arrival of Expresses, crying out for help from Gen. Eustis, has become an hourly occurrence. The San Felasco hammock has become so full of Indians that they crowd one another out on every side. Between Fort King and Miconopy, the waggon-train saw fifty Indians and the signs of many more, and so turned back to the latter point.

Major Gardner, in the emergency of the case, has been ordered to Miconopy. Lieut. Brent commands this post. Major Dearborn with two companies has gone to Charle's Ferry. The 4th Infantry has been ordered to Fort King and Miconopy. And several companies of mounted volunteers are now being raised. Baron Von Tufts, it is said, has assumed the command of Fort King. "Diamond cut diamond."

A few days ago I made a professional visit to Newnansville, to see a Capt. Fitzpatrick. The whole country is in a state of direful consternation. I met waggon and carts flying in every direction, the inhabitants universally abandoning their fields of corn throughout the fertile region of the Alachua. One man showed me a fresh Indian sign near a much-to-be-feared hammock at Clark's place.

Capt. Galt fired his howitzer upon several Indians who persisted in letting down the bars of his cattle pen, much to the amazement of the garrison. A Tennessee Lieutenant took the trail of some Indians who had stolen horses from Fort Crane. He captured an Indian's cap of singular construction, consisting of a wild cat's skin with the ears and tail standing in bold relief. These same Tennesseans, when we reached this post, refused to give up the command. A general battle with clubs ensued - Major Gardner ordered them to Black Creek, and General Eustis ordered them back again:

A few evenings ago, our men got up a theatrical performance. Russel, from Fort King, performed the part of an *Express-rider attacked by an Indian*. Immediately afterwards Russel set out for Miconopy with the mail; and I was called upon to dress the wounds of an Alabamian, who had just been engaged in a duel with knives. Russel soon made his re-appearance covered with blood, and just breath enough to say, "Oh Doctor! I have been shot by Indians," when he tumbled over and fainted. He performed his part well in both tragedies; but the latter was rather more according to nature. At first it was thought that his histrionic temperament, excited more vividly than usual by an extra glass of wine, had summoned up the savages, and that in his gallant defense his bridal arm had received the charge of his pistol. His horse followed him in about half an hour so terribly excited that he obstinately refused to receive any consolation. Next morning the mail was found about three miles from here. I now incline to the opinion, from careful inquiry, that Russel was fired upon by two Indians.

The inhabitants of our village, although "suffering and distressed," seem to enjoy the pleasures of life with not a little zest. They are certainly not destitute of the fatness of the land; and as for dancing, it is an amusement not unknown to them. They have a building expressly dedicated to that purpose, in which they assemble six nights in a week. Their manners and modes of life are so unsophisticated that they exhibit a state of primitive simplicity, just one degree removed from the condition of their red brethren.

I have seen Jesup's order complimenting Col. Twiggs for the capture of the 500. Bunts' people have been shipped from Tampa. Pray, whence come they?

Forry

P. S. We have just heard via Tampa that Alligator with 150 warriors, besides negroes, etc., had surrendered at Fort Basinger.

* * *

(This series is concluded)

BOOK REVIEW

The Spanish-American Frontier: 1783-1795, By Arthur Preston Whitaker. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, The Riverside Press, Cambridge, 1927. III+245 pp. Maps and Index.)

One of the long neglected aspects of American history has been the Spanish ambitions, desires, and intrigues in relation to the infant republic which the treaty of 1783 established in the new world. The territorial expansion of that republic was most closely interwoven with Spain, and the expansion itself was made largely at the expense of her holdings or those of her former colonies. It is of the plans and policies arising from such border situations in the years immediately following the Revolution, that Dr. Whitaker treats in his recently published book entitled, *The Spanish-American Frontier, 1783-1795: The Westward Movement and the Spanish Retreat in the Mississippi Valley*.

The period is one of extreme complexity, for the war with England left many questions unsettled between the United States and Spain. The boundary between the Floridas and the southern limits of the new nation was in dispute; the right to navigate the Mississippi, so glibly given to the Americans by their former mother country, was vehemently denied by Spain; the commercial treaty, so keenly desired by the Eastern States, had not been negotiated; while permeating the whole situation were the ever-present fear of the Spanish of American expansion and the restless ambition of the frontiersmen. The twelve years under discussion was a tangled maze of Indian alliances, secession plots, land-jobbing schemes, and fur-trading

interests. The author had before him no easy road when he set himself the task of discovering the unity of the many events—the meaning of the apparent confusion. It is greatly to his credit that he is able to reconstruct a fascinating story and to set forth, as the narrative progresses, some excellent examples of historical synthesis. It is an additional tribute to him that the reader is repeatedly conscious of a curiosity to know more of certain events—to sink the plumb line of research deeper into specific situations. Dr. Whitaker will probably satisfy this desire in the years to come. The present volume is obviously a fairly general treatment of the whole period, as the *Acknowledgment* informs one that further study of the subject has already been planned.

The most important source from which the book has been drawn is the Spanish Archives at Seville and Madrid, but a satisfying amount of American, French, and English material is cited. Few secondary books or articles are mentioned, but this is due to the scarcity of such work among both Spanish and American historians. Two criticisms of the technical handling of the material might be made: First, there is no general list of sources; hence, the reader who wishes to know whether certain books, articles, or documents have been consulted must scan fourteen chapters of footnotes. Second, all the footnotes, although clearly and concisely arranged by chapters, have been placed by the publisher at the end of the volume. For the layman who is reading for the tale alone, this is well; for the critical student who wishes from time to time to check and verify the author's statements, it is a decided inconvenience.

The volume as a whole is interesting as well as worth while, which is more than can be said of much

of our present-day historical writing. It is stimulating because of the added information which is set forth and on account of new approaches to-and new interpretations of-old situations. To repeat an earlier statement, the reader is left with a genuine desire to learn more.

KATHRYN T. ABBEY.

NEW MEMBERS

Fifty-five names have been added to the roll of members of the Society during the past quarter. This is a greater gain than ever before; and indicates both the steady growth of interest throughout the State in Florida's past, and a more widespread knowledge of the work which the Society is trying to do. In almost every case that spread of interest, and with it the increase in membership, has come through personal contact; so it largely depends on the individual member in every part of Florida whether the work of the Society is to be broadened. To the earnest efforts of B. Frank Hampton, of Gainesville, is due most of the gain in membership during this period.

William B. Drew, of Jacksonville, long an active member of the Society, has now become a life member. Mr. Drew is a son of Columbus Drew, a name which appears repeatedly in the records of public and business affairs of Florida during several decades of the last century.

This interest and help of Mr. Hampton and Mr. Drew have had an immediate result in furthering our work.

Our new members are-

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Allen, G. Frank | Colson, Barney R. |
| Bryant, Fred T. | Carter, S. G. |
| Bodiford, J. S. | Cannon, E. Finley |
| Barns, Paul D. | DePass, M. H. |
| Bishop, M. Priscilla | Drew, Alice J. |
| Burkheim, L. J. | Dell, George A. |
| Baxter, Ruth H. | Douglass, Mrs. Z. H. |
| Baird, E. | Evans, R. M. |
| Burroughs, Rosa T. | Eberle, Carl George |
| Cawthon, W. S. | Elmore, Wm. T. |
| Cole, A. H. | Fowler, J. R. |
| Colson, J. H. | Gribbel, Mrs. John |

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Griffin, Mrs. S. S. | Parrish, J. O. |
| Gower, Jennie | Pound, C. A. |
| Graham, Lee | Parrish, Mrs. M. M. |
| Glass, A. Martin | Philips, Maggie B. |
| Hiers, B. D. | Royall, J. B. |
| Huie, Margaret | Rogers, Mrs. Henry |
| Hampton, W. F. | Spain, Frank O. |
| Homestead Public Library | Snow, T. A. |
| Hampton, E. B. | The State Library Board |
| Hampton, Fred J. | Thomas, W. R. |
| Knight, Floyd L. | Taylor, H. E. |
| Kelley, Mrs. Josephine | Thomas, O. H. |
| Leffler, Cornelia | Thomas, Ralph W. |
| McKay, John L. | *Thomas, T. F. |
| McCollum, Mrs. J. W. | Van Hying, Dr. T. |
| McCollum, J. W. | Walden, Mrs. May |
| McCreary, Elmer | Welch, G. W. |
| Phifer, J. A. | Yowell, Clarence |
| Philips, R. L. | |

DONATIONS:

By Frank Drew,

Buckingham Smith transcripts of Spanish and
Timuquana documents
Portrait of Charles W. Jones

By Miss Alice Drew,

Framed portrait in oil of Stephen A. Douglas

By Arthur T. Williams,

Journal of Florida House of Representatives,
1903.
Directory of Confederate States, 1861-1865
Framed map of Fernandina

By T. C. Imeson, author,

History of the City of Jacksonville

*On April 29, after a life of helpful service, Dr. T. F. Thomas died at his home in Gainesville.

By H. Clay Crawford,

File of House of Representatives, 1903

By J. C. B. Koonce, author,

Dade Memorial Park

Micanope, Indian Chief

Saga of the Urn

In the Park

Captain George Washington Gardiner

By T. Frederick Davis

Portrait of Gen. Gregor MacGregor

By Duncan U. Fletcher,

Art and Artists of the Capitol

Phi-Alpha-Delta Quarterly

By Edgar L. Pennington,

Photostat copies of documents relating to Anglican missionaries in Florida, from Fulham Palace library

By Mrs. Minnie Moore-Willson, author,

The Birds of the Everglades, and their Neighbors the Seminoles

By Frederick Cubberly,

Map of Florida, by order of Gen. Zachary Taylor

By W. S. Cawthon,

History of Public School Education in Florida

