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**Kozy, Charlene Johnson**

**A HISTORY OF THE GEORGIA LOYALISTS AND THE PLANTATION PERIOD  
IN THE TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS**

*Middle Tennessee State University*

**D.A. 1983**

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A HISTORY OF THE GEORGIA LOYALISTS AND THE  
PLANTATION PERIOD IN THE TURKS  
AND CAICOS ISLANDS

Charlene Johnson Kozy

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Graduate Faculty of Middle Tennessee State University  
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for the degree Doctor of Arts

August, 1983

A HISTORY OF THE GEORGIA LOYALISTS AND THE  
PLANTATION PERIOD IN THE TURKS  
AND CAICOS ISLANDS

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## ABSTRACT

# A HISTORY OF THE GEORGIA LOYALISTS AND THE PLANTATION PERIOD IN THE TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

by Charlene Johnson Kozy

This study traces the attitudes and behavior of adherents to the British Crown in the colony of Georgia during the Revolutionary War and their experience in exile. The study is important for the unique story it tells which begins in Georgia with the war fought between Whigs and Loyalists and ends with the Loyalists' resettlement on Grand Caicos. Further, the work is especially important as a documentary record because printed documents relating to the Loyalists who settled Grand Caicos are almost non-existent.

The search for primary sources began with the few historians who have published documentary works concerning Loyalists: Lorenzo Sabine, Wilbur H. Wright, and Hugh Edward Egerton. The "Old Series" (1790-1850) of the Bahama Registry, purchased on microfilm from the Bahamian government in Nassau, includes land grants issued under George III, estate appraisals, conveyances, and wills. The Public

Charlene Johnson Kozy

Library in New York and the Public Archives in Ottawa hold manuscripts of the Commissioners of Claims' Reports made following the Revolutionary War for the British government. The manuscripts of Lydia Parrish, on deposit in the P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History at the University of Florida, yielded valuable primary material. In addition, the author personally inspected plantation ruins on Grand Caicos to correlate documented data with topography, land marks, and other geographical features.

This study found that there was a concerted effort on the part of a group of like-minded men, from similar backgrounds, tied together by common goals, to recreate a way of life which they had been forced to abandon in North America. These men are catalogued variously by origin, family, occupation, and property loss in North America. They were wealthy, predominantly high-ranking officers in the armies of the King, who had been active politically in North America and later in the Bahamas. They were, in fact, successful in building a plantation society on Grand Caicos. While the Plantation Period lasted only three decades, this study effectively adds another step to the historical process of identifying the Loyalists in exile.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author of this dissertation wishes to acknowledge the help and interest of those who made this study possible. Dr. William T. Windham, Chairman of the History Department of Middle Tennessee State University, gave initial encouragement for the work. Mrs. Frances Hunter, librarian for interlibrary loan of the Todd Library at Middle Tennessee State University, worked diligently in locating sources. The author is deeply indebted to the members of her committee: Dr. Frederick S. Rolater, Dr. Fred Colvin, Dr. James Neal, Dr. Charles W. Babb, and Dr. Mario Perez-Reilly. The author is especially appreciative of the Chairman, Dr. Frederick S. Rolater, whose kind manner and guidance helped complete the work.

The author wishes to acknowledge her friends on the Caicos Islands, Constance and Emmanuel Hall and Valerie Hamilton, for their hospitality and help on the Islands. Lastly, gratitude is extended to the author's children for accepting her absence on many occasions, to her mother, and especially to her husband, Steve, for his tolerance and long hours of proofreading this work. It is the author's hope that they will share with her the success of completing this endeavor.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the latter part of the eighteenth century, on a crescent shaped chain of islands southeast of the Bahamas, activity was at an all-time peak. The Islands known as Grand Caicos had been uninhabited for almost 275 years. Suddenly, ships were unloading supplies, tools, and animals, and plantation houses were being erected. In a very few years, a new community was created on these remote islands. The men in charge of this endeavor were former citizens of the southern colonies of British North America and were known as American Loyalists.

This dissertation is a study of these American Loyalists, approximately seventy-two families, who sought homes in the Bahama Islands after the Revolutionary War; of their clash with the Whigs in North America; of their disappointment in the Bahamian political system; and of their successful attempt to establish a plantation economy.

The poignant story of these Caicos Island planters started before the outbreak of the Revolutionary War and is best begun by recounting the events in the southern colonies, especially Georgia, between 1763 and 1783. These people chose the path of exile for various reasons.

However, they were as zealous in their beliefs as were the Patriots to the cause of revolution, and were equally willing to sacrifice lives and property for what they believed to be right and just. Although each family had its own unique problems, the decision to remain loyal to the British Crown brought them together.

They were Loyalists, yes, but loyal to what or to whom? They were loyal not only to a country or king, but to a political philosophy of an established government that provided for the needs of its people, allowing them some voice in the government. In exile, they immediately set about to right the wrongs they perceived in the Bahamian government. They appeared to be radicals but they were actually displaying the same conservative thinking to which they had been loyal in America. They had been leaders in the southern colonies and they quite naturally assumed the same position in the Bahamas. Some achieved high rank in government but were ultimately defeated by native Bahamians and "opportunistic" Loyalists.

By the late 1780s, when faced with a government unacceptable to their philosophy, they had chosen the Out Islands, Grand Caicos, as a location for a new community. Even though many of them had been military men who had fought diligently to uphold the British cause in America,

they turned their "swords into ploughshares" and went about being planters on the Caicos Islands.

Why Grand Caicos? The Turks and Caicos had an unusual political history. The inhabitants of these Islands, Turks Island being the seat of government, were conservative and had historically resisted governments which sought gain by attempting to control their shores. These families had found a place where they could create a politically conservative community. The Caicos had been uninhabited since the arrival of the Spaniards and were reported to have good soil. The setting predicted success; however, the climate, insects, and soil exhaustion drove the second generation away, leaving the islands to the African slaves they had brought with them. Because the slaves were left with few tools and almost no capital, scrubby brush and cactus soon overran the carefully tended fields and elegant homes. European family names like those in the southern North American colonies, a few chimneys, and broken walls are the legacies of this Plantation Period.

The history of displaced persons is that of discontent and a longing for "home." The American Loyalists were no exception; they, too, expressed strong sentiments to return to North America. However, few returned and the majority died in exile.



## CHAPTER I

### THE TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

The meager information available about the Turks and Caicos Islands implies a certain historical unimportance. Politically, this cannot be denied; indeed, it was sometimes difficult to identify them politically. Their importance came from a viable salt trade that was of commercial value to the early English in Bermuda and the Bahamas and their position on the strategic sea passage to Haiti and Cuba which the Spanish and French attempted to control at various times. In the late eighteenth century the English attached another importance to the Islands by using land there to satisfy claims of American Loyalists for losses in the American Revolution.

Geographically, the Turks and Caicos Islands are located in the northernmost archipelago of the West Indies which also includes the Bahamas. They are approximately 90 miles north of Haiti, 120 miles northeast of Cuba, and 575 miles southeast of Florida.

Specifically, the Turks and Caicos Islands are Grand Turk, the most populous and seat of the government;

Salt Cay, a small cay off Grand Turk; and the Caicos Islands, which are divided into five smaller clusters: South Caicos, Middle Caicos, West Caicos, North Caicos, and Providenciales (see maps 1 and 2).

The Spaniards called the islands "Las Amanas," probably a native name. Later the French called them "Les Isles Turques" which is closer to the name Turks Islands. The name originated from an abundant growth of a dwarfish species of cactus resembling a Turkish cap.<sup>1</sup> The name "Caicos" is believed to come from a native plum tree and is of Indian origin.<sup>2</sup>

The Caicos Islands are separated from Grand Turk by twenty-two miles of water known as Turks Passage. Even though it reaches a depth of 7,000 feet or more, the passage presents grave dangers to ships due to the strong currents and the coral reefs. Through the ages innumerable shipwrecks have occurred in this passage.<sup>3</sup>

A spectacular continuous coral reef surrounds the Caicos Islands and limits their access to the sea; South Caicos has the best natural harbor of the group. Areas

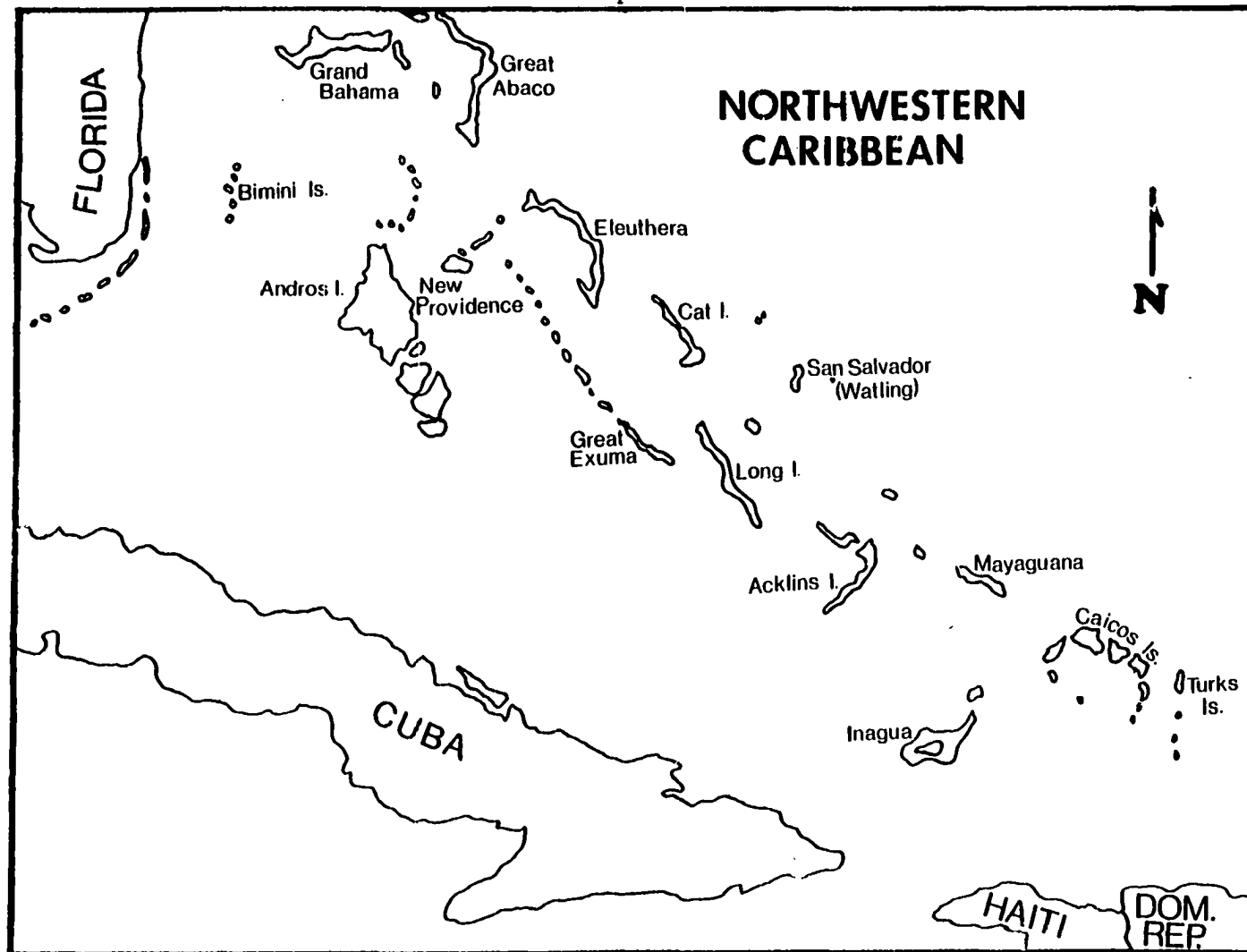
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<sup>1</sup>Daniel McKinnen, A Tour Through the British West Indies, in the Years 1802 and 1803 Giving a Particular Account of the Bahama Islands (London: J. White, 1804), p. 122.

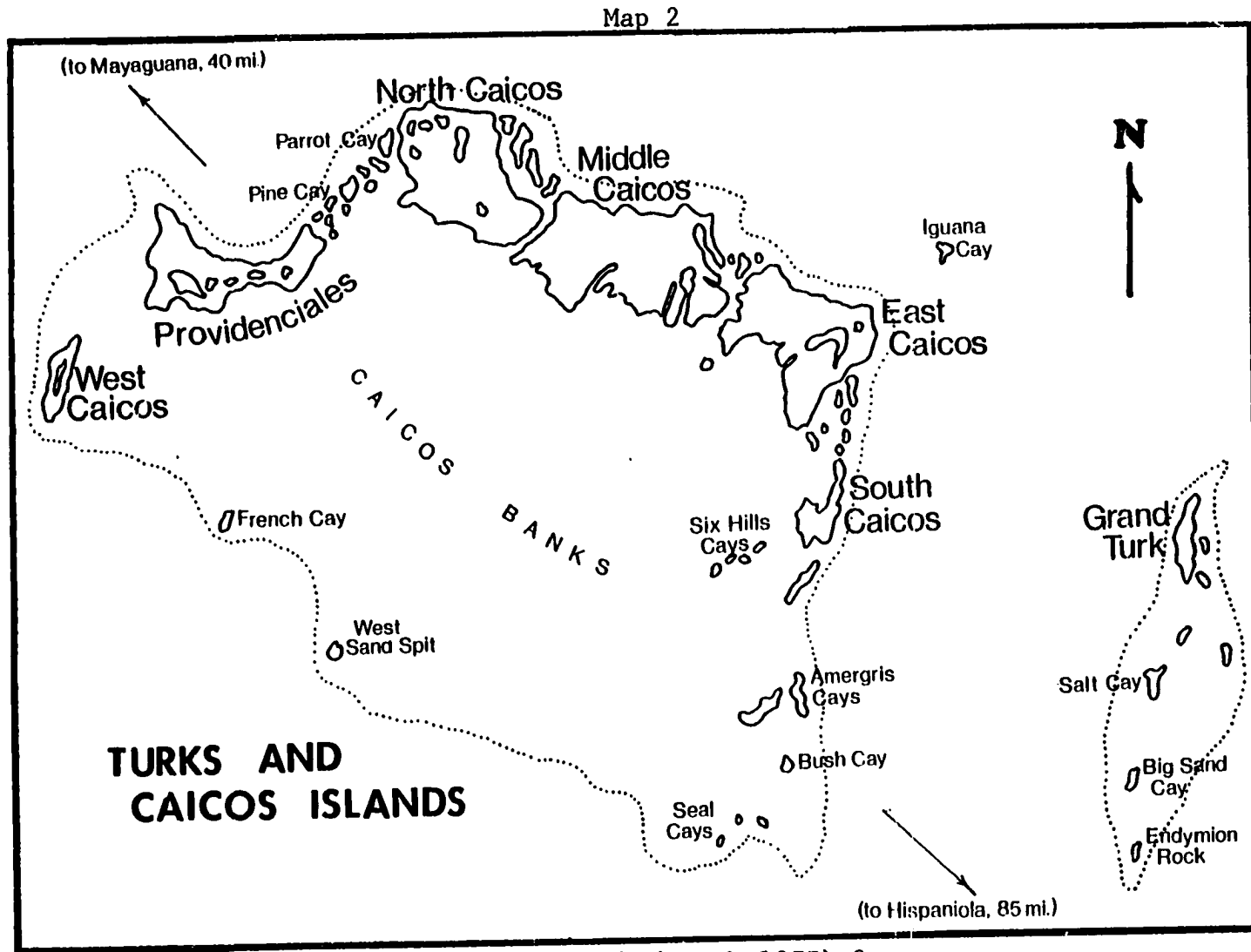
<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 130.

<sup>3</sup>Theodoor De Booy, "The Turks and Caicos Islands, B.W.I.," Geographical Review 6(1) (July 1918):44.

Map 1



Source: The World Book Atlas, 1962 ed. Map of West Indies, p. 64.



Source: Caribbean Business News 8(6) (March 1977):9.

known as "landings" are found on the other islands. These indicate a place for larger ships to anchor offshore while smaller ships take the cargo to the shore.

The large quantity of salt produced in the natural ponds has given significance to the Islands since pre-historic times. The calcareous rocks that lie in horizontal layers have been beaten by the sea to form holes allowing the ocean water to find its way inland and form salinas or salt ponds. The principal ponds lie on Grand Turk and Salt City. However, salinas are found throughout the island group. Early in the year, when dry weather comes, the salt in these natural ponds begins to crystalize and form solid cakes; the crystals are broken up and raked to shore for collection.<sup>4</sup>

A chain of hills about forty feet high runs from north to southeast on Grand Turk. The Caicos also have a higher elevation on all northern coasts where hills covered with natural grass terminate in high cliffs that drop straight to the ocean on Middle Caicos.

There is generally a shortage of water on Grand Turk. The Caicos, however, have enough rainfall, twenty-two to thirty inches annually, to provide wells and spring water the year round.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>McKinnen, A Tour, p. 123.

<sup>5</sup>Hosay Smith, A History of Turks and Caicos Islands (Hamilton, Bermuda: Published by Hosay Smith, n.d.), pp. 8, 14.

The southeast trade winds moderate the high temperatures and humidity during the summer months providing a pleasant climate. Tropical storms occasionally hit the islands, destroying property and taking lives and, in some instances, even washing away the vegetation and soil.<sup>6</sup>

The soil on the Caicos was described by Daniel McKinnen in 1802, from personal observation, as ". . . the most esteemed of any in the Bahamas. . . ." <sup>7</sup> The soil today is thin and rocky, and agriculture is of secondary importance to the economy of the islands. The shallow Caicos Bank, a triangular shoal to the south of the islands, is home for lobster, conch, and bonefish.<sup>8</sup> These banks provide easy access to an abundant supply of food.

Archaeologists have determined that a Lucayan Arawak culture existed on the island of Middle Caicos between the approximate dates of 1000 and 1500 A.D. Two types of cultures have been identified. One type was based on a trade center that reached the Arawaks of the Greater Antilles, and the other was a simpler, "traditional" Lucayan village. They appear to have been contemporaneous; the "traditional" supplied sea turtles to the elite group of the

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 17-29.

<sup>7</sup>McKinnen, A Tour, p. 131.

<sup>8</sup>Colin Rickards, "Profile of the Turks and Caicos Islands," Caribbean Business News 8(6) (March 1977):11.

trading center, which apparently exported salt as an element of exchange. Evidence recently developed on Middle Caicos (1977) revealed the presence of a planned village with a stone-lined ceremonial court in the plaza and inter-connecting roads. This fairly advanced culture prospered until the coming of the Spaniards in the late fifteenth century.<sup>9</sup>

Yucayo (Caicos) appears on the first map of the New World drawn by Juan de la Cosa (1500), along with other islands in the group, none clearly delineated. Columbus named these islands, indicating very early exploration by the Spanish.<sup>10</sup>

The Caicos Islands are also mentioned in the early records of Ponce de Leon's voyage from Puerto Rico to Florida while searching for the elusive "Fountain of Youth." Herrea, who had access to logbooks, wrote that de Leon reached the Caicos on March 9, 1513.<sup>11</sup>

The Spaniards did not make a permanent settlement in the Bahamas. After failing to find the luxuries of the East Indies, they left, taking with them the Lucayan population. Las Casas estimated that half a million Lucayans were taken

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<sup>9</sup>Shaun Sullivan, "Caribbean Archaeology," handbook prepared for research project on Middle Caicos, 1981. (Mimeographed), pp. 2-12.

<sup>10</sup>Michael Craton, A History of the Bahamas (London: Collins, 1963), p. 45.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 42.

prisoners. That was probably an exaggeration but it is reasonable to assume that about 20,000 Lucayans were taken for slave labor. Many died of disease, starvation, and general ill treatment. Lucayans frequently committed suicide and mothers sometimes killed their babies to save them from slavery. According to Peter Martyr, by 1513 only a small number of native inhabitants was left in all the Bahamas. Ponce de Leon wrote in the same year that he could find only "a single old crone" on the Islands. After that date, Spanish writers made no mention of inhabitants in the Bahamas.<sup>12</sup>

The next inhabitants of the Turks and Caicos Islands came from Bermuda. A Bermudian sea captain in a small, swift craft rediscovered Turks Islands in 1678 and reported them uninhabited.<sup>13</sup> For the next hundred years, the salt-raking on Turks and the subsequent salt trade remained the hub of Bermuda's commerce.<sup>14</sup> A small permanent settlement existed at Grand Turk while hundreds of migrant workers would come during the raking season.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 38-39.

<sup>13</sup>Joan Kennedy, Isle of Devils (London: William Collins Sons and Co., Ltd., 1971), p. 644.

<sup>14</sup>Terry Tucker, Bermuda Today and Yesterday 1503-1973 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975), p. 75.

<sup>15</sup>James H. Stark, Stark's History and Guide to the Bahama Islands (Boston: Photo-Electrotype Co., 1891), p. 170.



In 1764, Gentleman's Magazine published a description of the dismal lives of salt-rakers on Turk's Island. They lived in:

. . . little huts covered with leaves; their whole wardrobe consists of a straw hat, a check shirt, and a pair of ordinary trowzers [sic]; they have a knife in their pocket, and a kettle in their kitchen. Their food is saltpork, and now and then a turtle or guana (a sort of a large lizard) when they have time to catch them, and very often they are without bread; and yet in this way of life they enjoy health, nor ever differ about property or religion, for they have neither priest, lawyer, or physician among them.<sup>16</sup>

Trade with the British mainland colonies was extensive especially with New England where the large fisheries required much salt. Account sales of cargo shipped on American sloops include invoices of salt and sugar shipped from Turks Island to Georgia.<sup>17</sup> Gentleman's Magazine gives an account of how Americans traded with the Bermudians on Grand Turk: ". . . they pay the Bermudians in a small part in money, the rest in stinking rum, rotten pork, and musty biscuits, and now and then throw them a cask of sour water into the bargain."<sup>18</sup>

In 1701 a jurisdictional dispute between Bermuda and the Bahamas arose when the newly appointed governor of the

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<sup>16</sup>"Description of Turk's Island," Gentleman's Magazine 34 (September 1764):437.

<sup>17</sup>Jenckes Papers, 1752-78, account sales of cargoes of the sloop Three Sallys. 881, Rhode Island Historical Society Library, Providence, Rhode Island.

<sup>18</sup>"Description of Turk's Island," p. 437.

Bahamas, Elias Haskett, attempted to levy duties upon Bermudian salt-rakers in the Turks and Caicos Islands. One vessel was seized for non-payment and Haskett threatened to hang the captain saying, ". . . he would make no more to do it than to hang a dog." The Governor of Bermuda strongly protested Bahamas' right to tax islands that belonged to Bermuda and even renewed an old claim that the Bahamas should come under the jurisdiction of Bermuda. To enforce this position, letters of marque were issued to Bermudian ships "against pirates." Actually they were to prevent seizure by Bahamians.<sup>19</sup>

Bermudians further strengthened their claim by dispatching Captain Lew Middleton to the Turks and Caicos to rid the islands of Spaniards who had raided and imprisoned the inhabitants in 1710. Middleton was successful and the salt trade continued, but not without Spanish harassment both to the salt-rakers and transporting ships, requiring continuous Bermudian protection.<sup>20</sup>

In 1764, Turks and Caicos was the center of a dispute between France and England. The French violated the 1763 Treaty of Paris when Count d'Estaing occupied the Turks and Caicos Islands. The incident was settled through negotiation and d'Estaing withdrew; however, the incident

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<sup>19</sup>Craton, History of the Bahamas, p. 91.

<sup>20</sup>Stark, History and Guide, p. 160.

alerted the British to the need for protecting the Islands. That task was given to the Bahamas, nullifying Bermuda's claim to Turks and Caicos.<sup>21</sup>

Governor William Shirley of the Bahamas asserted his authority by appointing William Symmer to serve as a resident agent on the Islands. Further, because contraband trade could not be controlled, he recommended to London in 1767 that free trade with the French and Spanish be allowed in the Islands. London, protecting mercantilism, refused and ordered the royal governor to see that all Bahamian laws be observed in the Turks and Caicos.

A crisis that might have reached revolutionary proportions was prevented when the Bahamian Assembly refused Shirley's request to pass additional laws controlling trade in the Turks and Caicos. Agent Symmer had reported strong resentment to such legislation from the inhabitants who were not even represented in the Bahamian Assembly. These democratic ideals were probably not the reason for non-passage as some members of the legislature had a vested interest in the salt trade and did not want to upset that arrangement. After 1771, some legislation controlling salt-raking was passed with a moderate degree of success.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Craton, History of the Bahamas, p. 147.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., pp. 150-51.

The Turks and Caicos Islands were recognized by an Act of Parliament in 1799 as meeting the requirements for voting and holding membership in the Bahamian Assembly. Representatives were sent to the Legislature in Nassau to represent the Islands but their interest and attendance were poor.<sup>23</sup> The inhabitants of Turks and Caicos disavowed any connection with the Bahamas and refused to recognize its authority. They continued to maintain close ties with Bermuda because of the annual migration of Bermudian salt-rakers.<sup>24</sup>

Officially, Turks and Caicos Islanders remained under the jurisdiction of the Bahamian government until 1848. Then a Constitution was written which established a local President and Council. In 1874, an Annexation Act joined them to Jamaica and, when Jamaica became independent in 1962, Turks and Caicos chose to remain a British possession.

The Islands are now largely self-governing. Under a Constitution granted in 1969, a State Council was created. The British government still appoints a governor but allows larger responsibility to the partially elected Ministerial form of government.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>24</sup>Stark, History and Guide, p. 160.

<sup>25</sup>Rickards, "Profile of the Turks and Caicos Islands," p. 11. Nine of the fifteen members of the Legislature are elected.

This dissertation concentrates on the background and actual events occurring in the Islands from 1780s to 1820s. The Turks and Caicos, although far from the battlefields of the American Revolution, did not escape involvement. Before the peace was signed in 1783, a French force seized Turks and Caicos. Horatio Nelson, a young Captain in Admiral Hood's West Indies Squadron, tried unsuccessfully to retake the Islands. The Islands were returned to the British that same year in the peace treaty.<sup>26</sup> This signal event, the Treaty of Paris, 1783, would bring changes to the Turks and Caicos unlike anything before or after, changes that are often called the "Loyalist Invasion."

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<sup>26</sup>Craton, History of the Bahamas, p. 159.

## CHAPTER II

### GEORGIA: 1763-1775

Salt, the household item used in every home, was the single tie between most Georgians and the Turks and Caicos Islands in the late eighteenth century. The trading sloops brought their cargo of salt to the docks of Savannah, collected their pay and sailed away. There was no reason for any citizens of Georgia to think they would ever leave their land and take up residence on those remote salt islands in the Caribbean.

Georgia was the youngest of the colonies and, in the 1760s, quite dependent upon the mother country for frontier protection. The Treaty of Paris of 1763 had removed a major threat to Georgia's security when Spain ceded Florida to Great Britain and the French withdrew west of the Mississippi. Instead of the Spanish enemy, Georgia had two new British colonies, East Florida and West Florida, for neighbors. Meanwhile, Georgia had doubled her land available for white settlement by signing a treaty with the Creek and Cherokee Indians.<sup>1</sup> The colony's natural resources, land

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<sup>1</sup>Kenneth Coleman, The American Revolution in Georgia 1763-1789 (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1958), p. 6.

and timber, and the royal government's desire to make it available, brought greater prosperity than the Georgians had ever known. These prosperous times would not end until 1775 when the rebellion broke out.<sup>2</sup>

When the Great War for the Empire ended in 1763, England emerged as the strongest nation in Europe. It became clear that the British intended to regulate the American colonies much more closely and thoroughly than they had in the past. When the question arose as to who would pay for the costly victory, the colonists were unwilling to assume any part of the debt. They disagreed with the British argument that Parliament had the right to tax colonists along with other British subjects. This dispute over taxation, brought on by the British government's search for revenue to pay for a war, triggered the events that led to the Revolution.<sup>3</sup>

Despite the prosperous times, Georgia would not escape the unrest of the other colonies. During the next decade, the turmoil would spill into the south and engulf the citizens of Georgia. By 1775, many who had been loyal British subjects would think of themselves as Americans and act accordingly.

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<sup>2</sup>Kenneth Coleman, Colonial Georgia: A History (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976), p. 205.

<sup>3</sup>Kenneth Coleman, ed., A History of Georgia (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1977), p. 57.

In October, 1760, James Wright, born in South Carolina, became Georgia's third royal governor. Wright had served as Attorney General for twenty-one years in South Carolina. However, at the time of his appointment, he was in London acting as South Carolina's Colonial Agent. Wright governed Georgia longer than any other man. In the twenty-two years that he was governor,<sup>4</sup> he left Georgia only twice; once when he was granted a leave in 1771-1773 and again in 1776 when he was driven out by the Revolutionary government. He returned in 1779 after the British recaptured Savannah and remained there until the final evacuation in July, 1782.<sup>5</sup>

Wright saw his position as governor as being a servant of the King. The Governor placed obedience to orders from London above the needs of the people of Georgia. He did not hesitate to dissolve an uncooperative Assembly if it forgot its powers were by the grace of the King.<sup>6</sup> Wright usually worked well with the Assembly; his persuasive powers controlled the Speaker most of the time. He understood the Americans' attitude toward their rights and did nothing when

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<sup>4</sup>W. W. Abbot, The Royal Governors of Georgia 1754-1775 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1959), p. 84.

<sup>5</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup>Kenneth Coleman, "James Wright," in Georgians in Profile: Historical Essays in Honor of Ellis Merton Coulter, ed., Horace Montgomery (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1958), p. 41.



the Assembly, in response to a circular letter from the Massachusetts House of Representatives, objected to the Sugar Act of 1764 and the proposed Stamp Act.<sup>7</sup>

When the letter came from Massachusetts in August inviting delegates to come to a Congress in New York in October, 1765, to oppose the passage of the Stamp Act, Governor Wright refused to call a session. Alexander Wyllly, Speaker of the House, circumvented Wright's inaction by calling for all members of the Assembly to meet and discuss the proposal. Sixteen of the twenty-five members attended. On September 2 a reply was sent to Massachusetts expressing Georgia's concern and support for any action the Congress decided to take. The reason they gave for not sending delegates was that the Assembly was in recess. When the Assembly officially met in October, it thanked Wyllly for the way the matter had been handled. Wright made no mention of any of this in his letters to the Board of Trade and said nothing to the Assembly.<sup>8</sup>

The Stamp Act was scheduled to go into effect throughout the Americas on the first of November, 1765. Its Georgia opponents took advantage of a day of celebration on October 25, the anniversary of George III's ascension to the throne, to parade about the streets with an effigy of a

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>8</sup>Abbot, Royal Governors, p. 108.

stamp collector. Neither stamps nor distributor arrived on time, and a similar parade was held on November 5, Guy Fawkes' Day. During this time McHenry's Tavern was chosen as a meeting place to plan a greeting for the delayed stamp distributor. The protesting group called themselves the "Sons of Liberty."<sup>9</sup>

It was January 3, 1766, before the distributor arrived in Georgia. No business requiring stamps had been conducted and no ships had been allowed to clear Savannah's harbor during this time. When word of threats to destroy the stamps reached Wright, he promptly moved the stamps to the Ranger's guard house for safe keeping. He personally stayed there to protect the stamps, claiming he "did not have his clothes off for four days."<sup>10</sup>

Public opinion against the stamps was so strong that the only stamps sold were to sixty vessels in the harbor. After receiving another threat in January, Wright sent the remaining stamps out of the colony in February, 1766.<sup>11</sup>

Parliament repealed the Stamp Act on March 5, 1766. The fact that there had been no loss of property and no loss of favor with the King pleased Wright and the Assembly. Wright blamed the troubles in Georgia on the lack of

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<sup>9</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, p. 19.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 20-21.

<sup>11</sup>Coleman, "James Wright," p. 48.

enforcement in South Carolina. The governor of South Carolina had allowed ships to clear port with only a statement that no stamps were available.

After the Stamp Act crisis, Wright made a determined effort to win over the Liberty faction. He spoke with its leaders about the consequences of mob rule. They assured him that rebellion against established authority would not happen again.<sup>12</sup>

In reaction to the Stamp Act crisis and the Quartering Act of 1765, the Liberty Party was now capable of challenging Wright's authority. Governor Wright asked the Assembly to comply with the Act which would make the colonies assist in the garrisoning and supplying of British troops in America. After the Assembly did not answer for three weeks, Wright pressured the body. They informed him that they could not cooperate because to do so would violate the wishes of their constituency as well as set a dangerous precedent.<sup>13</sup>

The Liberty Party grew in strength until it finally dominated the Assembly after 1768. It was simply the party of revolution evolving at a much slower pace than similar parties in the northern colonies. Georgia was still dependent on Britain for protection of its frontiers and,

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<sup>12</sup>Abbot, Royal Governors, pp. 126-27.

<sup>13</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, p. 23.

even though the Assembly would usurp Governor Wright's authority, it was slow to offend the King or Parliament.<sup>14</sup>

A most important pre-Revolution conflict arose in 1767 after the passage of the Townshend Acts, which were import duties on a list of commodities, including tea. Again, Massachusetts took the lead and sent another circular letter urging unity in opposing Parliament's right to tax the colonies.

Alexander Wyllie, the Speaker of the Commons House, responded to the letter. He wrote that the Assembly could take no further action until it met in November, but Georgia's agent, Benjamin Franklin, was instructed to work for the repeal of the Townshend Act. London, upon hearing of the letter, instructed Governor Wright to disapprove Wyllie should he be elected Speaker of the next Commons House.

When the Commons met in November, Wright warned the Assembly that, if the circular were considered, he would dissolve the body according to his instructions. Disregarding the warning, Speaker Wyllie presented the circular, and it was approved. A notice of this approval was sent to Massachusetts. Holding to his strong-executive view of government, Wright dissolved the Assembly in December, 1768.

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<sup>14</sup>Abbot, Royal Governors, pp. 129-30.

Executive and Legislative branches were hopelessly deadlocked.<sup>15</sup>

Although it was not until the summer of 1774 that the members of the Liberty Party were clearly identified, the House Journals plainly indicated the earlier leaders. William Ewen was one of the early leaders and would become the first president of the Georgia Council of Safety.<sup>16</sup>

The situation between the Commons House and the Governor continued to worsen, and, after several requests, Governor Wright was granted leave. He sailed for England in 1771. His old friend, James Habersham, served as Acting Governor in his absence. Habersham continued the practice of dissolving uncooperative Assemblies and thus no improvement occurred in the relationship between the two branches.<sup>17</sup>

James Wright returned in 1773 as Sir James Wright, a title given by the King during his stay in England. Georgia, unlike the other colonies, was quiet. The Governor and the Assembly were more compatible and no real protests of British policies were made.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, pp. 28-29.

<sup>16</sup>Abbot, Royal Governors, p. 131.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 156.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 158.

In the spring of 1774, after the passage of the "Intolerable Acts," petitions and protests broke out throughout the colonies. A meeting was held at Tondee's Tavern in Savannah, July 14, to consider issues at hand; later meetings of the same nature were held on July 27 and August 10.

The meeting of August 10 was of special significance. It had been scheduled for August to allow representatives from distant parishes time to travel to Savannah. Wright protested the meeting, but he was not successful in preventing it. Every parish sent representatives. The eight resolutions adopted expressed Georgia's first revolutionary sentiments.

The delegates at Savannah discussed the matter of sending delegates to the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia. A motion to send delegates was brought to the floor twice and defeated both times. A letter from St. John's Parish claimed that a group from Savannah was present and voted without legal standing, causing the defeat of the motion. At any rate, the decision not to send delegates to the First Continental Congress was made by the people of Georgia without interference from Governor Wright.<sup>19</sup>

Fighting between the colonists and the British began on May 10, 1775, in New England. The Liberty Boys, playing

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<sup>19</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, pp. 42-44.

up the bloodshed, moved to win the Georgia citizenry to the Revolutionary cause and to gain control of the Georgia government.

The colonists circulated a report that the British government planned to arm the slaves and encourage rebellion. Also, an official letter by Wright, which was highly critical of the meetings of the Liberty faction in Georgia, was published in South Carolina.

The war of words turned into pranks, then violence, and finally force. Guns placed along the river bank were spiked and rolled down the bluff in an effort to spoil the salute planned for the celebration of the King's birthday. A guard standing watch at a seized ship was tarred and feathered, and then thrown in the river. A mob armed with bayonets appeared in the streets following the celebration of the King's birthday and warned all new visitors in Savannah to leave the city within a week.

Joseph Habersham led a constant harassment of Governor Wright and his supporters. His group, known as the "Savannah Mob," consisted of both rowdies and young men from leading families. Its activities climaxed in June when the members stole an estimated six tons of gunpowder from an English cargo ship moored in the harbor. The gunpowder was divided among South Carolina and Georgia Patriots.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Abbot, Royal Governors, p. 175.

On July 4, 1775, a provincial congress met and elected Archibald Bulloch as president. Aided by the Committee of Correspondence and later by the Council of Safety, this Congress actually ruled the colony. Although Wright remained in Georgia for six more months, he had lost control. Joseph Habersham had ordered his arrest on January 18, 1776, but he escaped and fled to England in February of the same year.<sup>21</sup>

The activities of the Sons of Liberty were not confined to Savannah. They had been active elsewhere during the Stamp Act Congress crisis. After Governor Wright's departure they stepped up their activities.

The backcountry, or the northeastern part of Georgia, was not nearly as concerned about "taxation without representation" as was the lowcountry, or the part around Savannah. Indeed, the backcountry had little representation in the Georgia Assembly. The Liberty faction of the lowcountry took measures to secure revolutionary support of the backcountry.

The Provincial Congress adopted the "Association" in July, 1775. The adoption was a pledge to wage war against the Crown and, importantly, to treat non-signers as enemies. In keeping with the Association, the Liberty Boys set out to

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 178.



control the backcountry, and Thomas Brown would become a prime target.<sup>22</sup>

Thomas Brown emigrated from Britain in 1774, bringing with him seventy-four indentured servants. He established a 5,600 acre plantation located in the north-eastern part of Georgia, a part of the recently ceded Creek and Cherokee land. His operation showed so much promise that he ordered another seventy-five indentured servants to be sent to him in the fall of 1775, evidence that Brown hoped to become a permanent Georgia planter.<sup>23</sup>

According to James Gordon, Brown's partner in a land scheme, Brown "being Young and Active and Violent against the Rebel Measures, used to attend their Meetings and oppose their measures." Gordon said he had the same sentiments but did not declare them with "the same warmth."<sup>24</sup> Brown was eventually visited by the zealous Liberty Boys. According to his own description, "upwards of One-Hundred Men" came and urged him to sign the Association. When he refused, most of the men left, but those who remained threatened to arrest him if he would not sign. Brown resisted and

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<sup>22</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, p. 61.

<sup>23</sup>Gary Olson, "Loyalists and the American Revolution: Thomas Brown and the South Carolina Backcountry 1775-1776," South Carolina Historical Magazine 68 (October 1961):201-02.

<sup>24</sup>Wallace Brown, The King's Friends (Providence, Rhode Island: Brown University Press, 1965), p. 245.

attempted to arm himself until a blow to the head with a rifle ended his resistance. The Rebels dragged him five miles from his home, tied him to a tree, and "applied burning torches . . . to the soles of his feet." They tarred and feathered him and paraded him around the countryside. He was partially scalped and lost several of his toes. After he signed a statement that he had "repented of his past conduct," he was given a horse and allowed to escape.<sup>25</sup>

The mistreatment of Thomas Brown brought to the Loyalists one of their ablest leaders, a man who would repay the Georgia Sons of Liberty in full measure. Brown fled to East Florida where he organized the Florida Rangers from Loyalists and Indians. He was as responsible as any single individual for the savage partisan fighting in the South.<sup>26</sup> In the next two years the Patriots would be in control of Georgia and there would be vicious fighting.

James Habersham, a prominent Georgian, wrote to a friend in London in 1775 accurately predicting the state of affairs to come in Georgia. He wrote:

. . . I would not choose to live here any longer than we are in a state of proper subordination to, and under the protection of Great Britain. . . . However, I do wish that a permanent line of government was drawn and pursued by the mother and her children . . . otherwise,

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<sup>25</sup>Olson, "Loyalists and the American Revolution," p. 207.

<sup>26</sup>Coleman, ed., A History of Georgia, p. 76.

I cannot think of the event but with horror and grief.  
 Father against son, and son against father, and the  
 nearest relations and friends combating with each other!  
 I may perhaps say the truth, cutting each other's  
 throats.

Habersham left Georgia shortly after writing the letter and died at New Brunswick, August, 1775. His three sons became active in the Revolutionary cause.<sup>27</sup>

Habersham's prediction came true in Georgia. Many families were divided by the struggle. Noble Jones, a resident of Georgia since its founding, never relinquished his allegiance to the Crown until his death in 1775. However, his son, Dr. Noble Wymberly Jones, was an early and consistent supporter of the Patriot's cause and the second provincial congress, elected him as a delegate to the Second Continental Congress in 1775.<sup>28</sup> Alexander Wyllly was associated with the Liberty Party all through the 1760s. His brother Richard, a lawyer, was a Whig and served on a committee for Colonial Government in 1778. However, Alexander joined his sons William and Alexander Campbell Wyllly as a Loyalist, and suffered the indignities and property losses the allegiance cost.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Lorenzo Sabine, Biographical Sketches of the Loyalists of the American Revolution with an Historical Essay, 2 vols. (Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, Inc., 1966), 1:504.

<sup>28</sup> Abbot, Royal Governors, pp. 131-32.

<sup>29</sup> Allen Candler, ed., The Revolutionary Records of the State of Georgia, 3 vols. (Atlanta: The Franklin-Turner Co., 1908), 1:326, 520.

CHAPTER III

THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR IN  
GEORGIA: 1776-1778

After Governor Wright's departure in 1776, Georgia quickly moved to give credence to the fledgling government organized in 1775. On April 15, 1776, the provincial congress issued Georgia's first temporary state constitution. It was known as the Rules and Regulation of 1776<sup>1</sup> and it stated that governmental powers originated with the people and that government existed for their benefit. It was a brief, thirteen paragraph document that contained only a broad outline for the government and left the details to be filled by the Council of Safety.<sup>2</sup>

The able Archibald Bulloch was elected President and Commander-in-Chief. Some of his first considerations were for the militia, continued protection of the frontiers from Indian attacks, and economic interests of trade and

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<sup>1</sup>Coleman, ed., Georgia, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, p. 77.

manufacturing. Provision was made to watch "non-Associates and other enemies of American liberty."<sup>3</sup>

The Council of Safety certainly augmented the principles laid down concerning governmental power. They often altered appropriations made by the provincial congress, and their idea of justice was to rearrest those of doubtful loyalty whom the courts had freed. Slaves, abandoned by fleeing Loyalists, were used for construction of civil and military installations. The Council felt no guilt in preying on British shipping through letters of marque to privateers.<sup>4</sup>

Even though Georgia did not send delegates to the First Continental Congress, she was represented at the Second Continental Congress. Of the original five delegates sent, John Joachim Zubly left in disagreement and returned to Georgia when talk of independence began. He was among the first Loyalists to be banished and to have his property confiscated. Only three delegates signed the Declaration of Independence: Button Gwinnett, a merchant, who had emigrated from England in 1765; Lyman Hall, Connecticut-born and fiercely partisan; and George Walton, a twenty-seven year old, native-born Georgia lawyer.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>4</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, p. 78.

<sup>5</sup>Ellis Merton Coulter, Georgia A Short History (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1947), pp. 130-31.

Even though a copy of the Declaration did not reach Georgia until August 8, 1776, a celebration was still the order of the day. Four readings were made: to the council first, to a group on the public square, and twice at the "liberty pole" where a thirteen-gun salute was fired. The celebration was topped off that night by a funeral in effigy for George III.<sup>6</sup>

In the summer of 1776, President Bulloch called for a convention or congress to be held. At this congress a new constitution was considered and adopted on February 5, 1777, without being submitted to the voters.<sup>7</sup>

The Revolutionary movement was hampered considerably by in-house quarreling and political factions. The Liberty Party in Georgia had as members liberals from the rural areas and conservatives from the urban areas. Lachlan McIntosh, a conservative, and Button Gwinnett, a liberal, were classic examples of the polarization. Both men desired the command of the Georgia Battalion. When McIntosh was elected in September, 1776, it appeared that Gwinnett deliberately set out to embarrass him. Through an intercepted letter from Governor Patrick Tonyn of East Florida, Gwinnett charged a Tory connection between George McIntosh, Lachlan's brother, and the Loyalists from East Florida.

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<sup>6</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, p. 79.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 80. During the Revolution, only the Massachusetts Constitution was submitted to the voters.

Consequently, George McIntosh was arrested. Later he was released because there was insufficient evidence against him.<sup>8</sup>

When Lachlan McIntosh called Gwinnett "a Scoundrell and Lying Rascal," Gwinnett challenged McIntosh to a duel. The confrontation took place outside Savannah in a meadow that previously had belonged to Governor Wright. Gwinnett was mortally wounded and died twelve days later.<sup>9</sup>

After Gwinnett's death, Lyman Hall attempted to have McIntosh indicted for murder. George Walton intervened and tried to bring peace to the new government by requesting help from George Washington. In response, Lachlan McIntosh was transferred and assigned duty in the Alleghenies.

Partisan quarreling continued. Another duel was fought, this one between George Wells and James Jackson. Jackson was wounded in both knees, and Wells was killed.<sup>10</sup> Despite the factions, the legislature continued to deal with the matters at hand, including the court system, trade, land grants, and legal ways to regulate and control the expulsion of "enemies of the state" and to dispose of their property.

Although some Loyalists were expelled as early as 1777, the Council did not pass an Act until March 1, 1778;

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>10</sup>Harold H. Martin, Georgia: A Bicentennial History (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1977), p. 52.

this Act of Attainder listed 177 citizens and declared them "guilty of high treason" and allowed confiscation of their property.<sup>11</sup> These citizens were ". . . banished from this State forever . . . if they returned after 60 days they would be jailed." Alexander Wylly, John McDonald, Thomas Brown, and John Martin were among those listed.<sup>12</sup> A second Act of Attainder was passed in May, 1782, listing William Wylly, A. Campbell Wylly, John M. Tattnall, and Alexander McLean among the banished.<sup>13</sup>

Records of confiscated lands being sold show heavy losses for the Wylly family. A house and lot in Savannah that belonged to both William and Alexander Campbell Wylly was sold to Jacob Reed; Thomas Washington bought a lot in Savannah that had belonged to William Wylly; Mordecai Sheftall, a prominent Jewish merchant, bought 150 acres of land that had belonged to Alexander C. Wylly; and James Habersham, son of the elder James Habersham, bought 1,000 acres that had belonged to Alexander C. Wylly. Other Loyalists also lost large amounts of property. John Martin lost a total of 6,032 acres of land by confiscation. John McIntosh had 2,450 acres sold through confiscation. Alexander McLean's 500 acre plantation was sold. Eleven

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<sup>11</sup>Coleman, ed., Georgia, pp. 75-76.

<sup>12</sup>Candler, ed., Revolutionary Records of Georgia, 1:326.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 1:376, 378, 386.



Negroes belonging to John M. Tattnall were sold, but no mention of land was made.<sup>14</sup>

This Act of Attainder was designed to dishonor these citizens and it served as a bond far beyond the shores of Georgia. With the exception of John M. Tattnall, these men took up arms and achieved officer rank in the war waged from East Florida against the Whigs in Georgia. All of them later qualified for compensation from the British government in the form of money and the land grants in the Bahama Islands. By the late 1790s these and others will be found building new plantations in the most southeastern islands of the Bahamas, the Turks and Caicos.

It was a common practice to confiscate property for the refusal to take an oath of allegiance to the Revolutionary cause. John Joachim Zubly was called upon to take the oath of allegiance in the fall of 1777. He declined and became indignant at the demand. He argued that, "if a man cannot preserve liberty and property, without taking an oath . . . all decency is at an end." Further, he claimed, the requirement of two witnesses to an oath was an insult to Swearer and the witness. Zubly agreed to take an oath of allegiance to Georgia alone, but not to other states. After refusing to take an oath, he was banished and his

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 1:420, 430, 427, 428, 476, 500, 530, 603, 664.

property confiscated in 1778.<sup>15</sup> Many Georgians were known to take the oath to save their lands. Indeed, some took oaths to both sides and carried on a profitable trade with the British in East Florida and the provincial Georgia government.<sup>16</sup>

The Revolutionary War in Georgia was unlike that in any of the other colonies. It was not a formal war where decisive battles like Saratoga were fought or winters at Valley Forge endured. Instead, a bloody, brutal, civil war ensued. Small bands of men would clash briefly and then run away, leaving prisoners to be hanged on the spot or turned over to the Indians to be scalped or disemboweled. The term "Tory" had a hateful meaning that was erased only with time. The war in Georgia in many cases was motivated by vengeance for some private wrong, either real or imagined and not for the "unalienable rights of men."<sup>17</sup>

As in any civil war, each side had a position that could be defended. One such example occurred in South Carolina following the abuse of Thomas Brown. After the infamous visit by the Liberty Boys, Brown sought refuge in the upcountry of South Carolina where he joined Loyalists

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<sup>15</sup>Reba Carolyn Strickland, Religion and the State in Georgia in the Eighteenth Century (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), p. 145.

<sup>16</sup>Brown, King's Friends, p. 240.

<sup>17</sup>Martin, Georgia, pp. 49-50.

Patrick and Robert Cunningham, Thomas Fletchall, and Moses Kirkland in rallying armed support for the King's cause.

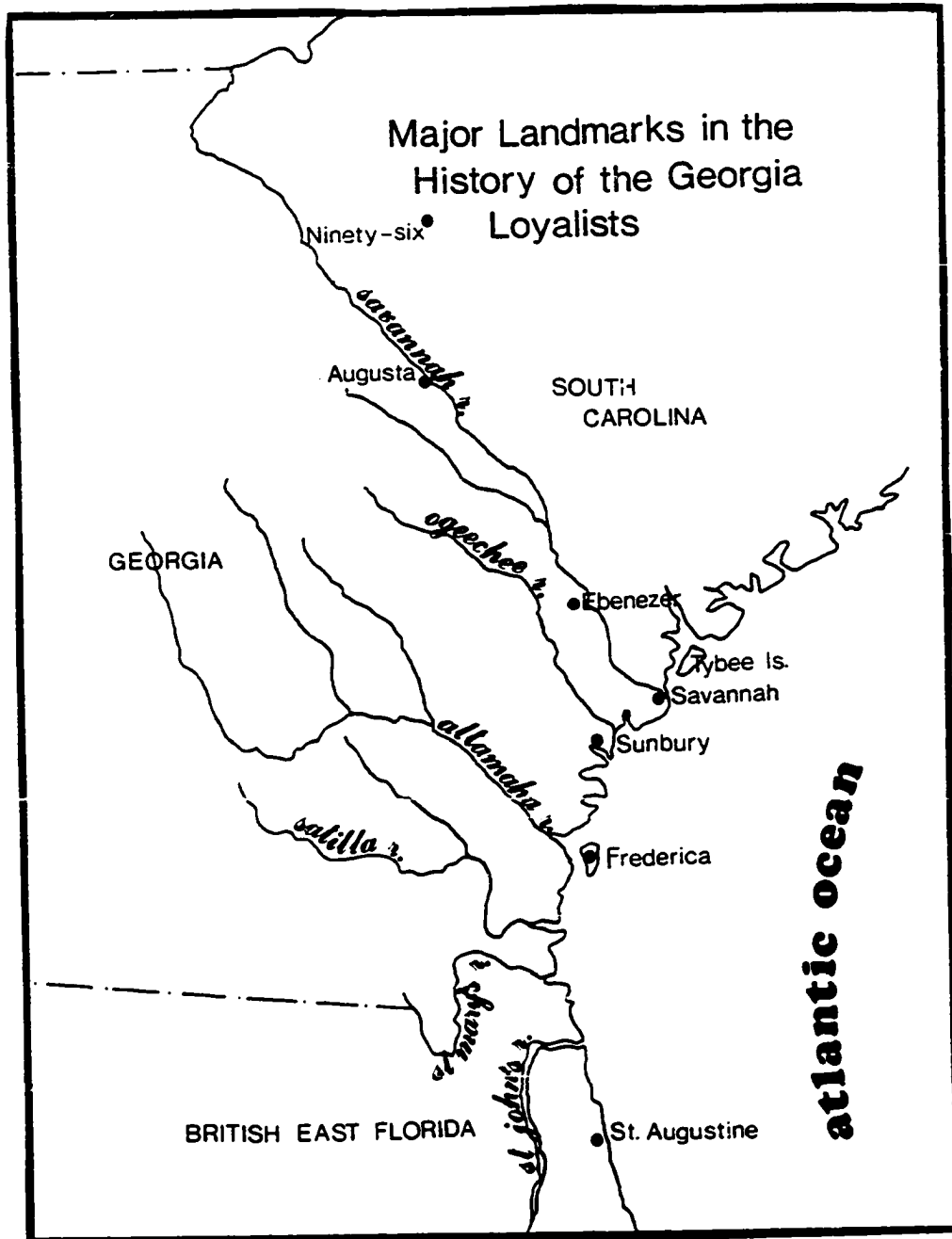
To counter this movement, the Patriots sent two clergymen, William Tennent and Oliver Hart, along with William Drayton to try to win the people to the Revolutionary cause. When the armed Loyalists would not disperse, Drayton mustered support from the South Carolina militia and broke up the Loyalist group. Consequently, a treaty was drawn up at Ninety-Six (a town and district in South Carolina) on September 16, 1775, stating that the non-Associators would not support British troops at any time or give "offense to the Revolutionaries." On the other hand, if any non-Associators were molested, without the consent of Congress, the molestors would be punished. Drayton reported to the Council of Safety that he had a successful mission.<sup>18</sup>

In a letter to Governor Lord William Campbell of South Carolina, Thomas Brown gave his Loyalist view of what happened. According to Brown, the "armed supporters" had gathered to protect themselves and the "security of our friends" against a band of "the most notorious horse thieves in the province." The Patriots had been ordered, according to Brown, to "rifle houses, break locks and seize papers of those who opposed the Designs of Congress," and to take into

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<sup>18</sup>James H. O'Donnell, "A Loyalist View of the Drayton-Tennent-Hart Mission to the Upcountry," South Carolina Historical Magazine 67 (January 1966):16-17.

Map 3



custody any who refused to sign the Association. Brown told of an intercepted letter from Drayton to Colonel Richardson that had ordered a Colonel Thomas "to burn the houses and destroy the Plantations of all the Non-subscribing Absentees."

Brown, Robert Cunningham, and Fletchall had rallied approximately 2,700 men to resist this movement. Overwhelmed, Drayton had sent a message asking the leaders, Brown, Fletchall, and Cunningham to surrender, and promised to release all others involved.<sup>19</sup>

Brown's response eloquently extolled the cause of liberty and the desire for peace, but he explained that to surrender would be dishonorable. Drayton then asked for a conference. It was considered unwise for all three men to go, so Fletchall was sent as a representative. Brown alleged that Fletchall had been drinking on the way and was intoxicated when he signed the Articles prescribed by Drayton. Brown assured Campbell that, even though the people felt betrayed by Fletchall's action, they had not lost confidence in Cunningham and himself. He also requested ammunition and instructions from the Governor.<sup>20</sup>

Thomas Brown and Robert Cunningham were taken into custody by the Council of Safety following this incident.

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., pp. 18-21.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., pp. 23-26.

Brown was released after interrogation, but Cunningham was trapped by his answer concerning his commitment to the Treaty of Ninety-Six. Cunningham described the agreement as "false and disgraceful." He was arrested and taken to Charleston for trial.<sup>21</sup>

Angered by his brother's arrest, Patrick Cunningham raised a body of men to rescue him from the Whigs. The rescue attempt failed, but 1,000 pounds of gunpowder, on its way to the Cherokee Indians as a "gift" from the Whigs, was captured. The Loyalists exploited the "gift" and spread the fear of an Indian attack.<sup>22</sup>

More importantly, the Loyalists gained the support of the Council of Safety's agent to the Cherokee, Richard Pearis. Pearis defected to the Loyalists and made an affidavit that the Council was indeed planning to use Cherokee Indians against Loyalists. Historians consider his statement questionable, but it seemed to rally support.

A bloody three-day skirmish erupted when the Whigs sent Major Andrew Williamson with 550 men to recover the gunpowder. He was met by Patrick Cunningham with 2,000 men. A twenty-one day truce was declared which allowed the Whigs to raise an additional 4,000 men. The Loyalists suffered a

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<sup>21</sup>Robert McCluer Calhoon, The Loyalist in Revolutionary America 1760-1781 (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1973), p. 457.

<sup>22</sup>O'Donnell, "A Loyalist View," p. 15.

major defeat and many were arrested. All were later released except for Robert Cunningham and Richard Pearis.

Robert Cunningham and Richard Pearis remained in custody until June, 1776.<sup>23</sup> After their release, they continued their support of the Crown and received compensation at the conclusion of the war. After the war they joined their comrades-in-arms from Georgia in the far-away Turks and Caicos Islands. Interestingly, both the Georgia Gazette and the Bahama Gazette carried notice of the marriage of Richard Pearis, Jr., and Margaret Cunningham, daughter of Brigadier General Robert Cunningham on July 22, 1790.<sup>24</sup>

The partisan skirmishes forced Thomas Brown to leave South Carolina. The South Carolina Provincial Congress had issued a warrant for his arrest so he fled to East Florida to find a base for his operations until the British retook Georgia.<sup>25</sup>

Governor Patrick Tonyn of East Florida welcomed Brown. The leadership of these two men provided protection

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<sup>23</sup>Calhoon, Loyalist in Revolution, p. 457.

<sup>24</sup>Lydia Austin Parrish, "Records of Some Southern Loyalists Being a Collection of Manuscripts About Some Eighty Families Most of Whom Immigrated to the Bahamas During and After the American Revolution" (typed manuscript in Widener Library, Harvard University: microfilm copy in P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida, collected from 1940 to 1953), p. 421. Hereinafter cited as Parrish MSS.

<sup>25</sup>O'Donnell, "A Loyalist View," p. 27.

for Florida from Georgia Whigs. In the spring of 1776, Sir Henry Clinton planned an expedition to regain control of the southern colonies for the British. At Tonyn's suggestion, Clinton gave permission for Brown to raise two to four companies of men to aid in this campaign. In April, 1776, Brown, with about twenty men and several horseloads of ammunition, set out through the Indian country to try to reach the Loyalists in South Carolina. Two events caused the plan to fail. First, the Creeks were reluctant to allow so much ammunition to pass through their territory. Second, Sir Henry Clinton's poorly executed attack on Charleston failed. Although Brown and Clinton failed, the events served to show Brown's ability. Governor Tonyn instructed Brown to recruit a regiment of mounted rangers in East Florida to assist in the defense of the colony. Early in 1777, Brown and his East Florida Rangers were stationed on the border of East Florida and Georgia.<sup>26</sup>

The Rangers were made up of approximately 2,000 men. They were poorly trained and ill-equipped, but they compensated for these inadequacies with a burning desire for vengeance. They were Georgians who had been driven from their homes by the Whigs. Their contribution was twofold: they were able, with their knowledge of the geography, to

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<sup>26</sup>Gary Olson, "Thomas Brown, Loyalist Partisan, and the Revolutionary War in Georgia, 1777-1782," Georgia Historical Quarterly 54(1) (Spring and Summer 1970):1-2.



plunder the border areas in cattle raids that supplied food for themselves and others in East Florida, and they fought diligently to prevent the capture of St. Augustine by the Whigs.<sup>27</sup>

In the three years the Whigs controlled Georgia, January 1776-December, 1778, one expedition a year was made against East Florida. No one of the three lasted over six weeks and each was successful only in igniting retaliatory raids of the Florida Rangers. This caused much suffering for the citizens of lower Georgia.<sup>28</sup>

The major cause of failure of these expeditions was in the partisan quarrelling of the Georgia Whigs. Disputes over timing of the expeditions (the hot, summer months) and the lack of cooperation between officers commanding the expeditions were the two major problems. In contrast, Governor Tonyn of East Florida proved to be an able leader who would utilize his new-found army of Brown's Rangers.<sup>29</sup>

The first invasion of St. Augustine attempted by the Continental troops was under the command of Robert Howe and William Moultrie, aided by the Georgia militia under General Charles Lee. They marched off in August, 1776, and returned

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<sup>27</sup>Harvey H. Jackson, Lachlan McIntosh and the Politics of Revolutionary Georgia (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1979), p. 39.

<sup>28</sup>Martin, Georgia, pp. 49-50.

<sup>29</sup>Coulter, Georgia: A Short History, p. 134.

before the end of September. Lack of provisions and the summer season doomed this expedition.<sup>30</sup> (See Chart 1.)

The second invasion came at the time of the Gwinnett-McIntosh clash in the spring of 1777. Gwinnett, newly elected President and Commander-in-Chief, tried to prove himself a capable military man and hero to his fellow Georgians. He did not include McIntosh in his early plans. Continental Commander Robert Howe would not order troops from South Carolina to assist because Gwinnett and Howe could not agree on the order of command. This ill-fated expedition set out in April of 1777 without the Continental troops. Colonel John Baker was to go by land and Colonel Samuel Elbert would go by sea. The timing was uncoordinated and they were forced to fight separately. Brown's Rangers met Baker. Reportedly, one-half of Baker's men fled without firing their guns. Elbert aborted his mission due to scarcity of provisions and low troop morale. The troops were back in Savannah in June, 1777.

This second invasion precipitated retaliatory raiding parties led by Thomas Brown. Governor Tonyn of East Florida reported that Brown's Rangers were once within five miles of Savannah. The Georgia militia was rarely able to provide much opposition to the Rangers. The Georgians were

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 135.

## CHART 1

ATTEMPTED INVASIONS OF EAST FLORIDA BY  
GEORGIA MILITIA AND CONTINENTAL  
TROOPS 1776-1778

Expedition and Date	Patriot Leaders	Reasons for Failure
First: September 1776	General Charles Lee Georgia Militia  Continental Generals Robert Howe and William Moultrie	Sickness of troops; hot weather; insufficient trans- portation; hostilities of Cherokees; lack of cooperation between Lee and civilian authority.
Second: April 1777	Georgia President Button Gwinnett  Continental Commander of Georgia Troops Lachlan McIntosh  Colonel Samuel Elbert Georgia Militia  Colonel John Baker Georgia Militia	Lack of cooperation between Gwinnett and McIntosh; short pro- visions; sickness of troops; disgust of troops.
Third: June 1778	Georgia Governor John Houstoun  Continental General Robert Howe  Colonel Andrew Williamson South Carolina Militia  Continental Commander of South Carolina Troops Charles C. Pickney	Dispute over order of command between Howe, Houstoun, and Williamson; Howe abandoned the expedition.

beginning to fear a full-scale invasion from East Florida.<sup>31</sup>

John Houstoun became the governor of Georgia after Gwinnett's death in May of 1777. After a conference with General Howe it was decided to attempt another invasion of East Florida. The invasion force was formed with Continentals from South Carolina, led by Colonel Charles C. Pickney, the Georgia Continentals under Colonel Samuel Elbert, and state militia from both states led by Governor Houstoun and Colonel Andrew Williamson from South Carolina. This effort came the closest of the three to succeeding. Williamson and Houstoun, at one point, had Brown and his Rangers surrounded. Brown came so close to being captured that he lost his coat.<sup>32</sup> However, any chance for success was lost because of quarreling in the ranks. Confusion in command led Howe to ask, and receive, approval for the Continental troops to return to Savannah. The Georgia and South Carolina militia followed. All of them were back in Savannah by the last of July, 1778.<sup>33</sup>

These expeditions had been plagued with problems that created a tragic border war-game by the Georgia troops

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<sup>31</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, pp. 102-104.

<sup>32</sup>Olson, "Thomas Brown," Part I, pp. 9-10.

<sup>33</sup>Charles C. Jones, Jr., The History of Georgia, 2 vols. (New York: The Riverside Press, 1883; reprint ed., Spartanburg, S.C.: The Reprint Co., 1965), 2:268-69.

and provided many successes for the vengeful Brown and his Florida Rangers. When the British returned to Georgia in December of 1778, Brown would move the same type of warfare to the backcountry near Augusta.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE BRITISH RETURN TO GEORGIA AND THE AFTERMATH: 1778-1782

Former Georgia Governor Sir James Wright had not been idle in his exile. Both he and former Governor Lord William Campbell of South Carolina had agitated for a British invasion of the South since 1776. In August, 1777, they presented a memorial expressing their beliefs that a large number of Loyalists and Indians were merely waiting for support to assert themselves against the Whigs. Governor Tonyn and exiled Loyalists in Florida also encouraged a conquest. Thomas Brown's intelligence reports were favorable for internal support. Consequently, a "Most Secret" letter from the British government dated March 1, 1778, was delivered to Sir Henry Clinton. This letter named Clinton Commander-in-Chief in America and outlined plans for military operations in the South.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, pp. 116-17. This change in command was also closely related to Sir William Howe's loss of the Philadelphia area to the Americans.

Clinton sent Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell from New York to Georgia to lead the invasion. Campbell's army contained between 2,500 and 3,500 British, German, and Loyalist troops. He was given instructions to take Savannah and then to "pursue such other measures . . . prudent and expedient for the purpose of reducing the neighboring provinces." To assist Clinton, General Augustine Prevost, Commander at St. Augustine, was to march "all troops of every kind" from St. Augustine and wait at St. Mary's River to support Campbell. Once British rule was restored in the South, it was hoped that the other colonies in rebellion would capitulate.

As planned, Campbell's fleet arrived off Savannah, December 23, 1778. Campbell landed troops below Savannah without opposition and, surprisingly, captured the city the following day.<sup>2</sup>

Even though the Whigs were outnumbered, a proper defense might have saved the city. As Continental Commander Robert Howe and Governor John Houstoun did not coordinate their defense, they not only were defeated, but the casualties were tragic: 450 Whigs were captured and 100 were killed or drowned trying to escape. The British lost only seven killed and nineteen wounded.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Coleman, Colonial Georgia, p. 288.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 289.

While awaiting General Prevost's arrival from East Florida, Colonel Campbell and Commodore Hyde Parker issued a proclamation that gave full pardon for past disloyalty if an oath to the King were taken. On January 17, Prevost relieved Campbell of military command in Savannah. Then Campbell, with a 1,000 man force aided by Brown's Rangers, proceeded to Augusta, which was considered a strategic city. Its capture would give encouragement and protection to loyal subjects in the backcountry of Georgia and the Carolinas.<sup>4</sup>

Augusta was captured January 31, 1779. Brown, who had been wounded in a skirmish along the way, garrisoned his troops there. Campbell, meanwhile, penetrated the back-country to secure oaths and to incite insurrections. After two weeks of effort, Campbell "thought it expedient" to fall back to Savannah because the Whigs not the Loyalists were gaining in strength.<sup>5</sup>

Campbell's efforts were not all in vain; he did secure some munitions and about fourteen hundred men submitted and allowed themselves to be formed into a royal militia. However, the expedition revealed that Loyalist eagerness to assist in reclaiming Georgia for the royal government was false.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Olson, "Thomas Brown," Part I, pp. 12-13.

<sup>5</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, p. 122.

<sup>6</sup>Olson, "Thomas Brown," Part I, pp. 12-13.



There are several good reasons for this lack of support by the Loyalists. First, the more zealous Loyalists had left Georgia in 1776 either by choice or force; second, the remaining Loyalists had adjusted to the Whig government over three years and did not desire new upheavals; and, third, most Loyalists simply feared the wrath of the Whigs if the British did not remain in Georgia. Several Loyalist leaders had been executed for treason and rebellion after the British left in 1775.<sup>7</sup>

Through the spring and summer of 1779, neither the Whigs nor the Loyalists were strong enough to make a serious attack on the other. However, there were continuous minor raids back and forth from the Loyalist controlled Savannah area and the Whig controlled upcountry.<sup>8</sup>

Thomas Brown and the East Florida Rangers were operating in Georgia. The British regulars had often been critical of Brown and even perhaps a bit jealous of this irregular and his ill-behaved Rangers having rank and prestige. Therefore, since the primary purpose of their existence was to provide defense for East Florida and since that need had been eliminated, Lord George Germain, English Secretary of State for the American department, instructed Governor Tonyn to place them on the same level with all

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<sup>7</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, p. 123; Olson, Thomas Brown," Part I, p. 13.

<sup>8</sup>Coleman, Colonial Georgia, p. 293.

other provincial corps or disband them. The Rangers apparently refused to accept this reorganization because, at the end of June, 1779, the Florida Rangers were disbanded.

Brown then formed a new corps called the King's Carolina Rangers. This new corps initially had thirty-two enlisted men and fourteen commissioned and non-commissioned officers, but by October, 1779, its ranks had grown to only fifty-two men and officers. The ranks were considerably less than the 2,000 that comprised Brown's first regiment in 1777.

General Prevost, previously critical of Brown and his Florida Rangers, now recommended that they be confirmed. He justified his decision by stating that "he is entitled to it by his zeal and Service." Later, Prevost was to comment that "the new Rangers have very decent appearance and they behave well." The new Rangers wore uniforms of short green coats with crimson collars and cuffs and plain lapels.<sup>9</sup>

Governor Wright had returned from exile in London to resume his duties in Georgia in the summer of 1779. He was alarmed at the condition of the colony. The military under Prevost had done little to establish a civil government or to prevent looting and misconduct by the British troops. And, most alarming, he found that Georgia was not as militarily secure as had been thought.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Olson, "Thomas Brown," Part I, pp. 14-15.

<sup>10</sup>Calhoon, Loyalist in America, pp. 474-75.

Embarrassed by the loss of Savannah to the British in 1778, the Americans, aided by the French, attempted to retake the city in the fall of 1779. At the request of Governor John Rutledge of North Carolina, the French agreed that Count d'Estaing would provide naval support. D'Estaing, with twenty-two vessels and about 4,000 troops, arrived off the coast of Savannah on September 1, 1779. American General Benjamin Lincoln assembled his troops at Ebenezer to assist in the siege.<sup>11</sup>

The British were unprepared. They had only twenty-three cannons mounted and only one hundred men ready for action. D'Estaing boldly sailed up the Savannah River and demanded that the city surrender. British commander Prevost outwitted d'Estaing by asking for a twenty-four hour truce before he gave an answer. D'Estaing granted the truce without consulting with General Lincoln.

Taking full advantage of this truce, the British began defense measures. Negro labor was used to strip the guns from the war vessels on the river, ships were sunk in the river above and below the city to block the French fleet, and troops were summoned from outlying posts. Lieutenant-Colonel Cruger arrived with a detachment from Sunbury; Colonel John Maitland brought 800 men from Beaufort; General Oliver De Lancey's 2nd Battalion of New York

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<sup>11</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, p. 128.

Volunteers answered the call; the Carolina Light Horse, a company of Hessians under Colonel Maitland's command, joined Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Brown's King's Rangers and Major Wright's corps.<sup>12</sup>

The determined d'Estaing led three attacks in his attempt to take the city, but he failed each time. The casualties were high for the one and one-half hours of fighting<sup>13</sup>; estimates range from 700 to 1,800 French and Americans as killed or wounded. Among the wounded was Count d'Estaing, and the famous Polish Count Pulaski was killed. The British losses were one captain and fifteen privates killed, and thirty-five wounded. The French requested a truce to bury their dead and to care for their wounded. The truce was agreed to until three o'clock and then extended until dark.

About a week later the French wearily moved away by sea and the Americans retreated into safe territory in South Carolina.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Charles C. Jones, Jr., The History of Georgia, 2: 282-87.

<sup>13</sup>Martin, Georgia, p. 55.

<sup>14</sup>Franklin B. Hough, ed., The Siege of Savannah by the Combined American and French Forces Under the Command of General Lincoln and the Count d'Estaing in the Autumn of 1779 (Athens: The University of Georgia Libraries, 1866; reprint ed., Spartanburg, South Carolina: The Reprint Company, Publishers, 1975), pp. 42-43.

Undoubtedly, Savannah would have fallen if d'Estaing had stormed the city upon arrival. The British took full advantage of d'Estaing's overconfidence and, even though the Americans never gave up the idea of recapturing Savannah, the city would remain under British control until the final evacuation in 1782.

Celebrations were held in Savannah and St. Augustine in honor of the successful defense of Savannah.<sup>15</sup> It is highly likely that Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Brown of the King's Rangers and Lieutenant-Colonel Stephen De Lancey of the 2nd Battalion of New York Volunteers<sup>16</sup> talked about the siege and the aid given by the reinforcement troops from New York. However, it is highly unlikely that the two men even considered their common future as exiled planters in the Turks and Caicos Islands. Throughout the war, they were to remain in the Crown's service, De Lancey as Lieutenant-Colonel of the New Jersey Volunteers<sup>17</sup> and Thomas Brown as Commander of the King's Rangers. Following the war, each received land as compensation in the Bahamas.

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<sup>15</sup>Coleman, *Revolution in Georgia*, p. 129.

<sup>16</sup>Orderly Book of the Three Battalions of Loyalists Commanded by Brigadier-General Oliver De Lancey 1776-1778, originally published as Volume III, John Divine Jones Fund Series (New York: New York Historical Society, 1917; reprint ed., Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1972, p. 17.

<sup>17</sup>Sabine, Biographical Sketches, 1:371.

Sir James Wright set about following his instructions from London for reestablishment of civil government. The instructions ordered him to call an Assembly, to indemnify Loyalists for their losses, and to try to raise revenue to contribute to the cost of the war. Wright's task was formidable. He did succeed in expediting the election of an Assembly in April, 1780. However, its members represented only the coastal area.

The bitterness between the Loyalists and the Whigs on the battlefield continued in the legislature. Each side denounced the other side as traitors, and both declared that private property was a spoil to be seized by the government in power. The first Assembly that Wright called remained in session from May 9 through July 10. It took political rights from 151 persons who held public office under the Continental government. In April, 1781, a bill listed 112 (many on the list of 151) as guilty of high treason and confiscated their properties. Twenty-four individuals who had held civil or military offices under the state government were on the list. The Act was subject to royal approval and there is no record of an approval or of the Act being enforced.<sup>18</sup>

Although the British officially held Georgia, Governor Wright was insecure and rightfully so. Whig forces

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<sup>18</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, pp. 148-53.

were so evident that it was sometimes unsafe for the British to venture too far from Savannah. In August, 1780, it was reported that "noted rebels boldly appeared in Savannah" defying royal authority. Wright did not have more than 500 soldiers in Savannah and only 240 were garrisoned at Augusta. If the Whigs had not been so busy with their own problems, they easily could have retaken Georgia. Georgia Governor Wright asked for additional troops on several occasions but was turned down each time.<sup>19</sup>

The war of attrition continued in Georgia. The raiding irregulars as well as the regular Commanders were a part of it. General Lincoln's surrender of Charleston to Clinton in May, 1780, precipitated a premature uprising of the Loyalists in the Carolinas that proved tragic; the insurrection was brutally quashed. In August, 1780, following the complete rout of American General Horatio Gates at Camden, Cornwallis ordered that all deserters be hanged (changing sides was not at all uncommon). An even stronger dispatch from Cornwallis ordered officers to "punish the inhabitants . . . for their late breach of paroles and perfidious revolt," and urged them to "strike terror into the inhabitants."<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Jones, History of Georgia, 2:426-27.

<sup>20</sup> Olson, "Thomas Brown," part II, pp. 189-90.

Thomas Brown, while in Augusta, took an active part in this brutal warfare and did irreparable damage to his reputation. In keeping with Cornwallis' order regarding "deserters," five were captured, including a seventeen-year-old boy, and were hanged. In another instance, Whig commander Elijah Clark left wounded men behind, believing they would be cared for. Brown, wounded, ordered thirteen of the Whig prisoners brought to the house where he was recovering and ordered them hanged in a stairwell. Tradition has it that the thirteen represented the thirteen colonies.<sup>21</sup>

The beginning of the end for the British in Georgia came in the spring of 1781 when Colonel Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee attacked Augusta. After facing cannon fired directly into the British fort, Thomas Brown surrendered. Brown and his Rangers were heavily guarded both to prevent escape and to protect them from vengeful citizens and soliders. Brown's comrade, Colonel Grierson, and his soldiers did not fare as well. The soldiers reportedly suffered every "species of abuse and insult." Grierson was murdered. Brown, in the safety of night, was taken from Augusta down the Savannah River to Savannah. A prisoner exchange at Savannah freed Brown, and he resumed command of the King's Rangers in the defense of Savannah.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Coleman, Colonial Georgia, pp. 299-300.

<sup>22</sup>Olson, "Thomas Brown," Part II, pp. 193-94.



During the Augusta campaign, Colonel Henry Lee made the following report to Nathanael Greene concerning the revolutionary leadership in Georgia. "They exceed the Goths and Vandals in further[ing] schemes of plunder, murder & iniqu[i]ty. All this under pretence of supporting the the virtuous cause of America."<sup>23</sup>

Brown's surrender at Augusta ended any resistance to the Whigs in the backcountry. Savannah's population swelled with fleeing Loyalists. Their presence made the problem of provisions critical and jeopardized the city's defense. Governor Wright continued to apprise the British government of the conditions and repeatedly asked for troops. By 1781 the British government was tiring of the war. Troops and supplies were not sent. Surprisingly, the Whigs failed to capture Savannah in the fall of 1781. Brigadier General Anthony Wayne had counted on Whig support that did not come. He was successful only in keeping the British confined to the Savannah area.<sup>24</sup>

The war became increasingly unpopular in England. Sir Guy Carleton replaced Clinton in March, 1782, and preliminaries for peace negotiations began in April, 1782. All offensive operations had stopped and in May, 1782,

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<sup>23</sup>Edward J. Cashin, Jr., and Heard Robertson, Augusta and the American Revolution: Events in the Georgia Back Country 1773-1783 (Darien, Georgia: The Ashantilly Press, 1975), p. 59.

<sup>24</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, p. 142.

orders arrived to evacuate all British troops and Loyalists from the three remaining garrisons in the South:

Charleston, Savannah, and St. Augustine. Pleas from Governor Wright that the British keep Georgia in the peace settlement were of no avail. Plans were modified, however, to evacuate Charleston and Savannah first and leave St. Augustine as a temporary asylum for Loyalists. In his reply to the unhappy Loyalists in Savannah and Charleston, Carleton said that evacuation was "not a matter of choice, but of necessity, in consequence of an unsuccessful war." The last British transport left Savannah on July 11, 1782.<sup>25</sup> Thomas Brown's Rangers, true to their audacious style, stayed in the Savannah area until July 31 before going overland to St. Augustine.<sup>26</sup>

General Anthony Wayne was given command in Georgia and soon reinstated American authority. Care was taken not to destroy the city in the evacuation. Tybee Island was used as a temporary place for refugees to camp before leaving America.<sup>27</sup>

The British government promised transportation for the Loyalists to other points in the Empire. Unfortunately, the troops were the first evacuated, and there was not

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<sup>25</sup>Olson, "Thomas Brown," Part II, p. 196.

<sup>26</sup>Coleman, Revolution in Georgia, p. 144.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

sufficient room on the transport ships for many of the other refugees. Some had to travel overland to St. Augustine.<sup>28</sup>

It is difficult to determine the exact numbers of refugees that left Georgia. General Wayne estimated 6,000 persons, black and white, were waiting for transport ships. Governor Wright requested transportation to Jamaica for 2,000 Negroes, and General Carleton stated that ten families with 1,568 Negroes went to Jamaica. A report from General Leslie said that 1,042 whites and 1,956 Negroes were in East Florida. Therefore, Wayne's estimates appear realistic. The number of claims filed by Loyalists is of little value in estimating the number of exiles because every Loyalist was not a claimant. Evidently, more than 6,000 persons left Savannah in the summer of 1782 as exiles.<sup>29</sup>

In the peace negotiations, the treatment of the Loyalists was the most difficult item to resolve. It was felt that the British government should, if possible, obtain restitution for persons who had lost property and had not been banished. The Americans, Benjamin Franklin as spokesman, argued that the Confederation had no such power, but it was willing to recommend to the several States that they pay indemnities. England capitulated even though arguments made by Franklin seemed hollow.

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 145.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

On November 29, 1782, commissioners from America and Britain met for a final agreement. The American commissioners agreed that there would be no future confiscation of property or prosecution of Loyalists, and that Congress would recommend to the several states and their legislatures that amnesty and restitution of their property should be given to them.

As a result of the negotiations the Loyalists were deprived of amnesty and restoration of property by the Confederation. The recommendation by Congress to the States to grant amnesty and restore property sanctioned the claims of the Loyalists, but Congress also claimed that there was no power to enforce the recommendation. Therefore, fulfillment of the Treaty was left to the States where the Loyalists had been found guilty of treason and banished. England had clearly sacrificed the interests of the Loyalists to end the war.<sup>28</sup>

An attempt to mitigate this wrong was made by the British government by negotiating for a delay in the final evacuation of East Florida. This delay of almost three years provided a temporary asylum for the exiled Loyalists.

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<sup>28</sup>Egerton Ryerson, The Loyalists of America and Their Times 1620-1816, 2 vols., 2nd ed. (New York: Haskell House Publishers, Ltd., 1970), 2:54-60.

## CHAPTER V

### EAST FLORIDA TO THE BAHAMAS: 1782-1785

East Florida was a haven for persecuted Loyalists as early as 1775. Following instructions from the Earl of Dartmouth on November 1, 1775, Governor Patrick Tonyn of East Florida issued a proclamation inviting Loyalists to come to East Florida. Posters promising free land were placed in public places in Charleston and Savannah.<sup>1</sup> The land was available because large tracts, previously authorized by the government, had not been occupied, which had been a stipulation of the earlier grants. Governor Tonyn attempted to recover those unoccupied lands and to open them to immigrants who could not or did not desire to purchase Florida lands.<sup>2</sup>

Between 1775-1785, the population of Florida had fluctuated with the alternating victories of Whigs and

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<sup>1</sup>Wilbur H. Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, 1774-1775: The Most Important Documents Pertaining Thereto, Edited with an Accompanying Narrative, 2 vols. (Deland, Florida: Florida State Historical Society, 1929), 1:23-24.

<sup>2</sup>Lietch Wright, Jr., Florida in the American Revolution (Gainesville: The University Presses of Florida, 1975), p. 103.

Loyalists in the southern provinces. Loyalists left Georgia in the summer of 1775 and in early 1776 when the Whigs gained control of the government and Governor James Wright was arrested. When British authority was restored in December, 1778, they returned, hoping to recover their properties and stations in the province. The largest number of Loyalists immigrated to East Florida in 1782 after General Sir Guy Carleton postponed the British evacuation of East Florida.

The future of the Floridas was not clearly decided in the minds of the British. The interest in retaining Florida was linked primarily with the plight of the Loyalists. The thinly populated Floridas and perhaps Louisiana seemed likely places for a permanent refuge. When Lord Dunmore returned to America in 1781 he had expected to resume his Virginia governorship but was stopped in Charleston by Cornwallis' surrender. Encouraged by John Cruden, who was in charge of captured rebel property, Dunmore proposed that trained Negro units, joined by white Loyalists and a few British regulars, could capture West Florida and Louisiana. John Morison, who had drilled sepoys in India, suggested black "sepoys" as an army that could unite the Carolinas, Georgia, and East Florida into one large British colony. The Americans, preferring Britain's control of the Gulf Coast to Spain's, secretly encouraged the British. The Spaniards soon knew the plans were being

discussed and made it clear that they expected the treaty of 1782 to be honored, giving Spain both East Florida and West Florida; an exchange of Gibraltar for the Floridas had been considered but pressure to conclude the peace led the British to forego a colony on the Gulf Coast.<sup>3</sup>

In the meantime, Carleton had appointed General Alexander Leslie to be in charge of the evacuation of Charleston and Savannah in July and August of 1782. Savannah was crowded with Loyalists from the outlying parts of Georgia. Their families had joined them because of the promise of transportation to other parts of the empire. General Anthony Wayne, the American in command of Savannah, reported several thousand Loyalists were camped on Cockspur and Tybee Islands as early as June, 1782, waiting to leave Georgia. The weather was hot and the water on Tybee was contaminated. Many died before the embarkation in July.<sup>4</sup>

The evacuation was not a pleasant or even a safe experience. Among the refugees was Elizabeth Lichtenstein Johnston of Savannah, who had married Captain William Johnston of the Third Loyal American Regiment. Mrs. Johnston's Recollections, written in 1836, is regarded as typical of the experiences of many emigrants. Captain and Mrs. Johnston went from Savannah to Charleston with the

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 117-20.

<sup>4</sup>Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, p. 106.

military. When Charleston was evacuated, Mrs. Johnston and her children took passage to St. Augustine to join her father-in-law, Dr. Lewis Johnston, and his family. She related that she "saw many vessels lying stranded along the shore that had been wrecked on the sand bar." She reported that no lives had been lost at the time of her own landing although "much of the poor Loyalists' property was destroyed."<sup>5</sup>

Governor Tonyn welcomed the refugees in spite of the shortage of accommodations in St. Augustine. A report made by General Leslie on July 18, 1783, numbered the refugees who arrived at St. Augustine from Georgia as 1,042 whites and 2,998 blacks. This more than doubled the previous white population there and increased the black population by one-fourth.<sup>6</sup> The supplies brought from Georgia were soon consumed and, by November, rations were issued to the refugees. It was apparent that they had to become self-sufficient. Land was available on the St. John's River so Thomas Brown began to organize the distribution.<sup>7</sup>

The Loyalists were slow to accept the idea that Great Britain would relinquish East Florida. An association

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<sup>5</sup>Elizabeth Lichtenstein Johnston, Recollections of a Georgia Loyalist, ed. Rev. Arthur Wentworth Eaton (New York: M. F. Mansfield and Co.; reprinted, 1972), p. 210.

<sup>6</sup>Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, p. 106.

<sup>7</sup>Lockey, East Florida, pp. 157-58.



was organized to consult with the Spanish ambassador in London about that possibility. The Spanish offered almost the same terms to the British subjects in 1783 that the British had offered to the Spanish subjects in 1763; they could keep their property and take an oath of allegiance to the new country. The one difference was that the British settlers would not be granted religious freedom, but would have to become Catholic. Protestant Loyalists could not accept the loss of religious freedom and lobbied for an article allowing freedom of worship.

Another hope for the Loyalists was that Britain might exchange Gibraltar for Florida; these negotiations continued after 1783. It soon became evident, however, that they must leave Florida or become Spanish subjects.<sup>8</sup>

The Loyalists' concern for their future and dissatisfaction with the conditions in East Florida was apparent by early 1783. William Wylly of the Carolina King's Rangers left Florida for England in May, 1783, to solicit aid from the British government for his regiment.<sup>9</sup> In September, 1783, a group of Loyalists signed a petition asking support from civil government. They complained of "frequent Robberys, Burglarys and thefts that have lately

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<sup>8</sup>Wright, Florida in the American Revolution, pp. 123-24.

<sup>9</sup>Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, p. 144.

been committed." Georgians John M. Tattnall and John Martin were among the petitioners.<sup>10</sup>

In July, 1783, Lieutenant John Wilson, the acting engineer at St. Augustine, had been ordered by Carleton to go to the Bahamas to make a general survey of the Islands. Wilson went to Nassau and prepared a report based on records there. Seven Islands were listed as occupied: New Providence, Eleuthera, Harbor Island, Cat Island, Exuma, Long Island, and Turks Island. His report did not entirely differentiate between black and white inhabitants and gave the total population as about four thousand.

Wilson explained that the number of inhabitants on Turks Island could not be accurately determined. The population fluctuated because inhabitants from Bermuda came for the salt-raking season in February. He did mention that there were 29 total taxable (meaning free heads of households), 20 slaves, and 18 capable of carrying arms (meaning males above 15 years old). A military company was kept on Turks by order of the governor. The Caicos Islands, usually grouped with the Turks Islands, was not mentioned in the report.<sup>11</sup> This suggests that there were no inhabitants on Caicos at this time and helps substantiate the belief

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<sup>10</sup>Lockey, East Florida, pp. 157-58.

<sup>11</sup>Stark, History and Guide, p. 170.

that the Caicos had not been inhabited since the arrival of the Spaniards in the sixteenth century.

Wilson returned to East Florida and made his initial report on September 7. Some Loyalists were reluctant to go to the Bahamas and Wilson made a second trip to prepare a more comprehensive report.

The new information was more reassuring than in the first report. Wilson admitted that the Islands were rocky and the surface rough, but reported that the three kinds of soil existing there would be adaptable to the growth of cotton, vegetables, and guineacorn. Wilson described a black, reddish-gray soil, a red soil in valleys which appeared to be of a calcareous nature, and black soil on the higher areas. He maintained that the soil had not been tested because the present inhabitants were indolent and did not bother to clear and properly cultivate the land.<sup>12</sup>

On September 12, 1783, a fleet of British transports arrived at St. Augustine. Two days later a number of inhabitants applied for transportation to the Bahamas. Among those were Thomas Brown, recently appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs for East Florida, and at least sixteen of the King's Rangers. Some of the North Carolina and South Carolina regiments applied for transportation; Lieutenant-Colonel John Hamilton of the North Carolina

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 172-73.

regiment was among them. The decision for the military to leave East Florida this early was without doubt inspired by the promise that they might choose lands on the less populous islands.<sup>13</sup> Records are not available concerning the processing of these applications, but Siebert states it is highly probable that transportation was supplied for all those desiring it.<sup>14</sup>

On December 4, 1783, Lord North advised Governor Tonyn that British subjects in East Florida must capitulate to the Treaty. Lord North emphasized in his letter the concern of the British government for "those unfortunate people." The government considered the Bahamas and the West Indies as first choice for resettlement because the climate resembled that of the southern United States and the islands were sparsely populated. These conditions made possible the best adjustment to their former lives. Lord North further stated that land would be given in proportion to their former possessions and their ability to cultivate it. The Loyalists were assured that "every possible attention would be paid to their situation, wherever they may fix upon for their destination and . . . to leave it to the option of

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<sup>13</sup>Robert S. Lambert, "The Flight of Georgia Loyalists," The Georgia Review 17(4) (Winter 1963):442.

<sup>14</sup>Wilbur H. Siebert, The Legacy of the American Revolution to the British West Indies and Bahamas. A Chapter Out of the History of the American Loyalists (Ohio State University Bulletin, 8(27). Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1913), p. 19.

those who wish to withdraw." The British government promised conveyance ". . . with their Families and movable Effects to any of His Majestys Possessions, either in Europe, America, or the West Indies. . . ." Provisions had already been sent to the Bahama Islands and would be sent to the other West Indies according to the number choosing to go.

Lord North reminded Tonyn that, by the fifth article in the treaty, eighteen months, with an extension if necessary, were allowed for the Loyalists to sell their estates and leave Florida. Four thousand tons of shipping had been ordered to St. Augustine for that purpose.<sup>15</sup>

Lord North's letter was a result of careful thought and planning by the British government. Guy Carleton, Commander-in-Chief in North America, had been concerned about the large numbers of Loyalists moving to Canada and had recommended to the British government that lands in the Bahamas be offered to the southern Loyalists because of the similar climate. Lieutenant Wilson's survey verified the availability of the lands and the capability of the soil for extensive agricultural development. Therefore, in September, 1783, a royal proclamation stated intentions of the government to purchase the lands in the Bahamas from the

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<sup>15</sup> Joseph Byrne Lockey, East Florida: 1783-1785. A File of Documents Assembled and Many of Them Translated (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1949), pp. 178-79.

Proprietors and gave instructions to Lieutenant-Governor John Powell how to issue those lands. Those instructions were as follows:

To every head of a family, forty acres and to every white or black man, woman or child in a family, twenty acres, at an annual quit rent of 2s. [shilling] per hundred acres. But in the case of the Loyalist refugees from the Continent, such lands are to be delivered free of charges, and are to be exempted from the burdens of the quit rents for ten years from the making of the grant.<sup>16</sup>

Governor Tonnyn wrote to Governor John Maxwell of the Bahamas in May, 1784, asking for protection for the incoming Loyalists.<sup>17</sup> Transport ships began to leave St. Augustine in April, 1784, and continued until November, 1785. A total of twenty-seven ships left St. Augustine carrying refugees and their properties to different parts of the British Empire. Sixteen of those transports sailed to the Bahamas. The last ship, Cyrus, departed November 13, 1785, with Governor Tonnyn.<sup>18</sup>

The evacuation was delayed chiefly because the Loyalists wanted to avoid property loss. Merchants wanted more time to dispose of their goods, scattered and distant plantations presented transportation problems to St. Augustine, and there was little market for their goods since

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<sup>16</sup>Craton, History of the Bahamas, p. 163.

<sup>17</sup>Lockey, East Florida, p. 694.

<sup>18</sup>Carole W. Troxler, "Loyalist Refugees and the British Evacuation of East Florida," Florida Historical Quarterly 60(1) (July 1981):24-25.

the only Spaniards in the province were civil government and military personnel. Also, restrictions were placed on sales. July 18, 1785, was the last day for public auction and before that date sales were conditional in case East Florida should be restored to Great Britain. Consequently, the amount of personal property to be shipped was far greater than any former estimate. After the Spanish government refused to purchase church pews and bells and a fire engine, Governor Tonyn shipped them to the Bahamas.<sup>19</sup>

The new Spanish Governor, Vizente Manuel de Zespedes, arrived in St. Augustine on June 26, 1784, and officially took possession of East Florida for Spain on July 12, 1784. For more than a year, Governor Tonyn and Zespedes ruled jointly. It was apparently a fairly smooth transition. A ball was given by the British when the Spanish took control. Zespedes even allowed Tonyn to raise two troops of men, mostly from the residual of Brown's Rangers, to patrol the frontiers.<sup>20</sup>

Thomas Brown went to the Bahamas with some of his Rangers in 1783 but apparently returned to East Florida soon thereafter. A bond of friendship and mutual esteem developed between Zespedes and Brown. The wives and children of both families were equally congenial. When the

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<sup>19</sup>Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, pp. 171-72.

<sup>20</sup>Wright, Florida in the American Revolution, pp. 135-36.

Brown family prepared for their final departure from St. Mary's harbor in July, 1785, Antonio de Zespedes, son of the Governor, ran away from home to be with them. Young Antonio played his guitar and sang for the young women in the group. Brown returned the young man to his parents in August accompanied by a note begging leniency from his father.<sup>21</sup> Brown wrote to Governor Zespedes from St. Mary's July 10, 1785, thanking him for his friendship and favors and expressing regrets of leaving St. Augustine. Zespedes' reply of July 18 expressed similar regrets for Brown's departure and encouraged future correspondence "or commands, with which I shall always be most happy to comply."<sup>22</sup>

Early scholars did not attempt to estimate the population increase in the Bahamas due to Loyalist immigration. They contented themselves with giving the number in 1773 as 2,052 whites and 2,241 blacks and stating that the population was "considerably augmented by the immigrants from North America." According to a census of 1782, naming seven islands, the total number of inhabitants was 4,002, with less than one-fourth being Negroes. The population was increased by 6,000 to 7,000 inhabitants of both races from June, 1783, to April, 1785.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Helen Hornbeck Tanner, Zespedes in East Florida 1784-1790 (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1963), p. 69.

<sup>22</sup>Lockey, East Florida, pp. 568-69.

<sup>23</sup>Siebert, Legacy of the American Revolution, p. 22.



Johann David Schoepf, a German, traveled extensively in the Bahamas in 1783-1784. In his work, Travels in the Confederation, he gives a thorough description of Nassau, the capital of the island of Providence and first stop for the majority of the refugees.

. . . The houses were wooden and lightly built according with the climate. No chimneys and only a few glass windows were used. Governor Maxwell lived in a special house on a high hill. The public buildings were a church and an Assembly-house. A building near the water with only a roof served as an open market for public sales of goods. It appeared to be a gathering place for buyers, sellers, ship's captains or anyone wanting to hear news. The streets were made of natural stone.<sup>24</sup>

The presence of the refugees did not escape Schoepf's attention. He stated that "no quarters were to be had, because all the houses were filled with refuies [sic] escaped from North America . . . and many Americans present who had been banished from the states of Georgia and South Carolina . . . and were expecting here the results of their trials of a permission to return."<sup>25</sup>

The last Loyalists from East Florida landed in Nassau September, 1785. Because they were late in arriving, they did not receive provisions and plantation tools like the early immigrants. They were described as being "the poorer sort, destitute of the necessities of life, and

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<sup>24</sup>Johann David Schoepf, Travels in the Confederation 1783-1784, trans. Alfred J. Morrison (Philadelphia: William J. Campbell, 1911), p. 22.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 264.

perishing daily." The Bahama agent in London was notified of their condition and requested immediate relief from the British government.<sup>26</sup>

Siebert describes Nassau as almost a ruin after a hurricane in 1785. Brigadier General McArthur and Lieutenant Wilson worked to help rebuild the town. They constructed buildings for gunpowder and supplies near the Fort. Nassau's recovery was further accelerated by the arrival of the Loyalists who promoted commerce, ship-building, and, especially, agriculture. Cotton planting increased from 2,470 acres under cultivation in 1785 to 4,300 acres in 1787.

The Loyalists who emigrated from Florida to the Bahamas were partially compensated by the British government for their losses on the Continent. Much of that compensation would be in the form of land claims on the Caicos Islands.

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<sup>26</sup>Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, p. 192.

## CHAPTER VI

### CLAIMS AND COMPENSATION

The first Loyalists who fled to the Bahamas had actually gone early in the Revolution. In spite of this, they did not escape the turmoil of the war. Following a Spanish invasion, launched from Cuba, Bahama's Governor John Maxwell capitulated on May 8, 1782. The Spanish offered liberal terms to the British subjects. They had eighteen months to settle their affairs and leave or they could become Spanish subjects and stay. Maxwell and other government officials went to England and some Loyalists joined their comrades in East Florida.<sup>1</sup>

The formal treaty ending the Revolutionary War was signed on September 3, 1783, but the Spanish were to retain control of the Bahamas until the definitive treaties were signed and that could be years later. Meanwhile, Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew Deveaux of the South Carolina militia, an exile in St. Augustine, had already taken the initiative. In April, 1783, Deveaux, with a handful of settlers and Negro slaves, set out by night for New Providence. They

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<sup>1</sup>Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, p. 182.

surprised the sleeping garrison and captured Fort Montagu without firing a shot. The Spanish governor surrendered after a few shots were fired at his house. The next morning the Spanish were almost embarrassed when they surveyed their captors. They were disguised as Indians in an effort to intimidate the Spanish and most humiliating were the "men of straw . . . drest out to increase the apparent numbers."<sup>2</sup>

Governor Patrick Tonyn of East Florida reported this action to the Home Secretary, May 15, 1783. Tonyn praised Deveaux's effort and recommended him "to your favor and protection."<sup>3</sup>

Andrew Deveaux was the first of the Loyalists to settle in the Bahamas and to receive compensation for losses suffered during the Revolutionary War. He received a 250-acre estate on New Providence and 1,000 acres on Cat Island.<sup>4</sup>

In July of the same year of Deveaux's expedition, the British government passed a Compensation Act to provide redress for Loyalists' losses during the Revolution. This accelerated processes to accommodate the needs of the refugees. The Act of 1783 was to expire in 1785, but, because of the large number of claims, it was extended until

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<sup>2</sup>Craton, History of the Bahamas, pp. 160-61.

<sup>3</sup>Lockey, East Florida, p. 99.

<sup>4</sup>Craton, History of the Bahamas, p. 161.

1788.<sup>5</sup> Five Commissioners were appointed and told to "enquire into the losses and services of all such persons who had suffered in their rights, properties, and profession . . . in consequence of their loyalty to his Majesty."<sup>6</sup>

The British concern for the American Loyalists had not begun here. In 1782, John Eardly-Wilmot and Daniel P. Coke had been appointed to inquire into the suffering of the exiled Americans. Wilmot and Coke subsequently served as two of the commissioners provided for in the Compensation Act.<sup>7</sup>

According to the Commissioners' first report, dated August 10, 1784, great care was taken to honestly evaluate each claim. Titles to real property were to be presented and, in the absence of titles, satisfactory evidence was required for proof of ownership. The Commissioners cross-examined the claimants. They particularly noted that personal appearances did not interfere in their decision.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Hugh Edward Egerton, ed., The Royal Commission of the Losses and Services of American Loyalists 1783 to 1785: Being the Notes of Mr. Daniel Parker Coke, M.P. One of the Commissioners During that Period (New York: Burt Franklin, 1915; reprinted 1972), p. xxxi.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. xxxiii.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. xxxii.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. xxxvi.

Claims that were considered fell into four categories: losses of property held before the war, losses of office held before the war, losses of professional income, and claims by representatives of deceased Loyalists provided the claimant was loyal also.

The claimants were also arranged in classes or divisions. Considerations were given to those who had performed "exceptional services," those who had borne arms, those who had been Americans but later changed allegiance, and those who had borne arms for America but later joined the British.<sup>9</sup>

Two Commissioners held hearings in London, two presided in Nova Scotia, and the fifth Commissioner gathered information in New York.<sup>10</sup> The claimants were required to present themselves before the Commissioners either in London or Canada. Many claims were too small to merit the journey. Some claimants did not file within the allotted time. All Loyalists who lost property were not, therefore, compensated.

Even with these precautions, there were criticisms of the work of the Commissioners, who could only recommend to Parliament. They were accused of having a bias against

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. xxxiii.

<sup>10</sup> Wallace Brown, The Good Americans, The Loyalists in the American Revolution (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1969), p. 181.

Loyalists in general and of moving too slowly, considering the miserable conditions of some of the Loyalists. It appears from the task at hand and the compensation awarded the British government did its best to compensate these refugees for their loyalty.<sup>11</sup>

Some unusual and trivial claims were made. William Wyllly, for example, claimed loss of clothing. While on a business mission for Governor Tonym, he had been shipwrecked off St. Augustine. Forced to swim ashore, he lost all his clothes and entered St. Augustine naked. No decision is recorded concerning payment of this claim.<sup>12</sup>

The records of the claims made for losses provide valuable information about the Loyalists. They indicate occupation, former home, acreage lost, and sometimes mention family members. An entire volume of the British Claims reports is devoted to the claims of Georgians.<sup>13</sup> A study by Wallace Brown shows Georgia as the state having the largest percentage of the population who were claimants and Savannah as the city having the largest percentage of the population

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<sup>11</sup>Brown, King's Friends, p. 287.

<sup>12</sup>Claims, American Loyalists, Series II, 7 vols. (Ottawa: Public Archive of Canada), 2:119. Hereinafter cited as Claims.

<sup>13</sup>American Loyalists. Transcript of the Manuscripts Books and Papers of the Commission of Enquiry Into the Losses and Services of the American Loyalists, 60 vols. (Preserved amongst the Audit Office Records in the Public Record Office of England 1783-1790: New York Public Library, 1900), 34. Hereinafter cited as American Loyalists.

who were claimants.<sup>14</sup> Another of Brown's surveys reveals that farmers and landowners were the largest percentage as claimants in Georgia and office-holders the second largest percentage. Forty-nine percent of the Georgian claimants served in the armed forces for the British. Thirty percent of the total were officers.<sup>15</sup>

Special consideration was given to Georgia refugees from East Florida. A branch claims office operated in Nassau and the British government opened an East Florida Claims Office in London. Henry Yonge, clerk of the council and a former lawyer from Georgia, took the testimony of claimants and their witnesses in Nassau and forwarded the information to London. The Bahama Gazette, August 1, 1789, gave notice of an extension of a filing date to October 6, 1789. The original closing date had been January 1, 1787. About eighty claims were filed through the Nassau office.<sup>16</sup> A partial explanation for this special treatment is found in a statement of William Pitt published in the Bahama Gazette, September 2, 1786. Pitt said, ". . . East Florida was made the price of peace; was surrendered for public advantage at the time it was under allegiance of his Majesty." Also, it

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<sup>14</sup>Brown, King's Friend, pp. 254-55.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 342-43.

<sup>16</sup>Thelma Paterson Peters, "The American Loyalists and the Plantation Period in the Bahama Islands" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Florida, 1960), p. 73.



was to the refugee's advantage that some of the British in positions of power had been investors in East Florida plantations.<sup>17</sup>

In total, 5,072 Loyalist claims were submitted; however, only 4,118 or approximately eighty-one percent were given compensation.<sup>18</sup> The East Florida claimants numbered 372.<sup>19</sup> Compensation for losses consisted of cash payments, annual pensions for professional income, payments to widows and orphans, positions in offices in Britain or the colonies. Some officers were granted new commissions, some volunteer officers received half pay, and some were granted land. On the average, a Loyalist received less than half of the compensation requested. Records show that the East Florida Loyalists received only about one-third of the amount requested in their petitions. The British government did spend a large sum of money in an effort to compensate the Loyalists. Wallace Brown translates the approximate figures for actual payment as between fifteen and twenty million dollars.<sup>20</sup>

After the claims were paid there still remained the problem of resettling of the Loyalists and rebuilding their

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<sup>17</sup>Parrish MSS, p. 31.

<sup>18</sup>Brown, The Good Americans, p. 188.

<sup>19</sup>Peters, "American Loyalists," p. 73.

<sup>20</sup>Brown, The Good Americans, p. 188.

their lives. Governor Maxwell returned from England in 1784 to find innumerable problems in Nassau. In an address to the Assembly, he asked that the Legislature look with favor on "those forced to seek an asylum among these islands." Legislation was passed immediately governing the slaves and an effort was made to settle the refugees in the Out Islands.<sup>21</sup>

Lieutenant Wilson's surveys of 1782 and 1783 had established which islands were inhabited and the kinds of soil they had. Some islands were more desirable than others. Abaco and Eleuthera were not as desirable as those to the south and southeast of New Providence, commonly called the Windward Islands, which became the plantation islands. Here the Loyalists could recreate the large plantations with the slave labor and staple crop pattern they had known in Georgia or the Carolinas. These islands were Watling (now San Salvador), Cat Island, Acklins, the Exuma group, Long Island, and the group farthest away, the Caicos. Great Inagua Island and Grand Turk, located in the same area, attracted salt-rakers, but no planters.<sup>22</sup> The Caicos Islands were reported as having the best soil<sup>23</sup> (see Map 1).

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<sup>21</sup>Craton, History of the Bahamas, p. 164. The Out Islands are all Bahama Islands other than New Providence, the location of the capital, Nassau.

<sup>22</sup>Peters, "American Loyalists," p. 67.

<sup>23</sup>McKinnen, A Tour, p. 131.

The original order from London, to grant forty acres to every claimant "being master or mistress of a family," with an additional twenty acres for children, was later increased to possibly one hundred. Slaves were included in the "headright" system and were often bought merely to increase the acreage the Loyalists could claim.

To keep the land, certain provisions were required of the claimants. Two out of every twenty acres had to be put into cultivation within three years. If the land could not be used for agriculture, a twenty by fifteen foot dwelling had to be built and the land used for cutting timber or digging rock. Consequently, many grants were lost and were either re-granted or abandoned. Most of the grants were made between 1787 and 1797 when Lord Dunmore, former royal governor of Virginia, was Governor of the Bahamas. It is said that he was quite generous in awarding land grants to himself. It is also notable that some of the original inhabitants of New Providence, also called Old Inhabitants, received land grants in the Out Islands.<sup>24</sup>

From the Bahama Registry at Nassau, a study of grants on the Turks and Caicos Islands was made.<sup>25</sup> Previous

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<sup>24</sup>Peters, "American Loyalists," pp. 66-69.

<sup>25</sup>Record books of the Public Registry Office, Nassau. Approximately 500 volumes from 1720 to present, mostly handwritten, and containing land grants, indentures, manumissions, correspondence, estate appraisals, wills, and so forth. "Old Series" 1778-1850. A, A-1, B, B-1, C-1, D-1, E-1, E-2, F-1, M, X-Conveyances, 1809, Wills-1790-1806.

studies by A. T. Bethell (1914 and 1937) listed only 114 grants on 16 Bahamian Islands. The Turks and Caicos Islands were not included in those studies. The average grant from Bethell's studies was 382 acres; the smallest grant recorded was thirteen and one-half acres on New Providence and the largest was 1,460 acres on Abaco.<sup>26</sup> The Bahama Registry reveals 92 grants made to 72 persons on the Caicos Islands. A total of 18,138 acres was granted showing an average of 197 acres per plantation. (See, as example, copy of original Land Grant.) The smallest grants were 40 acres and the largest was a combined total of 4,560 acres made to Thomas Brown. The grants give Grand Caicos as the location. At that time Grand Caicos included all six of the Caicos Islands in the crescent-shaped chain (see Map 2). The earliest date found was February, 1789, and the latest date for a grant was December, 1791.<sup>27</sup>

There is quite a disparity in estimates of total population on the Caicos Islands. Daniel McKinnen reported

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Microfilm copies are available from the Dakota Microfilm Co., 345 Orange Ave., Orlando, Florida. May be purchased only with permission of the Bahamian government. This copy will be deposited in the Todd Library, Middle Tennessee State University. Hereinafter cited as Bahama Registry.

<sup>26</sup>A. Talbot Bethell, The Early Settlers of the Bahama Islands With a Brief Account of the American Revolution, quoted in Craton, History of the Bahamas, p. 165.

<sup>27</sup>Bahama Registry, A, B, C, D, E.

DEFENDER OF THE FAITH, and so forth: To all as whom those Presents shall come, Greeting.

Wheat and Corn. ALL that Tract of Land, containing by Adjustment, two hundred Acres  
being and being upon the General Survey, bounded North by  
by Miller's Tract, East by Tract of  
Tract of Land, and on all other sides by  
Tract.

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that, before 1800, twelve heads of families and two or three hundred slaves occupied the Islands. When McKinnen visited the Islands in 1803, he mentioned in his report that one "gentleman alone" had six hundred slaves.<sup>28</sup> A missionary, John Richards, estimated many of the Out Islands' populations in 1790. The Caicos was shown as having 900 inhabitants.<sup>29</sup> H. E. Sadler, quoting an unnamed London publication, says more than 40 white families settled the Caicos, bringing with them 1,200 slaves.<sup>30</sup> Names on appraisals and conveyances bring the number of plantations to over eighty. Considering that some of the grants probably were never exercised, Sadler's assessment would be more nearly correct than McKinnen's.

The total acreage granted on North Caicos was 10,090 and averaged approximately 306 acres per grant (33 grants); the total acreage granted on Middle Caicos was 4,814 acres and averaged 267 acres per grant (18 grants). The military grantees were obviously favored over the non-military grantees. Although the number of actual grants to the military on both Islands was approximately 1 in 4, the average acreage per grant was approximately 680 for military grantees and 189 for non-military grantees. Even

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<sup>28</sup>McKinnen, *A Tour*, p. 132.

<sup>29</sup>Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, 1:195.

<sup>30</sup>H. E. Sadler, "Turks Islands Landfall," 7 vols. (Grand Turk, B.W.I.: Victoria Public Library, 1977), 4:10.

disregarding the holdings of Thomas Brown, who was by far the largest grantee, the average is still approximately 302 acres for the other military grantees. An explanation for this advantage could be that the military, excluding three privates, a chaplain, and a doctor, were high-ranking commissioned officers. The three privates received smaller than average acreage for the military grantees (80 and 100 acres).

The following is a list of grants on Grand Caicos. The list is followed by maps of North Caicos and Middle Caicos showing the approximate location of the land granted. Some names are omitted on the maps because the location could not be established with reasonable accuracy. Stephen De Lancey's plantation is noted on the map although he is not found as receiving an original grant. De Lancey was a high ranking officer from New York and later New Jersey who joined the southerners in their defense of Savannah. His plantation was 900 acres, a larger than average holding, and is noted on present-day maps by its name, "Greenwich." Present-day maps<sup>31</sup> were used to establish land marks, bodies of water, direction, and so forth in determining plantation locations. Also, the author of this dissertation, in the summer of 1982, explored ruins on the Caicos Islands to determine plantation locations.

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<sup>31</sup>Official maps were purchased from the government at Grand Turk, capital of Turks and Caicos Islands.

Land Grants on Grand Caicos as recorded in the Bahama Islands Record Books of the Public Registry Office, known as the "Old Series" (1778-1850)

THOMAS ARMSTRONG

C/1, 48.\*

26 December, 1789

160 acres on Grand Caicos near the southeast end of Bottle Creek, bounded eastwardly by Bottle Creek, westwardly by pine barren, north by Charles Pasteur's and John McDonald's land, south by John Edward's and George Loveek's land.

JOHN BARCLAY

F/1, 141.

12 February, 1791

1000 acres on Grand Caicos, bounded on the north by the Hon. Wm. Gamble's land, on the south by a marsh southerly, easterly by John Lorimer's land, westerly by George Augustus Gamble's land.

ROBERT BASDEN

C/1, 45.

19 December, 1789

60 acres on Grand Caicos, bounded on the northeast by the lower going through, northwesterly by John Bromhall's land and all other sides by vacant land.

JOHN BELL

F/1, 127.

12 February, 1791

720 acres on Grand Caicos, bounded on the north by the windward going through on Grand Caicos, bounded on all sides by marshes and creeks.

F/1, 128.

12 February, 1791

300 acres upon a key or point to the eastward of the windward going through on Grand Caicos, bounded on all sides by marshes and creeks.

F/1, 142.

16 February, 1791

80 acres on a key to the westward of the windward going through on Grand Caicos, bounded on all sides by the sea.

JOHN BROMHALL

D/1, 77.

1 January, 1790

100 acres upon Grand Caicos at the lower going through, bounded on the northeast by the lower going through and on all other sides by vacant lands.

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\*C/1 denotes the reel, 48 denotes the page number, 26 December, 1789, denotes the date the grant was signed.

ANN BROWN

E/1, 138.

21 September, 1790

25 and one-half acres on Grand Caicos, bounded eastwardly by Colonel Brown's land, on the north by Hugh McCann's land, on the south by James Missick's land and on the west by the said James Missick's land.

THOMAS BROWN

B/1, 45.

19 March, 1789

500 acres on Grand Caicos (one of our Bahama Islands) to the eastward by Blubber Cut, bounded to the north and east by other lands of the said Thomas Brown and on the other sides by vacant lands.

B/1, 47.

19 March, 1789

60 acres on the Grand Caicos (one of our Bahama Islands) to the eastward of Blubber Cut, bounded to the south by other lands of said Thomas Brown and all other sides by vacant lands.

B/1, 48.

19 March, 1789

500 acres on Grand Caicos (one of our Bahama Islands) to the eastward of Blubber Cut, bounded on the north by vacant lands, on the east by Flamingo Pond and on the other sides by land belonging to the said Thomas Brown.

B/1, 49.

19 March, 1789

420 acres upon the Grand Caicos (one of our Bahama Islands) eastward of Blubber Cut, bounded northwardly by the sea, southwardly by other lands of said Thomas Brown and on all other sides by vacant lands.

B/1, 50.

19 March, 1789

500 acres on the Grand Caicos (one of our Bahama Islands) to the eastward of Blubber Cut, bounded on the north and west by other lands of said Thomas Brown, on the east by Flamingo Pond, on the south by marshes and scrubby bushes.

B/1, 57.

19 March, 1789

500 acres on Grand Caicos (one of our Bahama Islands) about four or five miles eastward of Blubber Cut, bounded on the west and north by vacant land and on the east and south by other lands of said Thomas Brown.

THOMAS BROWN (continued)

C/1, 134.

26 December, 1789

1000 acres on the Grand Caicos, bounded eastwardly by Bottle Creek, southerly by James Pringle's and Henry Ray's and Wm. Wylly's land, westerly by vacant pine barren and northerly by John W. McIntosh's land.

C/1, 137.

26 December, 1789

680 acres on Grand Caicos, bounded northwardly by the sea, westwardly by Wm. Henry Hamilton's land, southwardly by vacant lands, and eastwardly by George Augustus Gamble's land.

D/1, 40.

15 December, 1790

500 acres on the Grand Caicos, bounded easterly by Fig Tree Hill and the bluff of Bottle Creek, southwardly by John Wier's and vacant land, westerly by Low Pine Barren and northerly by Wm. Wylly's land and Henry Ray's land and John Kerr's land.

MICHAEL CLARK

E/1, 113.

13 August, 1790

80 acres upon Grand Caicos, bounded northwardly by West Harbour, eastwardly and southwardly by vacant land and westwardly by the sea.

ROBERT CLARK

F/1, 195.

26 February, 1791

260 acres on Grand Caicos at Bottle Creek, bounded northerly by said creek, easterly by John M. Tattnall, Esq.' land and on all other sides by vacant land.

JOHN COCHRAN

E/1, 128.

4 September, 1790

200 acres upon Grand Caicos, bounded easterly by Bottle Creek, northwardly by John Edwards and George Loveek's land, westwardly by vacant land and southwardly by vacant land.

CHARLES COCKS

B/1, 27.

15 May, 1789

140 acres on Grand Caicos (one of our Bahamas Islands), bounded westerly by Catharine Davis' land, northerly by vacant land, easterly by Colonel Thomas Brown's and Anthony Holmes' land.

## PRINCE COLEMAN

E/1, 58.

2 August, 1790

100 acres on Grand Caicos situated near Bell Works, bounded northwardly by John Vallentine's land, southwardly by vacant land, eastwardly by Edward West's land and westwardly by John Martin's land.

E/1, 109.

14 August, 1790

40 acres upon Grand Caicos at Bottle Creek, bounded easterly by Charles Fox Taylor's land, northwardly by Joseph Moore's land and on all other sides by Alexander McLean's land.

## ROBERT CUNNINGHAM

E/1, 173.

23 October, 1790

100 acres on Grand Caicos, bounded northwardly by Whole Grown Creek, eastwardly by Judith Power's land, southwardly by scrubby land and marshes and westwardly by Susannah Nelm's land.

E/1, 174.

23 October, 1790

508 acres upon Grand Caicos, bounded northwardly by Whole Grown Creek, eastwardly by Susannah Nelm's land, southwardly by marsh and westwardly by John Lorimer's land.

## CATHARINE DAVIS

B/1, 11.

27 March, 1789

80 acres on the island of Grand Caicos, one of our Bahama Islands, bounded westwardly by Wade Stubbs' land, easterly by Charles Cox's land, southerly by a marsh and northerly by vacant land.

## JANE DAVIS\*

C/1, 15.

26 December, 1789

60 acres upon the Grand Caicos at the west side of Bottle Creek, bounded northeasterly by Charles Richter's land, southwardly by Charles Pasteur's and John McDonald's land, westwardly by pine barren and northwesterly by Alexander McLean's land.

D/1, 37.

26 December, 1789

60 acres on the Grand Caicos at the west side of Bottle Creek, bounded northeasterly by Charles Richter's land, southwardly by Charles Pasteur's and John McDonald's land, west by pine barren and northwesterly by Alexander McLean's land.

## JOSEPH DEMERIT

E/1, 63.

31 July, 1790

180 cares on Grand Caicos to the eastward of Parrot Key, bounded southerly by Thomas Williamson's land and salt marshes, westerly by the sea and marshes, northwardly by Button Wood Pond and eastwardly by vacant land.

## JOHN DICKSON

D/1, 153.

14 April, 1790

200 acres upon Grand Caicos, bounded northwardly by Whole Grown Creek, southwardly by a marsh, eastwardly by vacant land and westwardly by Judith Power's and Robert Cunningham's land.

## JOHN EDWARDS\*

C/1, 76.

26 December, 1789

40 acres upon Grand Caicos, bounded easterly by Bottle Creek, northwardly by Thomas Armstrong's land, westwardly by George Loveek's land and southwardly by George Cochran's land.

C/1, 111.

26 December, 1789

40 acres upon the Grand Caicos, bounded eastwardly by Bottle Creek, northwardly by Thomas Armstrong's land westwardly by George Loveek's land and southwardly by John Cochran's land.

## WILLIAM FARR

B/1, 5.

22 March, 1789

380 acres on Grand Caicos (one of our Bahama Islands) to the southward of the salt pond between Pumpkin's Bluff and three rocks bounded on the north by the said salt pond, and on the east by Thomas Brown's and vacant lands, westwardly by Thomas Rigby and Thomas Williamson's land, and southwardly by vacant land.

## JOHN FERGUSON

E/1, 55.

2 August, 1790

184 and one-half acres on the Grand Caicos near Bell Works, bounded eastwardly by John Wallentine's land, southerly by John Martin's land, westwardly by Hamilton Robinson's land and northwardly by the sea and a palmetto ridge.

## JOHN FOONK

E/1, 51.

16 July, 1790

40 acres upon Grand Caicos, bounded easterly by Bottle Creek, westerly by John M. Tattnall, Esq.' land, southerly by said John Foonk's land and northerly by Ludwick Seleg's land.

E/1 52.

16 July, 1790

100 acres upon the Grand Caicos, bounded easterly by Bottle Creek, southerly by James Howe's land, westwardly by John M. Tattnall, Esq.' land and northwardly by said John Foonk's land.

## JOHN LEWIS FRAZER

E/1, 31.

7 July, 1790

60 acres upon Grand Caicos near Bell's Works, bounded eastwardly by Jeremiah Tinker's land, westwardly by John Gregory Harrison's land, southwardly by Robert West's land and northwardly by a palmetto ridge.

## GEORGE AUGUSTUS GAMBLE

F/1, 3.

20 October, 1790

710 acres on Grand Caicos, known by the name Franken Isle, opposite three keys, bounded northwardly by an arm of the sea and palmetto ground, westwardly by Thomas Brown's land, southwardly by vacant land and eastwardly by the Hon. Wm. Gamble's land.

## WILLIAM HENRY HAMILTON

D/1, 151.

2 April, 1790

290 acres upon the Grand Caicos to the westward of the windward going through, bounded northwardly by the sea, westwardly and southwardly by vacant land, and eastwardly by Thomas Brown's land.

## JOHN GREGORY HARRISON

E/1, 38.

7 July, 1790

40 acres upon Grand Caicos near Bell Works, bounded eastwardly by John Lewis Frazer's land, southwardly by Edward West's land, westwardly by John Vallentine's land and northwardly by a palmetto ridge.



WILLIAM HASKEY

F/1, 12.

27 October, 1790

40 acres upon Grand Caicos at Bottle Creek, bounded northerly by the said creek, eastwardly by Alexander Campbell Wyllly's land, westwardly by John Cochran's land and southerly by vacant land.

ANTHONY HOLMES

B/1, 75.

28 March, 1789

40 acres upon Grand Caicos (one of our Bahama Islands), bounded southerly by a salt marsh, northerly by Thomas Brown's land, easterly by vacant land and westerly by Charles Cock's land.

JAMES HOWE

E/1, 170.

22 October, 1790

400 acres on Grand Caicos, bounded southwardly by Richard Pearis' land, westwardly by vacant land, northerly by vacant land and John Foonk's land, and easterly by Bottle Creek.

JAMES HYETT

F/1, 177.

26 February, 1791

100 acres upon Grand Caicos about two miles southeast of Parrot Key, bounded on the west by marshes, on the north by vacant land, on the east by Wade Stubbs' land, on the south by Margaret Jones' land.

JOHN KERR

B/1, 104.

13 August, 1789

120 acres upon Grand Caicos, bounded eastwardly by Bottle Creek, northwardly by James Pringle's land, westwardly by Henry Ray's land and southwardly by Thomas Brown's land.

JAMES LANE

E/1, 103.

13 August, 1790

40 acres upon Grand Caicos at Bottle Creek, bounded eastwardly by Joseph Morris Moore's land, northwardly by Thomas Brown's land, westwardly by vacant land and southwardly by Alexander McLean's land.

AMBROSE LEE

E/1, 153.

5 October, 1790

100 acres on Grand Caicos, bounded easterly by Wm. Wylly's land, northerly by a aprt of Colonel Brown's land, and on the other sides by vacant land.

JOHN LORIMER

F/1, 163.

23 February, 1791

504 acres upon Grand Caicos, bounded northwardly by Whole Grown Creek, eastwardly by Robert Cunningham's land, westwardly by Wm. Gamble's land and southwardly by a marsh.

GEORGE LOVEEK

D/1, 31.

26 December, 1789

40 acres upon the Grand Caicos at the west side of Bottle Creek, bounded eastwardly by John Edward's land, southwardly by John Cochran's land, westwardly by vacant pine barren land and northwardly by Thomas Armstrong's land.

C/1, 110.\*

26 Lecember, 1789

40 acres upon the Grand Caicos at the west side of Bottle Creek, bounded eastwardly by John Edward's land, southwardly by John Cochran's land, westwardly by vacant pine barren land and northwardly by Thomas Armstrong's land.

JOHN MARTIN

E/1, 60.

2 August, 1790

200 acres upon Grand Caicos at the west end of Bell Works branching eastwardly by Prince Coleman's land, westwardly by Hamilton Robinson's land and southerly by vacant land.

HUGH McCANN

E/1, 192.

16 August, 1790

25 and one-half acres upon Grand Caicos, bounded eastwardly by Col. Thomas Brown's land, northwardly by said Hugh McCann's land, westwardly by James Missick's land.

E/1, 108.

13 August, 1790

100 acres on Grand Caicos, bounded eastwardly by Thomas Brown's land, northerly by William Kerr's land, westerly by Wade Stubbs' land and James Missick's land, and southerly by Ann Brown's land.

JOHN McDONALD

B/1, 172.

31 December, 1789

100 acres on Grand Caicos on Bottle Creek, bounded easterly by the said creek, northwardly by Charles Richter's land, westerly by Charles Pasteur's land and southwardly by Thomas Armstrong's land.

MARTIN McEVOY

F/1, 7.

1 November, 1790

750 acres upon Grand Caicos, bounded northwardly by John Petty's land and vacant land, eastwardly by land applied for by John Bell, Esquire, southwardly by marshes and westwardly by vacant land.

JOHN McINTOSH

F/1, 57.

14 December, 1790

750 acres upon Grand Caicos about two and one-half miles up Bottle Creek, bounded on the south by Thomas Brown's land, on the east by said creek, on the west by vacant land and on the north by Richard Pearis' land.

F/1, 58.

14 December, 1790

180 acres upon Grand Caicos, bounded eastwardly by said John McIntosh' land, southwardly by Colonel T. Brown's land and on all other sides by vacant land.

JOHN McKINZIE

F/1, 136.

21 February, 1791

200 acres upon Grand Caicos on a part of the Blue Mountains, bounded northwardly by sandy land on the sea, eastwardly by vacant land, southwardly by the salinas, and westwardly by John Petty's land.

ALEXANDER McLEAN

D/1, 74.

21 December, 1789

100 acres on the Grand Caicos on Bottle Creek, bounded eastwardly by the said creek, southwardly by Charles Richter's land and Jane Davis' land, and on other sides by vacant land.

JAMES MISSICK

C/1, 59.

26 December, 1789

100 acres on the Grand Caicos (one of our Bahama Islands), bounded easterly by vacant land, westerly by John Penn's land and vacant land, and southerly by Wade Stubbs' land.

JAMES MISSICK (continued)

F/1, 144.

16 February, 1791

216 acres upon Grand Caicos on the southwest point near Parrot Key, bounded northerly by Richard Stubbs' land, eastwardly by Wade Stubbs' land, and on all other sides by the sea, mangroves and marshes.

JOSEPH MORRIS MOORE

E/1, 90.

14 August, 1790

40 acres upon Grand Caicos at Bottle Creek, bounded eastwardly by John Weir and Charles Fox Taylor's land, northwardly by Thomas Brown's land, westwardly by James Lane's land and southwardly by Prince Coleman's land.

CHARLES PASTEUR

C/1, 60.

26 December, 1789

40 acres on Grand Caicos on the west side of Bottle Creek, bounded easterly by John McDonald's land, northwardly by Jane Davis' land, westwardly by pine barren and southwardly by Thomas Armstrong's land.

RICHARD PEARIS, JUNIOR

E/1, 83.

9 August, 1790

400 acres on Grand Caicos on Bottle Creek, bounded southwardly by the said Richard Pearis' land and John McIntosh's land, westwardly by vacant land, northwardly by James Howe's land and vacant land, and eastwardly by said Richard Pearis' land and Buttonwood scrubbs on Bottle Creek.

JOHN PENN

D/1, 50.

26 December, 1789

200 acres on the Grand Caicos (one of our Bahama Islands), bounded on the south by Richard Stubbs' and Wade Stubbs' land, on the east by James Missick's and vacant land, on the north by Miss Margaret Jones' and vacant land, and on the west by mangrove marsh.

JOHN PETTY

E/1, 77.

16 August, 1790

600 acres upon the Grand Caicos, bounded northwardly by the sea, eastwardly by vacant land, southwardly by salinas and ponds and westwardly by vacant land.

JAMES PRINGLE

B/1, 106.

13 August, 1789

100 acres on Grand Caicos, bounded eastwardly by Bottle Creek, southwardly by John Kerr's land, westwardly by Henry Ray's land, and northwardly by Thomas Brown's land.

HENRY RAY

B/1, 105.

13 August, 1789

200 acres upon Grand Caicos near Bottle Creek, bounded eastwardly by James Pringle and John Kerr's land, southwardly by Thomas Brown's land, westwardly by Wm. Wylly's land and northwardly by vacant land.

MARGARET REARDEN

A/1, 126.

27 January, 1789

200 acres upon Grand Caicos (one of our Bahama Islands) to the eastward of Blubber Cut, bounded on the west by mangroves and shoal waters, and on all other sides by vacant lands.

CHARLES RICHTER

C/1, 139.

21 December, 1789

80 acres upon the Grand Caicos, bounded easterly by Bottle Creek, northwardly by Alexander McLean's land, westwardly by Jane Davis' land and southwardly by John McDonald's land.

THOMAS RIGBY

D/1, 32.

26 December, 1789

200 acres on the Grand Caicos, bounded southwardly by Thomas Williamson's land and on all other sides by vacant land.

HAMILTON ROBINSON

E/1, 56.

2 August, 1790

156 and one-half acres upon Grand Caicos near Bell's Works, bounded eastwardly by John Martin and John Ferguson's land, westwardly by George Smith's land, southerly by a marsh and pine barren, and northwardly by the sea.

LUDWICK SELEG

E/1, 50.

16 July, 1790

30 acres upon Grand Caicos, bounded northwestwardly by John M. Tattnell, Esq.' land, southwestwardly by John Foonk's land, and on all other sides by Bottle Creek.

## GEORGE SMITH

E/1, 57.

2 August, 1790

100 acres on Grand Caicos near Bell Works, bounded eastwardly by Hamilton Robinson's land, southwardly by marshes and vacant land, westwardly by vacant land and northwardly by the sea.

## WADE STUBBS

B/1, 12.

27 March, 1789

860 acres on the island of Grand Caicos (one of our Bahama Islands), bounded on the west by James Missick's land, easterly by Catharine Davis' land and vacant land, and southerly by salt marshes.

F/1, 117.

10 February, 1791

100 acres upon Grand Caicos, bounded on the north by Thomas Williamson's and William Kerr's land, eastwardly by vacant land, southwardly by Miss Margaret Jones' and John Penn's land, and westwardly by James Hyett's land.

## RICHARD STUBBS

B/1, 17.

80 acres on the island of Grand Caicos (one of our Bahama Islands), bounded westerly by shoals and mangroves and small inlets of the sea, and on all other sides by vacant land.

## JOHN MULRYNE TATTNALL, ESQ.

B/1, 95.

11 August, 1789

300 acres on the Grand Caicos near the mouth of Bottle Creek, bounded northeasterly by said creek and on all other sides by vacant land.

D/1, 155.

14 April, 1790

750 acres upon the Grand Caicos, bounded northwardly by Whole Grown Creek and the windward going through, southerly by a marsh, eastwardly by John Bell's land and westwardly by John Dickson's land.

## CHARLES FOX TAYLOR

E/1, 97.

14 August, 1790

60 acres upon the Grand Caicos at Bottle Creek, bounded eastwardly by the said creek, southwardly by Alexander McLean's land, northwardly by John Weir's land and westwardly by Prince Coleman's land.

JEREMIAH TINKER

E/1, 147.

24 September, 1790

160 acres upon Grand Caicos, bounded easterly by Wm. Henry Hamilton's land, southerly by vacant land, westerly by John Lewis Frazer's land, and northwardly by the sea.

JUDITH TOWERS

E/1, 107.

14 August, 1790

60 acres upon Grand Caicos on Whole Grown Creek, bounded westwardly by Robert Cunningham's land, northwardly by said creek, eastwardly and southwardly by John Dixon's land.

JOHN TUCKER

F/1, 70.

28 December, 1790

40 acres upon the Grand Caicos, bounded eastwardly by Michael Wood's land, southerly by James Howe's land, and on all other sides by vacant land.

JOHN VALLENTINE

E/1, 59.

2 August, 1790

100 acres upon Grand Caicos near Bell's Works, bounded northwardly by a palmetto ridge, southwardly by Prince Coleman's land, eastwardly by John G. Harrison's land and westwardly by John Ferguson's land.

JOHN WEIR

C/1, 105.

15 December, 1789

40 acres upon the Grand Caicos, bounded eastwardly by Bottle Creek, southwardly by vacant land, westwardly by vacant land, and northwardly by Thomas Brown's land.

EDWARD WEST

E/1, 61.

2 August, 1790

40 acres on Grand Caicos, bounded northwardly by J. G. Harrison's and John L. Frazer's land, southwardly by vacant land, eastwardly by Jeremiah Tinker's land and westwardly by Prince Coleman's land.

ROBERT WHITEHEAD

E/1, 62.

31 July, 1790

120 acres upon Grand Caicos, bounded northwardly by Thomas Williamson's and vacant lands, southwardly by James Hyett's land, eastwardly by Wade Stubbs', Thomas Williamson's and Thomas Rigby's land.

MARY WILKINSON

E/1, 70.

13 August, 1790

60 acres upon the Grand Caicos at the back of Bottle Creek, bounded northwardly by John M. Tattnall, Esq.' land, eastwardly by John Foonk's land, southwardly by James Howe's land and westwardly by Michael wood's land.

THOMAS WILLIAMSON

B/1, 171.

18 December, 1789

288 acres, the same being a key called Parrot Key, situated on the north side of Grand Caicos, one of our Bahama Islands, bounded on all sides by the sea.

E/1, 179.

20 October, 1790

100 acres upon Grand Caicos near a rocky point eastward by Parrot Key, bounded southwardly by a small inlet of the sea, and on all other sides by vacant lands.

E/1, 180.

20 October, 1790

200 acres on the Grand Caicos about four or five miles to the eastward of Blubber Cut at Will's west lookout, bounded on all sides by vacant land.

E/1, 181.

20 October 1790

180 acres on Blubber Cut Key on the north side of the Grand Caicos, bounded northeasterly by Blubber Cut Creek, northwesterly by the sea, and on all other sides by vacant land.

MICHAEL WOOD

E/1, 82.

13 August, 1790

40 acres upon Grand Caicos near Bottle Creek, bounded northwardly by Mary Wilkinson's land, southwardly by James Howe's land, westwardly by John Tucker's land and vacant land, and northwardly by John M. Tattnall, Esq.' land.

ALEXANDER CAMPBELL WYLLY

F/1, 9.

27 October, 1790

200 acres upon Grand Caicos on the south point of Bottle Creek, bounded westwardly by William Haskey's land, southwardly by vacant land, and on all other sides by the said creek.



SUSANNAH WYLLY

E/1, 112.

14 August, 1790

200 acres upon Grand Caicos, bounded easterly by William Farr's land, southerly by Thomas Brown's land, and on all other sides by vacant land.

WILLIAM WYLLY

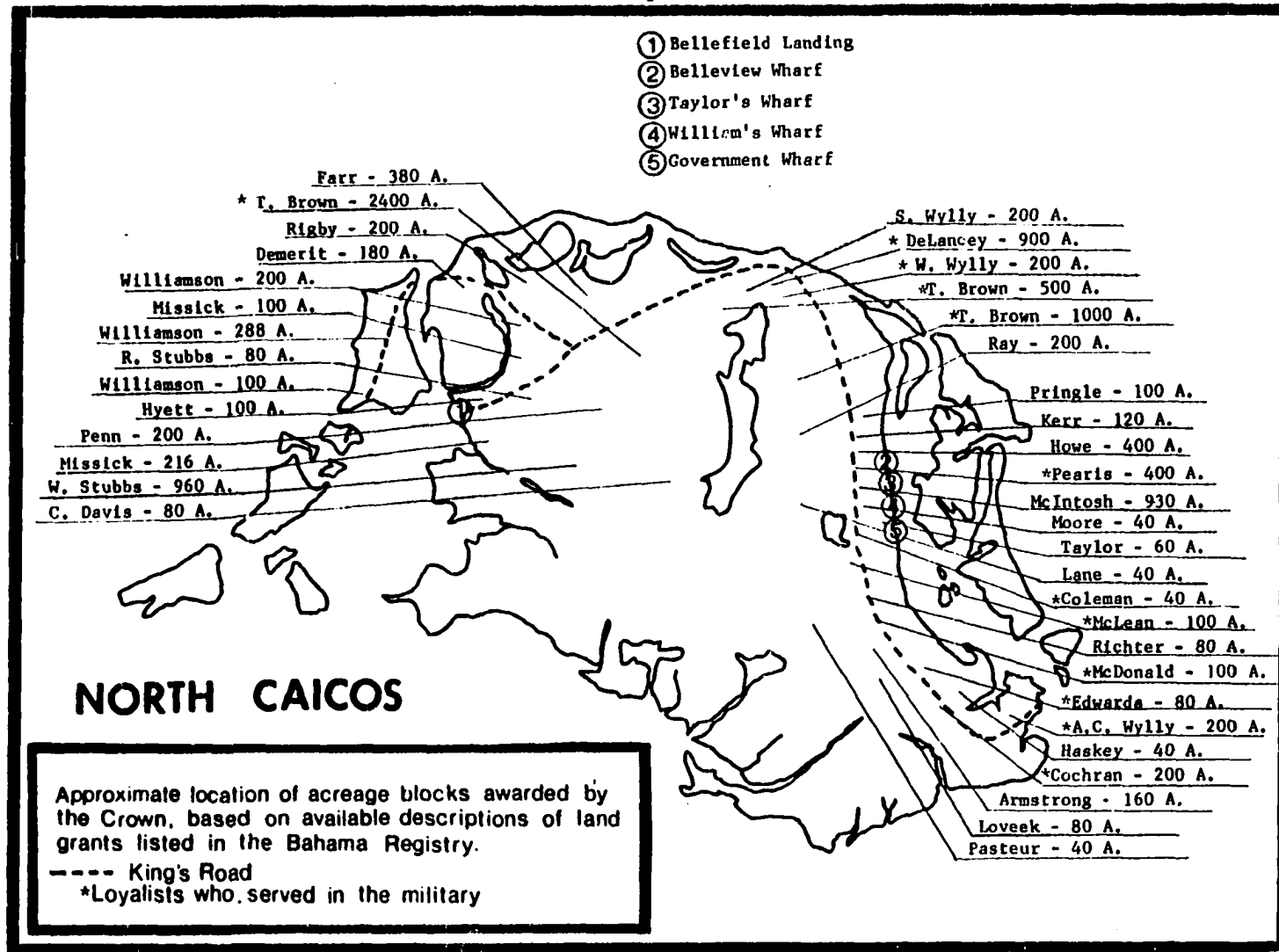
B/1, 114.

17 August, 1789

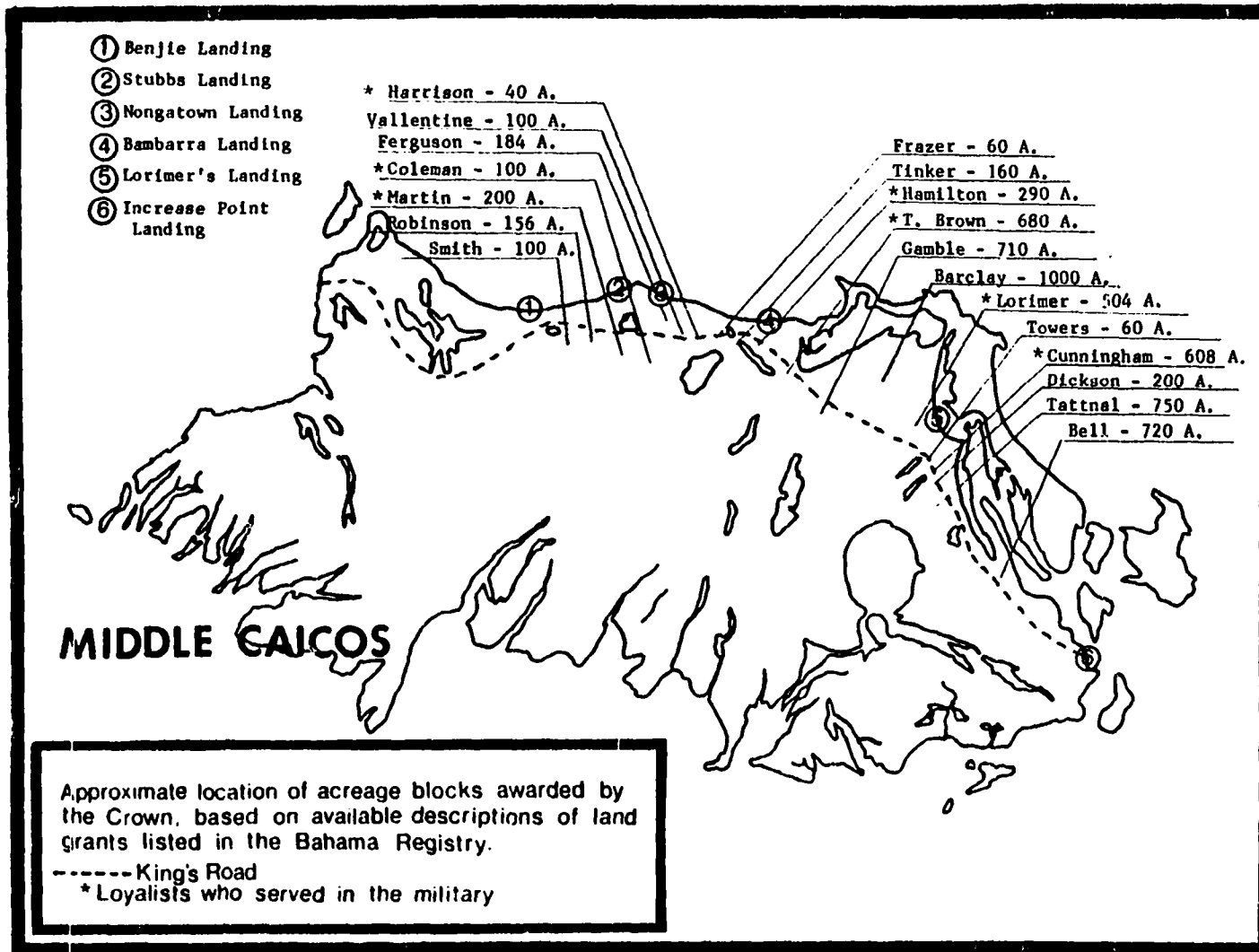
200 acres extending to the eastward from Guana Ridge, Grand Caicos, bounded eastwardly by Henry Ray's land, southwardly by Thomas Brown's land, and on all other sides by vacant land.

\*Denotes what appears to be duplicate grant.

Map 4



Map 5



## CHAPTER VII

### POLITICAL ACTIVITY AND COLLECTIVE BIOGRAPHY

Thomas Brown was elected to represent the town of Nassau in the Bahamian Assembly in 1788.<sup>1</sup> The following year he served as chairman of a committee which reported on the conditions in the Bahama Islands. It was a favorable report, pointing out the prospect for agricultural development as well as the advantages of the location of the islands for trade.<sup>2</sup> In the same year, 1789, Brown was granted 4,560 acres of land on Grand Caicos. His grants were among the first made on these islands. Within two years, a total of seventy-two individuals had received land.

Of the seventy-two families granted land, information of origin is available for twenty-five. The largest number of these settlers was from Georgia (44%), the Carolinas had the second largest number (32%), followed by East Florida (12%). New York and New Hampshire each had one settler. One grant was given to a non-Loyalist, an old resident of New Providence.

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<sup>1</sup>Peters, "American Loyalists," p. 96.

<sup>2</sup>Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, p. 195.

The list of seventy-two grantees cannot be considered an accurate census of the islands during the Plantation Period because on conveyances and appraisals in the Bahama Registry names appear that are not in the grants. Also, it is doubtful that all seventy-two grantees established plantations. Grants as small as 40 acres or 60 acres would not have been adequate for the plantation system of agriculture.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, an estimate of 40 families may be as accurate as any.

The majority of the settlers on the Caicos was probably from Georgia. William Wylly mentions that the refugees came principally from Georgia in his book, A Short Account of the Bahama Islands, published in 1789,<sup>4</sup> and C. D. Hutchings, a contemporary writer from South Caicos, names Georgia as a former home for the Loyalist settlers.<sup>5</sup> Thomas Brown's leadership could have influenced former military men to join him on Grand Caicos.

It is known that some of the King's Rangers and the Royal Militia chose Grand Caicos for homes. They present an impressive roster: Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Brown, commander of the East Florida Rangers and later the King's

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<sup>3</sup>Bahama Registry, E-1:107, C-1:105, E-1:61, E-2:116, E-2:33-34, E-2:277, X:111, X:48, X:111.

<sup>4</sup>William Wylly, A Short Account of the Bahama Islands, quoted in Parrish MSS, p. 34.

<sup>5</sup>Hutchings, "Story of Turks and Caicos," p. 4.

Rangers<sup>6</sup>; Brigadier General Robert Cunningham of the Royal Militia of South Carolina<sup>7</sup>; John Edwards who fought with Cornwallis at the Battle of Camden<sup>8</sup>; Major John Gregory Harrison of the South Carolina Rangers<sup>9</sup>; Captain John Martin of the Royal North Carolina Regiment<sup>10</sup>; Captain John Donald of the Georgia Royal Militia<sup>11</sup>; Captain John McKinzie of the British Legion from North Carolina<sup>12</sup>; Major Alexander McLean of the King's Rangers<sup>13</sup>; Lieutenant-Colonel Pearis who joined General Cunningham<sup>14</sup>; Chaplain Commandant John Cochran of the Majesty Fort William and Mary in Providence of New Hampshire<sup>15</sup>; Captain William Wylly of the King's Rangers; Captain Alexander Campbell Wylly of the King's Rangers<sup>16</sup>; Dr. John Lorimer, a surgeon for the garrison at

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<sup>6</sup>Sabine, Biographical Sketches, 2:260.

<sup>7</sup>Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, 2:315.

<sup>8</sup>American Loyalists, 5:276.

<sup>9</sup>Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, 2:375.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 1:91.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 2:108.

<sup>12</sup>American Loyalists, 8:156.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 7:276.

<sup>14</sup>Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, 2:272.

<sup>15</sup>American Loyalists, 13:373.

<sup>16</sup>Sabine, Biographical Sketches, 2:599.

Pensacola<sup>17</sup>; and Lieutenant-Colonel Stephen De Lancey of the first battalion of the New Jersey Volunteers.<sup>18</sup> It has been shown in previous chapters that these men fought a common enemy in North America and it is quite apparent that their comradeship lasted beyond Georgia's shores. This concentration of the military from the southern provinces is more than coincidence. Their common goals and values, plus Brown's knowledge of "the best soil in the Bahamas," led them to once again join forces.

This "invasion" of Loyalists led inevitably to political and social clashes with the old residents of the Bahamas. The Loyalists, typical of most refugees, settled in groups that had economic, blood, and common geographic ties from their past. A missionary observed that the "Conchs"<sup>19</sup> were ". . . poor, almost illiterate, unchurched and given to swearing and drinking" while the Loyalists were ". . . the gentry . . . employ their leisure hours in reading the works of Mandeville, Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Hume," and were ". . . unhappily . . . brought up in the

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<sup>17</sup>Peters, "American Loyalists," p. 206.

<sup>18</sup>Sabine, Biographical Sketches, 2:371.

<sup>19</sup>A term taken from a large shellfish, plentiful in the Bahamas and used to mean the Old Inhabitants who ate large quantities of this fish. Peters, "American Loyalists," p. 55.

North American school of modern politics."<sup>20</sup> Consequently, two different cultures, social and political, were in conflict.

Governor John Maxwell's initial welcome of the Loyalists soon turned into dismay and ultimately to the surrender of his office. The old residents resented the sheer numbers of newcomers and Maxwell, heeding their desires, discriminated when he could. He described the Loyalists in a letter to Lord Sidney in 1784 as being of two types: farmers who moved to the Out Islands with their families and slaves, and officers, merchants, and others who wished to return to the Continent. He considered the first group worthy of merit but the second group was demanding, could not be satisfied and "almost wish to take over the government."<sup>21</sup>

Maxwell was not too far from wrong. The Board of American Loyalists was organized in July, 1784. Their stated purpose was to unite "to preserve and maintain the Rights and Liberties for which they had left their home and their possessions. . . ."<sup>22</sup> The major point of disagreement between the Loyalists and the government was stated by

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<sup>20</sup>Wallace Brown, "The Loyalist of the American Revolution in the Bahamas and British West Indies," Revisite Internationale 5 (1975):643.

<sup>21</sup>Craton, History of the Bahamas, p. 166.

<sup>22</sup>Peters, "American Loyalists," p. 86.



William Wylly ". . . it is only reasonable that the Loyalists be admitted to a share in the legislature and . . . the Assembly be dissolved and a new General Election take place."<sup>23</sup>

A disputed election in 1784 climaxed the friction between Maxwell and the Loyalists. The Provost Marshal had declared six Old Inhabitants elected for Nassau and the Western District of New Providence even though Loyalists candidates had received the majority of the votes.<sup>24</sup> When a petition was presented to investigate the election, the Assembly deferred any consideration. Seven Loyalist members withdrew without the Speaker's permission. John Petty and Peter Dean went further and circulated a paper officially protesting the action of the Assembly. The Speaker ordered the protest paper burned publicly outside the Courthouse door.<sup>25</sup>

The Loyalists held a meeting on May 8, 1785, and announced a decision of revolutionary tones. They were ". . . not represented in the present Assembly . . . and of course not bound by any laws they might think proper to

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<sup>23</sup>Parrish MSS, p. 37.

<sup>24</sup>John Ferguson, future planter on Grand Caicos, was one of the disallowed candidates. Peters, "American Loyalists," p. 90.

<sup>25</sup>Craton, History of the Bahamas, pp. 168-69.

pass." John Ferguson, John Petty, and John M. Tatttnall were among the signers of the proclamation.<sup>26</sup>

By this time, Maxwell had been called to England and James Powell was Acting Governor. Powell did not bend to the Loyalists' wishes. He continued the Assembly for four more months and, on September 26, Peter Dean, John Petty, and James Moss were expelled from the Assembly for their part in circulating the petition.<sup>27</sup>

In spite of an apparent victory for the old residents, the Loyalists found Powell more desirable as Governor than they had Maxwell. The Bahama Gazette carried letters urging the permanency of Governor Maxwell's absence. John M. Tatttnall, John Petty, John McKenzie, John McDonald, and John Russell, future planters on Grand Caicos, signed the letters. A letter from the residents of Abaco, John Vallentine, John Forbes, and John Martin, also future planters on the Caicos, asked that their names be added to "that respectable list."<sup>28</sup>

Powell was a Loyalist, formerly of Georgia. He died in less than a year after he assumed his duties as Lieutenant Governor. John Brown, a Conch, served two years

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<sup>26</sup>Parrish MSS, p. 41.

<sup>27</sup>Craton, History of the Bahamas, p. 169.

<sup>28</sup>Parrish MSS, pp. 37-40.

as interim governor until John Earl of Dunmore became Governor in October, 1787.<sup>29</sup>

When Dunmore, the last royal governor of Virginia, became Governor of the Bahamas, the Loyalists had become the stronger party. Dunmore followed the policy of his predecessor and would not dissolve the disputed Assembly and allow new elections. The "Long Parliament" lasted eight more years until the end of Dunmore's administration.<sup>30</sup>

Governor Dunmore, an experienced politician, found an adversary in William Wylly, twenty-five years his junior. Wylly, a lawyer and captain in the King's Rangers from Georgia, made known his presence in New Providence, not as a ruffian soldier, but as a man with positive political ideas and capable of statesmanship. He observed in his book, A Short Account of the Bahamas, that newcomers who were accustomed to an upright administration of law were ". . . galled by that perversion of public justice."<sup>31</sup>

Wylly began his running fight against Dunmore, the Assembly, and the Courts by describing the Assembly as being ". . . composed of destitute, bankrupt, and habitual drunkards of lowest description . . . four planters, not a merchant, nor a lawyer, or any man of respectable property."

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<sup>29</sup>Peters, "American Loyalists," p. 95.

<sup>30</sup>Siebert, Legacy of American Revolution, p. 25.

<sup>31</sup>Parrish MSS, p. 35.

He compared this group to a colonial assembly which ". . . considered proper that men of the first weight, character, and information should compose the Council." Wylly described the Judges as having ". . . unpardonable ignorance, want of common honesty, and beastly drunkenness." He further charged that a sole Judge ". . . decides without a jury, upon all matters, not only of law, but of fact."<sup>32</sup>

Wylly's attack on the Governor was equally vicious and bold. He called Dunmore ". . . obstinate and violent by nature . . . with a capacity below mediocrity, little cultivated by education, ignorant of the constitution of England . . . the lordly Despot of a petty Clan . . . and the immorality of his private life less reprehensible than the defects of his public character." Specifically, Wylly accused Dunmore of fathering a child of a woman who was married to one of the Seachers of Custom.

Dunmore struck back at Wylly by having him arrested on a charge of having called the Chief Justice "a damn'd liar." Wylly's version was that the Chief Justice warned him more than once to support the government more loyally. The trial was a farce and the case was dismissed on the grounds of conflict of evidence.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., pp. 43-45.

<sup>33</sup>Craton, History of the Bahamas, pp. 174-79.

William Wylly's finest hour was his anti-slave stand. In the early 1800s he was accused of belonging to the abolition movement in England. Wylly, by then Attorney-General of the Bahamas, challenged the authority of master over slave in 1816. The case involved a Negro woman named Sue. She was brought to Nassau in 1809; her master, with a male Negro slave named Sandy, arrived in 1816. The master attempted to take Sue, Sandy, and a child born to them back to Georgia. Wylly ruled that Sue could not be taken.

Wylly refused to appear before a committee of the House to explain his ruling. He was arrested and imprisoned, but released by order of the Chief Justice. The House, asserting its claim to superiority over the Courts, declared the action of the Court unconstitutional. A public meeting supported the action of the Assembly. At a later meeting, the Assembly voted not to grant salaries to William Wylly and the Justice of the General Court since the beginning of the dispute, or for future services. This case was of such prominence that it was designated "the Wylly Affair."<sup>34</sup>

After 1790, when the automatic grants to the Loyalists ended, Dunmore was accused of using land grants as reward for patronage and to enrich himself. After

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<sup>34</sup>Siebert, Legacy of American Revolution, pp. 31-32.

tremendous government spending and other unpopular activities, Dunmore was ordered to return to England in 1796. John Forbes, a Georgia Loyalist, was appointed Acting Governor.<sup>35</sup> Not all the Loyalists participated in government during the period between 1785-1794. The Loyalists who were newcomers to the political arena were active, but the extremists, such as have been mentioned, were excluded in one way or the other. During this period, economic prosperity neutralized political friction. The long staple "sea island" cotton was being grown and plantations became more attractive each year.<sup>36</sup>

The following consists of biographical data on twenty-five families who established plantations during this period on Grand Caicos. Some of their names are found in the previous chapters as supporters of the Crown in North America and again as "extremists" in their exile home, the Bahamas. Whether it was for economic or political reasons, these families chose an Out Island, Grand Caicos, that offered opportunity for independence on both counts.

THOMAS ARMSTRONG most likely came from South Carolina. He first went to Abaco and failed as a planter there. He was granted 160 acres on the Caicos and also became a partner of John Russell, a wealthy shipbuilder from

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<sup>35</sup>Craton, History of the Bahamas, pp. 174-79.

<sup>36</sup>Craton, History of the Bahamas, p. 170.

East Florida, on Grand Caicos. His name appears as a witness on several estate appraisals made on the Caicos.

Close ties kept by the southern Loyalists are illustrated by the wedding of Thomas Armstrong's son, John, to the daughter of Henry Yonge, a lawyer and formerly of Georgia. John Armstrong had become a well respected lawyer in Nassau.<sup>37</sup>

JOHN BELL was obviously a man of great wealth as he did not depend on the British government for transportation to resettle in the Bahamas. The Bahama Gazette carried a story January 5, 1789, about Dr. John Bell, from East and West Florida, and his troubles at sea. It appears that one of his sloops sprung a leak and was forced to put in port in St. Eustatius "on his way to settle on an island." The sloop carried 180 of his Negroes along with other possessions.

Dr. John Bell settled on Grand Caicos, where he had been granted over 1,000 acres of land in 1791, and apparently lived there until his death early in 1800. He established two plantations, "Increase" and "Industry." An estate appraisal was made after his death; ninety Negro slaves were listed by name and age. Bell had 300 acres of cotton "highly cultivated" and 200 acres in pasture. Several buildings are described. A family type dwelling is

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<sup>37</sup>Parrish MSS, pp. 452-53.

among them but no mention of a family is made. "Increase" Plantation is identifiable today on the southeastern coast of Middle Caicos.<sup>38</sup>

THOMAS BROWN. The infamous Thomas Brown became benign in exile. His talent as a diplomat in Spanish Florida not only aided in the prolonged evacuation but was beneficial for those remaining under Spanish rule. In the Bahamas, Brown enjoyed a moderate political career. He became a member of the Assembly for the town of Nassau when he defeated Governor Dunmore's son in a special election. As a member of the Assembly, he served as chairman of a committee appointed to make a report "on the state of the Bahama Islands." In this report, Brown recommended new buildings for the town of Nassau. Apparently one building housed the court, the Assembly, and the jail. The report reflected an interest in the civic development of Nassau. Brown was appointed Salt Commissioner in 1789 after salt-raking was regulated by law. There was no pay for this position. Brown was praised in the Bahama Gazette as an honorable, upstanding gentleman.

In 1788, Brown was granted 1,000 acres of land on Abaco. Apparently he did not live on Abaco because he was elected as representative from Nassau, New Providence. He did establish a home on the 4,560 acres granted on Grand

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 135; Bahama Registry, E-2:290.



Caicos. The Bahama Gazette carried an announcement October 3, 1789, of the marriage of Miss Ester Farr, daughter of William Farr, an old resident of Nassau, to Colonel Thomas Brown, "at the Caicos." There are implications that Brown had a family in East Florida, but no direct mention is found and it can be concluded that his wife died, if indeed he had a wife prior to Miss Farr. Two children were born to the Browns: a son, of whom little is known, indicating that he might have died young; and a daughter, Susan Harriet, who later married a doctor on St. Vincent.

It is notable that Mrs. Brown's father, William Farr, was also a planter on Grand Caicos. He was granted land the same month and year as Brown and, according to his grant description, his land was "bounded on the south by Thomas Brown, Esq."

Brown was the only grantee to be given grants on both North and Middle Caicos. The largest tract was on North Caicos. Near that tract, a present-day village bears the name Whitby which was the name of the town in England from which Brown emigrated in his youth.

The Browns left Grand Caicos and resettled on St. Vincent sometime after 1800. Mrs. Brown's father died in 1800, the plantations were on the decline, and French pirates were raiding commercial ships bringing supplies to the Caicos--all of which probably contributed to the move.

Brown was in England in 1809 and petitioned for land in the West Indies. The British government granted him six thousand acres on St. Vincent. He was implicated in a forgery charge concerning this property. Some accounts say he was convicted of forgery in 1812. Sabine doubts the story since convictions of forgery in England at this time usually resulted in the death penalty.<sup>39</sup>

Brown's well-written letters clearly indicate that he was well educated. He wrote to the historian, Dr. David Ramsey, after the publication of The History of the Revolution of South Carolina. He explained that his behavior as an officer in a war was no different from the American generals. He gave examples of heinous war crimes committed by the Whigs against the Loyalists, including his own tarring and feathering. He denied taking vengeance ". . . esteeming it more honorable to forgive than to revenge. . . ." <sup>40</sup> In another letter written by Brown to Lord Liverpool in London, he stated that at a moment's notice he was ready to leave his plantation and resume superintendency of the southern Indians in Florida.<sup>41</sup>

However, Brown never got the opportunity to return to his St. Augustine house on Charlotte Street; his exile

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<sup>39</sup> Sabine, Biographical Sketches, 1:262-65.

<sup>40</sup> Historical Collections of Georgia Compiled from Records and Official Documents, George White, ed. (New York: Pudney and Russell Publishers, 1854), p. 614.

<sup>41</sup> Wright, Florida in the American Revolution, p. 152.

was permanent. He continued to manage his St. Vincent plantation, taking solace in the fact that most of his Whig adversaries were dead, including Thomas Graham, the man who took the lead in tarring and feathering him in 1775. Graham was shot in August, 1782, by Creek warriors who had escaped the Whigs in Georgia.<sup>42</sup>

The Royal Gazette carried a death notice of Mrs. Brown "at St. Vincent" in 1807. Eighteen years later, 1825, Colonel Brown died. His obituary described him as a "distinguished, gallant, and enterprising officer who had achieved the rank of Colonel Commandant of his Majesty's late regiment of South Carolina or Queen's Rangers and also Superintendent General of Indian Affairs in the Southern districts of North America."<sup>43</sup>

JOHN COCHRAN is one of the few on Caicos whose origin was not a southern colony. As a claimant for property loss he identified himself as Chaplain Commandant of the Majesty Fort William and Mary in Providence of New Hampshire. His claim was filed February 5, 1787, and his grant was made September 4, 1790.<sup>44</sup>

ROBERT CUNNINGHAM was the son of John Cunningham, a Scotsman, who moved from Virginia to Ninety-Six District,

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

<sup>43</sup>Gentleman's Magazine 95 (October 1825):382.

<sup>44</sup>American Loyalists, 13:373.

South Carolina, in 1769. He was commissioned a Circuit Judge of District Ninety-Six and is considered one of the most prominent Loyalists of the South. He supported the British cause as early as 1775 when he objected to the Non-Importation Act. He advised neighbors not to sign the Whig Association and subsequently took up arms with Thomas Brown against the Whigs (see Chapter III). Cunningham was arrested and jailed but was released in July, 1776. He tried to join the Whig forces after the release, but they declined his services. Colonel Andrew Williamson, a Whig, wrote that Cunningham stated he came "to stand and fall with us. . . . I believe him to be sincere but at present it would be improper to confer any public trust on him." In 1780 he was made a Brigadier-General of the Royal Militia of South Carolina and remained loyal to the Crown.

At the conclusion of the war, Cunningham asked to be allowed to remain in South Carolina but his request was denied. His property was confiscated in 1782. He went to East Florida where he bought property on the St. Mary's River. In 1783 Cunningham went to Nova Scotia and later to England before settling in the Caicos.

General Cunningham was granted half pension pay for life and compensated for losses both in South Carolina and

East Florida. The British government was liberal in its allowances for his losses.<sup>45</sup>

In 1790, the same year Cunningham was granted 608 acres of land on Grand Caicos, both the Georgia Gazette and the Bahama Gazette carried an announcement of the marriage of Margaret Cunningham, daughter of Brigadier-General Robert Cunningham, to Richard Pearis, Jr., whose father, Richard Pearis, also received land on Grand Caicos and was formerly from South Carolina.<sup>46</sup> Cunningham died in 1813 at the age of 74.<sup>47</sup>

JOHN EDWARDS was from Virginia originally and moved to South Carolina. He served in the British Militia and fought with Cornwallis at the Battle of Camden. Edwards was severely wounded in this battle and was granted an annual pension of £20 for life to begin in the summer of 1783.<sup>48</sup>

WILLIAM FARR was the only grantee who was originally from the Bahamas. In his daughter's wedding announcement, October 3, 1789, he is acknowledged as an "old resident" of Nassau.

Farr was granted 380 acres on Grand Caicos in March, 1789. His plantation, "Cottage," joined the lands of his

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<sup>45</sup>Sabine, Biographical Sketches, 1:347; Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, 2:6, 316, 363.

<sup>46</sup>Parrish MSS, p. 421.

<sup>47</sup>Sabine, Biographical Sketches, 1:347.

<sup>48</sup>American Loyalists, 3:276.

daughter and son-in-law, Colonel and Mrs. Thomas Brown. An appraisal made at the time of his death "at the Caicos," indicates a well-developed plantation complete with slave quarters.

Farr's will was filed July 19, 1799, which gave "one-third of his estate to his wife, one-third to his daughter Margaret, one-third to Hetty Brown, wife of Colonel Thomas Brown of Grand Ciacos, to one son William \$100, daughter Sarah Bromball \$100, and daughter Elizabeth Fleming, \$100." Farr died in 1800 on Grand Caicos.<sup>49</sup>

JOHN FERGUSON was a petitioner for land from East Florida, November, 1781. He claimed as his loss a lot and building in St. Augustine. Ferguson was active in politics in the Bahamas. He was elected for a seat in the Assembly for the town of Nassau in 1784 but was denied the seat in favor of an "Old Inhabitant." His name appeared on the 1785 declaration made by the Loyalists that ". . . they were not bound by any laws." He also appears on a petition from Abaco, January 6, 1788, as a Justice of Peace.<sup>50</sup>

WILLIAM HENRY HAMILTON was from North Carolina and served as a captain in the regiment of the North Carolina Volunteers. He was a claimant in 1789 for temporary support, being so destitute he could not pay his fare as a

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<sup>49</sup> Bahama Registry, E-2:234; Wills 1790-1806:90.

<sup>50</sup> Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, 2:269; Peters, "American Loyalists," p. 90.

passenger on a ship. His signature appeared as a witness to losses suffered by John Hamilton while fighting under Cornwallis. He was granted 290 acres on Grand Caicos in 1790.<sup>51</sup>

JOHN GREGORY HARRISON was from South Carolina and later moved to Georgia. Siebert lists him as a refugee from East Florida. Harrison claimed losses of £303 and was awarded £110. Harrison is one of the few to settle on the Caicos whose reputation is tainted. In 1780 he applied to Cornwallis for an officer's rank with the promise to raise a corps of 500 men. Sir Henry Clinton agreed to the proposal. Harrison failed to raise the corps and "is said to have retired at the end of the war to Jamaica with much wealth acquired by robbery." Siebert believes, however, he went to the Bahamas. He is listed under Loyalists, 1780-82, with the South Carolina Rangers; "one company of 80 men under Major John Gregory Harrison, December 24, 1781."<sup>52</sup>

JOHN LORIMER'S name has survived to the present day in the name of one of the villages on Middle Caicos. He is the only Loyalist so honored.

Dr. John Lorimer received a commission as a military surgeon to the garrison at Pensacola, March 14, 1765. He was elected a member of the House of Assembly from Campbell

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<sup>51</sup>Claims, Series II, 6:202.

<sup>52</sup>Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, 2:361, 140, 375.

Town, West Florida, and served as temporary speaker. In 1776, he received several grants of land on the Mississippi River.

When West Florida surrendered to the Spaniards, Dr. Lorimer was among the prisoners sent to New York. The records show that, on April 2, 1782, Lorimer bought a Negro woman named Diana from William Garider of New Town, Long Island. He freed Diana November 20, 1783, witnessed by Public Notary.

While in New York he was inspector of Regimental Hospitals before immigrating to the Bahamas in 1789. He was granted land on the Caicos in 1791 where he died in 1807.

Dr. Lorimer's will gave specific instructions concerning his funeral. He wrote,

I wish my body to be carried to the grave by six of my Negroes (if I have any) dressed in white. For long services rendered me by my Negro woman Rose, I leave her free . . . leave Rose any two of my young Negroes born and raised at the Caicos or Turks Islands which she may choose. Also that the Negro woman Betty and her issue be the property of said Rose being bought for her from Robert Darrell.

He left his brother Thomas one-third of his property and, to his other brothers, Charles and James, and sister, Janett Sowers, the balance.

Present-day inhabitants know the location of Lorimer's grave, though time has erased any markings. Plantation ruins north of Lorimers are identified by the



residents as having belonged to "Mr. Lorimers, the American."<sup>53</sup>

JOHN MARTIN was a Georgia citizen who lived on Jekyl Island at the time of the Revolution. He published his intentions to leave Georgia for Florida in the Georgia Gazette, 1775. Martin was banished from Georgia March 1, 1778; his estate of 6,032 acres was confiscated and sold June, 1782.<sup>54</sup>

Martin moved to East Florida and was elected one of nineteen members to sit in the Commons House. When Florida was evacuated he moved to the Bahamas and claimed a loss of 200 acres, located four miles from St. Augustine.

In the Bahamas he is listed as one of the members representing the Western District of Nassau. He was clearly conservative and, from the beginning, politically active. He was appointed Justice of Peace and served as one who examined evidence in the Slave Trials which were conducted from 1785-1796. In June, 1789, Governor Dunmore appointed him one of the Assistant Justices of the General Court of the Bahamas, a position he held until his death in 1796. Martin was survived by his widow, Anna, and a son. Whether

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<sup>53</sup>Parrish MSS, pp. 386-87; interview with Stephen Penn, resident of Lorimers, Middle Caicos, July, 1982.

<sup>54</sup>Candler, Revolutionary Records of Georgia, p. 146; American Loyalists, 7:274.

or not they continued to live on Grand Caicos is not known.<sup>55</sup>

JOHN MCDONALD was banished from Georgia March 1, 1788.<sup>56</sup> As a Loyalist filing a claim, he identified himself as Captain John McDonald serving in Major Wright's company of the Georgia Loyalists. He petitioned for loss of "considerable" property and asked for additional help for wounds received in the "troubles." His wounds were so severe that one arm was "rendered" useless; McDonald was allowed £40 annually beginning in 1786.<sup>57</sup>

JOHN MCKINZIE petitioned as a resident of North Carolina for losses in that state. He testified that he served as a captain in the British Legion of the military and had been loyal in the early part of the uprising. McKinzie asked for and was granted temporary support for his four children who ranged in age from 18 years old to 18 months old.

McKinzie was active in Bahamian politics. His name appears on a petition to prevent Governor Maxwell's return to New Providence.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>Parrish MSS, p. 391.

<sup>56</sup>Candler, Revolutionary Records of Georgia, p. 379.

<sup>57</sup>American Loyalists, 8:90.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 8:55; Parrish MSS, p. 39.

JOHN MCINTOSH was a Georgia citizen who was banished and had 2,450 acres of land confiscated and sold.<sup>59</sup> In the Bahamas, McIntosh was outspoken in opposition to Governor Dunmore. His name appears on an affidavit testifying to a derogatory statement made by Governor Dunmore.<sup>60</sup>

McIntosh became a planter on Grand Caicos. He witnessed the estate appraisal of John M. Tattnall in December of 1796 made on Grand Caicos.<sup>61</sup>

ALEXANDER MCLEAN was active in the British cause in Georgia. He was listed among the banished from Richmond County, Georgia, March 1, 1788.<sup>62</sup> McLean joined Thomas Brown's King's Rangers and attained the rank of Major. He actively recruited for the Rangers and received compensation for this effort and was also compensated for transporting supplies to and from Augusta for the military. However, he was denied a pension.<sup>63</sup>

McLean moved to East Florida after the evacuation of Savannah and then to Abaco. In December, 1789, he received land on the Caicos where he established a home. In a will written by C. F. Taylor, McLean is mentioned as a resident

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<sup>59</sup>Candler, Revolutionary Records of Georgia, p. 422.

<sup>60</sup>Parrish MSS, p. 46.

<sup>61</sup>Bahama Registry, E-2:147.

<sup>62</sup>Candler, Revolutionary Records of Georgia, 1:386.

<sup>63</sup>American Loyalists, 7:276.

of the Caicos and it is specified that a slave family be returned to McLean since it was always considered that they were his property. The will was dated 1799. No mention is found of McLean after this date.<sup>64</sup>

RICHARD PEARIS immigrated with his parents to America at age 10. He lived in Virginia in 1755 on a 1,200 acre plantation. Pearis served as a Lieutenant in the Virginia Provincial Regiment as a Captain in charge of Cherokee and Catawba Indians. He actively fought against the Shawnee towns west of the Ohio River. He married a Cherokee woman and they had one son. Pearis had influence with the Indians and was sent to South Carolina in 1768 to serve as a British Indian Agent. He was involved with William Henry Drayton (see Chapter III); Drayton's activities caused Pearis to defect to the British cause. He joined Brigadier General Robert Cunningham and Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Brown in their siege of Ninety-Six, in November, 1775. Pearis was arrested and jailed in Charleston. While in jail, he took an oath of neutrality. This did not prevent his home from being burned and his family from being carried away. After extended effort to find his family, Pearis and six other refugees walked 700

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<sup>64</sup>Bahama Registry, Wills 1790-1850:150.

miles to West Florida. Pearis was granted land in Florida and was active for the British in that area.

Three years later Pearis returned to Ninety-Six and found his family. Indications are that the family was not separated again. After the recapture of Savannah by the British, Pearis, then a Lieutenant-Colonel, was ordered to go to Ninety-Six and raise support from the Loyalists. Pearis reportedly became disenchanted with the British and tried to neutralize his position and stay in South Carolina. When Savannah was evacuated, however, Pearis took his family and settled on St. John's River in East Florida.

Pearis' claim was heard in Nova Scotia. He received compensation for personal property in Virginia, South Carolina, and West Florida. He was awarded £5,624 in money and a military allowance of £70 yearly from 1784 to 1808. Pearis was granted 400 acres on Grand Caicos in 1790.

A sale, in 1791, of 100 acres of land on Grand Caicos is recorded to Thomas and Margaret Hill of New Providence. This transaction established Richard Pearis as a resident of Grand Caicos.

The Georgia Gazette and the Bahama Gazette both carried notice of the marriage of his son, Richard Pearis, Jr., to Margaret Cunningham, daughter of Brigadier-General

Robert Cunningham, July 22, 1790. Pearis died early in 1810 on the Caicos.<sup>65</sup>

JOHN PETTY, formerly of Georgia, operated a large estate on Providence Caicos, one of the islands of Grand Caicos. Petty was outspoken in Bahamian politics prior to his move to the Caicos. He was expelled from the Assembly at Nassau when he circulated a protest against the disputed election of 1784. The Speaker burned the protest in the doorway of the Assembly House and expelled Petty for his part in the circulation. Petty continued to be outspoken and signed other petitions protesting the undemocratic practices of the Bahamian government. For example, the declaration May 8, 1785, ". . . not represented . . . not bound by any laws they think proper to pass."<sup>66</sup>

THOMAS RIGBY was a native of England, immigrated to East Florida and petitioned to return to British territory when East Florida was ceded to Spain. He claimed losses of a house with double grounds on Charlotte Street, St. Augustine. He identified his trade as a Blacksmith. His wife and two sons are mentioned in his petition. Two hundred acres were granted on Grand Caicos in 1789.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>Parrish MSS, pp. 419-23; Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, 2:272, 273; Bahama Registry, E-1:83.

<sup>66</sup>Parrish MSS, p. 41; Craton, History of the Bahamas, pp. 168-69.

<sup>67</sup>A Spanish Census of Loyalists in Florida in 1783 (Georgia Genealogical Magazine, 1971). p. 75.

WADE STUBBS listed his losses in East Florida as 1,450 acres of land plus 15 head of stock and four riding horses. His slaves were listed as three Negro men and two children. Stubbs was a native of England and had immigrated to East Florida.

Stubbs established a plantation on the Caicos in 1789. Records of an account in London in 1807 for a shipment of goods to the Caicos establish his residency there. Also, a sale of 200 acres on the Caicos to John Forbes, former Governor of the Bahamas, is recorded in 1809.

Ruins of the Stubbs plantation remain on Middle Caicos today (see Chapter VIII).<sup>68</sup>

JOHN MULRYNE TATTNALL was one of the first Georgians to be banished.<sup>69</sup> He was a "large property" owner in Georgia and in East Florida. He claimed £5,529 and was allowed only £1,807.<sup>70</sup>

John M. Tattnall was active for the rights of Loyalists. He signed a petition while in East Florida soliciting aid for the refugees. He became a member of the Board of Loyalists in the Bahamas and signed the declaration

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<sup>68</sup>Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, 2:283; Spanish Census, p. 58; Bahama Registry, X-1809:28-31, 294.

<sup>69</sup>Robert S. Davis, Georgia Citizens and Soldiers of the American Revolution (Easley, South Carolina: Southern Historical Press, 1979), p. 222.

<sup>70</sup>Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, 2:307.

May 8, 1785. which stated their strong feelings about not being represented in the Assembly.

His extremist views undoubtedly cost him the appointment of Searcher of Customs. His father wrote from London that the appointment had been made but was being held up because of a letter from Governor Maxwell. Maxwell had reported to the British government that Tattnall was trying to overthrow the government. Tattnall openly retaliated in a letter published in the Bahama Gazette December 4, 1784, in which he explained that he had sacrificed his "fortune and dearest connections to the interest of his country and attachment to his Sovereign." He did not get the appointment.

Tattnall received over 1,000 acres on the Caicos. His estate appraisal at his death in December, 1796, describes a well-developed estate. His dwelling was a two-story house with a wide entry, dining room, and two parlors on the first floor, two bedrooms with a wide landing on the second floor, and a back entry (with furnishings) that probably connected to a kitchen to the rear of the house. The house was well furnished with mahogany furniture and silver serving utensils (see Chapter VIII). His plantation "Bonaventure" contained about 600 acres with 120 under cultivation (cotton of "tolerable appearance") and about thirty in pasture. He had stone buildings equipped with the latest invention to clean cotton, the wind ginn. Negro



houses with an overseer's house indicate the organization of labor on Tattnall's plantation. His property was appraised at less value because of its location in the West Indies. Cotton was on the decline by 1796 when Tattnall died.<sup>71</sup>

CHARLES FOX TAYLOR was only granted 60 acres on Grand Caicos, yet his name appears on estate appraisals as witnesses along with the large planters. It is likely that he bought additional acreage.

A letter is recorded in the Bahama Registry, May 27, 1799, written to Edwin Gardner by C. F. Taylor. It appears in the section of Wills and was written in South Carolina. It seems that Taylor had made a voyage to South Carolina and had become ill. The doctor had been summoned and, after the doctor left, Taylor felt he might die soon. He wrote to Gardner asking him to make arrangements for him in respect to the papers he had with him, his servant, and the baggage still on board the vessel in which he had traveled. He explained that his passage was not yet paid and he was to take \$50 out of the \$130 in the trunks and pay that bill. Taylor explained to Gardner that his attorneys on Grand Caicos, "where I live," Mr. John McIntosh, John Lorimer, and John G. Harrison would have charge of his affairs in "that part of the world." He asked that his trunks be sent to these men and that the Negro boy, borrowed

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<sup>71</sup>Peters, "American Loyalists," p. 89; Bahama Registry, E-2:33.

from his brother-in-law, Dr. Anthony George Forbes, who was a planter on the same island, be returned. He gave his Negroes to his mother and asked that his friend Thomas Forbes tell his mother about his death (indicating his mother lived on the Caicos). He mentioned other Negroes, Mac, his wife and two children would go to Alexander McLean because they were considered McLean's property.

Gardner registered the will with Major Charles Linsey of Charleston District of South Carolina the 27th of August, 1800, "an oath to the will of C. F. Taylor, deceased, May 27, 1799." Obviously, Taylor died in South Carolina the night he wrote the letter.<sup>72</sup>

THOMAS WILLIAMSON was from East Florida and claimed a loss of 223 acres of land and town lots at John's Town, Hester Bluff House. His total claim was £5,525 and he was allowed £1,362. Williamson received 580 acres of land on the Caicos. A large portion was on Parrot Cay off North Caicos.<sup>73</sup>

STEPHEN DE LANCEY belonged to the prominent De Lancey family of New York. He achieved the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant of the First Battalion of New Jersey Volunteers. Earlier he served with the 2nd Battalion

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<sup>72</sup>Bahama Registry, Wills, 1790-1806:150.

<sup>73</sup>Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, 2:267; Bahama Registry, A-1:180, A-1:179, D-1:171.

of New York Volunteers and helped defend Savannah in 1779 against the French and Americans (see Chapter IV).

De Lancey went to Nova Scotia at the close of the war and was appointed a member of the Council. Upon going to the Bahamas, he was appointed Chief Justice there and held that position until 1797.<sup>74</sup>

An appraisal made February 27, 1800, describes his 900 acre plantation, "Greenwich," as having "all improvements." Eighteen Negro slaves are listed by name and a complete wind ginn denotes cotton cultivation. The list of household items is not as detailed as in other appraisals but the items listed are as elegant, such as mahagony furniture and silver. Multiple "plantation boats" are listed in the appraisal.<sup>75</sup>

Sabine acknowledges there is conflicting evidence about Stephen De Lancey. He believes that De Lancey died at Portsmouth, in America, on board a ship, and that his body was interred in Governor Wentworth's tomb in 1799.<sup>76</sup>

THE WYLLY FAMILY. Alexander Wylly, with his brother Richard and sister Hester, immigrated from Ireland to Georgia in 1750. Their father joined them in 1758. Alexander married Susanna Crook of Chatham County, Georgia.

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<sup>74</sup>Sabine, Biographical Sketches, pp. 371-72.

<sup>75</sup>Bahama Registry, E-2:277;

<sup>76</sup>Sabine, Biographical Sketches, pp. 371-72.

Richard was a lawyer and Alexander was a planter and active in politics. Alexander served as Speaker of the House in Georgia for several years. The Wylly family became prominent in the history of Revolutionary Georgia. Richard became a Whig while Alexander remained a Loyalist.

Alexander and Susanna had two sons, Alexander Campbell and William, and one daughter, Susannah. Both sons were students at Oxford, England, when the war started. They returned to Georgia and became Captains in Thomas Brown's King's Rangers, thus asserting their undaunted loyalty to the British. In Georgia, Alexander Wylly, Speaker of the House, was a moderate to the point that Governor James Oglethorpe disallowed his re-election as Speaker. Soon, Alexander took a strong stand for the Crown but Richard joined the Patriots. Richard served on a committee for Revolutionary Georgia Government in 1778. His name appears as a member of the Executive Council of the Georgia government between 1776 and 1778. Thus, a family was divided and would never reunite.

After losing his position as Speaker of the Commons House of Georgia (because he had instructed the Georgia agent to work for the repeal of the Townshend Acts) Alexander Wylly fled to East Florida in 1776. He feared being "tarr'd and feather'd" because he was also a loyal British subject. Wylly returned to Savannah and died there in 1781; his death was probably "hasten'd by the troubles."

His widow lost their land by confiscation. She and her daughter went to Jamaica when Savannah was evacuated, but were forced to go to England because of the daughter's health. They later joined William and Alexander Campbell in the Bahamas.

The sons, William and Alexander Campbell, were active in the War and William was active in Bahamian politics (see Chapter VII). William married twice--Miss Matthews first, and a Miss Tyson second. Alexander Campbell married Margaret Armstrong of Nassau, formerly of North Carolina. Alexander Campbell and his wife wanted to return to the Continent. They first went to St. Augustine and then moved to Jekyl Island. Later they established a home on St. Simon's Island. During the War of 1812, Alexander had slaves to escape and join the British. Ironically, Wyllly was on the wrong side. The Treaty gave repayment to American citizens whose slaves had joined the British. Wyllly, being a British subject, received no payment. Alexander Campbell Wyllly died on St. Simon's Island. He had four grandsons who fought for the Confederacy during the Civil War in America. Three became Captains and the fourth was a Subaltern. All suffered wounds during the war.

Susanna Wyllly married John Anderson, a Loyalist from Savannah, while in Nassau. They continued to live there after trying to return to the Continent. A chilly reception caused them to return to New Providence where they died.

William Wylly, the most prominent of the family after the Revolution, served as Attorney-General in New Providence, and in 1812 became a Chief Justice on the Island of St. Vincent. Notice of his death was made in 1825 from that Island. Alexander Campbell Wylly, William Wylly, and Susannah Wylly all received land grants on Grand Caicos. There is no absolute evidence they exercised these grants.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>Parrish MSS, pp. 277-478; Sabine, Biographical Sketches, 2:599; Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, p. 49; Lambert, "The Flight of Georgia Loyalists," p. 445; Bahama Registry, D-1:114, A-1:112, F-1:9.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PLANTATION PERIOD ON TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS: 1789-1820

Today, scrubby brush, cactus, and trees cover the ruins of a brief Plantation Period unlike anything the Turks and Caicos Islands have ever experienced. Although the physical remains are few and in poor condition, the records in the Bahama Registry at Nassau and other historical data make it possible to know much about that time.

Geographically, the plantations lay along the northern coast of Middle Caicos and North Caicos and on the west coast of North Caicos, including Parrot Cay. Almost all plantations were bounded on one or more sides by the sea (see Maps 4 and 5). The higher elevation on the northern coast made agriculture possible while the lower elevation on the southern coasts created swamps and wet lands. A road called The Royal Road or King's Road connected the plantations and gave access to the landings to export cotton.

Daniel McKinnen made a voyage from England to the West Indies in the year 1802 to "notice the principal

islands enumerated." The Turks and Caicos were among the islands he visited and he left an eyewitness account of the conditions prevailing at that time. He described the soil of the middle islands of the crescent as having "some spots of clay . . ." and as being ". . . the most esteemed of any in the Bahamas." He found two sugar plantations but acknowledged that the staple commodity produced was cotton. West Indian fruits were growing "to perfection," especially oranges. McKinnen praised the new inhabitants for their "indefatigable effort" in planting and building roads suitable for carriages despite the rocky land.<sup>1</sup>

McKinnen described a cotton plantation on Acklins Islands, just northeast of Grand Caicos, which would be typical of plantations in all of the Out Islands. He stated that the average yield of cotton per acre was about 112 pounds and he found Negroes picking cotton in March. An unreliable crop was sometimes harvested later in the summer. The Anguilla, a long staple cotton, was grown as opposed to the Persian, or short staple, that was grown in Georgia.<sup>2</sup>

The invention of the cotton gin by Eli Whitney in 1793 revolutionized the cotton industry just at the time the plantations on the Caicos were being established.

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<sup>1</sup>McKinnen, A Tour, pp. 130-31.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 98.



Basically, the gin consisted of two parallel rollers, which turned in opposite directions, powered by either a hand or foot operated crank. It agitated the seeds and they fell through a screen, leaving the fiber. Joseph Eve of Nassau, an American Loyalist, soon improved Whitney's version of the gin by using wind for power.<sup>3</sup>

Cotton was known in colonial Georgia; however, it was mostly grown for home use prior to the Revolution.<sup>4</sup> The plantations the Loyalists lost by confiscation had been predominately engaged in the cultivation of rice near the coast and indigo, tobacco, corn, rye, and wheat in the back-country near Augusta.<sup>5</sup> Many post-Revolutionary Georgians owed their fortunes to the act of confiscation, including General Nathanael Greene, second in command to George Washington and later in charge of the Continental Army in the South. It was on Greene's widow's plantation that Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin in 1793.<sup>6</sup>

Ironically, the Anguilla, or long staple cotton, was sent to Georgia by a Loyalist, Roger Kelsall, about 1786 and became the principle American crop before the gin, since it

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<sup>3</sup>Peters, "American Loyalists," p. 157.

<sup>4</sup>Ralph Betts Flanders, Plantation Slavery in Georgia (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1933), p. 55.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 40-55.

<sup>6</sup>Medora Field Perkerson, White Column in Georgia (New York: Bonanza Books, 1956), p. 126.

could be processed without machinery.<sup>7</sup> Also, a planter from the Bahamas traveled to Georgia in 1794 and introduced the Bahamian method of setting the plants much closer together than had been practiced there before. This resulted in three times the yield, or about 340 pounds of clean cotton per acre, in Georgia. Much of the equipment of rice plantations could be converted to the cotton culture and rice was displaced as the staple crop of the tide-water area in 1793. This resulted in Georgia becoming a cotton rather than a rice growing state.<sup>8</sup>

The soil of the new cotton growing area of Georgia, sand and sandy loam above the clay and sand subsoil of the Atlantic coastal plain,<sup>9</sup> was similar to that McKinnen described on Middle Caicos. The invention of the cotton gin, and the demand in England by the textile industries for cotton, made the next few decades extremely prosperous for the plantation islands in the Bahamas as well as Georgia.

The Plantation Period on Grand Caicos was colorful because of the settlers themselves and the plantations they created on this formerly uninhabited island. After 1789, plantations mushroomed along the northern coast; the planters, ". . . men of capital." brought their families,

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<sup>7</sup>Peters, "American Loyalists," p. 149.

<sup>8</sup>Flanders, Slavery in Georgia, pp. 56-57.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 57.

slaves, livestock, knowledge of plantation cultivation, arts and crafts, books, and all else needed to create a self-contained home life and farming hierarchy in this new British community.

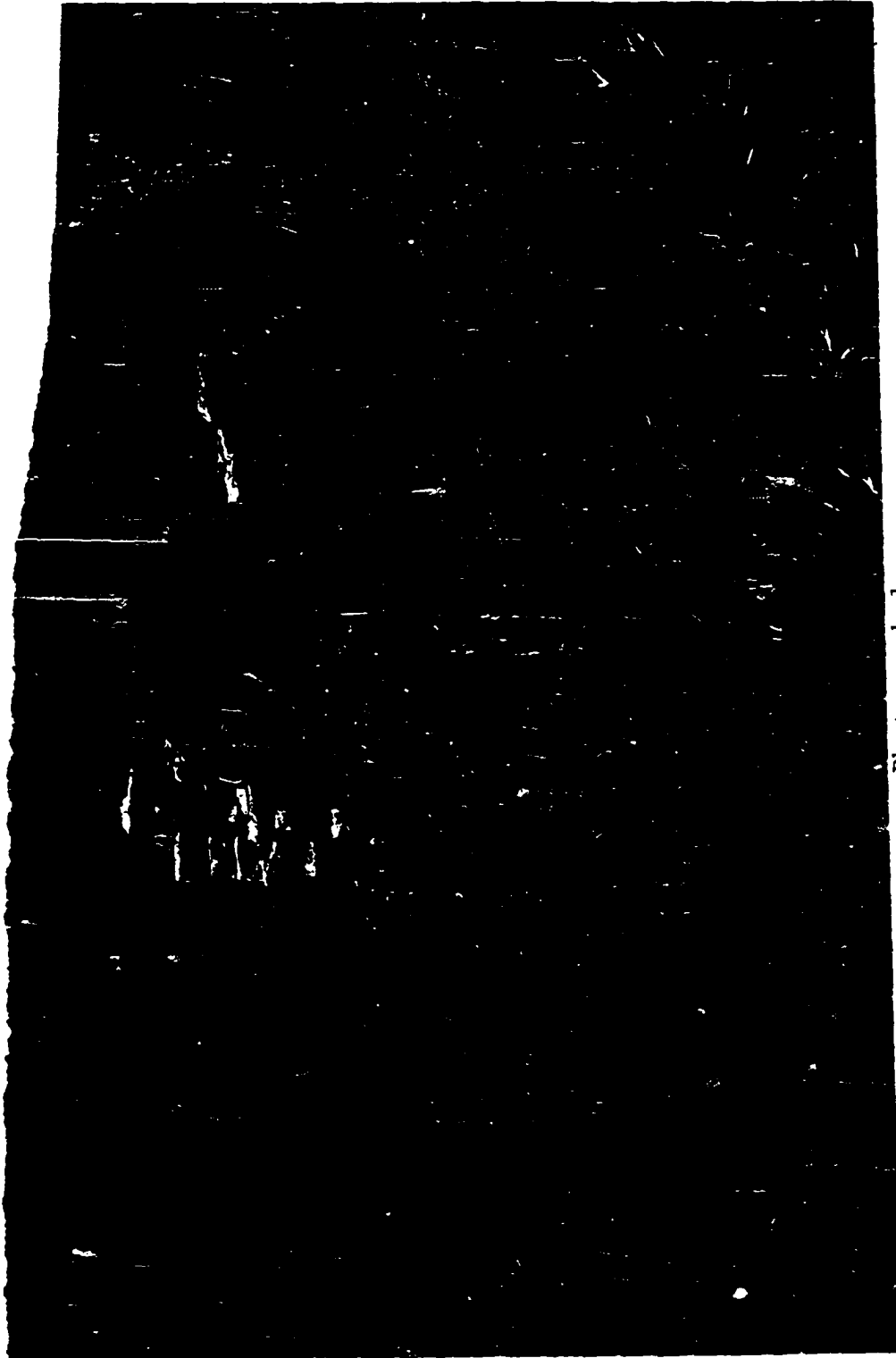
McKinnen's eyewitness account is brief and incomplete in many areas. Through the various estate appraisals and inventories recorded in the Bahama Registry, much more detail can be added. McKinnen mentioned only two species of animals raised on the Caicos, horned cattle and hogs.<sup>10</sup> In the inventories, horses were found on all the plantations. John Bell had a total of ten horses, including four mares, two fillies, and a "horse colt." Cows, calves, and bulls were included in the inventories, along with turkeys, guinea fowl, ducks, and geese.

Some plantations were known by a name. John Bell, probably a medical doctor, had two plantations, "Increase" and "Industry." "Increase" was described at the time of Bell's death in 1801 as having 1,470 acres of land, 300 of which were in cotton "highly cultivated," two hundred in pasture "properly subdivided with stone walls" (see Photographs 1 and 2), and the remainder in "standing woods."<sup>11</sup> The pasture "properly subdivided" was undoubtedly for cattle raising on the estate. Cattle were mentioned in

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<sup>10</sup>McKinnen, A Tour, p. 130.

<sup>11</sup>Bahama Registry, E-2:290.



Photograph 1  
Stone fences which subdivided fields



Photograph 2  
Decorated stone fences at "Haulover" Plantation

his inventory and cattle raising was commonly practiced on other Out Island plantations.<sup>12</sup> John Bell's residence was described as being "a frame dwelling house twenty-eight feet long by sixteen feet wide with a hall, two bedrooms and a pantry on one floor with an eleven foot piazza and a stone kitchen." Other buildings included "a cotton house made of pitch pine measuring thirty-nine feet long and sixteen feet wide complete with cellars, a corn house built of stone measuring forty feet long by twelve feet wide, and thirteen large stone houses for Negroes."<sup>13</sup>

William Farr called his 380 acre plantation "Cottage." An appraisal in February, 1800, states that 120 acres were in pasture and cultivation. A dwelling house (without description) and Negro buildings were on the plantation.<sup>14</sup> Wade Stubbs named a portion of his holdings "Clifton" (see Photographs 3 and 4).<sup>15</sup>

John Mulryne Tattnall's 600 acre plantation was called "Bonaventure."<sup>16</sup> William Forbes owned the "Retreat" plantation.<sup>17</sup> John Petty named his 800 acres "Brough

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<sup>12</sup>Craton, History of the Bahamas, p. 193.

<sup>13</sup>Bahama Registry, E-2:290.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 234.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., X-Conveyances, 1809:28-31.

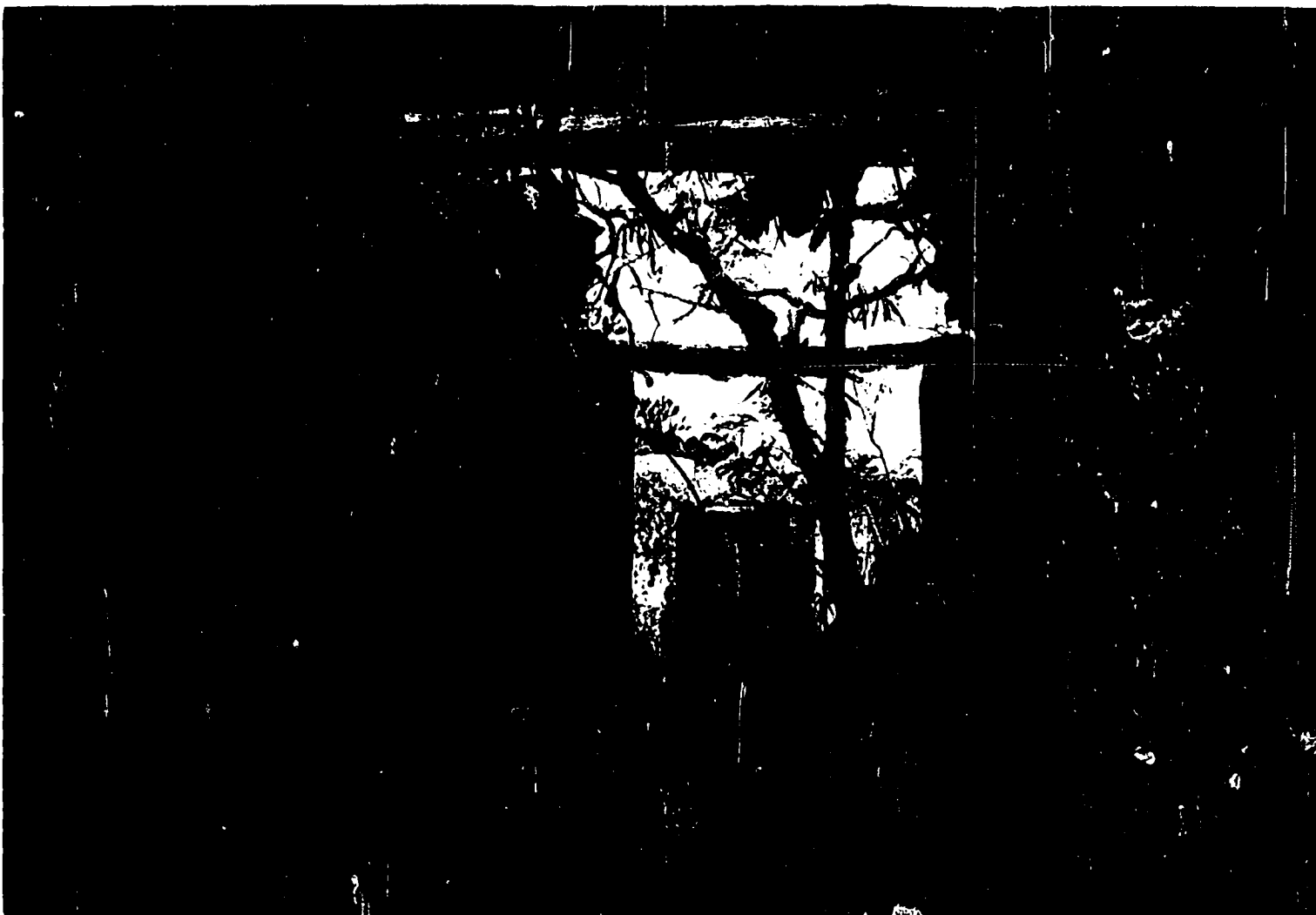
<sup>16</sup>Ibid., E-2:33.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 147.



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Photograph 3  
Stubbs Plantation. Outbuildings. Note the sea in the background which was a constant factor on the Caicos.



Photograph 4  
Stubbs Plantation. Outbuildings that could have been for cotton cleaning. The building has carriage size doorways.



Hill."<sup>18</sup> Stephen De Lancey's 900 acre estate, named "Greenwich," was complete with a "wind ginn" and a machine to clean cotton.<sup>19</sup> It is notable that these plantations were equipped with the newly invented "wind ginns." Thus, they were mechanically more advanced than most Georgia or South Carolina plantations at this time. Wind ginns greatly improved the output of cotton per acre and decreased the labor compared with the less efficient hand or animal driven ginns of the States.

According to folk-history, Dr. John Lorimer's 500 acre plantation was named "Haulover."<sup>20</sup> Stone foundations of a large dwelling house, a separate kitchen with a stone fireplace and chimney, and smaller houses were enclosed within a stone wall. Entrance gates large enough for carriages to pass through denote the extent the estate was developed. Many acres were subdivided with stone fences high enough to contain cattle. The dwelling was located high on the northern coast of Middle Caicos with a view of the sea.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 213.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 277.

<sup>20</sup>Interview with Alton Higgs, Lorimers, Middle Caicos, July, 1982.

<sup>21</sup>The author of this dissertation made a personal inspection of this plantation ruin in July, 1982. It is grown over with scrubby brush and cactus, and almost hidden. The guide, who is native born, burned patches of vegetation to mark the way out. It is located about three or four miles from the main road north of Lorimers.

To demonstrate the wealth and elegant lifestyle of some of the planters on the Caicos, one estate inventory is provided here--that of John Mulryne Tatttnall, a Georgia Loyalist<sup>22</sup> who had also previously held "large properties" in East Florida. Upon the British loss of Florida, he claimed a loss of £5,529 and was allowed £1,807.<sup>23</sup> This inventory was made after his death in 1796.

John Mulryne Tatttnall<sup>24</sup>

"Bonaventure" Plantation  
Grand Caicos  
16 December, 1796

Household Furniture

- 14 Iapan'd [sic] cane seat chairs<sup>25</sup>
- 2 mahogany card tables<sup>26</sup>
- 2 pair of glasses in good frames
- 1 sofa with furniture
- 1 printed floor cloth
- 1 set tea china
- 1 tea urn
- 2 tea trays
- 1 Iapan'd half circle table
- 2 pair of India shades

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<sup>22</sup>Davis, Georgia Citizens, p. 225.

<sup>23</sup>Siebert, Loyalists of East Florida, 2:307.  
Converted, £1,807 is equivalent to between \$600,000 and \$1,000,000 in 1983 currency.

<sup>24</sup>Bahama Registry, E-2:6, 33.

<sup>25</sup>Iapan'd (Japaned) was a popular style of the day which involved painting the chair black or another dark color and putting Japanese style designs on it in gold or white.

<sup>26</sup>The use of mahogany was common in the circum-Caribbean area and does not denote wealth as it would today.

- 1 coffee urn
- 2 oval tea trays

Furniture in the Western Parlour

- 1 large mahogany dining table with ends to match
- 1 round tea table
- 6 mahogany chairs with cane backs and bottoms
- 1 mahogany bottle cooper
- 1 mahogany case

Furniture in the Little Back Parlour

- 1 mahogany secretary with drawers and glass
- 1 bookcase with a variety of broken volumes (meaning incomplete)
- 1 mahogany side board
- 1 knife case. white ivory handle table knives and forks
- 1 set tea china
- 6 mahogany chairs with cane backs

Furniture in the Back Entry

- 1 large side table with drawers
- 1 broken set of glasses (meaning incomplete)
- 1 broken set of crockery
- 1 small fishing box

Eastern Chamber above the Stairs

- 1 mahogany bedstead for two- mattress
- 1 small chest of drawers
- 6 straw bottom chairs
- 1 mahogany basin stand
- 1 mahogany night table
- 1 bed chair stuffed

Western Chamber

- 1 bedstead
- 1 feather bed- pillows
- 1 small child's bedstead
- 1 cedar crib- small chair
- 1 mahogany dressing glass
- 1 trunk- bed linen
- 1 table
- 1 gentleman's saddle
- 1 pair of silver mounted pistols with holsters
- 1 mahogany gun case
- 1 swinging lamp

## Silver

6 spoons, fish knife, spoons  
 14 silver table spoons, sauce, ladel, butter knife  
 12 teaspoons  
 8 cups  
 1 tankard, coffee pot, sugar dish, cake holder,  
 candlesticks, snuffer stand, cravat stand, egg  
 frame and cup, toast trays, tureen ladel, rice  
 dish, spice box  
 2 pair of plates

picture of General Woolfe  
 thermometer, spy glass, fiddle (Mr. Tattnall's fiddle),  
 clarinet  
 kitchen furniture (some parts sold)

Tract of land or plantation called "Bonaventure." It  
 contains about 600 acres, 120 of which is in cotton of  
 tolerable appearance, about 30 in pastureage and the rest  
 in standing woods with a large stone building, 'seers house,  
 a wind ginn house compleat and Negro houses. Which in  
 consideration of the present wear and the precarious situa-  
 tion of property in the West Indies, we conceive to be  
 considerably less in value than it would be otherwise.

3200 sterling equal to £5,505.14

14 blades of merchantible cotton part  
 of the producing of the said estate

146.14  
 £5,551.28

"Retreat," William Forbes' plantation, was appraised  
 March 26, 1798, and was furnished as finely as the Tattnall  
 plantation. Mahogany furniture and silver table service  
 were much the same; however, a mahogany liquor cabinet and  
 40 dozen containers of wine were items not in Tattnall's  
 appraisal.<sup>27</sup> The table service in William Farr's estate  
 appraisal was even more elaborate than Tattnall's. A silver  
 tea service complete with a tray, teapot, sugar and cream  
 holders, other tea trays, sixteen silver teaspoons, a punch

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<sup>27</sup> Bahama Registry, E-2:116, 147.

ladle, soup ladle, and breakfast cups are examples of luxury items in the household.<sup>28</sup> Obviously, John Petty was interested in having the latest equipment for his plantation. Two "old foot ginns" are listed and "a new wind ginn" indicates his desire to replace worn equipment with tools of advanced technology.<sup>29</sup>

From the Tattnall and other inventories, it is apparent that plantation owners had fine furniture, slept on linen sheets and used china, glassware, and silver utensils on their tables. They maintained libraries, played musical instruments, hung pictures on their walls, and covered their floors. A "pair of silver mounted pistols with holsters" would almost certainly have been dueling guns. The spy glasses indicate the continual need to monitor the sea traffic. These appraisals describe the homes of families accustomed to luxuries.

In spite of the comment about the "precarious situation"\* of Tattnall's estate, it can only be concluded that the value of land on the Caicos increased rapidly from

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 234.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., E:213.

\*The "precarious situation" could only partially be because of the decline in agriculture in the Bahamas. It may refer to the wars of the French Revolution between Great Britain and France which saw naval fighting in the Bahama area and would lead soon to the quasi-naval war between the United States and France and fought in this same area from 1798-1800.

the time the grant was made in 1790 to the date of the appraisal in 1796. Tattnall was only allowed £1,807 from the British government and his land alone, in 1796, was valued at £5,405.15. Another illustration of the increase in land prices is available for the same time period. In 1791, Thomas Brown sold Robert Clark 394 acres of land for £2,240.<sup>30</sup> This would be £5.69 per acre. Only three years later, in 1794, Richard Pearis sold Margaret and Thomas Hill 300 acres of land for £2,280 or £7.6 per acre.<sup>31</sup>

The description of Tattnall's dwelling house and other descriptions found in estate appraisals are quite similar to houses built in Georgia prior to the Revolution. "Wild Heron," built in 1756, is located twelve miles from Savannah and is believed to be the oldest plantation house still standing in Georgia. It is a story-and-a-half house built above a brick cellar.<sup>32</sup> Another house on Bull Street in Savannah was advertised for sale in 1764 and was described as having two stories, a front balcony and a piazza. The first floor had two bed chambers, a dining room, a passage and a staircase. The second floor also had a dining room, bed chamber, and a closet large enough for a bed. Fireplaces were on both floors and it had a paved

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., X-Conveyances, 1794:48.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>32</sup>Perkerson, Columns in Georgia, p. 114.

cellar.<sup>33</sup> A house on a plantation offered for sale not far from Augusta was similar to these. The house was "newly glazed and paned," had two chambers, a dining room and hall, four shed rooms, and three fireplaces with a separate kitchen.<sup>34</sup> The cellars and chimneys were innovations brought to the Bahamas by the Loyalists. The Conch kitchen was a separate building, often a shed covering a fireplace, but was without chimney.<sup>35</sup> McKinnen, on his tour of the Bahamas, including the Caicos, in 1802, described durable buildings of stone, and finished with "... a wash of lime," i.e., whitewashed.<sup>36</sup> Since stone houses do not require whitewashing for durability, this was done for decoration. The chimneys, cellars, and "wash of lime" are evidenced in the ruins on Grand Caicos (see Photographs 1 through 11).

The inventories and the author's inspection reveal that houses were constructed of stone and wood. Many stone walls with window openings intact are still standing. Stone foundations without walls are readily found, indicating the structures had been made of wood which decayed with time. Tools in the inventories such as new hammers, new saws,

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<sup>33</sup>Ira L. Brown, The Georgia Colony (New York: Crowell-Collier Press, 1970), p. 66.

<sup>34</sup>Flanders, Slavery in Georgia, p. 49.

<sup>35</sup>Peters, "American Loyalists," p. 185.

<sup>36</sup>McKinnen, A Tour, p. 213.



Photograph 5  
Bambara ruins. Separate kitchen with a six foot fireplace.





Photograph 6  
Bambara ruins. Inside view of chimney. Approximately 4' x 6'.



Photograph 7  
Bambara ruins. "Breezeway" from kitchen to the main house.

iron squares, rulers, kegs of nails, new sash windows with frames, hook and eye hinges, door and bolt fasteners, and kegs of white paint support wide usage of wood in buildings. The appraisal of John Bell's estate even listed electrical rods (lightning rods).

Slavery was a necessary part of the plantation system. John Bell's estate of 1,470 acres, with 300 acres in "cotton highly cultivated," claimed 90 slaves.<sup>37</sup> The number of slaves per acre was similar to the number of slaves on rice plantations in Georgia in the 1770s. Figures taken from Sir James Wright's eleven plantations on the Savannah, Ogeechee, and Canoochee Rivers show the total number of slaves on each plantation ranging from 33 to 72, or an average of 47.5.

It might be thought that the low percentage of acreage under cultivation in the Caicos was unusual, but it was actually similar to Georgia. The plantation of Bartholemew Zouerbuhler, seven miles west of Savannah, contained 1,327 acres, but only 160 acres were cleared and "under fence." In the Caicos, John Bell had a total of 1,470 acres with 300 under cultivation and John Mulryne Tattnall's plantation contained 600 acres, of which 120 were cultivated.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Bahama Registry, E-2:290.

<sup>38</sup>Flanders, Slavery in Georgia, pp. 42-43.

Analysis of inventories of plantation tools of both Grand Caicos and the Colonies indicates the exclusive use of the hoe in the cultivation of cotton. In Georgia, one observer said, "the labor required for the cultivation is fit only for slaves and I think the hardest work I have seen them engaged in."<sup>39</sup> From the author's observation, the same statement would apply to Grand Caicos. Perparing the fields for cultivation would require extremely hard work.

There is ample evidence throughout the Americas that many Negroes worked at other tasks away from their masters' plantations. In Savannah, industrial slave labor was used; blacksmiths, coopers, mechanics, porters, carpēnters all earned wages either for themselves or their masters. One good example from the Caicos is Charles Fox Taylor who gave a Negro man to his brother-in-law, Dr. Anthony George Forbes, "planter on the same island," and specified that the slave was working on Grand Turk at the time, probably raking salt.<sup>40</sup>

There is an indication of a kindly attitude toward the slaves on the Caicos. Dr. John Lorimer not only freed a "faithful Negro woman slave, Rose," but willed her two Negroes when he died. Good treatment of slaves was reported

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 51; Bahama Registry, Wills 1790-1806, p. 150.

throughout the Bahamas. The master frequently superintended the slaves himself and, consequently, there was less use of the whip than with an overseer.

Daniel McKinnen witnessed the arrival of slave ships at Nassau. He described the sales as being conducted ". . . with respect to the slaves." The Africans were displayed for sale, naked and wearing a label around their necks with their age, strength, sex, and price indicated. They were sold for \$200 to \$300 each. Later McKinnen saw the same slaves on the street. They had expected to be eaten and, instead, they had been given clothes and food far superior to what they had known in Africa. He wrote, ". . . I found an inclination to pardon something of the supposed criminality of transporting them from Africa, on comparing their destitute and wretched state when first imported."<sup>41</sup>

A master-slave relationship is described in a letter from Grand Caicos printed in the Bahama Gazette, August 21, 1798. A vessel from Rhode Island bringing supplies to the planters on the Caicos was wrecked near West Caicos. Planters sent boats to save their purchases. As they were returning, French privateers ran them onto the reefs. The privateers were armed and attempted to take possession of the boats. Colonel Thomas Brown's boat, the largest of the five, had two mounted guns and Brown's Negroes were armed

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<sup>41</sup>McKinnen, A Tour, pp. 218-220.

with muskets. They drove the French off three different times, keeping them at bay for nearly three hours. They finally surrendered the boat and swam ashore. Two of Colonel Brown's Negroes were wounded but not mortally. The French gained possession of all five boats, which were laden with provisions, a loss that hurt the inhabitants. William Wylly was defended by his armed slaves during the "Wylly Affair" in Nassau. These incidents clearly indicate a loyalty to their masters.<sup>42</sup>

The following is a list of slaves on John Bell's plantation in 1800. They were listed by name, age, position and family; in one instance, the condition of health was noted.

Billy	-driver*
Phoebe	his wife
Margaret	10 years old
Sarah	8 years old
Isala	5 years old
Namodie	3 years old
Abagado	1½ years old

Jame	- driver
Belinda	his wife
Francois	13 years old
Silverler	5 years old
Philip	7 years old
Harriet	3 years old
Sara	grandmother

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<sup>42</sup>Parrish MSS, p. 193. The 1798 "battle" was a part of the quasi-naval war between France and the United States.

\*A driver is a black foreman for slave activities in agriculture fieldwork.

Bell - a field slave  
her child 6 years old

Buck  
Betty his wife  
Betsey 9 years old  
Joe 8 years old  
Kate 4 years old  
Sally 2 years old

Caesar  
Nanny, his wife afflicted with cancer  
Medina 4 years old  
child 3 years old

Cyrus  
Fatima his wife  
Fanny child

Cudjoe  
child 8 years old  
Isfair 3 years old

Dick  
Mary his wife  
Polly 13 years old

Carriacore  
son 3 years old  
Catherine her daughter

Toby

George  
Catherine his wife  
Lancashire her child

Glasgow  
Nancy his wife  
Hawa 6 years old  
Tabina 4 years old  
Mary Ann 1½ years old

John  
Victoria his wife  
Triam 10 years old  
Fortune 5 years old  
London 1½ years old

Pompey  
 Frances his wife  
 Buccanise 10 years old  
 Alaf 5 years old  
 Tabara 3 years old  
 Limetto 6 months old  
 Charlotte

Selapha  
 Euhis his wife  
 Flembitten her child

Swift  
 Clie his wife  
 Phillis  
 Julia 10 years old  
 Ali 9 years old  
 John 3 years old  
 Sidney 2 years old  
 Caravan 2 months old

Tom  
 Jeanie his wife  
 Peggy - her child 9 years old  
 Caesar 8 years old  
 Adam 3 years old  
 Pindas 1 year old

Will  
 Jeanie his wife  
 Charlie 4 years old  
 Jimmy 18 months old  
 Cennie her child

Fifteen male field hands were added to this list  
 by name only and not by family.<sup>43</sup>

A community the size of that on Grand Caicos  
 required formal government. By a lengthy Act of 1799, Turks  
 Islands and Caicos Islands were granted seats in the  
 Assembly at Nassau. Electors were to be male, free, white,  
 and at least 21 years of age. There was a property value  
 requirement of £500 and a residency requirement of one year

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<sup>43</sup>Bahama Registry, E-2:290.



year in the Bahamas. McKinnen states, however, that Grand Caicos did not send a delegate to the Assembly.

A port of entry was established on the Caicos and apparently used since records are available of trading ships delivering goods to the Caicos from England and the United States.<sup>44</sup> It is notable that by an Act of Parliament April 4, 1788, "no goods or commodities whatever be imported or brought from any of the territory belonging to the United States of America into his Majesty's West Indies . . .,"<sup>45</sup> and yet, a letter in the Bahama Gazette, 1798, relates how a ship from Rhode Island was delivering provisions to the inhabitants of Grand Caicos and was attacked by French privateers. Obviously, "statutory neglect" was the order of the day.

On October 17, 1791, William Gamble, Alexander Campbell Wylly, John Ferguson, John Lorimer, John Bell, and Wade Stubbs were appointed Justices of Peace. This is the only record of local authority found on Grand Caicos. They could perform legal services such as marriages, wills, and so forth for the residents of Grand Caicos.<sup>46</sup> Side arms are

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<sup>44</sup>Craton, History of the Bahamas, p. 127.

<sup>45</sup>Gordon Calherall, "British Baptist Involvement in Jamaica 1783-1865" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Keele, 1970), pp. 41-42.

<sup>46</sup>A. Talbot Bethel, The Early Settlers of the Bahama Islands, With a Brief Account of the American Revolution (Norfolk, England: Rounce and Wortley, n.d.), p. 109.

found in most of the estate appraisals but there was an apparent common respect that did not require formal law.

Roads were built, landings constructed and trade conducted with other islands and nations. With the geographical remoteness and the independent political attitude, it is highly unlikely that they received tax money for improvements. A common effort among the planters for roads and landings would be a more likely explanation.

Available records are meager but it is logical that families of this wealth would enjoy social gatherings. Their large mahogany dining tables and silver service appear ready for entertaining. The marriage of Thomas Brown and Ester Farr "at the Caicos" in 1789 was probably one of these events. Brown, the largest landholder on the Island, and Miss Farr's father, William Farr, another planter, could have combined efforts for an elaborate occasion. John Lorimer's request for six of "his Negroes, dressed in white," to carry his body to his grave indicates more than a simple burial. In remote areas it is not uncommon for funerals to become more or less a social gathering.

It was apparent that cotton planters in the Bahamas were facing financial problems by 1800. John Kelsall, a planter on Little Exuma, attributed the problem to soil exhaustion and "men, very many of them, unused to agriculture, . . . cultivating cotton for the first time in

their lives. . . ."<sup>47</sup> McKinnen noted that the plantations were almost deserted on Crooked Island in 1803. On Long Island, between 1795 and 1803, twenty-three plantations either failed completely or had a limited operation. In this same period of time, fifty cotton planters petitioned the Crown for relief. The Land Office was directed to revive cotton planting by allocating more Crown Lands.<sup>48</sup> On Grand Caicos, however, McKinnen found the soil in good condition with one planter owning 600 slaves.<sup>49</sup>

The problems associated with cotton growing were discussed unofficially and officially in the Bahamas. The Bahama Gazette frequently printed letters either asking for or giving advice concerning cotton growing. Crop-rotation was suggested, and windbreakers of Indian corn planted among the cotton rows was another suggestion. The Assembly passed laws regulating the growth of cotton. The amount of cotton grown was limited to seven acres for each "taskable hand," a field slave from sixteen to sixty years of age, and three and a half acres for a "half taskable hand," a field slave from twelve to sixteen or over sixty. Planters were ordered to give primary attention to destroying the chenille bug

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<sup>47</sup>Parrish MSS, p. 358.

<sup>48</sup>McKinnen, A Tour, p. 193.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 130.

when it first appeared and were fined when they failed to do so.<sup>50</sup>

Unfortunately, the disadvantages of the long staple cotton were felt heavily. The Anguilla cotton had sweeter leaves than other kinds of cotton and was attractive to the chenille bug, especially in dry weather. McKinnen stated that two-thirds of the cotton on some plantations of the Out Islands were destroyed by insects in 1788 and 1794.<sup>51</sup>

After McKinnen completed his tour and returned to Nassau, he spoke with Attorney General William Wylly about the soil exhaustion he had observed. McKinnen suggested manure as a fertilizer; Wylly explained that there was not enough manure and that the only hope was to let the land go back to nature.<sup>52</sup>

The plantations on the Caicos did not escape this decline of cotton prosperity. The descriptions given by the appraisers raise doubts about any successful future in the Islands. In 1796 John M. Tattnall's plantation was described as having a "precarious situation of property . . . we conceive to be considerably less in value than it would otherwise be."<sup>53</sup> In 1801 the appraisers of John

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<sup>50</sup>Peters, "American Loyalists," pp. 150-51.

<sup>51</sup>McKinnen, A Tour, p. 170.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>53</sup>Bahama Registry, E-2:33.

Bell's estate were ". . . at a loss how to proceed . . . under the many disadvantages which lands on the Caicos must be lived at this present time."<sup>54</sup> Unfortunately, the "many disadvantages" spoken of by the appraisers were compounded by violent weather and harassment by American privateers during the War of 1812.

According to H. E. Sadler, Turks and Caicos' unofficial historian, the Americans dealt heavy blows to the Islands during the War of 1812. Several schooners were lost, and gun emplacements were set up in the Caicos by the Loyalist planters in anticipation of an attack. One young planter from Bottle Creek, North Caicos, James Missick, served in the British Royal Navy and was captured by an American Privateer; no other details are known. The Americans suspended trade and a severe food shortage threatened famine. Planters ground sisal root and substituted it for flour.<sup>55</sup>

In 1813 a great hurricane swept the Islands and extensively damaged cultivation and buildings. This natural disaster, coupled with soil exhaustion and insects, ended prosperity for the planters on the Caicos. By 1820, most plantations were abandoned.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 290.

<sup>55</sup>Sadler, "Turks Islands Landfall," 4:41.

<sup>56</sup>De Booy, "The Turks and Caicos Islands, B.W.I.," p. 30.

It is not known what happened to the total Loyalist population of the Caicos. Estate appraisals are available for eleven planters giving the date of the appraisal and declaring them deceased. Their names and appraisal dates are as follow: James Frazer, December 1, 1795; John Mulryne Tattnall, December 16, 1796; John Podmore, December 5, 1796; Thomas Williamson, July 27, 1796; William Forbes, March 26, 1796; John Petty, May 23, 1799; John Bell, February 6, 1800; William Farr, February, 1800; Stephen De Lancey, February 27, 1800; John Muir, June 15, 1801; and John Lorimer, October 30, 1807. Charles Fox Taylor's will was executed May 27, 1799. Indications are that he died and was buried in South Carolina during a visit to that state. Alexander Campbell Wyllly returned to the United States and died on St. Simon's Island off the coast of Georgia. Thomas Brown and William Wyllly both moved to St. Vincent and died there.

A present-day inhabitant identified one grave as that of John Lorimer. Time has erased any trace of identification from the stones that line the grave. The present village of Lorimers is undoubtedly named for John Lorimer.<sup>57</sup>

Today in the Caicos, there is almost no verifiable knowledge concerning the Loyalists. There are no successors of the white settlers on the Caicos Islands. Slaves left by

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<sup>57</sup> Interview with Stephen Penn, Lorimers, Middle Caicos, July, 1982.

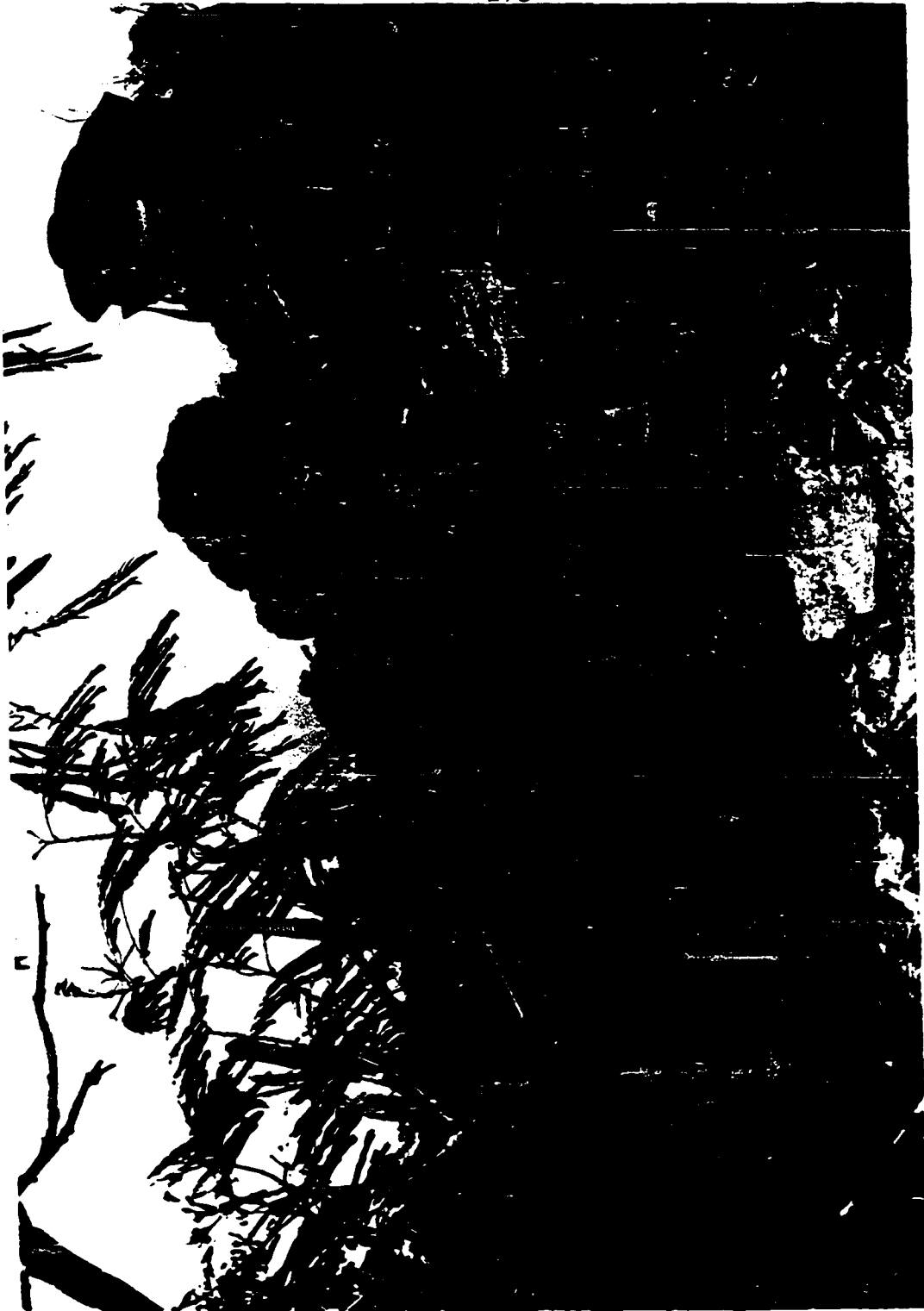
the Loyalists form the nucleus of the present-day population. Some of the surnames are those of the planters--Ferguson, Hamilton, Forbes, Penn, and McIntosh. Some claim their ancestry to Africans set free when the British navy captured the Spanish slave ship Esperanze and liberated 300 persons in 1841. The name of the village they created, Bambara, is believed to be the name of their home territory in Africa.<sup>58</sup>

Some of the plantation ruins and the acreage surrounding them are owned by present-day inhabitants. One, Mrs. Constance Hall, a lady in her early sixties, was born at the Ferguson plantation site. Her family moved after hurricane winds damaged the house. Located on the northern ridge of Middle Caicos, the Ferguson house is now completely overgrown with brush, trees, and cactus (see Photographs 8, 9, and 10). Mrs. Hall farms some of the land. Each year a different plot is cleared by hand using machettes and is then burned before planting (see Photograph 11). Sugar cane, corn, okra, peas, and watermelon are some of the vegetables grown in these small patches. Mrs. Hall employs women from the local villages to work the fields.<sup>59</sup>

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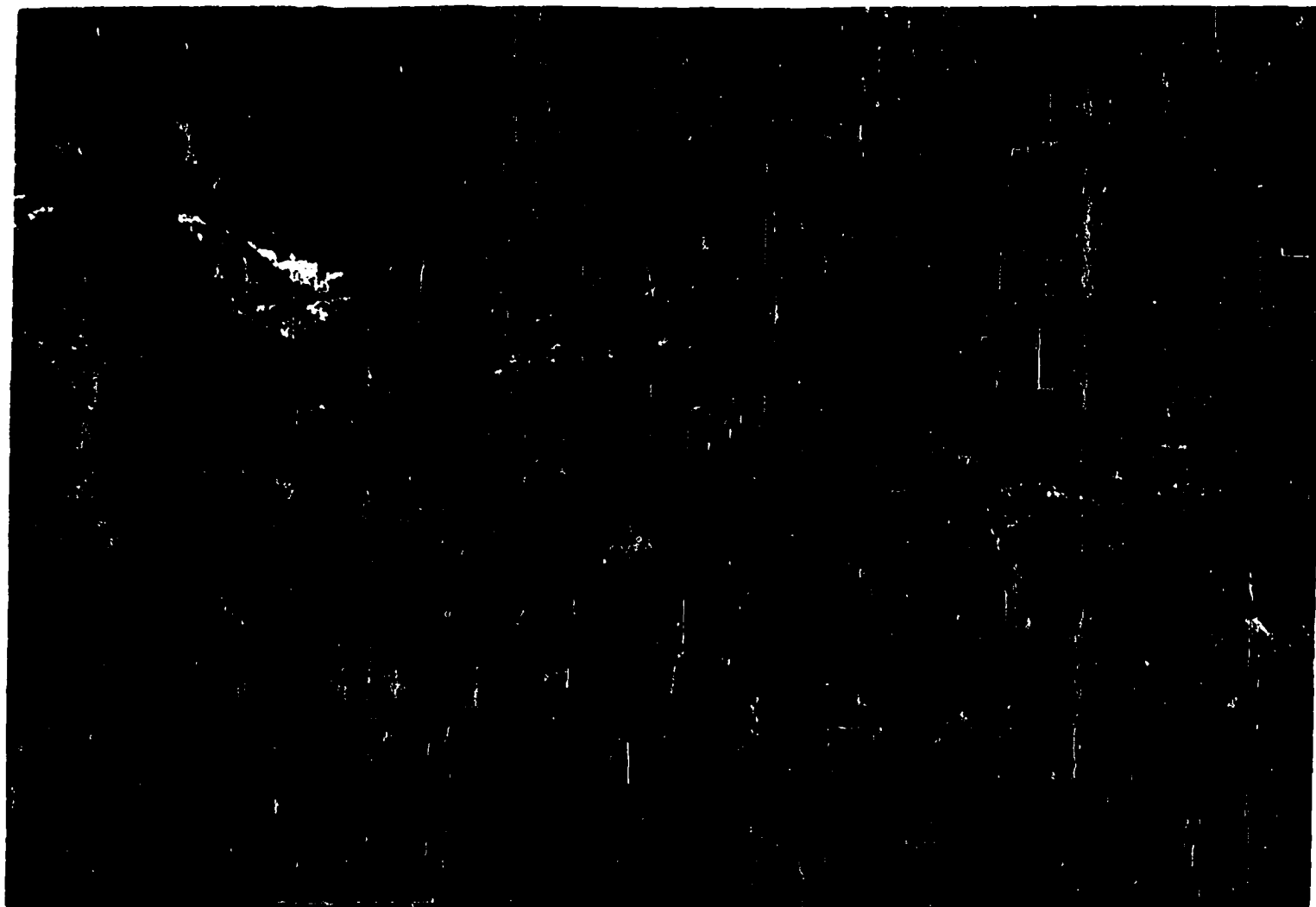
<sup>58</sup>Hutchings, "The Story of Turks and Caicos Islands," p. 5.

<sup>59</sup>Interview, Constance Hall, Bambara, Middle Caicos, July, 1982; inspection of Ferguson site by the author of this dissertation.



Photograph 8  
Ferguson Plantation. Main house with decorated entrance.



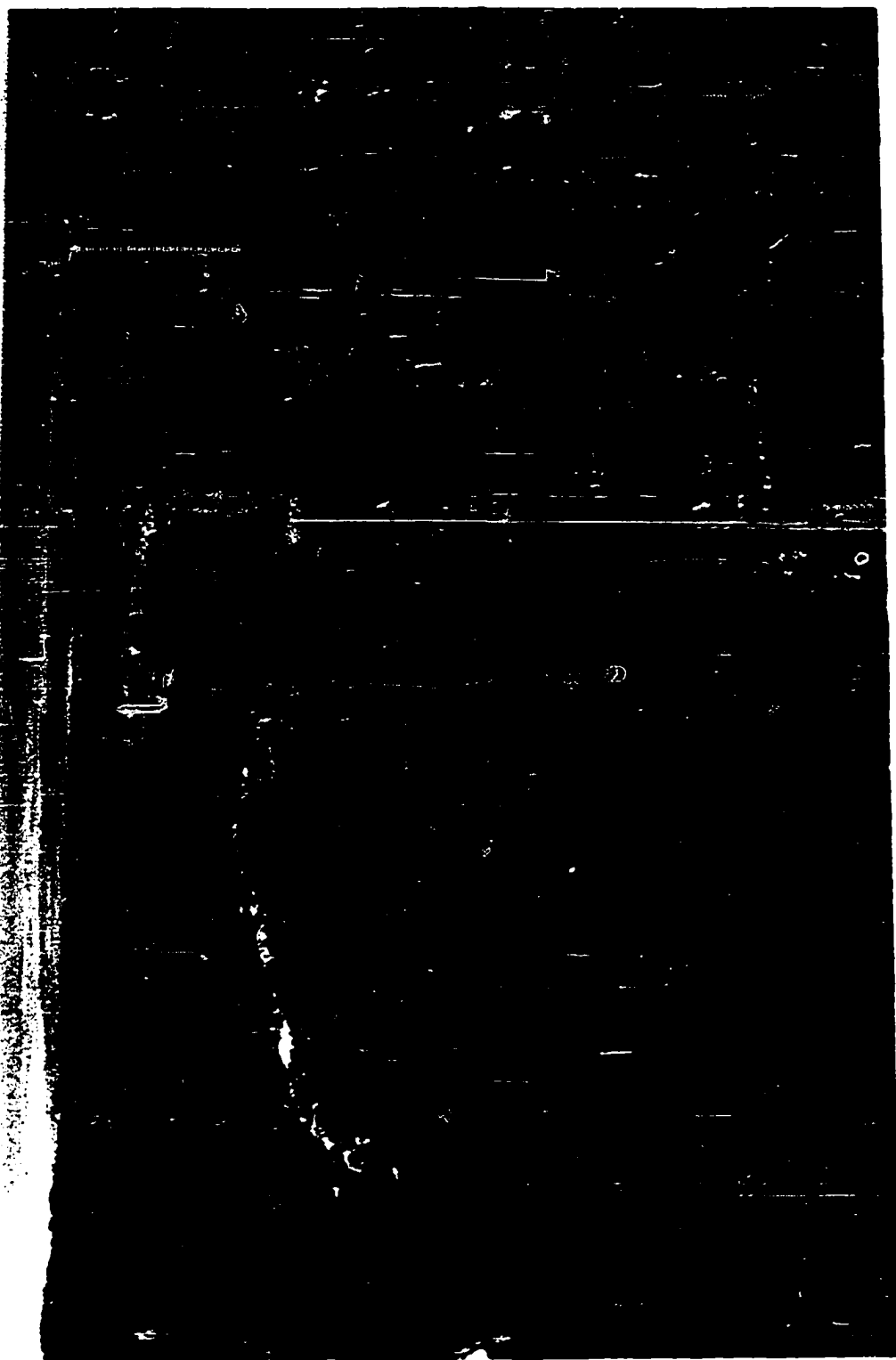


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Photograph 9  
Ferguson Plantation. Walls of main house which show openings for windows.



Photograph 10  
Ferguson Plantation. Same as Photograph 9 with a larger view.



Photograph 11  
Ferguson Plantation. View of present-day agriculture in top center.

The population of middle Caicos consists of approximately 450 inhabitants. They make their living by fishing, farming, and some commerce. Some leave the islands for work elsewhere, but they usually return to establish permanent homes.

It is said that the Caicos is the last "great frontier" within easy reach of the United States. They confidently await the return of the Americans and the prosperity that abounded during the brief Plantation Period.

## CHAPTER IX

### SUMMARY

Between 1763 and 1775, Georgia was prosperous for the first time in its short history. The colony was attracting new settlers from Europe and the neighboring North American colonies. New plantations were being established, especially around Augusta. Most of these Georgians were satisfied with their lives and wanted to retain the status quo.

Suddenly, a disruption occurred that forced them to align themselves politically with opposing factions. This led to bitter, vengeful actions by each side as any civil war will do. The winners always seem "right," or history makes them so. The losers always seem "wrong" unless they can return to power as the monarchy did in England in 1660 or in France in 1815. The Loyalists in Georgia did not return and thus were real losers.

The Whigs were in political control of Georgia from January, 1776, to December, 1778. They passed a Legislative Act in 1778 to rid their territory of those guilty of improbity, and, in an effort to secure their position

militarily, made three unsuccessful attempts to capture St. Augustine, the Loyalist stronghold. It was the British, however, aided by the exiled Loyalists from East Florida, who recaptured Savannah from the Whigs and held it until the conclusion of the War. Driven from Georgia by the Treaty of Paris, 1783, the Loyalists began their migration in exile that eventually led them to the Caicos Islands.

The Loyalists who settled the Caicos probably fared better than the average Loyalist. They were intelligent, wealthy, and had the ability to "get things done." The British government repaid their losses with generous settlements of money and land which they used to every advantage to reestablish their former way of life. The Caicos Islands had the potential in 1790 of furnishing them with permanence. Unfortunately, the Islands did not fulfill that potential.

Plantations growing Anguilla, or the long staple variety of cotton, were established on the Caicos. They were equipped with the latest equipment for cleaning cotton, and slave labor was available for field work. Plantation houses were built comparable to those in Georgia at that time. Marriages were made and funerals were arranged. Roads were built and landings were established to insure the delivery of provisions and luxuries. For approximately three decades, life was prosperous on the Caicos.

Weather, insects, soil exhaustion and war have all been given as reasons for failure as well as the fact that

some of the settlers were inexperienced planters. Soil exhaustion was a primary reason and the smallness of the Islands compounded that condition. In the United States during the early 1800s, soil exhaustion was not uncommon. The difference was that in the United States settlers could move to new land, but on the Caicos they were forced to leave the Islands because of the limited acreage.

There is no doubt that the Caicos community was planned. Their association began in the colonies and continued in exile. They were men wealthy enough to experiment with cotton plantations and, when it was no longer economically profitable, they could afford to move away and leave the land and buildings to their former slaves. Middle-class or poor people do not have those options.

Undoubtedly, these families suffered emotionally and were frustrated politically. Many families were separated, never to reunite and the British Bahamians were not yet ready for these "extremists" who wanted to change centuries of quasi-legal government. These Loyalists were undaunted in their zeal for right, as they viewed it, and perhaps at another place or time they might have been counted among the great men of history.

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