

EAST FLORIDA AS A REFUGE OF SOUTHERN LOYALISTS, 1774-1785

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FLORIDA, or East Florida as it was known during the American Revolution, remained steadfast in its attachment to the British crown, and therefore became a general refuge of Loyalists from the revolted Southern provinces. Lieutenant-Colonel Patrick Tonyn of the 104th Regiment was governor of Florida for a little more than a decade, that is, from March 1, 1774, until in June, 1784, when the Spanish governor, De Zéspedes, succeeded him. However, Governor Tonyn and the last British transports with departing Loyalists did not sail from St. Mary's River until November 19, 1785. The most notable features of the history of the province during this period are the part it played as a rallying place for Southern Tories, its share in plots and hostilities during the war, and its prolonged evacuation which occupied nearly two years and a half, of which the major part was conducted under Spanish auspices.

During the year 1775, the government, garrison, and scant population of East Florida felt the first tremors of the Revolution. In January they learned of an order in Council prohibiting the exportation of ammunition and arms from Great Britain, and the carrying of such supplies coastwise. Other measures and

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events soon followed that affected them more directly. In June the provincial Council was informed of a conciliatory resolution of the House of Commons which declared that when the civil authorities of a province should provide the revenue for the support of its own government, in case the proposal were approved by the king and Parliament, the taxes and duties hitherto levied by the home government could properly be discontinued, except the duties for the regulation of commerce, the net income of which would be credited to the account of the province. In July notice was received that the orders of the commander-in-chief of the British forces in North America were supreme in regulating the operations of those troops, and that General Gage had ordered a detachment of the 14th Regiment at St. Augustine sent to Virginia to aid Lord Dunmore. In August, but before Gage's orders had been complied with, the brigantine, *Betsy*, a vessel just arrived from London with a large quantity of gunpowder for the garrison and merchants at St. Augustine, was boarded off the bar by a party from the *Commerce*, a South Carolina sloop, and the powder carried away in the face not only of the two guns and the crew of the *Betsy*, but also a squad of the men of the 14th Regiment detailed to help bring the ammunition on shore.

By autumn Florida's supply of provisions, hitherto largely obtained from its neighbors and New York, was mostly cut off, and Tonym reported that a plan of attacking St. Augustine had been considered in South Carolina. He therefore advocated the invasion of that province as a sure means of protecting East Florida and preserving communication with the Creek Indians. He added that already some people had taken refuge in the peninsula, which was "becoming an asylum to the friends of the Constitution." The government of Georgia had been "entirely wrested" from Governor Sir James Wright by the "rebel committees" Tonym noted, and, in case General Gage

should seek a firm footing in the South, there could be no better place for that purpose than St. Augustine.

On November 1, 1775, Florida officials were authorized by royal mandate to receive refugees and provide for them when a letter from the Earl of Dartmouth, dated in the previous July, was submitted to the Council expressing the king's hope that the province might become a secure asylum for those in the rebellious colonies who were "too weak to resist the violence of the times" and too loyal to concur in the measures of revolt, and directing that free grants of land, exempt from quit-rent for ten years, be made in East Florida to such persons. Dartmouth's letter further suggested that the province endeavor to furnish those supplies to the West Indies which they could no longer procure from other parts of the American continent, and that the exportation of lumber be encouraged by licensing persons to cut it on the crown lands and affording security for landing it on some island belonging to the king. Orders were at once issued to the provincial customs officers forbidding them to clear vessels to any place not in the possession of the crown, and Governor Tonyn published a proclamation inviting the Loyalists to leave the provinces then in revolt and find a welcome and refuge in East Florida, where they would receive gratuitous grants of land and enjoy many other advantages. Copies of this proclamation were circulated in the neighboring provinces, and posted in public places, especially in Savannah and Charleston. They had a marked effect in causing adherents of the crown to retire to East Florida.

Among the refugees who had arrived at St. Augustine a few weeks before the distribution of Tonyn's proclamation were Colonel John Stuart, the superintendent of Indian Affairs in the Southern District, Thomas Browne, Daniel and James McGirth, Alan Cameron, and Captain Moses Kirkland. Kirkland had been active in forming a Tory association in the Ninety-six District, South Carolina, in consequence of which a

large reward had been offered for his arrest, but he had fled by way of Charleston to Lord Dunmore in Norfolk harbor and thence to St. Augustine. Alan Cameron had escaped from Charleston, where he had got into trouble for refusing to "comply with the proposals of the demagogues of this unlucky rebellion," as he expressed it. From St. Augustine he intended to sail for Boston, and apply for an ensign's commission in the British army. On his way north he stopped to see Lord Dunmore, and there fell in with Major John Connolly and Dr. J. F. D. Smyth. These three in compliance with Dunmore's plans, set out for Detroit to obtain the co-operation of the garrison there, and thence were to move southward through the Ohio country, where they were to enlist the Indian tribes and raise a regiment or more of Loyalists near Pittsburgh, capture Fort Pitt, and join Dunmore with their reinforcements. Daniel McGirth had escaped from prison in Georgia, and in company with his brother James had marched with Captain John Baker's party against Wright's fort on St. Mary's River, the northern boundary of Florida. At night they had fled to the enemy across the river. Thomas Browne had been tarred and feathered at Augusta for his hostility to the Committee of Safety, had plotted to capture the town, been published in the *Georgia Gazette* as an enemy to American liberty, and had fled by way of Charleston to St. Augustine. Warned by Governor Sir James Wright, Superintendent John Stuart embarked on the armed schooner *St. John*, at Cockspur, and retired to the Florida capital. The congress of South Carolina had ordered his arrest for trying to win the Indians to the British cause.

By the end of September 1775, a second detachment of the 14th Regiment was in readiness to depart for Virginia, and three companies of the 16th Regiment were expected to arrive at St. Augustine from Pensacola. Until they did arrive the reduced garrison in Florida consisted only of a small party of the Royal

Artillery and a few officers and about eighty men of the 14th Regiment under the command of Major Furlong. Superintendent Stuart had already sent friendly messages to the Indian tribes, and now dispatched a supply of gunpowder to the Creek nation by the hands of an Indian and an interpreter. On the north side of St. Mary's, however, the ammunition was seized by some Georgians and carried to Savannah.

Meantime, Captain Kirkland was preparing to leave St. Augustine for Boston with plans of Charleston and its harbor, the latest information about Georgia, and letters from Governor Tonyn and his colleagues recommending the bearer as a valuable agent to accompany a British expedition into the South. Kirkland sailed for Boston about the time that Alan Cameron and his friends were arrested at an inn near Hager's Town, Maryland, and a fortnight later still, Kirkland's vessel was overhauled by a Continental schooner and taken into Boston harbor. Thence Kirkland was sent to Washington's headquarters at Cambridge. Thus collapsed a great double plot to preserve the South to the British: Connolly and Cameron's mission had been to divide the Northern from the Southern provinces, and aid Dunmore in the recovery of Virginia; Kirkland's mission was to induce the British military and naval commanders at Boston to send an expedition to Charleston, and with the support of Southern Loyalists and Indians save the lower colonies to the king.

Measures for the defense of East Florida were taken early in 1776, including steps for the organization of a militia, a troop of horse, and a company of volunteers. Late in March some seventy-five opponents of Governor Tonyn met at Wood's tavern in St. Augustine and adopted an address of loyalty to the king, in denial of the governor's charge that Chief Justice William Drayton and Dr. Andrew Turnbull, the clerk of Council and secretary of East Florida, had become "Patriots for the cause of America." Drayton and

Turnbull carried this address to England without the governor's leave. They were vindicated by the action of the Lords of Trade and the king, but were never forgiven by Tonym, who persecuted them as long as they remained in the province. Meanwhile, frequent raids on the plantations along St. Mary's River induced the governor to commission Thomas Browne and Daniel McGirth to raise bodies of rangers among the refugees and other inhabitants. Commissions were issued to McGirth and Browne at the beginning of June. Browne's corps was known as the East Florida Rangers, and chiefly did guard duty with a band of Indians on St. Mary's. McGirth seems to have been at the head of an independent company, which in small groups went scouting and cattle stealing in Georgia. When the news of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence reached St. Augustine the attention of the populace was momentarily diverted from the frontier by the burning of the effigies of Samuel Adams and John Hancock on the plaza. Then in August came a call for help from the people of Amelia Island, who had fled with their negroes to the mainland at the approach of an armed schooner and two small vessels from Georgia to operate in St. Mary's River. On summons of the governor and Council a band of Seminole braves came to St. Augustine, and all loyal subjects were called on to embody under proper officers in support of the troops.

During the period from July 1776 to September 1778 three campaigns were made from Georgia against Florida. The first of these was undertaken by Major-General Charles Lee, but really conducted by Colonel William Moultrie. It got no farther than Sunbury, Georgia, on account of the unhealthy season and the sickness among the troops. This abortive expedition was the occasion for sending vessels into St. John's River to assist the detachment there in protecting the planters, while other vessels collected provisions along the St. John's and in Mosquito Inlet, and trusty

persons gathered spare arms from the inhabitants in anticipation of a siege of St. Augustine. It was also the occasion of a retaliatory expedition early in 1777 under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis V. Fuser, his force comprising about one thousand men, of whom five hundred were regulars, one hundred rangers, a body of Creek Indians, and a battery of field pieces. Fort Barrington was taken, its garrison dismissed on parole, and the fort burned, after which Colonel Fuser led his expedition back to St. Augustine early in March. Browne, McGirth, and their rangers brought off nearly two thousand head of cattle, most of which were sold to dealers in East Florida at 25s. each, the beef being retailed in the market at 3*d.* a pound.

Early in April 1777 Colonel Samuel Elbert led two battalions of Continentals to Sunbury, whence they sailed to the north end of Amelia Island, landing on May 19th. Colonel Baker and a detachment of over one hundred volunteers were to join Elbert's force at Sawpit Bluff, or Rolfe's saw-mill, on the south side of St. Mary's. They arrived at the bluff, and Baker soon sent out a party to reconnoitre for Elbert. On the 17th Baker's force was routed at Thomas's Swamp by Lieutenant-Colonel Browne with a body of three hundred men. Forty of Baker's volunteers surrendered, and more than half of them were massacred by the Indians. Some of Baker's men succeeded in joining Elbert at Amelia, or up St. Mary's, whither he had gone to look for parties of the enemy who might be gathering cattle in Georgia. At the end of May Elbert and his men began their homeward march, while his fleet returned to Sunbury.

About a year later Brigadier-General Robert Howe advanced against Florida with an expedition of eleven hundred Continentals and a large number of militia from South Carolina and Georgia. A contingent of seven hundred soldiers and seven field-pieces was led by Colonel Elbert. A part of this contingent pro-

ceeded in galleys and transports to Frederica, where the force captured the armed ship *Hinchenbrook*, the sloop *Rebecca*, and a brigantine. Late in June a thousand of the Americans landed at Amelia Narrows and began their advance up St. Mary's. At Fort McIntosh two of their detachments hemmed in Lieutenant-Colonel Browne with a party of rangers and Indians. Browne and his force managed to escape into the Cabbage Swamp, but emerged again when a force of two hundred regulars and McGirth's rangers under Major Graham were sent to their relief from Alligator Creek Bridge by Major James Mark Prevost. Retreating behind Graham's men, Browne's party received a volley while crossing the bridge from a detachment of the enemy. The detachment vanished when it saw that Browne's party stood fast, and was supported by the regulars on the other side. This affair occurred near the end of June. Retiring at once to Fort Tonym on St. Mary's, the Florida troops evacuated and burned it on July 2. A day later Howe's command took possession and remained until the 11th. It was now torn by factions, and the death rate among the men was high. The surgeons were consulted and advised that the expedition should not proceed farther. If it had been conducted under competent leadership and at the proper season it might have subjugated St. Augustine.

At the end of April 1778 Brigadier-General Augustine Prevost wrote from the capital of Florida of "the great increase of public expenses arising from the support of the unfortunate refugees from the neighboring colonies." Besides those who needed support, others came with means enough to buy or build houses in the town, or to clear plantations, erect buildings, and cultivate crops with the labor of the slaves they had brought with them. The great increase in the number of refugees at this time is easily accounted for. In the autumn and winter of 1777-78 the assembly of Georgia passed several acts against the Loyalists: one

for the expulsion of the internal enemies of the state, another to prevent the dangerous consequences that might arise from the practices of disaffected persons, and the third attainting those named in the act and confiscating their estates. In North Carolina a law was enacted for confiscating the property of all persons inimical to the United States, of those who neglected to become citizens within a limited time, and of those who were denied citizenship. South Carolina adopted a constitution which required all officers to take an oath to the state, abjure allegiance to the crown, and swear to defend the state against the king and his adherents. At the same time a test act was passed requiring every free male inhabitant to swear fidelity to the state, and a few months later the authorities were empowered to imprison those persons whose going at large might endanger the safety of the state. Numbers of Loyalists fled to East and West Florida and the islands of the sea rather than submit to these drastic measures. It has been said that nearly seven thousand refugees from Carolina and Georgia entered East Florida alone during the year 1778. Among these were three hundred and fifty South Carolinians, who came to St. Augustine in April of that year. Of these two hundred and sixty were formed into a regiment known as the South Carolina Royalists, comprising four companies of infantry and two troops of dragoons. Following these came between four and five hundred Scopholites, so named from one of their leaders, Colonel Scophel, of the South Carolina militia. They had assembled from the interior parts of Carolina, were joined by a Colonel Thomas and a party of Georgians, and plundered the scattered settlements through which they passed on their way to Florida. In June they were in a camp on St. Mary's River. In the previous April Colonel Elbert had received intelligence of about four hundred insurgents who were evidently bound for St. Mary's. Their leader styled himself Colonel Murphey. Meantime, refugees found

their way from North Carolina to East Florida, and were embodied with their fellows from other provinces in a corps called the Royal North Carolina Regiment under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel John Hamilton, a merchant of Halifax, North Carolina. Another refugee corps formed in these months was the Carolina King's Rangers. Some of these newcomers said that they expected hundreds more, in one case the number mentioned was seven hundred and in another fifteen hundred. Our documents do not give us full particulars concerning the influx of Loyalists during these months.

The Tory regiments formed in East Florida were participants in all the British expeditions in the South during the remaining four years of the Revolution. The East Florida Rangers, Daniel McGirth's men, the South Carolina Royalists, and some Indians accompanied Major James Mark Prevost's regulars against Sunbury in November 1778. On the return of this expedition it was at once incorporated in another led by Brigadier-General Prevost to Savannah. The Royal North Carolina Regiment and the Carolina King's Rangers shared with the other provincial corps in this movement, which reached its destination about the middle of January 1779, after the British force from New York under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Archibald Campbell had been in possession of the town more than a fortnight. James Mark Prevost, now a lieutenant-colonel, was made lieutenant-governor of Georgia until Governor Sir James Wright should return from England. James Robertson, who had been a refugee at St. Augustine for the past year, became the attorney-general and advocate-general of Georgia at the same time. Thus the royal government was revived there.

On the death of John Stuart, the superintendent of Indian Affairs, late in March 1779, the Southern District was divided, and Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Browne was named superintendent in the eastern

division. He thus became subordinate to Brigadier-General Prevost, who had recently been promoted to the rank of major-general. Prevost employed Benjamin Springer to collect live stock and provisions for the army. Springer's agents plundered the plantations of the Loyalists and Americans without distinction, and carried part of their booty into East Florida and sold it there. Springer was a refugee from South Carolina, who had joined the royal forces in Georgia. Later he retired to East Florida.

At the end of April 1779 Major-General Prevost marched into South Carolina with a force that included the Tory regiments from East Florida. The primary object of this movement was to allure General Lincoln and his troops from Georgia, but the defenseless condition of Charleston induced Prevost to attempt the capture of that town. The enterprise proved to be a failure, the summer season became very oppressive, and detachments of the troops returned to Georgia at intervals as occasion required. The appearance of Count D'Estaing's fleet off Tybee Island and the approach of Lincoln's army, made it necessary to summon all the outlying garrisons to Savannah. The provincial regiments from East Florida were assigned to the various redoubts, and gave a good account of themselves in defending the town.

While the British and Tory troops were still in Georgia, General Clinton led the expedition from New York which captured Charleston in May 1780. A contingent was summoned from Savannah to his aid, which included most of the provincial regiments from Florida. These were dispersed, together with other troops, by Lord Cornwallis to help cover the frontiers of South Carolina and Georgia. Thus the Royal North Carolina Regiment and some of the Carolina King's Rangers were sent under Lord Rawdon to Camden, the South Carolina Royalists and other provincials under Colonel Alexander Innes to Prince's Fort on a tributary of the Tyger River, and so on.

Meantime, Superintendent Browne, with some of the Carolina King's Rangers and a considerable body of Indians, was in possession of Augusta. Thus it happened that the Tory regiments from East Florida were in various battles and skirmishes in different localities of the South in the latter part of 1780. The Royal North Carolina Regiment moved with Cornwallis and his army through North Carolina to Wilmington, where a large part of it remained with Major Craig until the evacuation of that place in November 1781. About a fourth of Colonel Hamilton's men, however, accompanied Cornwallis to Yorktown, where one hundred and fourteen of them were included in the surrender in the following month.

As the Revolutionary forces gained possession of the outlying posts in Georgia and South Carolina, the British and Tory troops and numbers of refugees withdrew to Savannah and Charleston. In June 1782 the South Carolina Royalists and the Royal North Carolina Regiment were at the Quarter House, a few miles from Charleston, while the Carolina King's Rangers were at Savannah.

At mid-June 1782 a letter was received at Savannah from General Sir Guy Carleton in New York announcing that "transports might be daily expected" to remove not only the troops and stores, but also the governor and all those Loyalists who might choose to depart with their effects. The troops evacuated Savannah on July 11. A number of the refugees, with more than two thousand of their slaves, were transported to Jamaica. About four thousand persons, white and black, were landed in Florida. With them came Superintendent Browne and his Carolina King's Rangers. While some of the Loyalists from Georgia settled in St. Augustine and helped to build a promising town on St. John's Bluff, the greater number sought habitations in the country along St. John's River, on the Mantanzas, and on Doctor's Lake, some thirty miles south of the bluff.

Only three months after the arrival of these Geor-

gians the first fleet sailed from Charleston, bringing Lieutenant-Colonel Archibald McArthur, the new commandant for the garrison at St. Augustine, the Royal North Carolina Regiment, a part of the Carolina King's Rangers, the South Carolina Royalists, the East Florida Rangers, Lieutenant John Wilson of the Engineers, and a supply of small arms, ammunition, and brass ordnance. A vessel was sent in advance to notify the authorities, and bring back the two battalions of the 60th Regiment. This was in the early part of October 1782. The provincial troops were delayed in their disembarkation at St. Augustine by stormy weather. Ships were soon landing provisions both there and at St. John's Bluff. A vessel laden with clothing for the provincials grounded on the bar at St. Augustine. Soon the surplus population of the capital was spreading out into new sections of the town, and the neighboring country for a hundred miles around was being populated by the immigrant Loyalists. In March 1784 the traveler, Johann David Schoepf, who was then in St. Augustine, noted that round about the town stood "the hastily built cabins of these poor fugitives, walled and thatched by palmetto (yucca) leaves." He also records that "within two days no less than sixteen vessels, bearing refugees and their effects, went to pieces" on the bar of the town "and many persons lost their lives." Some of the refugees settled about the mouth of St. John's River, while others went six or seven miles farther up the river and increased the population of the town of St. John's Bluff.

The October fleet from Charleston seems to have brought about nine hundred people, mostly provincial troops, though some were, according to Tonyn, substantial merchants and planters. By Christmas these South Carolinians, and the North Carolinians who had accompanied them from Charleston, were forming their settlements in the country. A few days later, that is, on December 31, the great fleet arrived from that place. The figures giving the number of passengers

brought by this fleet are twelve hundred and seventy-three whites, and sixteen hundred and fifty-three blacks.

Meanwhile, John Winniett, who was appointed by Lieutenant-Colonel Glazier commissary of refugees and signed himself "inspector of refugees," aided by a committee of four prominent Loyalists, two from South Carolina and two from Georgia, took a census of the newcomers and their negroes. This enumeration extended over the interval from July 1782 to April 20, 1783. It showed a total of five thousand and ninety whites, of whom two-thirds or more were from Carolina. It also showed a total of nearly eighty-three hundred negroes, of whom probably more than half had been brought from Georgia. The grand total was thirteen thousand, three hundred and seventy-five. Before the evacuation of Savannah the population of East Florida, according to Governor Tonyn, was about one thousand whites and three thousand negroes. Adding these four thousand to our thirteen thousand, three hundred and seventy-five, we get seventeen thousand, three hundred and seventy-five. Supplies of provisions to meet the needs of these thousands of refugees, white and black, for six months or more, were shipped to Florida in part from New York and in part from some of the island possessions of Great Britain. Appeals were made by Tonyn and other officers to General Leslie at Charleston for plantation tools. One estimate calls for tools for five thousand refugees.

At the end of February 1783 Lord Townshend sent a letter to Governor Tonyn directing him to give notice to the inhabitants of the third article of the preliminaries of peace, which provided for the cession of the province to Spain, so that they might settle their affairs and prepare to leave Florida. Early in April General Carleton wrote to Brigadier-General McArthur asking what were the intentions of the provincial troops and Loyalists. This letter was soon followed by the official instructions to prepare for the evacuation within the term of eighteen months named in the eighth

article of the treaty of peace. Tonym complained that the recent accession of nearly twelve thousand Loyalists had created general confidence among the people that Florida would remain a British possession, and had induced the refugees to build houses and clear plantations. New settlements had spread, he said, more than a hundred miles on each side of St. Augustine, great additions had been made to the town, and two villages had arisen on St. John's River, in one of which two hundred commodious houses had been built during the last six months. The governor also raised objections to the several regions proposed for the emigrants to remove to, namely, the West Indies, the Bahamas, and Nova Scotia. The provincial regiments were determined to remove to some British possession, but knew not whither to go. Among the more than two hundred who registered by May 20 the places designated for settlement were New Providence in the Bahamas, Jamaica, and England. By the end of May some of the principal inhabitants had arranged to send their wives and children to the mother country by the transports then at St. Augustine.

Meanwhile, on April 1, 1783, Major Andrew Deveaux, a refugee from South Carolina, embarked at St. Augustine with sixty-five other refugee volunteers, whom he called the Royal Foresters, in two armed brigantines, and sailed for Harbor Island. There he recruited for a few days, securing negroes principally. He thus increased his force to two hundred and twenty men, whom he was able to supply with only one hundred and fifty muskets. From Harbor Island he sailed to New Providence, captured three large galleys, landed his men at nightfall, carried the eastern fort at daylight, and four days later planted two batteries on the hills back of the main fortress in spite of Spanish shot and shell, and finally compelled the governor, Claraco y Sanz, to surrender the islands by a well directed shot at his palace. In accordance with the articles of capitulation the garrison of seven hundred men, seventy cannon, and four galleys were

sent to Havana and the governor to Spain, after which Major Deveaux occupied the palace with his own servants. This gallant exploit was performed on April 18th, just nine days after England had signed the treaty with Spain by which the Bahamas were restored to the former.

Late in June 1783 two transports sailed with their quotas of British subjects for Jamaica and New Providence, and two more sailed for England on July 9. On board the latter were not only the wives and children of the principal inhabitants, but also some prominent refugees who carried with them the memorials and schedules of their own losses as well as those of other Loyalists. The Bahamas were soon incorporated with the Southern District and placed under the command of Brigadier-General McArthur at St. Augustine, and Lieutenant John Wilson, the engineer, was sent from Florida to examine into the military state of New Providence. A committee of prospective settlers also went to view that island. A little later General Carleton directed McArthur to send the engineer back to the Bahamas with a view to finding out whether or not they were suitable for settlement by the Loyalists. Carleton had recommended to the British government that ungranted and escheated lands in the Bahamas be given to those Tories who had lost their estates through their allegiance, and would settle there.

Meantime, the inhabitants of Florida were in a fluctuating state of mind. Some people with negroes preferred Jamaica and the Windward Islands, many the Bahamas, the officers of the civil government and other gentlemen with their families were going to England; the merchants wished to take with them their stock of goods; and shipping would be needed in addition for the export of about twenty thousand barrels of tar and turpentine. All told, according to Governor Tonym, nearly ten thousand people would emigrate out of a population of about sixteen thousand.

Engineer Wilson reached Nassau in New Providence

on August 7, 1783, while Major Deveaux was residing in the government house. He found that the Bahamas were little known to the inhabitants and that only seven of the islands were occupied, the population, white and black, numbering four thousand. He reported favorably on the agricultural conditions, attributing the uncultivated state of the islands to the indolence of the inhabitants. He thought that settlers from the mainland, being more accustomed to industry, would subject the soil to a fairer test than it had had before. This favorable report, together with the references in General Carleton's letters to numbers of refugees who were leaving New York for the Bahamas, encouraged many of the Floridians to settle there. Carleton emphasized the advantages in store for such of the provincial troops as might emigrate to Nova Scotia, though they might go to the Bahamas if they preferred. When the troops should leave St. Augustine McArthur was to repair to Nassau, and assume command of the Bahamas. In an address from the members of the General Assembly and other principal inhabitants of Florida to McArthur, protest was made against the removal of the troops lest rapine and murder should result, ships and provisions were requested for those wishing to depart, and the unsuitability of the Bahamas and Nova Scotia for people with negroes was urged.

The arrival of a fleet of transports and victuellers at St. Augustine just after the presentation of this address hastened the preparation of the people for their departure. A number of the Loyalists at once applied for conveyance to the Bahamas. Among these was Superintendent Browne and a large proportion of his Carolina King's Rangers. The prevalence of banditry and horse stealing made it necessary late in October for Tonyn to form two troops of horse, and give them orders to protect the persons and property of the inhabitants from the operations of several gangs of thieves, one of these gangs being led by Daniel McGirth.

Late in October the first fleet for Nova Scotia sailed

with many of the provincial troops on board, including a part of the Carolina King's Rangers and the South Carolina Royalists. The latter received grants of land at Stormont and the former at St. Mary's Bay. Every private was given one hundred acres and every non-commissioned officer two hundred, exclusive of what the members of their families were entitled to. Only four days after the embarkation of these provincials three companies of the 37th Regiment arrived in East Florida from New York, thus affording the province an additional measure of military protection.

Special officers were appointed to conduct the evacuation. William Brown, the speaker of the Commons House of Assembly, was made commissioner of the evacuation, and kept the books or registers in which the emigrants' names were entered with their destinations and the number of their slaves. Robert Leaver was the agent of transports, and looked after the embarkation of the passengers, and on occasions forbade the carrying on board of bulky possessions which would occupy too much space. Lieutenant John Mowbray of the provincial navy was agent for the small craft, which were used for the shipment of a large part of the personal effects, and Peter Edwards, who was secretary to Governor Tonym, clerk of the crown, and clerk of the Commons House of Assembly, kept the record of the expenses incurred by the evacuation. Unfortunately we do not have the records of the agent of transports, from which to gather the data in regard to the sailing of single vessels and fleets for their different destinations. Probably no record was kept of individuals, single families, and small groups of persons who took passage on ordinary vessels leaving port, or departed in small schooners which they hired or bought for the purpose. Many left in this unofficial manner. Nor was any record kept of the actual number, chiefly people living in the back parts of Florida, who, some by water but most of them by land, took their departure for the settlements on the lower Mississippi, or the mountainous regions to

the northwestward. Governor Tonyn estimated that about four thousand people migrated by throngs in February 1784. In March, according to the traveler Schoepf, ships were "continually going out, with goods and passengers, to the West Indies or Nova Scotia." This was taking place throughout the period of the evacuation, the last ships sailing from St. Mary's River on November 19, 1785. Fleets and single transports were also departing at frequent intervals for the Bahamas, the island of Dominica, England, and "other foreign parts." The record kept by the commissioner of the evacuation gives the following list of destinations, with the numbers of whites and blacks that departed for each, together with the numbers who remained with the Spaniards:

DESTINATIONS	WHITES	BLACKS	TOTALS
To Europe	246	35	281
" Nova Scotia	725	155	880
" Jamaica and the Spanish Main	196	714	910
" Dominica	225	444	669
" the Bahama Islands	1033	2214	3247
" the States of America	462	2561	3023
" other Foreign Parts	61	217	278
With the Spaniards	450	200	650
	3398	6540	9938
TOTAL			

The commissioner adds that at the time of the peace it was supposed that about five thousand people, mostly of the black country, went over the mountains to the states and other places. The last column of totals in the above table I have added simply for comparison.

Governor Tonyn was advanced in military rank before he left Florida, being made a major-general. His governorship terminated on the arrival in June 1784 of the Spanish governor, De Zespedes, who brought with him his civil and military officers and a small body of troops. Brigadier-General McArthur had designated Captain Abbot to deliver the barracks and public buildings "in the best order" to the Spaniards, but the British government had requested Governor Tonyn to remain and administer the evacua-

tion until it was practically completed. Tonyn supplied the new governor with a general survey of the conditions in Florida, and called his attention to the plundering operations of the "banditti." In a proclamation of July 14 De Zepedes declared that the robbers must retire from the province, and extended full liberty to the British subjects still remaining to withdraw with their effects. Early in August he issued a second proclamation, a clause of which seemed to operate against negroes who had joined the British standard by invitation of some military officer, and against the numerous plundered slaves who had been brought from Charleston. This clause led to sharp correspondence between Tonyn and De Zepedes. Another source of complaint on the part of Tonyn and the British inhabitants was the immunity or protection enjoyed by banditti under the Spanish administration. Tonyn protested more than once against the repeated crimes of these thieves, especially of McGirth and his gang, who were permitted to range through the country. In fact, Tonyn told De Zepedes that he proposed to report all complaints from British subjects arising from violations of the treaty of peace, as he was under command from the Court of St. James to see to it that the provisions of the peace were duly fulfilled.

The term of eighteen months allowed for the evacuation of Florida ended on March 19, 1785. As this date drew near Tonyn realized that more time would be needed to complete the undertaking, and he wrote to Lord Sydney suggesting that application be made to the Court of Madrid for a prolongation of the term. There had been much delay in transporting quantities of personal effects by small craft down the rivers and getting them to St. Mary's, where the shipping lay. At mid-February Tonyn had sent to Governor De Zepedes an address signed by twenty-eight British subjects, mostly merchants who wanted the period of the evacuation prolonged in order to sell their goods, asking an extension of time. The

Spanish governor gave an encouraging answer, but Tonyn published an advertisement that the last transports would leave on February 20. Early in April Tonyn wrote that the transports were nearly ready to sail for the last time with their quotas of passengers for their different destinations, and that the return of four ships from the Bahamas was awaited to carry off the "gleanings." Nevertheless, transports were still going out in the following summer with laggard emigrants. At length, on July 13, Tonyn received the information from De Zespedes that he had had orders from Spain extending the term of the evacuation by four months, that is, until July 19. A fortnight after this the Spanish governor wrote again to say that on account of new excesses committed by British subjects, every one of them remaining without his permission was to depart. This order applied not only to English subjects but also to the ships and transports of their king. However, there was still to be nearly four months' delay. In August Tonyn and some of his civil officers were on board of the armed ship *Cyrus* in St. Mary's. Later on he dismissed the last division of the emigrants, and gave final orders for the transports to proceed to their several destinations. They did not get a fair wind until September 11. It carried them over only the first bar, when the wind suddenly changed, and a lost anchor perforated the bottom of the *Cyrus*. An express vessel was sent to New Providence to summon a transport, but was wrecked on the island of Abaco. However, its master succeeded in reaching Nassau and delivering his message. Two transports, the *Two Sisters* and the *Ann*, at once returned to St. Mary's. Meantime, the marine officers managed to repair the *Cyrus* in tolerable fashion, but her passengers preferred to take their chances on board the *Two Sisters*. The *Ann* also took on board emigrants and their effects, and the two vessels sailed for England. On January 11, 1786, The *Two Sisters* was at Portsmouth, whence Tonyn wrote to Lord Sydney of his safe arrival.

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