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The mask of liberty: the making of freeholder democracy in revolutionary Georgia

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GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Dissertation

**THE MASK OF LIBERTY: THE MAKING OF
FREEHOLDER DEMOCRACY IN REVOLUTIONARY GEORGIA**

by

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requirements for the degree of
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DEDICATION

In memory of Mike, Mary and Jeanne Hynes

**THE MASK OF LIBERTY: THE MAKING
OF FREEHOLDER DEMOCRACY IN REVOLUTIONARY GEORGIA**

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Boston University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, 2014

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ABSTRACT

The Mask of Liberty: The Making of Freeholder Democracy in Revolutionary Georgia examines the structures and practices of government in Revolutionary Georgia from the 1750s to ratification of the federal constitution in 1788. Based on evidence compiled from land, probate, legislative, and executive records supplemented by loyalist claims, newspapers, manuscript, shipping, and grand jury records, this dissertation presents a view of the American Revolution in Georgia that reorients previous studies.

This study argues that Georgia's American Revolution belonged to non-elite white male freeholders, fiercely committed to local control and autonomy. After Independence, they fashioned a political system that vested real power in small counties and starkly limited the reach of the state's executive and judicial branches. Georgians based their government on a mix of ideas current in Revolutionary America, the utility of which they measured against the state's distinctive history. This study relates that history to the political structures and practices that grew out of it.

The American Revolution in Georgia was not a revolution of the dispossessed, of women, of slaves, or of property-less white men. It was fashioned by ambitious, self-interested men, most of whom migrated to Georgia in the decades immediately before or

immediately after independence to take advantage of liberal land policies, a growing commercial environment and unusual opportunities to establish themselves, provide for families, and participate in self-government. Late eighteenth century Georgia was, at least for a time, the best freeholders' country, a land where white men could gain a freehold and enjoy a measure of political equality unknown to their fathers and grandfathers. That was the radicalism of Georgia's American Revolution, a radicalism born of the state's distinctive history of late settlement, destructive warfare, and engagement with great political debates of the age.

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List of Abbreviations

<i>CRG</i>	<i>Colonial Records of the State of Georgia</i>
<i>GG</i>	<i>Georgia Gazette</i>
<i>GSG</i>	<i>Gazette of the State of Georgia</i>
<i>RGG</i>	<i>Royal Georgia Gazette</i>
<i>RRG</i>	<i>Revolutionary Records of the State of Georgia</i>

The Mask of Liberty: The Making of Freeholder Democracy in Revolutionary Georgia

Introduction

How radical was the American Revolution? Or, to borrow the title of a recent volume: *Whose Revolution Was It?*¹ From images of the Boston Tea Party to rhetoric borrowed from the Declaration of Independence, to rights and powers enumerated in the Constitution, the founding generation left plenty of room for future debate about the American Revolution's relative promise, achievements, and disappointments. In the hands of twenty-first century pundits, the men and women who lived through the Revolution assume somewhat mythic proportion as principled exemplars of virtue, courage, and startling foresight. Scholars who come to know these same individuals by poring over faded documents provide more sophisticated and more complicated views of the issues that motivated residents of the thirteen British Mainland North American colonies to rebel from the greatest empire of their time. Yet even the most careful scholars can fall into interpretative traps by situating eighteenth century evidence within explanatory frameworks that made more sense in the nineteenth or twentieth centuries than they did in the eighteenth.

Looking backward from the present to Revolutionary America requires seeing past the tremendous and unforeseeable upheavals of the Civil War and Emancipation, the expansive rise of the American state and the American Empire, and the unparalleled transformations of production and wealth creation that accompanied the rise of modern capitalism. Nearly two-and-a-half centuries of dramatic political, economic, social, and

¹ Young and Nobles, *Whose American Revolution Was It?*.

cultural change have made the world inhabited by the men and women of eighteenth century America, if not a foreign place, certainly a very confounding place to interpret.

For scholars of American radicalism, looking backward means applying a healthy skepticism against the temptation to find direct lines of causation leading from the Revolution to pivotal moments and movements of the last 200 years. To label a subset of eighteenth century Americans as radical does not mean that they envisioned universal suffrage, equal rights for women (or even for men) or any other version of social and political equality. They were not twenty-first century Americans waiting for time to catch up with their vision; they were eighteenth century individuals living within families and communities and responding to their immediate circumstances with the intellectual and political tools at hand. Most eighteenth-century American radicals would appear to modern observers as God-fearing folks with shockingly high tolerance for the harsh physical brutalities and stark social inequalities of everyday life.

The Mask of Liberty explores the American Revolution by focusing on Georgia, the youngest of the thirteen British North American colonies. The notion of eighteenth century Georgia as radical no doubt seems odd to those who know the state's subsequent history of cotton, Confederacy, and White Citizens' Councils. However, tantalizing evidence from the revolutionary era suggests that there is more to the story than what we think we know. Consider, for example, the state's first constitution. Ratified in February 1777, the document created a unicameral legislature with a weak executive, established low property requirements for voting and office holding, and enumerated certain rights and freedoms, including freedom of religion, freedom of the press, the right to trial by

jury, and the principle of habeas corpus. Framers vested considerable power in newly created counties and allowed for the establishment of new counties with as few as 100 electors. Alone among the new state constitutions, Georgia's empowered jurors to determine law as well as fact in civil and criminal trials and vested appellate power in special county-based juries rather than in state-appointed justices. Together with the constitution of Pennsylvania, from which Georgia's drafters drew liberally, Georgia's constitution offered one of the more democratic frames of government in the new nation in 1777.²

Georgians revised their constitution in 1789 and again in 1798, adding a state senate and raising property qualifications for office-holders, but these later documents still retained the single-year term for legislators, allowed all white men who had paid taxes the previous year to vote, and vested final decision-making power in county juries. (The state first established an appellate court in 1845.) Moreover, throughout the 1780s and 1790s a lively political press developed in the state, placing debates about the nature of government and the people's proper role in determining the structures, authority and practice of government before a broad public.³

Common wisdom among historians holds that revolutionary-era Georgians were more interested in land than ideas and more swayed by personality than principle. Fifty years ago, Kenneth Coleman, colonial and revolutionary Georgia's pre-eminent scholar,

² Saye, *A Constitutional History of Georgia, 1732-1968*; Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 79–84.

³ Saye, *A Constitutional History of Georgia, 1732-1968*; Ware, *A Constitutional History of Georgia*; Lamplugh, *Politics on the Periphery*.

declared “there would certainly have been no revolution had it been left to Georgians to begin!” His contemporary, historian W. W. Abbot, quipped that “had the Savannah River been fifty miles wide instead of only a few yards, the people of Georgia would hardly have even considered breaking with Britain in 1776.” In a confident post-World War II adaptation of Becker’s “who should rule at home” formulation, Coleman and Abbot understood the American Revolution in Georgia as a conflict among late colonial elites. Both scholars understood the colony’s entrance into the rebellion as the result of outside influence as grievances nurtured elsewhere in the American colonies made their way south, and, over time, and with pressure from patriot voices in neighboring South Carolina, convinced otherwise loyal Georgians to cast their lot on the side of independence.⁴

Recent scholarship has focused on individual Georgians such as Continental Army General Lachlan McIntosh, rebel planter Jonathan Bryan, Loyalist merchant turned planter James Habersham, and Tory militia leader Thomas Brown. Soundly researched and engagingly told, these narratives of Revolutionary Georgia tell a story of men too busy grabbing land and settling scores to engage seriously with the lofty debates emanating from colonists to the north, let alone push those debates to the margins of political thought. In *Land and Allegiance in Revolutionary Georgia*, the most comprehensive treatment of Georgia in the Revolution since Coleman’s, Leslie Hall

⁴ Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 278; Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775.*, 182.

reinforces that view by recounting stories of partisans changing sides chiefly to secure land bounties or to restore confiscated properties.⁵

The compelling strength of these accounts reinforces a view of the Revolution as narrowly political and non-ideological. From this perspective, the Constitution of 1777 appears as almost a fluke, the product of a small band of men who gained momentary control of the process of state making while other men were busy protecting assets or squabbling over pique. That the constitution prevailed for a dozen years, through war, occupation and the long reconstruction process of the 1780s bears little mention. That the constitutions that followed in 1789 and 1798 honored the spirit of broad democratic engagement in the process of governing seldom appears even in footnotes.⁶

Historians' reluctance to take seriously the radical democratic nature of Georgia's eighteenth-century constitutions aligns well with the historiography of the American Revolution in the South, which cannot escape the twin shadows of slavery and the American Civil War. When, in the early twentieth century, Beard, Becker, and Jameson posed crucial questions about the social and political nature of the American Revolution generally, the South remained awkwardly anomalous. Unable to reconcile the fact that the same political rhetoric and founding documents that paved the way for gradual

⁵ Jackson, *Lachlan McIntosh and the Politics of Revolutionary Georgia*; Galloway, *The Formation of a Planter Elite*; Lambert, *James Habersham*; Cashin, *The King's Ranger*; Hall, *Land & Allegiance in Revolutionary Georgia*.

⁶ See Lamplugh, *Politics on the Periphery*. Lamplugh presents a richly detailed account of the partisan strife that characterized post-Revolutionary Georgia's state politics. By focusing on the roles and rhetoric of state leaders, such as James Jackson, Lamplugh explains the rise of party politics in terms that fit neatly within the familiar understanding of the Revolution in the South as something less than radical.

emancipation in northern states also allowed slavery's aggressive expansion into the southern frontier, Progressive-era scholars treated the post-revolutionary period in the South as a prelude to the Civil War. They searched assiduously for any evidence that would illuminate the long road to secession. Historians interested in the American Revolution found ample topics for study in New England and the Middle States, making only occasional detours southward to account for Washington, Jefferson, and Madison. The Revolutionary South attracted so little attention in the first half of the last century that, in 1957, John Richard Alden introduced his *The South in the American Revolution* with the claim that "this volume is the first to be devoted to the South during the era of the Revolution."⁷

The outpouring of scholarship on the Revolution in the 1960s through 1980s stimulated several fresh treatments of the late colonial South. Arguably, the most influential of these was Edmund Morgan's *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia*, which paradoxically focused on the seventeenth century rather than the eighteenth. Morgan's brilliant linkage of the perverse relationship between white American's liberty and African-Americans' bondage continues to inform scholarly interpretations of the Revolutionary South.⁸

Rhys Isaac's work on colonial Virginia broke ground with a nuanced interpretation of the politics of public and private interactions in the built environment of the Old Dominion—for example, churches, plantation houses, and courthouses—where

⁷ Alden, *The South in the Revolution, 1763-1789*, ix.

⁸ Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom*.

elites displayed their authority and where others in the community sometimes challenged their claims to power. In *Transformation of Virginia* and later in *Landon Carter's Uneasy Kingdom*, Isaac highlighted some of the social, religious, and psychological tensions underlying the Virginia gentry's response to the inter-colonial resistance movement that led to the American Revolution. His evocative representation of the cultures of mastery—both personal and political—drew attention to layers of textured evidence hiding in plain sight in historical records.⁹

Robert Olwell applied Isaac's sensitivities to South Carolina in his examination of blacks and whites locked in a cultural contest defined by imperial power, white dominance, and near-constant black resistance on the eve of and through the Revolution. Indeed, deep worries about the intersection of slave resistance and political rebellion drove South Carolinians to violence in summer 1775, when leaders of the American resistance in Charles Town managed the prosecution and execution of Thomas Jeremiah, a free black river pilot, for alleged complicity in a British plot to foment slave rebellion. Two recent monographs on the Jeremiah case highlight white fears and black vulnerability when the language of liberty rang through the streets of southern ports and found its way into the homes and gathering places of slaves and free persons of color.¹⁰

The appeal of the Revolution's idealized promise of equality and liberty to the enslaved population has captured so much scholarly attention in the last several decades

⁹ Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*; Isaac, *Landon Carter's Uneasy Kingdom*; Breen, *Tobacco Culture*.

¹⁰ Olwell, *Masters, Slaves, & Subjects*; Ryan, *The World of Thomas Jeremiah*; Harris, *The Hanging of Thomas Jeremiah*.

that a well-read person could reasonably conclude that slaves were the only radicals in the Southern colonies. Important contributions by Peter Wood, Sylvia Frey, Cassandra Pybus, Simon Schama, Douglas Egerton, and Gary Nash, among others, have deepened our appreciation for the heroic efforts of thousands of enslaved men and women who sought freedom during the American Revolution. Other scholars have revealed stunning stories of military bravery often under British flags.¹¹

Another recent historiographical school that took notice of the Revolutionary South grew out of the “New Military History” and focused on the War for Independence in the Southern backcountry. Intrigued by the social effects of mobilization, occupation, and guerilla warfare, historians Don Higginbotham, Ronald Hoffman and others explored the protracted internecine conflicts that took place in the Carolinas and Georgia. This work raised crucial questions about the effects of the war on the peace that followed and on the political structures and practices that took shape after the war. Because these studies did not extend beyond the war years, those questions remain unanswered.¹²

More recently, new work, again focusing on Virginia, has introduced a modest but crucial shift of interpretation to the historiography of the Revolutionary South. First

¹¹ Wood, “‘Liberty Is Sweet’: African-American Freedom Struggles in the Years before White Independence”; Wood, “‘Taking Care of Business’ in Revolutionary South Carolina: Republicanism and Slave Society”; Frey, *Water from the Rock*; Pybus, *Epic Journeys of Freedom*; Schama, *Rough Crossings*; Egerton, *Death or Liberty*; Nash, *The Forgotten Fifth*; Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution*, 157–66, . These works built on the seminal scholarship of Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution*.

¹² Higginbotham, “Some Reflections on the South in the American Revolution”; Hoffman, “The ‘Disaffected’ in the Revolutionary South”; Hoffman, Tate, and Albert, *An Uncivil War*. For a more recent treatment, see Picuch, *Three Peoples, One King*.

in *Forced Founders* (1999) and then in *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution* (2007), Woody Holton argued that non-elites, including Africans and African-Americans, Native Americans and non-elite whites, played decisive roles in the coming of the Revolution and in the constitutional settlement. Michael A. McDonnell carried Holton's neo-progressive argument deeper into the everyday politics of making war while keeping peace among co-combatants. In *The Politics of War*, McDonnell built on Allan Kulikoff's important work to propose an overtly class-based interpretation of Virginia's revolutionary experience, suggesting that divisions between gentry and their neighbors over taxation, conscription, and needed supplies transformed the War for Independence into a real revolution in the old Dominion. In effect, by suggesting that yeoman farmers forced Virginia's gentry to accommodate their demands first for political action and eventually for broader participation in the political processes of the new nation, Holton and McDonnell have restored the politics of governing to the narrative of the Revolutionary South. In doing so, they have paved the way for a reconsideration of the contested meanings of the Revolution in the slave south, including a closer look at Georgia's peculiar constitutions and the broadly democratic structures the state adopted after Independence.¹³

The Mask of Liberty examines the structures and practices of government in Revolutionary Georgia from the 1750s to the ratification of the federal constitution in 1788. Based on evidence compiled from land, probate, legislative, and executive records

¹³ Holton, *Forced Founders*; Holton, *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution*; McDonnell, *The Politics of War*; Kulikoff, "Revolutionary Violence and the Origins of American Democracy"; Kulikoff, "The War in the Countryside"; Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves*.

supplemented by newspapers, manuscript, shipping, and grand jury records, this dissertation presents a view of the American Revolution in Georgia that at once complements and reorients previous studies. The intent is not to be different, or novel, for its own sake, but to answer a question that past scholars have not addressed—whose revolution was it?

This dissertation argues that Georgia's American Revolution belonged to non-elite white male freeholders, fiercely committed to local control and autonomy. After Independence, they fashioned a political system that vested real power in small counties and starkly limited the reach of the state's executive and judicial branches. The state's legislative branch, viewed by scholars as the dominant branch of state government, provided a venue for the different counties to barter influence among one another, but even its powers were circumscribed by a populist preference for weak government fully responsive to freeholders' interests. Georgians based their government on a mix of ideas current in Revolutionary America, the utility of which they measured against the state's distinctive history. This study relates that history to the political structures and practices that grew out of it.

Starting with the colony's founding in 1732, the first chapter traces early settlement under the trustees, the transition to royal government in the 1750s, and the rapid increase in population and economic prosperity after the end of the French and Indian War. By the mid-1770s, Georgia had grown from an estimated 3,000 settlers clustered along the Atlantic coast near Savannah to more than 30,000 living in a string of solitary and isolated settlements that reached from St. Mary's River in the south, along

the coast and up the Savannah River to 80 miles or more above Augusta. Despite the rapid and expansive growth of settlement, government functions and symbols of British authority remained centered in Savannah. The British governor, his circle of supporters, and the established Anglican Church had an impressive presence in the capital but played little role in the day-to-day lives of most of the colony's inhabitants. This geography of authority played a profound role in the Revolution and its aftermath.

The second chapter explores the development of an opposition party centered in the lower house of assembly. Opposition leaders engaged with the broader inter-colonial resistance movement and, at the same time, sought to achieve the kinds of autonomy that other colonial assemblies had won earlier in the century. Repeatedly stymied by Governor James Wright, an exceptionally strong royal governor, they used public meetings and letters published in the weekly *Gazette* to persuade the larger public to support resistance measures advanced by other colonies. The governor prevailed through the early 1770s, but at some cost. In June 1770, grand jurors issued exceptional presentments accusing Wright of abusing his prerogative and putting the Indian traders' commercial interests ahead of white settlers' security. The incident merits serious attention because it demonstrates the important and forgotten role grand juries played in eighteenth century politics.

The Boston Tea Party and the resulting Coercive or Intolerable Acts shattered what Reverend Samuel Cooper called "a pause in politics" in the early 1770s. Georgia's opposition leaders once again sought to build popular support for the inter-colonial resistance movement and, as before, they stumbled when confronted by Governor

Wright's deft political maneuvering. No Georgian attended the First Continental Congress in September 1774 and, as late as May 1775, Georgia had not adopted the Continental Association. Everything changed, however, when Georgians learned about the exchange of gunfire at Lexington and Concord. Chapter three examines how the politics of persuasion gave way to a more broad-based politics of defiance that ranged from public enactments of exclusion by a crowd armed with tar and feathers to an individual juror's refusal to swear an oath and sit in judgment of another man. In the final months of 1775, Governor Wright watched helplessly as rebel leaders and their supporters undermined any semblance of royal rule in Georgia and, indeed, across the thirteen colonies.

With independence, Georgians had an opportunity to, as Thomas Paine said, "begin the world over again" and the political world they constructed differed markedly from the colonial order. Chapter four takes a close look at the Constitution of 1777 and explores how the young state government responded to early challenges posed by political infighting and desperate concerns about allegiance to the American cause. The legislature empowered local committees to compel suspected British sympathizers to demonstrate loyalty to the state or face banishment with no recourse or appeal. Evidence from two counties suggests that at least some committees embraced this new power. But, citizens of one of those counties used the far more ancient authority of the grand jury to check committee actions and the law itself.

Chapter five explores the American Revolution's excruciating human toll in Georgia by focusing on physical displacement of civilian populations in war. Between

1776 and 1778, hundreds of loyalists fled to St. Augustine, the West Indies or England to avoid harassment by their neighbors and state officials. British forces conquered coastal Georgia in late 1778, sparking new rounds of movement as many loyalists returned and rebel leaders fled to the Carolinas, Virginia and as far north as Philadelphia. Over the next three-and-a-half years, marauding bands of outlaws, deserters, runaway slaves, and partisan militia devastated the countryside. Neither the restored British governor nor the often-divided rebel authorities could protect civilians from the ravages of a brutal civil war.

In the 1780s, Georgians, like other Americans, confronted the crucial question of who deserved to enjoy the blessings of hard-won liberty. Chapter six examines how Georgians answered this first with regard to loyalists and then by looking at the kind of new settlers the state attracted and how they engaged with new county governments. By the middle of the decade, Georgians for the most part, had moved beyond debates about wartime allegiance and focused instead on settling into the peace, attracting new settlers and making their new county governments work. In the final quarter of the eighteenth century, the population of the state increased by a factor of five. The number of counties increased from eight in 1777 to twenty four in 1796, with each new county providing additional opportunities for freeholders to participate meaningfully in shaping local government.

So, how radical was the American Revolution in Georgia? If we compare the structure and practices of government in the late colonial period with the structure and practices of government in the mid-1790s, the answer is “very.” To be sure, it was not a

revolution of the dispossessed, of women, of slaves, or of property-less white men. It was an eighteenth century political revolution, fashioned by ambitious, self-interested men, most of whom migrated to Georgia in the decades immediately before or immediately after independence to take advantage of liberal land policies, a growing commercial environment, and unusual opportunities to establish themselves, provide for families and participate in self-government.

When Georgians designed an independent government, they borrowed liberally from developments elsewhere in America and vested considerable power in broadly democratic structures designed to respond to the concerns of local property holders, men who met the minimal threshold of taxpayer. The new structures of government provided numerous opportunities for Georgians to practice self-government at the same time that an expanded press brought debates about the meaning of citizenship and the relationship between the government and the governed to all regions of the state. Late eighteenth century Georgia was, at least for a time, the best freeholders' country, a land where white men could gain a freehold and enjoy a measure of political equality unknown to their fathers and grandfathers. That was the radicalism of Georgia's American Revolution, a radicalism born of the state's distinctive history of late settlement, destructive warfare, and engagement with great political debates of the age.

Chapter One: Foundations

The familiar narrative of Colonial America begins in the early decades of the seventeenth century with single male adventurers in Jamestown, pious families in Plymouth and Boston, and Dutch traders along the Hudson River. From those iconic images, scholars trace the dominant sectional patterns of United States history through the Civil War. Jamestown's ambitious young men quickly recognized tobacco as the region's best proxy for gold and turned to exploiting first land and then labor in pursuit of their desired riches. New England's Puritan founders established solid communities organized around faith, family, and modest subsistence. New York's Dutch and later English traders laid the groundwork for a commercial empire that transcended ethnic, political, and cultural borders. With such a varied set of founders, it is far easier to understand how the federal union came apart in 1861 than it is to understand how the thirteen colonies came together in 1776.

Come together they did, however. Even the young and sparsely populated colony of Georgia, the colony most dependent on subsidies from the King's government, joined twelve fellow colonies in rebellion against Great Britain, to the astonishment of its long-serving royal governor James Wright. Some contemporary observers, especially those of the loyal persuasion, explained Georgia joining the American cause as the result of "weak and infatuated men" having fallen under the spell of radicals from nearby Charles Town. Others suggested that Georgians, like other white southern colonists, joined the rebellion to defend their slaveholdings. Perhaps some Georgians simply followed friends, kin, and business associates from the other side of the Savannah River into patriot politics and

some no doubt believed their property safer under American than British rule, at least after Virginia's last royal governor offered freedom to slaves who deserted rebel masters to join British forces in 1775.

Before we accept the Tory version of history or read nineteenth century politics into the eighteenth century, however, we should first look more closely at colonial Georgia. After briefly considering the colony's distinctive beginnings, this chapter examines first the distribution of land and then the locations of political authority in royal Georgia to understand the context in which white residents approached the American Revolution.

Trustee Georgia

Georgia owed its origin to a mix of military necessity, philanthropic vision, timing, and mercantile ambitions. By the 1730s, Spanish troops in Florida and French traders along the lower Mississippi posed very real threats to South Carolina rice planters and Indian traders. Schemes to settle a buffer colony between the Altamaha and Savannah Rivers gained support in the late 1720s just as a parliamentary committee concluded its investigation into the deplorable state of English prisons. The committee's work brought James Edward Oglethorpe together with Dr. Thomas Bray, founder of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPGFP), and the two formed a partnership dedicated to establishing a charity colony for "unfortunates." Planners

imagined that the proposed colony's mild climate would promote cultivation of hemp, flax, and silk for textile manufacturers in England and Ireland.¹

In 1732, King George II granted the Georgia Trustees a charter and Parliament authorized an annual subsidy to promote the settlement and maintenance of a colony of hard-working, Protestant yeoman families. To ensure that the new venture did not replicate what the trustees saw as the evils of plantation societies in South Carolina and the West Indies, the planners prohibited slave labor and set the standard allotment of land at 50 acres, with a 500-acre maximum allocation. In addition, they disallowed female inheritance and restricted title to *tail male*, which severely limited the grantees' ability to sell, mortgage, or rent acreage.²

Georgia's first English settlers faced formidable challenges when they arrived in America as had the earliest white settlers in Virginia a century before. Of the 114 passengers who accompanied Oglethorpe to America, 53 (46%) did not survive the decade, with most dying within a year or two of landing. Another 17 (15%) departed the colony and headed either for South Carolina or back to England and 15 (13%) simply disappeared from official records.³ Also like the first Chesapeake settlers, those first

¹ Coleman, "The Founding of Georgia."

² A rich literature explores the founding of Georgia. Among others, see Ready, "Philanthropy and the Origins of Georgia"; Spalding, "James Edward Oglethorpe's Quest for an American Zion"; Wood, "The Earl of Egmont and the Georgia Colony"; Phinizy Spalding, *Oglethorpe in America*.

³ Survival percentages are based on comparison of Coulter's list of Ship Ann passengers with indices of CRG volumes. See Coulter and Saye, *A List of the Early Settlers of Georgia*. On seasoning in Georgia, see Cates, "The Seasoning" Seasoning had of course exacted an especially heavy toll on the first generations of English settlers in the Chesapeake. See Morgan, *American*

Georgians had few of the agricultural skills necessary to eke out a living in an initially hostile environment. The trustees had pre-determined as much when they selected “a sort of middle poor, . . . decayed tradesmen, or supernumerary workmen in towns and cities,” over “Husbandmen or Labourers from the Country” as passengers on Trustee-funded ships bound for the new colony. Georgia’s founding settlers included a wig maker, several insolvent merchants, some tradesmen and just one known farmer. Later transports brought more men and women with various occupations—carpenters, tailors, clothworkers, potash makers, gardeners, millers, and bakers, and, to support the trustees’ dreams of developing a silk trade, Italian artisans familiar with silk cultivation and manufacture.⁴

More than 2,800 immigrants traveled to Georgia in the colony’s first decade. The trustees and the SPGFP paid transport costs for 64% (1810). Trustee records classified more than 800 (44%) of those sent “on the charity” as “Foreign Protestants.” These included hundreds of Palatines, displaced by the War of Austrian Succession a generation earlier, and Salzburgers, recently expelled from their homes by the Catholic bishop of Salzburg, as well as smaller numbers of Mennonites, Swiss and Swabians.

Driven from their homes by continental warfare and religious intolerance, these non-English-speaking immigrants brought with them an array of dissenting practices that would contribute to the colony’s religious pluralism. They also brought connections to

Slavery, American Freedom, 158–59. For an interesting discussion of colonial understanding of the relationship between climate and health, see Kupperman, “Fear of Hot Climates in the Anglo-American Colonial Experience.” For a thoughtful interpretation of the role of seasoning in the creation of cultural identity in the Lower South, see Chaplin, *An Anxious Pursuit*, 93–108..

⁴ Coulter and Saye, *A List of the Early Settlers of Georgia*.

broader communities of co-religionists in Europe and in other American colonies. In the case of the Mennonites, these connections facilitated removal and resettlement in Pennsylvania when their pacifism conflicted with their neighbors demands that they share in the defense of the colony against threatened Spanish invasion.⁵

Another distinct ethnic and religious group migrated at the expense not of the trustees nor of the SPGFP, but with sponsorship from Bevis Marks Synagogue in London. The trustees did not set out to recruit Jewish settlers; but they did try to raise money for their colony from several of the city's wealthiest Jews. To the trustees' dismay, the same philanthropic impulse that moved Christians to wish to resettle deserving poor Protestants inspired Jewish leaders to organize and fund the migration of Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews deemed worthy of charity.

Hasty efforts by some trustees to block Jewish settlement in the colony failed to stop the Schooner *William and Sarah* with 42 Jews from setting sail to Savannah in late 1732. Seven months later, a surprised Oglethorpe asked Charles Town attorneys whether the Georgia Charter permitted Jews to settle in the colony. Because the charter guaranteed liberty of conscience and the free exercise of religion to all "except papists," the lawyers answered in the affirmative. In 1735, one of the men whose family arrived on the *William and Sarah* wrote in his diary that Savannah's Jews "open'd the Synagogue" today. It would take decades for the community to erect a proper house of worship, but

⁵ Fogleman, "Shadow Boxing in Georgia."

Savannah's Mikve Israel became just the third organized Jewish congregation in North America.⁶

In addition to individuals and families sent on charity, another 1,021 individuals migrated to Trustee Georgia. Mindful of the new colony's frontier nature, the trustees recruited dozens of Scots Highlander families to settle the southernmost region of the colony and to check Spanish ambitions to extend Florida north of the St. Mary's River. Gaelic speaking Presbyterians, the Highlanders organized the first Presbyterian meetinghouse south of Charles Town. Other Scots, mainly from the Lowlands, emigrated to join the rough and tumble, yet lucrative, Indian trade. The vast majority of emigrants, however, came from England in response to economic pressures at home and the cheerful accounts of the prospects of success in the newest British colony that circulated in promotional pamphlets as well as in the press.⁷

It took little time for discontented settlers to voice opposition to the trustees' restrictive governance. In 1738, a faction of so-called Malcontents circulated a petition, hoping to galvanize opposition to the Trust and especially to the prohibition of slave labor, without which they claimed the colony would fail.⁸ Proponents of African slavery

⁶ Greenberg, "A 'Haven of Benignity'"; Jones, "Sephardim and Ashkenazim Jewish Settlers in Colonial Georgia"; Snyder, "A Tree with Two Different Fruits"; Sheftall, "Levi Sheftall Diary, 1733-1808," 35.

⁷ Anthony W. Parker, *Scottish Highlanders in Colonial Georgia*.

⁸ Betty Wood presents an excellent overview of the Malcontents and their strategies in Wood, *Slavery in Colonial Georgia, 1730-1775*, 25–58. Also Wood, "A Note on the Georgia Malcontents"; Flanders, *Plantation Slavery in Georgia*, 3–22; Potter, "The Rise of the Plantation System in Georgia"; Davis, *The Fledgling Province*, 11–4. For examples of Malcontent literature, see Tailfer, Anderson, and Douglas, *A True and Historical Narrative of the Colony of Georgia*.

emphasized the unhealthful conditions under which agricultural workers toiled in Georgia's swamps and marshes and argued that European indentured servants too easily succumbed to the fevers that plagued the southern climate.⁹ Moreover, those servants who managed to escape disease often took advantage of the cover their white skins provided and absconded to Charles Town or cities farther north.¹⁰

Slave owners in neighboring South Carolina, who had their own plans for expansion south of the Savannah River, fueled the debate by lending support to the Malcontent cause both in Savannah and among the trustees and their associates in London. Even George Whitefield weighed in on the Malcontents' side. After just four months as the SPGFP missionary in Savannah, he described the trustees' plan as "well meant at home; but . . . absolutely impracticable in so hot a country abroad" and suggested that settling Englishmen in Georgia without the use of slaves "was little better than to tie their legs and bid them walk."¹¹

⁹ As evidence of the persistence of the belief that Georgia's climate necessitated the use of African slaves, see the 1768 letter to newly appointed colonial agent Benjamin Franklin stating that "white people were unequal to the Burthen in this Climate and therefore it was absolutely necessary to allow us the free use of Slaves." Habersham, "Committee Appointed to Correspond with Benjamin Franklin Esqr, Agent"; Habersham, *The Letters of Hon. James Habersham, 1756-1775*, VI:71-74, quote on p. 72.

¹⁰ Whites continued as indentured servants in Georgia even after the legalization of African slavery. And they continued to run away. In May 1774, planter Joseph Butler complained that "John Carver, the white servant that I Bought of Mr. Telfair," had absconded. Butler warned Edward Telfair and his business partners that Carver, a joined, had headed toward Savannah, where he would likely meet with Telfair's cooper, also a servant, and leave for Carolina. See Butler, "Joseph Butler to Gentlemen, May 24, 1774."

¹¹ Tyerman, *The Life of the Rev. George Whitefield*, 1: 141; Wood, *Slavery in Colonial America, 1619-1776*, 17-19; Scarborough, *The Opposition to Slavery in Georgia Prior to 1860*, 23-43, 58-75. On South Carolinians' interest in Georgia land, see Gally, *The Formation of a*

Not all Georgians supported the Malcontents' campaign to legalize slavery. Some, in fact, charged that their disgruntled neighbors suffered from indolence rather than from lack of bondsmen and warned that dependence on slave labor would only exacerbate the colony's problems. Leaders of the Salzburger settlement dismissed Malcontent claims that rice cultivation was "quite impossible and dangerous for white People." In a petition to the trustees, they reported, "several People of us have had, in the last Harvest, a greater Crop of Rice than they wanted for their own Consumption." Moreover, some opponents of slavery feared the ill effects of large-scale plantation agriculture on already struggling farmers. They worried that Georgia would follow the example of South Carolina and the West Indies and develop an extremely wealthy elite at the expense of the colony's yeomanry.¹²

By far the most compelling argument against Malcontent efforts to legalize slave labor stemmed from Georgia's vulnerable military position. Spanish settlers in Florida, French traders in the southwest, and Cherokee, Creek, and Seminole populations on the southern and western frontiers made the fledgling province's security an issue of serious concern. Eighteen Scots Highlanders of Darien responded to the Malcontent petition by drafting one of their own that urged the trustees not to permit slavery. "How miserable would it be to us, and our Wives and Families, to have one enemy without, and a more dangerous one in our Bosoms!" they asked. Even some Malcontents acknowledged that

Planter Elite; Chesnut, *South Carolina's Expansion into Colonial Georgia*; Chesnut, "South Carolina's Penetration of Georgia in the 1760's."

¹² Wood, *Slavery in Colonial Georgia, 1730-1775*, 59–73, quote on p. 66; Cozma, "John Martin Bolzius and the Early Christian Opposition to Slavery in Georgia."

slavery could compromise the colony's defenses by encouraging the kind of dispersed settlement common in the plantation regions of the Carolinas and the Chesapeake. The violent slave uprising near Stono, South Carolina, in 1739 tempered but did not end Malcontent calls for the legalization of slavery in Georgia.¹³

Ultimately, the decision to legalize slavery fell to a small group of weary and disheartened trustees who saw their influence on members of Parliament, as well as on Georgia's settlers, waning throughout the 1740s. In 1750, they yielded to Malcontent pressure; effective the first day of January 1751, colonists could legally use slave labor in Georgia. The trustees surrendered their charter the following year.

Royal Georgia

When John Reynolds, the first of three royal governors, arrived in Savannah in October 1754, he found a population of approximately 3,000 white and black inhabitants scattered over an area of roughly 1,875 square miles (1,200,000 acres). The Atlantic Ocean marked the colony's eastern border; the Altamaha and Savannah Rivers formed the province's southern and northern boundaries; and, to the west, the Creek Indians controlled most land "above the Flowing of the Tides"—territory more than 40 miles inland. The majority of Governor Reynolds' constituents lived along the banks of the

¹³ Jackson, "The Darien Antislavery Petition of 1739 and the Georgia Plan" quote on p. 619. On Stono, see Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion*; Hoffer, *Cry Liberty*.

Savannah River northwest of the capital or along the marshy coastline between Savannah and the Altamaha River to the south.¹⁴

The wealthiest among them produced timber products such as tar, turpentine and staves, or engaged in the lucrative Indian trade in the hinterlands of Augusta. A few dozen Carolina planters had taken advantage of the trustees' lifting of the prohibition against slavery and had established rice plantations along the coast south of Savannah. Most settlers, however, cultivated staples including corn and peas and depended upon small stocks of cattle, hogs, and poultry for subsistence.¹⁵

Immediately after his arrival, Reynolds set about establishing the structures of government called for in his instructions from the Board of Trade. He met with the royally appointed council, issued writs of election for representatives to a general assembly, and established a court of session in Savannah and courts of conscience or justice of the peace courts outside the capital. At an early meeting, members of the council proposed that they consider building a new structure in which to meet because of the "ruinous Condition" of the existing government house. As if on cue, a "Stack of Chimneys and one End of the said House" collapsed. Governor Reynolds and the council "providentially escaped being buried on the Ruins" and adjourned to find another meeting place.¹⁶

¹⁴ Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775.*, 3–5.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Candler and Knight, *The Colonial Records of the State of Georgia*, 7: 21.

The ramshackle condition of Savannah's public and private buildings during the early years of royal rule prompted a visitor to comment that a man with £20 sterling in his pocket could easily purchase half the town. Indeed, such a man would have found little else on which to spend his money. Only a handful of merchant houses operated in Savannah at mid-century and they suffered from chronic shortages of currency, credit, and commodities. In 1755, the customs house logged 53 arrivals in Savannah's port, only one of which had sailed from England. Most vessels came from the West Indies (n=26) carrying sugar and slaves or from South Carolina (n=17) with flour, biscuit, and beer from Philadelphia by way of Charles Town. Ship captains sailed away with cargos of lumber, staves, horses, and cattle for the West Indies, and deerskins and beaver pelts that would find their way to English markets.¹⁷

Less than twenty years later, Georgia's third and last royal governor, Sir James Wright, estimated that the colony's population had grown to 33,000 (an increase of over 1,000 percent) and its territory had expanded to 6,695,429 acres (10,462 square miles). Wright himself had negotiated three separate Indian cessions, adding more than 5-1/2 million acres of land to the province's domain. Savannah had grown into a bustling commercial center of 2,000 residents where merchants advertised goods from all reaches of the British Empire. The number of inbound voyages nearly tripled from 53 in 1755 to 154 in 1774. Vessels from the West Indies (n=53) and South Carolina (n=38) continued to crowd the busy wharves of Savannah, where their crews mixed with the crews of

¹⁷ Port activity for Savannah has been reconstructed from surviving British Naval Office Records records and, after April 1763, entries in the weekly *Georgia Gazette*. British Naval Office Records Inbound vessels are listed in Appendix A.

slavers from Africa (n=12) as well as ships from the British Isles (n=17), and the Mid-Atlantic and New England colonies (n=15).¹⁸

As both the Malcontents and their opponents had predicted, slavery had transformed the province. Less than a quarter century after the trustees lifted the ban on slave labor, African and African-American slaves accounted for 45 percent of the colony's population.¹⁹ Their labor produced rice, indigo, tobacco, and a host of other crops for market. They hunted, raised stock and poultry, tended gardens, spun cloth and felled trees. Highly skilled slaves worked as sawyers, carpenters, pilots, smiths, tailors, and seamstresses.²⁰ They built homes for their masters and for themselves.

¹⁸ Wright, "Report of Governor James Wright to Lord Dartmouth on the Condition of the Colony." Also see Pressly, *On the Rim of the Caribbean [electronic Resource]*, 50–112. Pressly makes an interesting argument for viewing Savannah "as a 'Caribbean' town." In 1771, the Reverend Samuel Frink reported Savannah's population as 1,996. See Frink, "Reverend Samuel Frink to Secretary Burton, July 8, 1771." For an example of the goods and services offered by Savannah merchants and trades people, see Mary Hepburn's advertisement, *GG* 5 August 1767, in which she announces her plan to open a coffeehouse "Where Gentlemen may Breakfast on the same footing as in London." Also, see John McFarlein's announcement that he was a "new Taylor from London," 6 December 1764; Jean Campbell, Mantua Maker, 3 September 1766. Estimates of port activity are based on collected BNO records and *GG* entries. See Appendix A for listing of all inbound vessels identified from those sources.

¹⁹ In his 1773 report, Governor Wright wrote that the total population exceeded 33,000: "I suppose the number of White, Men, Women and Children in the whole Province may be eighteen thousand and upwards, And that of Blacks is computed at fifteen thousand." Wright, "Report of Governor James Wright to Lord Dartmouth on the Condition of the Colony," 167.

²⁰ In 1758, the assembly tried to limit the number of urban slave artisans in order to attract white tradesmen to settle in Georgia (*Watkins Digest*, 52), but the presence of skilled slaves in estate inventories, loyalist claims, newspaper advertisements and the few account books which survive the period demonstrates that a substantial numbers of skilled slaves worked on Georgia plantations and in urban settings. See, for example, the loyalist claim of John Graham which lists: 2 blacksmiths, 1 tailor, 10 squarers and carters, 2 grooms, 2 cooks, 5 coopers, 4 gardeners, 1 bricklayer, 14 sawyers, 1 coachman, 1 hairdresser, 3 footmen, 14 washerwomen and seamstresses. Graham's slaveholdings were, of course, unusual in number but even small slaveholders owned and profited from skilled slave men and women. See "An Account of Lands,

They cleared fields, dug wells, and turned paths into roads. In short, slaves created wealth. Their labor transformed Georgia from an economically dependent colonial outpost to a productive and increasingly profitable plantation society.

Land in Royal Georgia

Between 1755 and 1775, Georgia's royal governors and council members granted 1,400,749 million acres to more than 2,600 individuals. Meeting as a land court the first Tuesday of every month to review petitions for land and caveats related to contested boundaries, surveys, or terms of grants, they created a "pyramid shaped distribution of landholders" with lowcountry rice planters at the top and upcountry farmers at its base.²¹

Two types of early land records have survived largely intact. The council's clerk recorded minutes of the governor and council meetings, which include information about petitions submitted and the council's decisions. Enclosed with the governor's routine correspondence to London, these records appear in volumes 7 through 12 of the *Colonial Records of Georgia (CRG)*. In addition, the surveyor general and his deputies filed individual plats, often quite detailed, showing neighboring landowners and principle

Negroes & other Effects," in AO 13 American Loyalist Claims, Series II (035) Claims F-J R, Georgia (microfilm frames 199-205; digital frames 249-55).

²¹ Wood, *Slavery in Colonial Georgia, 1730-1775*, 90.

geographic markers, for every grant awarded. They have been abstracted and printed in eight volumes, organized by colonial parish or district.²²

The present analysis draws on data compiled from the surveyor general records of recorded grants, augmented by information recorded in the *CRG* minutes of the governor and council in order to approximate landownership in royal Georgia. Because the analysis draws only on grant-related records, it does not reflect purchases and sales among colonists. With that limitation in mind, and in the absence of a series of tax records, the data provides an important base, albeit an imperfect one, for understanding patterns of land distribution during the twenty years of royal rule.

Most studies of Georgia published since 1960 state that 5% of Georgia landowners controlled 20% of the land and that 60 individuals owned 2,500 or more acres. Under the headright system, land grants of that size suggest slaveholdings of dozens of slaves. (Consider that 100 acres for the head of household and 50 each for a wife and 5 children would justify a 400-acre grant. In order to support a claim for 2,100 additional acres, a man would need an additional 42 hands.) Although authors often cite James C. Bonner's *History of Georgia Agriculture* (1964), Bonner seems to have drawn on Milton Heath's *Constructive Liberalism*, published a decade before in 1954. Heath cites E. M. Coulter on the 5% claim and refers readers to volumes 6 through 11 of the

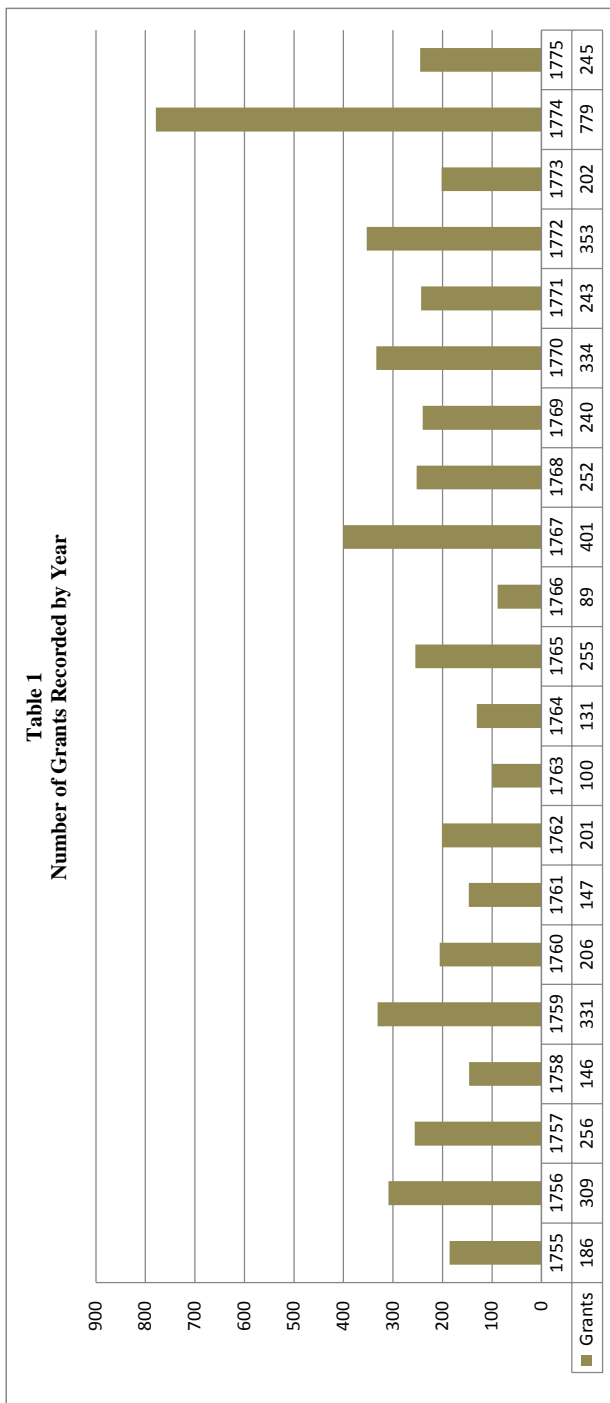
²² Candler and Knight, *The Colonial Records of the State of Georgia*; Bryant, *English Crown Grants for Islands in Georgia, 1755-1775*; Hemperley, *English Crown Grants for St. Philip Parish in Georgia, 1755-1775*; Hemperley, *English Crown Grants in Christ Church [i.e. St. Matthew] Parish in Georgia, 1755-1775*; Bryant, *English Crown Grants in St. Andrew Parish in Georgia, 1755-1775*; Bryant, *English Crown Grants in St. George Parish in Georgia, 1755-1775*; Hemperley, *English Crown Grants in St. John Parish in Georgia, 1755-1775*; Hemperley, *English Crown Grants in St. Paul Parish in Georgia, 1755-1775*, 1974.

CRG to identify the 60 men who held more than 2,500 acres. In place of Heath's 60 men with more than 2,500 acres, the current analysis has identified 91. And, where Betty Wood and others, following Coulter, suggested that, "around 5 percent of landowners controlled 20 percent of the lands by the early 1770s," the present dataset confirms that an even smaller group representing just 1.5% of landowners controlled 20% of Georgia's allocated lands at the start of the Revolution.²³

Table 1 displays the total number of grants awarded by year between 1755 and 1775. As soon as Governor Reynolds and the council began meeting as a Land Court in early 1755, Georgians who had received *tail-male* grants under the trustees began to convert their grants to *fee-simple* title. New settlers, especially South Carolina and West Indian planters eager to move slaveholdings into the colony, also rushed to file petitions for grants in the early years of royal government. That initial flurry declined after 1759 and the total number of surveys recorded remained low for several years while the southern frontier suffered the effects of the French and Indian War. Activity increased in 1765 and, notwithstanding considerable year-to-year variations, the Land Court awarded a median number of 248 grants annually for the next decade.

Shifting focus from the number of grants to look at the total acreage granted to individuals, the contours of landholding in Colonial Georgia come into view. Of the 2,656 individuals who completed the grant process, 233 received less than one acre,

²³ Wood, *Slavery in Colonial Georgia, 1730-1775*, 108; Bonner, *A History of Georgia Agriculture, 1732-1860*, 108; Heath, *Constructive Liberalism*; Coulter, *A Short History of Georgia*, 101–3. See Appendix B for names of men owning 2,500 acres or more and Appendix C for the 1.5% (n=39) who collectively owned 20% of the lands allocated in the royal period.

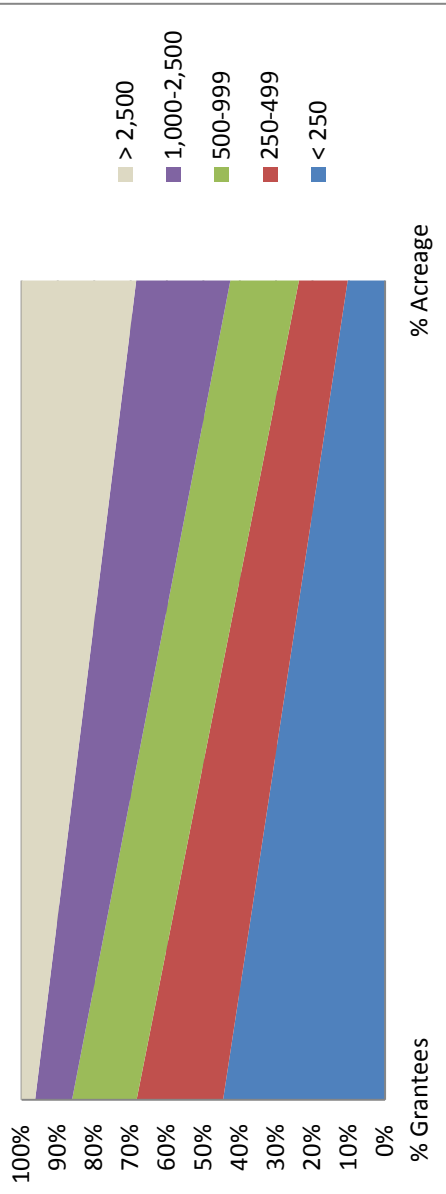


which means they claimed just one or more townlots, 60'x90' lots, generally intended for a home, store or wharf in Savannah, Ebenezer, Augusta Sunbury, or Brunswick. Of the remaining 2,423 grantees, 45% received less than 250 acres; 24% claimed between 250 and 499 acres; 18% filed for 500-999; 10% received from 1,000 to 2,500; and 4% claimed more than 2,500 acres. Table 2 provides a striking picture of the concentration of land in the colony and confirms earlier scholars' characterizations of royal Georgia as having a very small number of men who controlled a large proportion of land. The buff band at the top of the graph shows the 91 landowners who claimed more than 2,500 acres. Representing just 4% of the total number of grantees on the left axis, the buff band expands to 32% on the right side to indicate the percentage of awarded land claimed by those 91 individuals.

The purple band immediately below accounts for the 10% of grantees who received between 1,000 and 2,499 acres or 26% of the total lands allocated. Together, the men (and a few women) in the two top bands received 58% of all acreage granted. In contrast, the blue band at the bottom of the graph represents the 45% percentage of grantees who claimed less than 250 acres; it slopes downward as it approaches the right axis because the total land claimed by those individuals represented just 12% of the 1,400,749 acres granted.

The red band represents the grantees who received between 250 and 499 acres, whose total landholdings accounted for 15% of granted lands. Only the green band, which shows claimants of between 500 and 999 acres, remains proportional with 18% of the grantees and 19% of the acreage.

Table 2
Distribution of Acreage by % Grantees



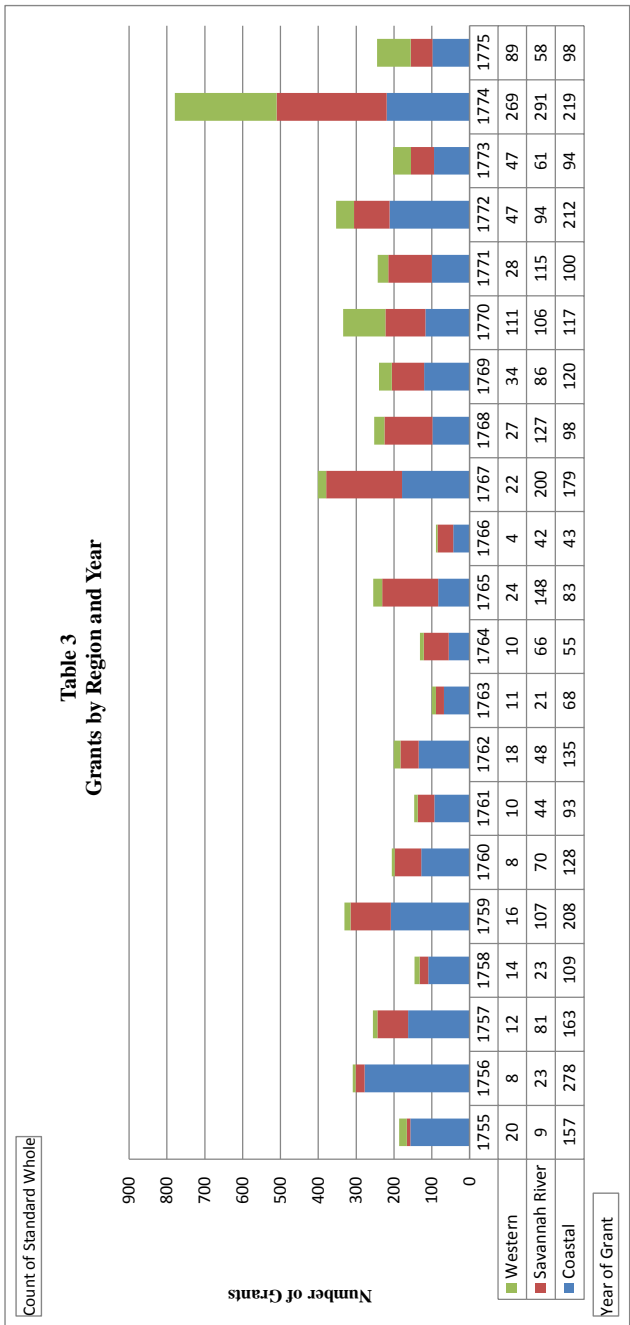
As large amounts of acreage became concentrated in the hands of a small number of men, distinct patterns of landholding emerged within the colony's shifting borders. In 1758, the assembly created eight Anglican parishes that functioned as civil units for the rest of the royal period. For purposes of analysis, those parishes can be grouped into three geographic regions: coastal, Savannah River, and western.

Coastal

The coastal parishes consisted of Christ Church, St. Philip, St. John, St. Andrew, and St. James Parishes. Christ Church included Savannah and its hinterlands. The rich lands along the Great and Little Ogeechee Rivers comprised St. Phillip Parish. The town of Midway and the port of Sunbury anchored St. John Parish. St. Andrew encompassed the area that Highland Scots had settled near Darien. St. James Parish ranged from the old military outpost of Frederica to the Sea Islands south of the Altamaha River. In 1765 the assembly established four more parishes (St. Patrick, St. David, St. Thomas, and St. Mary), which contemporaries referred to as the Southern Parishes, also located in the coastal region. All of the coastal parishes started at the Atlantic and ran inland; they contained a mix of lands suitable for rice cultivation or forest products, such as lumber, pitch and tar.²⁴

Demand for acreage in the coastal parishes consistently outstripped demand in other regions through 1763 (see Table 3). After that, the number of grants in the Savannah River and western regions equaled or outnumbered coastal region grants every

²⁴ Watkins and Watkins, *A Digest of the Laws of the State of Georgia [electronic Resource]*, 52–54, 114.



year except 1772 when claimants rushed to the newly opened Southern parishes (St. David, St. Thomas, St. Patrick, and St. Mary).

As early as 1764, the distribution of landholding in the coastal region had assumed a character that residents of the South Carolina Lowcountry would find familiar. Historian Philip Morgan found a median landholding of 908 acres in the St. James Goose Creek in 1745 (based on a single tax return showing 44 households) and medians ranging from 202 to 800 in other lowcountry sections of South Carolina in the 1780s (also based on tax returns, showing from 32 to 171 households). Grantees in Georgia's coastal region received a median acreage of 400 by 1764; the median increased slightly to 450 by 1770 and returned to 400 by 1775.²⁵

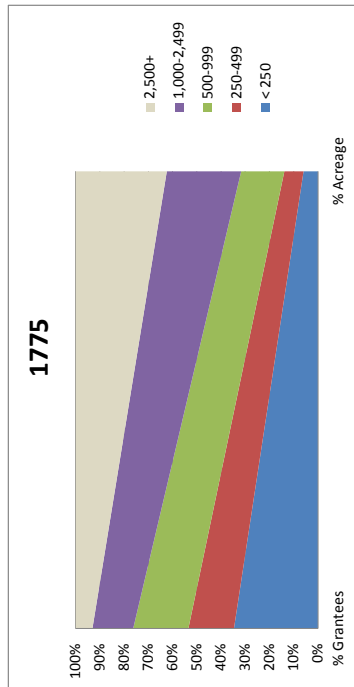
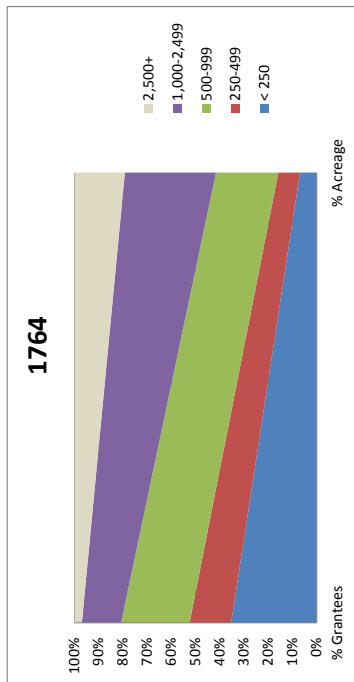
Table 4 shows the distribution of acreage by size range in 1764 and 1775. The percentage of landholders with less than 500 acres of land (blue and red bands) changed little during that period, rising slightly from 52% to 54% of total grantees, while the percentage of land granted to individuals whose total holdings fell within those ranges decreased from 16% to 14% of all lands granted within the region. The most significant change over the decade occurred within the top category of grantees, whose share of granted acreage increased from 21% in 1764 to 38% by the end of the colonial period.

With large landholders claiming a growing proportion of prime coastal lands for rice cultivation, the region's slave population increased dramatically as well. Estimates of the slave population in the colony as a whole grew from 1,855 in 1755 to 15,000 two

²⁵ Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint*, 42–43. The Georgia medians are based on acreage claimed by 546 individual grantees by 1764, 781 by 1770 and 1,012 by 1775.

Table 4
 Distribution of Acreage by Size Range, 1764 and 1775
 Coastal Region

	% Grantees	% Acreage	% Grantees	% Acreage
<250	35	7	35	6
250-499	17	9	19	8
500-999	28	26	23	18
1,000-2,499	16	38	17	31
2,500+	3	21	7	38



decades later, with the greatest number of slaves living along the coast. One recent study showed that the average petitioner for lands in the coastal region reported 9.35 slaves compared to 2.49 in other regions, which would suggest that roughly 79% of the colony's slaves or approximately 11,845 lived in the coastal parishes. A generous estimate of the white population in that region in 1775 would be 8,500. Allowing for the uncertainty of precise numbers in the absence of census or even tax records, there can be little doubt that Georgia's rice-growing coastal region had become majority slave by 1775.²⁶

Savannah River

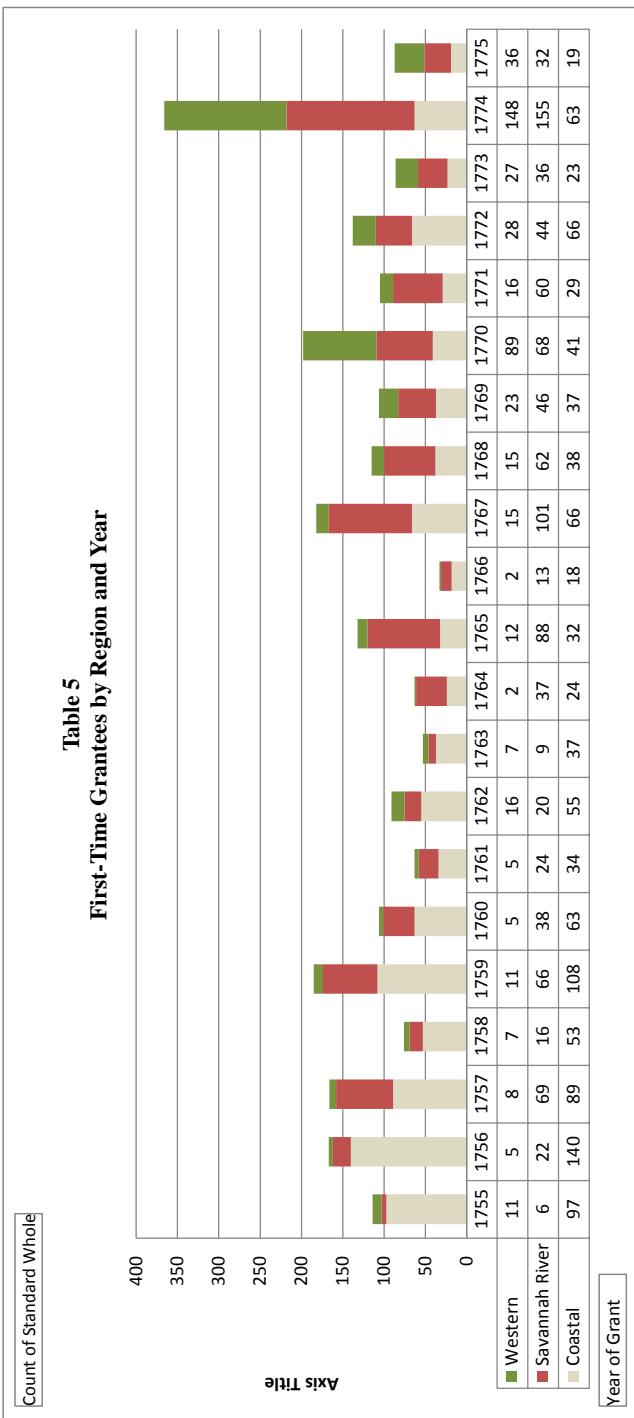
The Salzburger settlement of Ebenezer in St. Matthew Parish and the Halifax or Lower River and Briar Creek neighborhood in St. George Parish comprised the Savannah River Parishes. St. Matthew grants tended to run in narrow strips from the Savannah River inland, allowing landowners access to the river and to the riverbeds used for rice cultivation. St. George settlements looked more like the subsistence farms that many residents had left behind in North Carolina or Pennsylvania.

As the settlement pattern along the Atlantic Coast became more like Carolina and the West Indies, new settlers sought upcountry lands. Table 5 illustrates the location of acreage awarded to first-time grantees by year. Except for a brief and anomalous period immediately following the Stamp Act controversy, newcomers disproportionately migrated to the Savannah River and western regions.

In St. Matthew and St. George, newcomers found a starkly different human landscape than on the coast. Through 1764, 66% of grantees claimed less than 250 acres

²⁶ Marsh, *Georgia's Frontier Women: Female Fortunes in a Southern Colony*, 96–102.

Table 5
First-Time Grantees by Region and Year



and just 2% of claimants received more than 1000 acres. A decade later, the distribution pattern had changed modestly, but smallholders continued to dominate the region (see Table 6). While some households produced rice, indigo, and even silk, most raised peas, corn, and tobacco along with cattle and hogs for market. The Savannah River allowed for transport to the coast and the many creeks and waterways in the area provided power for flour, grist, and saw mills.

Over time, the same attributes and potential for development that drew first-time grantees soon attracted men who had already received grants in the coastal region and who wished to expand their holdings. Between 1764 and 1775, the number of grantees in the Savannah River region quadrupled from 279 to 1,138. In 1764, only 13% of the grantees held 500 or more acres (compared to 47% in the coastal region) and their lands represented just 39% of the acreage awarded in the region (compared to 85% in the coastal parishes). A decade later, 21% of grantees in the region controlled more than 500 acres and their holdings accounted for 55% of lands awarded. The greatest changes took place in the top two categories of landholding, where the percentage of awarded acreage increased from 11 to 31% of the total.

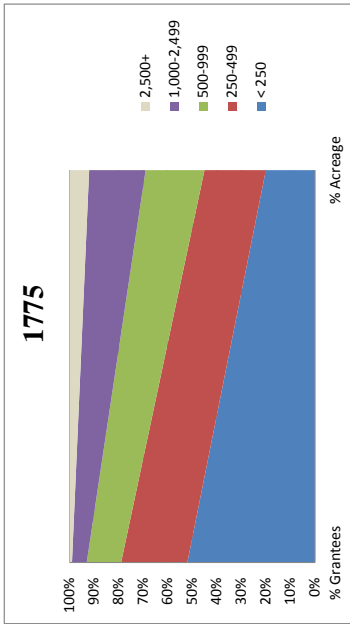
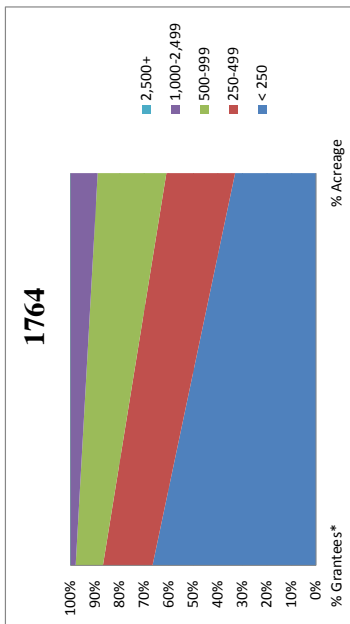
Western Region

Western lands open to white settlement increased dramatically in the royal period as the result of lands cessions won from leaders of the Creek and Cherokee nations. The 1763 Treaty of Augusta extended Georgia's border fifty miles above Augusta and increased its territory by 2.4 million acres. In 1773, a second Treaty of Augusta forgave debts owed by Creek and Cherokee nations to Augusta traders in exchange for 2.1

Table 6
 Distribution of Acreage by Size Range, 1764 and 1775
 Savannah River Region

	% Grantees*	% Acreage	% Grantees	% Acreage
< 250	66	33	52	20
250-499	20	28	27	25
500-999	11	28	14	24
1,000-2,499	2	11	6	23
2,500+	0	0	1	8

* 99% total due to rounding



million acres lying another 70 miles north of Augusta.²⁷ By 1775, the western region included St. Paul Parish and the so-called “New Purchase” or Ceded Lands.

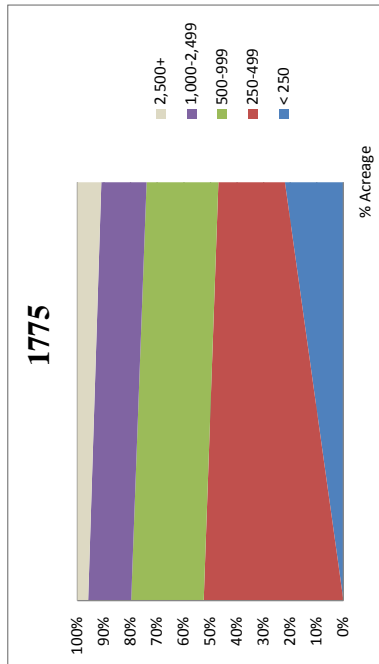
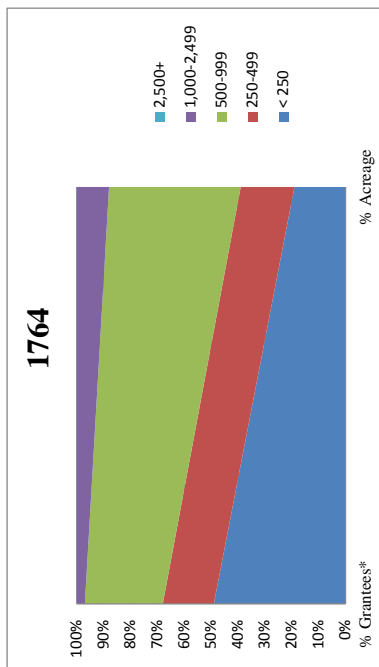
At the close of the French and Indian War, just 117 grantees had filed for western lands; that number grew to 829 twelve years later. The median landholding actually decreased from 300 in 1764 to 250 in 1775. Table 7 shows that the blue and red bands representing smallholders with less than 500 acres increased both in percentage of grantees (from 68% to 79%) and in percentage of lands granted (39% to 47%) between 1764 and 1775.

Those increases, of course, represent only those settlers who occupied the lands legally. If the availability of good, unoccupied lands encouraged hundreds of men to submit petitions for piedmont acreage near and above Augusta, it also attracted like numbers of men and some families, who simply moved onto land, constructed makeshift accommodations and eked out a living without concern for legal title. In 1764, prompted by persistent reports of “vagabonds and other idle persons” making mischief in the west, Georgia’s General Assembly passed a law that prohibited “People of loose and disorderly Lives . . . with no kinds of property or visible way of living or supporting themselves but by hunting” from entering the province. Officials feared that men who “sit and Build a Hut, make little or no Improvements and are always ready to remove without loss or danger to

²⁷ Green, *The Politics of Indian Removal*, 30–32.

Table 7
 Distribution of Acreage by Size Range, 1764 and 1775
 Western Region

	% Grantees*	% Acreage	% Grantees	% Acreage
< 250	49	19	52	22
250-499	19	20	27	25
500-999	29	49	16	27
1,000-2,499	3	12	4	17
2,500+	0	0	1	9



themselves” would stir trouble with neighboring bands of Cherokees and Creeks only to “quit the Province” at the first sign of real danger.²⁸

Georgia’s western lands also attracted large numbers of more stable trespassers, men who cultivated and often made valuable improvements on unclaimed land “without authority.” These squatters, frequently with wives and children, and even servants and slaves, cleared fields, planted, and harvested crops, constructed homes, outbuildings, and cowpens. They “so far assumed to themselves a right to said land, by such seating, building and planting, as to sell the same to the next comer” when they themselves moved “to some more distant part” where they “repeated the same process.” The 1764 law directed justices of the peace to give squatters three months to apply for and receive grants for the lands they had improved, a provision that suggests at least a begrudging acknowledgment that these settlers constituted a very different and less dangerous class than so-called hunters. Yet official tolerance only extended so far; the assembly ordered constables “to destroy the huts, buildings, and fences” of any settlers who did not comply with the law promptly.²⁹

Despite the government’s efforts to dissuade disreputable newcomers, illegal settlement continued along the frontier to the consternation of officials in Savannah. The assembly extended the law against vagabonds and so-called hunters in 1767, 1770, and again in 1773. Chief Justice Anthony Stokes denounced rootless settlers as “Crackers,” and warned they would bring “ruin to the Civilized part of the rice colonies.” He

²⁸ *CRG* 18: 588-98.

²⁹ *CRG* 18: 588-98.

recognized that hunters plagued the Carolinas as well as Georgia and believed that “when these people are routed in the other provinces, they fly to Georgia, where the winters are mild, and the man who has a rifle, ammunition, and a blanket, can subsist in that vagrant way, which the Indians pursue.” Stokes attributed their behavior to their having “descended from convicts . . . transported from Great Britain to Virginia” a century earlier.³⁰

Notwithstanding official disapproval of illegal settlement, colonial officials inadvertently encouraged the practice by failing to enforce the requirement that grantees improve their lands within a specified period. In 1773, Governor Wright estimated that “not more than 120,000 acres” was under cultivation in Georgia. It was not unheard of, he later reported, for a man to purchase land “in the neighbourhood of his Residence,” and improve “the stipulated Quantity of Land on that purchase to save the forfeiture of his grants in other places.” This liberal interpretation of the terms of headright allowed landholders to make improvements in the coastal region even as they held onto large tracts in the west for speculation or later development. Of the dozen men who claimed more than 2,500 acres in Savannah River or western parishes, only three (Edward Barnard, George Galphin, and John MacLean) resided in those regions. The others

³⁰ Watkins and Watkins, *A Digest of the Laws of the State of Georgia [electronic Resource]*; Stokes, *A View of the Constitution of the British Colonies in North-America and the West Indies, at the Time the Civil War Broke out on the Continent of America. ... By Anthony Stokes, ...*, 140; Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*, 51–56.

included Savannah-based merchants, members of the governor's council and Governor Wright himself.³¹

Political Authority in Royal Georgia

Governor, Council, and Assembly

The establishment of royal government in Georgia in the mid-1750s coincided with a period of increased scrutiny of colonial administration by a newly revitalized Board of Trade. Having witnessed the rise of powerful elites in other American colonies, the board attempted to arm Georgia's governors with sufficient power to cultivate the loyalty of a select group of influential colonists and, at the same time, to dissuade ambitious men from challenging the authority of the king's representatives in America. Most importantly, the board freed the governor from dependence on the lower house's control of funds by securing a parliamentary subsidy that covered most of the government's expenses. This, they hoped, would result in a new kind of relationship between colonials and England.³²

The royal governor's role consisted of a mix of legislative, executive, and judicial functions that seems odd to modern observers more familiar with institutionalized separation of powers. Georgia's colonial governor understood his office as one of three branches of the legislature: "an Epitome of the Parliamentary Constitution of Great

³¹ Wright, "Testimony in Support of Loyalist Claim by William Knox."

³² Stokes, *A View of the Constitution of the British Colonies in North-America and the West Indies, at the Time the Civil War Broke out on the Continent of America. ... By Anthony Stokes, ...*, 119; Saye, *A Constitutional History of Georgia, 1732-1968*, 49–56; Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775.*, 8–15; Greene, *The Quest for Power.*, 46–47; for broader context, see Steele, "Governance of the British Empire."

Britain,” according to Governor James Wright. In that capacity, he issued writs of election and called the lower house of assembly into session. He could also prorogue and dissolve the lower house, propose legislation, and deliver an absolute and final veto to a bill he found objectionable.

As executive, the royal governor enjoyed broad authority to act as the king’s representative in the colony. He negotiated treaties and land cessions with Creek and Cherokee headmen, appointed associate justices to the General Court, commissioned militia officers, and appointed justices of the peace. The governor enjoyed the power of the pardon for all crimes except murder and treason and, with his council, he reviewed appeals from the General Court.³³

Notwithstanding delegated powers, effective governance depended on the relative strengths of the men appointed to office. In his brief tenure, John Reynolds, the colony’s first royal governor, nearly derailed the Board of Trade’s attempt to make Georgia a model colony not by exerting his authority, but by alienating powerful members of the assembly as well as some on the council. His more skilled successor, Henry Ellis, calmed political tempers and managed to build respectful relations with local elites while still projecting a strong authoritative presence in the colony. Ellis stayed in Georgia just three years, resigning his governorship in 1760.³⁴

³³ Wright, “Report of Governor James Wright to Lord Dartmouth on the Condition of the Colony,” 164; Saye, *A Constitutional History of Georgia, 1732-1968*, 52–54.

³⁴ Greene, *The Quest for Power*, 46–47. The essential source for Georgia’s royal governors remains Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775*. On Governor Ellis and patronage, see Edward J. Cashin, *Governor Henry Ellis and the Transformation of British North America*, 47–58.

James Wright, the third royal governor, held the office for twenty-two years and won praise from contemporaries and historians alike for his political acumen and skillful navigation of disruptive times. The son of Robert Wright, who served as chief justice in South Carolina, James Wright cultivated powerful connections on both sides of the Atlantic. As a young man, he studied in England and he entered Grey's Inn in 1741. After returning to the colonies, he built a successful legal practice in Charles Town and served briefly as attorney general of South Carolina before returning to London as South Carolina's agent.³⁵

In 1760, Wright arrived in Georgia as lieutenant governor; a year later, he became governor. He lost little time transferring his considerable personal wealth to Georgia. From his base in Savannah, he eventually oversaw a plantation empire second to none in the province, an empire developed by the labor of more than 500 slaves. His landholdings included nearly 20,000 acres acquired by grant and stretched from one end of the colony to the other.³⁶

In his early years as governor, Wright managed to balance local ambitions for more land and a stronger voice for colonials with directives from the Board of Trade that

³⁵ Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775.*, 84–102; Coleman, “James Wright.”

³⁶ For a sense of Wright's holdings, see his account of lands granted and purchased in his postwar petition for compensation, Wright, “List of Georgia Lands Granted and Purchased.” Also see *CRG* 9: 278, 393, 563, 606-7, 695; 10: 81, 160, 539, 608-9, 669-70, 729, 751, 880-811, 982 entries in the several volumes of *English Crown Grants in Georgia, 1755-1775*. Wright's two brothers, Charles and Jermyn, also prospered in Georgia where they acquired more than 8000 acres, mostly in the southern region of the colony. See *CRG* 9: 506, 511, 10: 40, 84, 258, 474, 810, 812, 914; 12: 93, 197 and Hemperley, *English Crown Grants for Parishes of St. David, St. Patrick, St. Thomas, St. Mary in Georgia, 1755-1775*.

called for careful and prudent containment of both. After 1765, however, events and tempers compromised his ability to lead what quickly became a divided government.³⁷

Like other colonial governors, Wright relied on the advice and support of his council, a group whose membership he shaped during his long tenure. Numbering between seven and twelve at any time, council members served by royal commission and at the pleasure of the crown. They met regularly with the governor and served as the legislature's upper house during sessions of the commons house of assembly. Early councils included a mix of original settlers (James Habersham, Francis Harris, Patrick Houstoun, and Noble Jones); men who had moved to the province after slavery's legalization (Jonathan Bryan, Grey Elliott, Clement Martin, Jr., and James Edward Powell); and officeholders who arrived as members of a new governor's entourage (William Clifton and William Knox).

Over time, Wright took advantage of deaths, departures, and shifting political coalitions to recommend the appointment of men of unquestioned loyalty to him personally as well as to the crown. In 1763, Wright supported the addition of Indian trader-turned planter John Graham, who became a trusted member of his inner circle. Six years later, when council member Jonathan Bryan publicly supported Nonimportation, the governor engineered his suspension. Later, as popular opposition to British measures grew more heated, Wright arranged to have men who held royal commissions, such as Chief Justice Anthony Stokes, Attorney General James Hume, and Superintendent of

³⁷ Coleman, "James Wright," 40–60; Canady, *Gentlemen of the Bar*. Canady places Wright at the very top of the legal profession in South Carolina and suggests that Wright represented more merchants than any other Charles Town lawyer in the 1740s and 1750s.

Indian Affairs John Stuart, named to the council in order to present a united front in support of imperial policies.³⁸

In addition to their non-salaried service on the council, each of the councilors at one time or another held provincial offices that provided a mix of prestige and remuneration. As secretary, James Habersham received £100 annually plus fees every time he or a clerk prepared a document for the governor's signature. William Knox briefly held the office of provost marshal with for which he enjoyed £100. Jonathan Bryan served a brief stint as public treasurer, a post worth around £150 a year—the equivalent of 5% amount collected. Grey Elliott and James Edward Powell served as judge advocates on the vice admiralty court, which paid no more than £10 but offered considerable power in a colony dependent on Atlantic trade. Francis Harris, Noble Jones, and James Edward Powell commanded militia units; James Read acted as a commissioner to regulate Savannah's public market; and all of the men held commissions as provincial justices of the peace.³⁹

The greatest benefit afforded council members was the knowledge they gained when sitting as a land court. As they reviewed petitions for land from bona fide settlers

³⁸ After recommending Graham for the Council in 1761, Wright hesitated because he needed his support in the lower house to quell a controversy involving the chief justice. By 1763, the chief justice had left the colony. Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775.*, 97–98; Gally, *The Formation of a Planter Elite*, 118–19.

³⁹ Alan Gally makes this case and documents it thoroughly in Gally, *The Formation of a Planter Elite*. *CRG* 7-10, esp., 7:88, 504, 811; 9:179; 10:428, 648. Wright, "Report of Governor James Wright to Lord Dartmouth on the Condition of the Colony," 172–74. Elliott was also deputy auditor of the king's revenues, *CRG* 13:675. For militia commissions, see Colonial Commission Book, B-1, Georgia Archives.

and speculators, they became aware of potentially profitable ventures—sawmills, ferries, and cattle pens—as well as of suitable parcels of land to claim for themselves. Claim they did. The median acreage claimed among the twenty men who served on the council was 4,350 acres. Only three councilors had less than 2,500 acres granted; two left the colony after short tenures, and the third, Superintendent for Indian Affairs John Stuart, joined the council in 1775, too late to take advantage of his position in this way.

Many contemporaries regarded councilor John Graham as one of the ablest planters in the colony; he was certainly among the wealthiest. Like Governor Wright, Graham held property in every part of the province: 2,000 Acres of river swamp on Great Satilla River; pine forests on the Altamaha, 1,000 acres within ten miles of Augusta, 2,019 acres of indigo land on St. Simon's Island, and town lots in Savannah, Darien, and Frederica. He claimed 1,400 acres in St. Matthew Parish, 2,000 in St. George and more than 4,000 acres in St. Paul on the basis of family right. These holdings made Graham one of the largest landowners on the frontier, yet he concentrated his efforts and most of his 260 slaves on Mulberry Grove and Monteith, two splendid rice plantations on the outskirts of Savannah, and confined his backcountry interests to lumbering and speculation.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Graham boasted that Mulberry Grove, "situated on the River Savannah within twelve Miles of the seat of Government," had "the very best kind" of rice swamp in Georgia. This plantation was actually two separate working plantations, each consisting of rice fields, pastures, provision lands, barns, rice machines, outbuildings and slave quarters. Monteith contained 360 acres of rice fields, 290 acres of provision fields and 5000 acres of uncleared land. Three white overseers, four black drivers and 190 field hands worked Mulberry Grove and Monteith for Graham. See "An Account of Lands, Negroes & other Effects," in AO 13 American Loyalist Claims, Series II (035) Claims F-J R, Georgia, microfilm frames 199-205; digital frames 249-255.

In 1765 Graham invested in a sawmill operated by Thomas Morgan on Brier Creek in the Savannah River Region and shortly afterwards he announced a plan to construct another mill on the same waterway. Graham's timing coincided with the explosion of settlement in the Georgia backcountry. In the years 1765 through 1769, 64% of successful petitioners received lands in the colony's Savannah River and western regions. The overwhelming majority of settlers were small farmers with few or no slaves who received grants of less than 500 acres. They cleared the forests, made improvements and established working households along the navigable creeks and river branches that permeated the upcountry. By their labor, they increased the value not only of their own land, but also of acreage owned by John Graham and other absentee owners. Virtually all council members were absentee landowners; the insider traders of their day, council members enjoyed unparalleled access to information about frontier development. Their positions allowed them to stake claims on western lands at precisely the moments other men began to settle and improve them.⁴¹

The Commons House of Assembly, or lower house, constituted the third branch of the legislature as well as the only branch determined by election. By law, male freeholders with 50 acres or with property valued at £50 could vote for representatives and those representatives had to have 500 acres or £500 in assets to serve.

One hundred sixteen different men served in Georgia's lower house in the royal period, half of them for just a single term. (Only Rhode Island and Nova Scotia had

⁴¹ CRG 9: 420, 451-52.

higher legislative turnover rates than Georgia.)⁴² Voters in St. Matthew's Abercorn and Goshen districts, for example, elected five different men to a single seat between 1755 and 1763. Their neighbors in Ebenezer (also in the Savannah River Parish of St. Matthew) consistently returned William Ewen of Savannah to one of their three seats, but rotated fifteen men through the other two seats. Only two men, Colin Reddock, and Alexander Wylly, won re-election in St. George Parish. Electors in St. John Parish similarly returned delegates no more than two times. Tiny St. James Parish elected only one man more than once as did voters in Vernonburgh District on the outskirts of Savannah, who elected Edmund Tannatt to an unusual second term in 1761.⁴³

The frequent turnover of house membership contributed to the out-sized influence of the few men voters regularly returned to the house, most of whom lived in or represented Christ Church Parish. In the aftermath of the Stamp Act, these men formed a powerful and effective opposition party within the assembly and, more generally, in Savannah. In 1770, suspended council member Jonathan Bryan joined them. For the first time in the colony's brief history, the commons house of assembly positioned itself on one side of divisive issues and the governor and council formed a decided block on the other side. In response, the governor and his circle grew more insular and the possibility of creating a model colony grew more elusive.

⁴² Greene, "Legislative Turnover in British America, 1696 to 1775," 447.

⁴³ Greene, *The Quest for Power*, 493–95.

Courts and the Established Church

On the eve of the Revolution, Georgia had one courthouse and three Anglican churches to meet the needs of a population numbering more than 33,000 spread over approximately 8,400 square miles. The single courthouse stood in Savannah, as did Christ Church. The western and Savannah River regions each had one Anglican place of worship and residents had to travel to Savannah to prove a will, record a deed or settle an estate.

Difficulties of internal travel exacerbated the organizational challenges of dispersed settlement and the lack of physical embodiments of power found in older, more developed colonies. Land travel depended on a system of poorly maintained roads and bridges whose condition brought frequent condemnation to the private individuals charged with their upkeep. Water travel largely depended on slaves who piloted their owners' vessels along the coast and through the myriad waterways that linked the coast to internal settlements as well as up and down the Savannah River. Private ferries near Ebenezer and Augusta carried passengers and cargo to South Carolina, making it easier for many upcountry residents to travel to Charles Town than to Savannah.

All criminal trials and civil disputes valued at £8 or more took place in the capital, where the colony's only courthouse stood. Presided over by the Chief Justice, appointed from London, and two associate justices, named by the governor, the General Court held criminal trials in December and June and civil trials four times a year. Surviving sources do not include jury lists, but we can identify 100 men who served as grand jurors between 1763 and 1775 from published presentments. Not surprisingly, just three of those jurors

lived in the western region; twenty one lived in Savannah River parishes (mainly St. Matthew); the remaining seventy six lived in coastal parishes.

Freeholders who resided at a distance from the capital engaged the justice system at its lowest, local, level—the courts of conscience, where justices of the peace and jurors delivered lay justice without benefit of lawyers and with few trappings of the English justice system. By law, courts of conscience (also called justices' courts) convened monthly to hear disputes of less than 40 shillings and quarterly to determine cases valued between 40 shillings and £8. A single justice of the peace and two freeholders could rule on the lesser cases; two justices of the peace and a jury of twelve freeholders decided cases involving higher values. Meeting in private homes, courts of conscience handled “the bulk of litigation” carried on in the colony.⁴⁴

As light a presence as the established government had beyond coastal settlements, it dwarfed that of the established church, which sometimes struggled even in the coastal region. In the colony's first decade, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPGFP) sent a series of Church of England missionaries to Georgia. Many of the young men who served in the 1730s and early 1740s found the climate inhospitable, the work challenging and the people unreceptive. John Wesley and his brother Charles stayed less than a year. Their successor, George Whitefield, made Georgia the base of his American speaking tours, but served as minister to Savannah only

⁴⁴ Saye, *A Constitutional History of Georgia, 1732-1968*, 63–65; Surrency, “The Courts in the American Colonies”; Gerber, “The Origins of the Georgia Judiciary.”

briefly. The pattern of turnover continued until the arrival of newly ordained Bartholomew Zouberbuhler in 1745. Swiss-born and American educated, he presided over Savannah's Christ Church for two decades, bringing much needed stability, which his successors maintained until forced to flee in 1776.⁴⁵

One hundred fifty miles north of Christ Church, Augusta's St. Paul's Church provided the second site for Anglican worship in the province. Like Savannah, Augusta and its early ministers suffered several serious mismatches of clerics and congregation. In response to the vestry's complaint that he "loved to Drink," one dismissed cleric admitted as much and exclaimed, "What was that to them"? He suggested to his SPGFP superiors, "If the Gentlemen of the Society have a mind to proscribe Penance to a Clergyman let them send him by all means" to Augusta.⁴⁶

When Samuel Frink assumed the pulpit in 1765, he found the parish in desperate condition for want of steady ministry. A year later he reported much progress in town despite attempts by a "very mischievous set of Croakers" from Philadelphia intent on perverting "the Minds of the People . . . to Presbyterianism." He worried that parts of Georgia and South Carolina would lapse into "a Heathenish state" unless the society sent more clergymen soon.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Pennington, "The Reverend Bartholomew Zouberbuhler"; Daniel, "Anglicans and Dissenters in Georgia, 1758-1777."

⁴⁶ Duncanson, "William Duncanson to Dr. Beecroft, Savannah, May 20, 1762."

⁴⁷ Frink, "Samuel Frink to Reverend Sir, Augusta, April 9, 1766."

In May 1771, the Reverend James Seymour arrived at St. Paul's, where he served through the end of the colonial period. He offered Sunday services in town and traveled to remote parts of the parish on weekdays. In 1773, he estimated that just two-fifths of the residents of the parish subscribed to Church of England beliefs with the remaining two-thirds divided among Baptists, Presbyterians, and Quakers.⁴⁸

The SPGFP appointment of John Holmes as missionary to St. George Parish in 1774 provided a third regular minister to support Church of England worship in Georgia. At his arrival, Holmes found his church without a pulpit and the promised parsonage not yet under construction. He reported that the parish included 400 families, half of them Presbyterians, and all "very poor & ignorant." He complained that a "parcel of illiterate Anabaptist preachers" infested the region and used their "enthusiastic rant" to influence "those whose want of discernment often leads them to mistake sound for sense." Like Seymour of St. Paul's Parish, Holmes assumed something of an itinerant life, venturing into distant parts of the parish to deliver services and sacraments and to distribute pamphlet literature and Bibles sent by SPGFP.⁴⁹

At the colony's founding, the trustees' toleration of Protestant dissenters had laid the foundation for denominational pluralism in Georgia; by the end of the royal period, it was difficult to recognize any substantial advantage afforded the Anglican Church as the *established* church. As early as 1741, two Lutheran congregations met regularly—one at the Salzburger's Old Jerusalem Church in Ebenezer and a second at the Church of the

⁴⁸ Seymour, "James Seymour to Reverend Sir, Augusta, March 1, 1773."

⁴⁹ Holmes, "John Holmes to Reverend Sir, St. George, February 1, 1774."

Ascension in Savannah. The migration of Carolina slave-owners into coastal Georgia in the 1750s included Congregationalists who settled in St. John Parish. They erected Midway Meeting house, not far from the Highland Scots' Presbyterian church near Darien in St. Andrew Parish. Mid-century settlers also included prominent South Carolina families who had turned away from the Anglican Church when awakened by George Whitefield's preaching and who found a spiritual home at Bethesda's Orphan House south of Savannah.

The 1760s saw hundreds of Scots-Irish Presbyterian families moving from Pennsylvania and the Carolinas to settlements in the Savannah River and western parishes. In the 1770s, they were joined by still more immigrants, from Ireland as well as from other colonies including a settlement of Quakers and Baptists who moved from Orange County, North Carolina.

Conclusion

On the last Sunday in January 1770, the Reverend George Whitefield hosted Governor Wright, members of the governor's council and lower house of the assembly and several other special guests at Bethesda Orphan House, located twelve miles south of Savannah. The celebrated evangelist had founded Bethesda as a refuge for fatherless children in the 1730s and had maintained its operations with donations collected on his several tours of the American colonies and with support from his dear friend James Habersham and other powerful men in Georgia. In the mid-1760s, Whitefield proposed to transform the facility into an academy to educate sons of Georgia's well-to-do families. Governor Wright, Secretary Habersham and the other guests endorsed Whitefield's

vision and proudly joined him on a tour of two new wings intended to house young scholars.

Shortly before noon, the men took their seats in the chapel, where Whitefield delivered a sermon that celebrated the progress Georgians had made in “this once despised, deserted province.” He recalled the colony’s humble beginnings and reminded his listeners that just thirty years ago, “lands which now sell for three po[unds] might have been purchased for three shillings” an acre.⁵⁰

At dinner, a full-length portrait of Whitefield overlooked the gathering as the founder himself waited upon his guests in a display of respect to the governor and members of the civil establishment. As the afternoon turned to early evening, Governor Wright rose and proposed a toast to King George III. Whitefield responded, “And let the people say Amen,” which was immediately “echoed back with a repeated loud Amen from one end of the room to the other.”⁵¹

Several of the men who gathered at Bethesda Orphan House had lived in Georgia since its early days under the trustees and knew as well or better than Whitefield the changes that had transformed the philanthropic outpost of small farmers into a prosperous, staple-producing colony of planters, slaves, traders, merchants, tradesmen and farmers. The Malcontents of old had won—decisively.

Even as they celebrated the achievements of the past, Whitefield’s guests heard the rumblings of new malcontents on the horizon. Alongside a lengthy description of the

⁵⁰ *GG* 21 March 1770.

⁵¹ *GG* 21 March 1770.

Orphan House celebration in the *Georgia Gazette*, the editor placed a notice that council member Jonathan Bryan, “a person . . . greatly instrumental in the settlement of this colony,” had been suspended from the council by order of the king. The *Gazette* referred to Bryan as “a gentleman of Revolution principles” and readers no doubt recalled Bryan had chaired a contentious meeting that called for nonimportation of British goods the previous fall.⁵²

Word of Bryan’s dismissal from the council pointed to the looming imperial crisis from which Georgia, small and peripheral though it often seemed, was not immune. Readers of the *Georgia Gazette* thus received conflicting messages about the province’s political condition. On the one hand, a cheerful account of the Orphan House event suggested that all was well, the future looked bright, and the king’s government well regarded. News of Bryan’s suspension from the council, on the other hand, belied that tranquil image.⁵³ While their host had looked to Georgia’s past and found much to

⁵² For accounts of Bryan’s role in Savannah’s nonimportation movement, see *GG* 6 September 1769. On the relationship between Jonathan Bryan and Whitefield, see Gally, “The Origins of Slaveholders’ Paternalism”; Jackson, “Hugh Bryan and the Evangelical Movement in Colonial South Carolina.”

⁵³ Just above news of Bryan’s suspension, the editor inserted a note about the outbreak of riots in New York and promised to include more information in a future issue. The March account of the event at Bethesda was actually the second account to appear in the *Gazette*. An earlier story appeared in February. Both accounts made much of the order, harmony and mutual admiration displayed at Whitefield’s entertainment. But it was the second account that assured readers that when Governor Wright toasted His Majesty George III, the much beloved Whitefield himself responded, “And let the people say Amen,” an amen which echoed through the Orphan House and, indeed, through the colony. *GG* 21 March 1770.

celebrate, the men who enjoyed Whitefield's hospitality knew all too well that the convivial atmosphere at Bethesda masked serious tensions and challenges ahead.

Chapter Two: Opposition

In 1763, the British Empire enjoyed global military and maritime dominance. In North America, the Treaty of Paris extended British administrative control to Canada and the trans-Appalachian lands as far west as the Mississippi River and as far south as the Gulf of Mexico. Victory over the French in India and Africa assured British commercial interests primacy in Atlantic and Indian Ocean trade. Amid the initial euphoria of victory, a member of Parliament exclaimed, “Look around . . . Observe the magnificence of our metropolis—the extent of our empire—the immensity of our commerce and the opulence of our people.”¹

On the other side of triumph, however, lay tremendous challenges for Britain’s fiscal and administrative capacity. A decade of warfare on multiple fronts had left staggering debt and British leaders recognized that the ongoing costs of an enlarged imperial apparatus would require still more resources. Sensible Britons expected the colonies to contribute to the cost of maintaining their own peace and stability. Beginning in 1764, Parliament enacted a series of measures intended to raise modest revenue in America.

The intensity of the negative colonial response surprised government officials in the colonies as well as in London. Over the next decade, American opposition to British efforts to assert imperial authority in the realm of taxation as well as in enforcement and prosecution of customs regulations challenged the very nature of the colonial relationship and exposed the essential hollowness of Britain’s imperial administration.

¹ Charles James Fox quoted in Colley, *Britons*, 101.

Post-Stamp Act conflict between Governor Wright and emerging opposition leaders in Georgia profoundly influenced the form of government adopted after independence. For that reason, this chapter follows the development of an opposition party in Georgia from the time of the Stamp Act to 1772. James Wright, the colony's third royal governor, enjoyed considerable success in his first five years in office. The coastal economy prospered, his program of licensing Indian traders helped to stabilize the frontier, and he had no serious disagreements with members of the council or commons house of assembly. All that changed in the long year between May 1765 when Georgians learned that Parliament had passed the Stamp Act and June 1766 when the *Georgia Gazette* announced its repeal.

Alone among colonial governors, Wright managed to issue stamped papers under terms agreed to by merchants, ship captains, and the Sons of Liberty. That accomplishment emboldened Wright even as it provoked leaders in the lower house to redouble efforts to gain powers that other lower houses had won earlier in the century. After five years of infighting within the walls of Savannah's government house, opposition voices moved into the grand jury room and launched a bold and provocative assault on Wright's person and position. The debate that followed revealed one of the fundamental issues of the American Revolution in Georgia—the rights of grand juries to assume political roles.

The Stamp Act in Georgia

Confirmation that Parliament had passed the Stamp Act reached Savannah in May 1765, shortly after a joint committee responsible for communicating with the colony's

agent, William Knox, wrote to Knox about the colony's displeasure with the Sugar Act of 1764. After several weeks of review and consideration, the committee sent Knox another letter instructing him to join "the other Colony Agents in any and every . . . Remonstrance" against the Stamp Duty. Parliament's "manner of imposing" taxes greatly alarmed provincial leaders, they wrote, because they "knew not, where the precedent may end."²

Convinced that the British ministry's schemes to tax the American colonies, particularly the insistence on payment in specie, would cripple Georgia's economy, the committee nonetheless advised Knox to proceed cautiously and to avoid "any expressions that may tend to call in Question the Authority of parliament." They feared that other colonies might go too far, give offense, and thereby undermine chances for repeal: "for we believe more may be gained by humbly and dutifully remonstrating than by any other Method."³

In early September, Assembly Speaker Alexander Wylly summoned colleagues to a meeting to consider whether Georgia should send delegates to a general congress proposed by the Massachusetts Assembly. Sixteen of twenty-five members of the commons house attended Wylly's caucus; those present endorsed the Massachusetts plan

² On 2 May 1765, James Johnston devoted the first page of the *Georgia Gazette* to an extended excerpt of the newly passed Stamp Duty. Quote is from James Habersham, James Edward Powell, et. al., to William Knox, 18 July 1765, Habersham, *The Letters of Hon. James Habersham, 1756-1775*, VI:40-41.

³ Ibid. For discussion of Georgia during the Stamp Act, see Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775.*, 103-25; Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 18-23.

and called on Governor Wright to convene the assembly so that Georgia could send an official delegation to the Stamp Act Congress. Wright refused. Frustrated by the governor's power to prevent the colony's participation in the proposed congress, Speaker Wylly took pains to assure a New England correspondent that the people of Georgia supported the congress even if their elected representatives could not attend. "As individuals," he wrote, Georgians "warmly espouse the Common Cause of the Colonies."⁴

Through the fall, James Johnston's *Georgia Gazette* reprinted accounts of developments in the northern colonies. The 10 October issue devoted more than a column to the violence in Boston and the destruction of the Lieutenant Governor's house. A second story, from Virginia, suggested a more genteel form of coercion. According to reports, several gentlemen had invited the arriving stamp officer to a ball "and treated him with the utmost politeness, but after it was over," they told him he would find his baggage loaded on a vessel leaving for London in the morning" and advised him to take passage without delay" if he wished to live.⁵

As 1 November 1765, the day Parliament had set for the act to go into effect, neared, neither stamps nor stamp distributor nor even text of the law had arrived in Georgia. On the night of 26 October, protestors turned an orderly celebration of the

⁴ *CRG* 14: 270-73; quote on 273. Almost every issue of the *Georgia Gazette* carried news about reaction to the Stamp Act from other colonies. See, for example, *GG* 29 August 1765, 5 September 1765, 12 September 1765, 19 September 19 1765, 26 September 26, 1765, 3 October 1765.

⁵ *GG* 10 October 1765

anniversary of George III's accession to the throne into a boisterous anti-stamp parade. "All ranks and denominations" of people created "a very great Tumult in the streets" and cheered when an effigy of a stamp officer was "hanged and burnt."⁶

Two days later, council member James Habersham and four other men received threatening letters signed *The Townsman*. The notes warned of dire consequences if the men failed to reveal the location of the stamps and the identity of "the unhappy person appointed Stamp master for this province." *The Townsman* voiced a widely held suspicion that Habersham or one of the others had secretly accepted the office of stamp distributor. If so, the anonymous penman advised, only a public renunciation of the office could spare the man the kind of harassment that had forced stamp masters throughout America to vacate their posts.⁷

The Townsman succeeded. The next *Gazette* published notices from three of the men (all Scots merchants) who had received the threatening notes denying that they had anything to do with the Stamp Act. Simon Munro wrote that he was not the stamp master, nor did he "intend to accept any such employment." George Baillie and Thomas Moodie

⁶ GG 31 October 1765. Mock hangings of stamp officers were staples of anti-stamp protests from Boston to Savannah. On the symbolic meaning of mock funerals, see Thompson, *Customs in Common*, 480. Thompson places such rites within a broader discussion of "rough music" and calls the mock funeral "the ultimate in excommunication."

⁷ GG 31 October 1765, 14 November 1765. Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775.*, 107. For a discussion of anonymous letters as instruments of protest, see Thompson, "The Crime of Anonymity." On disturbances that forced stamp masters throughout the colonies to resign their posts, see Morgan and Morgan, *The Stamp Act Crisis*; Hoerder, *Crowd Action in Revolutionary Massachusetts, 1765-1780*, 85-143. In Charles Town, Henry Laurens faced down an angry crowd of men who arrived at his home to search for stamped papers by inviting them in and calling them by name, thereby reasserting his very personal, paternalistic authority within the community. See Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, 91.

likewise denied that their warehouses stored stamped papers. They denounced the “Malicious person who must have given this false information” and went so far as to offer *The Townsman* a £50 reward to reveal the identity of the man responsible for spreading false rumors. Governor Wright, on the other hand, was more concerned with the identity of *The Townsman* himself. With the council’s unanimous approval, he offered £50 sterling to “any Person who will discover the author or authors” of the anonymous notes.⁸

A week later, on the eve of Pope’s Day, Savannah’s newly formed Sons of Liberty held their first public meeting at McHenry’s tavern. Reports from Charles Town claimed that the HMS *Speedwell* in the Savannah River carried stamped paper and that the colony’s stamp master, an Englishman named George Angus, would arrive shortly by sea. The Sons of Liberty, or, as Governor Wright called them, the Sons of Licentiousness, met to determine “the properest measures to be taken at this very alarming and critical juncture.” They voted unanimously to prevent the sale of any stamped paper in Georgia and agreed to visit Angus immediately upon his arrival in the colony to make known to him the “sentiments of the people” and the public’s desire that he “resign an office so universally disagreeable to His Majesty’s American subjects.” If, when confronted, the

⁸ *GG* 7 November 1765; *GG* 14 November 1765; *CRG* 14: 277. The 7 November *Gazette* carried the news that George Saxby had resigned his commission as stamp officer for South Carolina.

stamp officer refused to abandon his post, the Sons of Liberty vowed to take more extreme measures.⁹

Savannah's Pope's Day festivities hinted at what the Sons of Liberty had planned for Stamp Officer Angus. After nightfall, sailors and other men paraded through town carrying a scaffold with a man dressed as a stamp master. Periodically the parade stopped and marchers encouraged townspeople to taunt the victim as he "call[ed] out in a pitiful tone, No Stamps, No Riot Act, Gentlemen." The night's entertainment climaxed with a mock hanging in front of McHenry's tavern, where the Sons of Liberty had met the night before. The staged execution provided a grisly reminder that popular protest could turn violent as indeed it had in Boston and New York the previous summer.¹⁰

Instead of violence, a nervous calm settled over Savannah and lasted into early December. Governor Wright ordered the land office, courts, and ports closed and James Johnston suspended publication of the *Georgia Gazette* after the 28 November issue. By the middle of December, patience had worn thin. Angus had still not arrived in Georgia and dozens of vessels with restless crews sat idle along Savannah's waterfront. Barrels of

⁹ GG 7 November 1765. Savannah residents had celebrated Pope's Day and other civil holidays for decades. See McConville, *The King's Three Faces*, 70–76. For evidence that the practice persisted, see GG 8 November 1764. On Pope's Day festivities elsewhere in the colonies, see Hoerder, *Crowd Action in Revolutionary Massachusetts, 1765-1780*, 72–73; Nash, *The Urban Crucible*, 260–62; Shaw, *American Patriots and the Rituals of Revolution*, passim. Governor Wright's reference to the Sons of Licentiousness, is found in James Wright to Board of Trade, 31 January 1766, CRG 37: 103-9, quote on 104.

¹⁰ GG 7 November 7 1765.

rice ready for overseas markets filled merchants' storehouses and a troop of the King's rangers guarded the stamped paper at a fort within the town borders.¹¹

On 16 December, a delegation of Savannah merchants petitioned the governor to appoint a temporary stamp distributor so that commerce could resume. Wright asked the council for advice and the council voted to deny the merchants' request. Two days later, however, the governor and council revisited the question and Wright agreed to appoint a temporary distributor if asked by "general application."¹²

Over the next several weeks, merchants mobilized support for limited use of stamped paper to clear vessels out of port. Even some Sons of Liberty joined the effort and quietly worked toward a compromise that would allow trade to resume. A widely printed "extract of a Letter from Georgia" reported, "our liberty here is at a very low ebb." The author explained that early reports of northern resistance to the Stamp Act had generated "the same spirit" of opposition in Savannah as in other colonies. Over time, however, "some of our merchants (finding their interests concerned) who at first

¹¹ Perhaps in response to idle and unruly seamen in Savannah at the time of the Stamp Act, the next session of the assembly passed a law that punished mariners who deserted their ships and ascribed stiff penalties for Georgians who harbored them. Tavernkeepers and ferry operators were particularly warned not to encourage seamen to overindulge in vice and incur debt while on shore. See Watkins and Watkins, *A Digest of the Laws of the State of Georgia [electronic Resource]*, 130–32.

¹² *CRG* 9: 455-56, 460. Council minutes do not indicate who if anyone was appointed (or even considered as) interim stamp distributor. For a description of the state of the port in December 1765, see James Habersham to Daniel Robadeau (sic), 17 December 1766 [1765], Habersham, *The Letters of Hon. James Habersham, 1756-1775*, VI:57–58.

exclaimed the most against the act, drew off and have even endeavoured to suppress the spirit of liberty, by gaining over the greatest part of the ship-masters to their side.”¹³

Rumors about these negotiations spread through Savannah and the coastal region, generating confusion and concerns that found expression after a regular monthly muster on 2 January 1766. Some two hundred Savannah-area militiamen refused to disperse; word spread that they intended to march to Fort Halifax and “break open the Store & take out the Stamp’ t Papers & destroy them.”¹⁴

Governor Wright’s response to this threat set the tone for his dealings with opponents for the remainder of his tenure as governor. Over the next 17 years, he would repeatedly articulate fierce loyalty to the crown, display real physical courage, and act both decisively and effectively. On this occasion, he grabbed his musket and ordered the guard at For Halifax to move the stamps into the guardhouse and to maintain a party of “no less than forty men” to protect them at all times.¹⁵ Having secured the stamps, he returned home, where a crowd of townspeople and armed militiamen confronted him. Unflinching, the governor walked to the center and demanded to know what they wanted. They had come to find out whether he intended to name a stamp distributor, they answered. Wright replied, “if they had anything to ask, this was not a manner to wait

¹³ “Extract of a Letter from Georgia, dated Jan. 6, 1766” *Boston Post-Boy* 10 February, 1766; *Pennsylvania Gazette* 13 February 1766

¹⁴ *Pennsylvania Gazette* 13 February 1766 as cited in Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775.*, 113–14.

¹⁵ *Pennsylvania Gazette* 13 February 1766 as cited in Ibid. The same piece appeared in the *New York Gazette* 3 February 1766.

upon the governor of a province.” The people should know that he “would not violate his oaths to his Majesty,” and he “would act as he thought proper.” Over time, Wright told them, they would understand that “he was a friend to liberty, while their measures were destructive of it.” Eventually, the crowd broke up, vowing, “to meet at a minute’s warning, whenever they heard of a stamp distributor being appointed.”¹⁶

On 14 January 1766, customs officers in Savannah and Sunbury started clearing vessels from port with stamped papers “quietly issued” with the tacit approval of Savannah’s Sons of Liberty. A news item in the *Boston Evening Post* explained that Georgia’s “merchants and other inhabitants . . . had entered into bonds, that they would not make use of stamp papers for any other purpose whatever.” Courts remained closed, the *Gazette* did not publish, and all public business was suspended, but no one could deny that Governor Wright had managed to enforce the Stamp Act and in so doing had demonstrated his impressive political skills as well as his firm belief in Parliament’s right to tax American colonists.¹⁷

Repeal & Recrimination

On 25 June 1766, Savannah residents crowded into the Independent Presbyterian Meeting House to give thanks for the Stamp Act’s repeal. Reverend John Joachim Zubly rejoiced “that our land is not become a land of slaves, nor our fields a scene of blood.”

¹⁶ Ibid. In January 1766, an anonymous anti-stamp partisan reported, “Our Liberty here is at a very low ebb...of late some of our merchants (finding their interests concerned) who at first exclaimed most against the act, drew off, and have even endeavoured to suppress the spirit of liberty.” Unknown, “Extract of a Letter from Georgia Dated Jan. 6, 1766.”

¹⁷ *Boston Evening Post* 3 February 1766

According to Zubly, Georgians should remember two crucial lessons from the Stamp Act troubles. First, they should acknowledge George III's virtue. As soon as "our great and good King" recognized the injustice of the Stamp Act, he acted because "it is a pleasure to him to repeal an act that gives pain to his subjects." Second, they must recall their responsibility to defend their liberty because "if a prudent, proper remonstrance had not been made and received, the year 1765 must have been the fatal year from which the loss of American liberty must have been dated."¹⁸

Zubly made a bold claim for unity and called on his listeners "to remember the rock from which you were hewn; by descent or incorporation we are now all Britons." As Britons, they owed the king gratitude, loyalty, and obedience just as they owed one another forgiveness for intemperate words that passed during the Stamp Act crisis. He implored his listeners to "Let every injury received be written in sand and all kindness be preserved in marble."¹⁹

Notwithstanding Zubly's plea for unity, resentment lingered. Rather than debating Parliament's right to tax the colonies, opponents in this phase of the conflict attacked their opponents' character and veracity. Even members of the governor's council nursed grudges. James Habersham acknowledged that Lewis Johnson bore "his share" of the burden of supporting Governor Wright's efforts to uphold the law and that "Martin, Harris and Graham" had "not flinched" in the face of opposition. He pointedly omitted reference to others on the council, however, including most notably Jonathan Bryan, who

¹⁸ Miller, *A Warm & Zealous Spirit*, 43, 45.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 45, 46.

later became a staunch liberty man, and Noble Jones, whose son Noble Wimberly Jones soon emerged as a leader of the opposition in the lower house of assembly.²⁰

Several men used the *Georgia Gazette* to settle scores. Some letter writers who purported to want harmony could not resist taking public jabs at those with whom they disagreed. *Benevolus*, for example, first asked his readers to “bury in a friendly oblivion all that ill-blood and party heat” occasioned by the Stamp Act: “We can no more think all alike than we can look all alike,” he reasoned. He went on, though, to blame the Sons of Liberty for the continuing discord. Self-proclaimed friends of liberty, he charged, refused “to imitate . . . the healing and conciliatory example of our mother country.” After all, he argued, England had “overlooked some too violent and unjustifiable proceedings” on the part of the colonies. *Benevolus* defended those Georgians who had stood on the side of government, explaining that they had acted with a sincere patriotic spirit rather than “from a principle of malevolence to their country, or a base servile and unnatural desire to see it enslaved,” as their foes charged.²¹

Benevolus’ letter provoked angry responses from men he had criticized as well as from some whom he had defended. *A Lover of Truth* wished that his friend had left well enough alone. He worried that a prolonged public debate about men’s motives in the Stamp Act controversy would further divide an already fractured community. He complained that many men had suffered because they supported the rule of law during

²⁰ Habersham referred to Clement Martin, Francis Harris and John Graham. Habersham, “James Habersham to William Knox” in ; Habersham, *The Letters of Hon. James Habersham, 1756-1775*, VI:56.

²¹ *GG* 2 July 1766.

the crisis. No fans of the Stamp Act, they had merely refused to join their neighbors in “unbecoming & inpolitick heat.” For their prudence, they had been marked as enemies of liberty. Time would heal their wounds, he promised, just as it would banish the “chief fomenters of discord” to the obscurity they deserved.”²²

Bear and Forbear advised *Benevolus* to move beyond the question of who had done whom the greatest wrong. He urged universal forgiveness, but he made it clear that he believed the Sons of Liberty had suffered a great deal more during the troubles than had the friends of government. *Be Angry and Sin Not* entered the fray with a reminder that Christianity instructed men to forgive—but not necessarily forget—their enemies.²³

In July, correspondents turned to the familiar question of how Scotsmen fit into the empire. Closely associated with support of John Wilkes and opposition to the king’s minister Lord Bute, anti-Scot prejudice had flared in Savannah two years earlier when plans to launch a St. Andrew’s Club excited concerns about ethnic divisions in the town. Three of the men who received threatening notes from The Townsmen in November 1765 bore Scottish surnames (Simon Munro, George Baillie, and Thomas Moodie) and now critics drew parallels between the corrupting influence of George III’s Scottish minister, Lord Bute, and Governor Wright’s close association with men of Scottish background, including John Graham, Lewis Johnston, and Patrick Houstoun.²⁴

²² GG 9 July 1766.

²³ GG 9 July, 16 July 1766.

²⁴ GG 2 July, 9 July, 23 July 1766. A St. Andrews Club had existed in Savannah in the 1730s, but by the mid-1760s the earlier society had disappeared. See Dobson, *Scottish Emigration to Colonial America, 1607-1785*, 122. For the announcement of the founding of the second St.

A Lover of Truth complained that Scotsmen “were stigmatized with mean and scurrilous abuse . . . for their political behaviour” while English- and American-born supporters of government had “passed unnoticed.” He asked, “Who can be so destitute of common sense, common honesty, and common good manners as to throw out general abusive reflections on any nation, or insult any man, merely for his being of this or that country?”²⁵

An anonymous letter writer responded bluntly. “If men of any particular country (very few excepted) became at that time the objects of general dislike,” he explained, “their own offensive, united, and virulent behavior may well account for it.” Scots, he assured his readers, had “excited the honest resentment of every well-wisher to his country.” Finally, the *Gazette’s* editor, a native of Edinburgh, acceded to pleas from several letter writers and stopped publishing abusive letters, putting an end to the nasty back and forth that had consumed Savannah for more than a year.²⁶

Alone among the American colonies, Georgia issued stamped papers—not a lot, but enough for its governor to make a point about the rule of law. James Wright believed that his steady attention to duty won him admirers, but he also recognized that it made him the object of scorn and resentment. For the next seven years, Wright served as a

Andrew’s club, see *GG* 22 November 1764; for the controversy that followed, see *GG* 22, 29 November, 13, 20 December 1764, and 1 January 1765. Merchants Munro and Baillie had received with letters from *The Townsman* in November 1765. On the connection between anti-Scot sentiment and support for John Wilkes, see Rude, “Wilkes and Liberty.” Also see Colley, *Britons*, 117–32.

²⁵ *GG* 9 July 1766

²⁶ *GG* 2 July, 16 July, 23 July 1766.

galvanizing force around which two parties formed, one in support of his government and another in opposition. Less ideological than political, this relentless sparring would nevertheless erode support for the king's representatives in Georgia.

An Opposition Party Forms

In the years that followed the Stamp Act, political conflict in Georgia revolved around a contest of wills that developed between the governor and leaders of the commons house. The relationship between the executive and the lower house steadily deteriorated in a series of clashes over matters of privilege and prerogative. On the one hand, Georgia's house leaders simply sought to assert powers that other colonial assemblies had wrested from weak governors earlier in the century. On the other, because their aggressive reach for expansive powers played out in a compressed timeframe and against the backdrop of the broader imperial crisis, all parties saw the stakes as especially high.²⁷

The first major conflict stemmed directly from the Stamp Act. In the midst of all the turmoil in the summer of 1765, Georgia's agent in London, William Knox, published a pamphlet defending Parliament's right to tax the American colonists. Knox's *The Claim of the Colonies to an Exemption from Internal Taxes Imposed by Authority of Parliament Examined* circulated widely both in England and in America. Even his close friend James

²⁷ Greene, *The Quest for Power*.

Habersham admitted the unfortunate timing of Knox's essay; its publication had "given the greatest Umbrage" and had left the agent virtually friendless in Georgia.²⁸

The commons house wasted little time; in November 1765, the house instructed its committee of correspondence to "acquaint Mr. Knox...that the Province hath no further Occasion for his service." In his place, they appointed Charles Garth, who at the time also served as agent for South Carolina. Governor Wright and the upper house disapproved of the lower house's actions and tried unsuccessfully to block appropriations meant for Garth. They refused to recognize him as colonial agent and requested that authorities in London do the same. The issue remained unresolved until 1768 when both sides settled on Benjamin Franklin as a compromise candidate.²⁹

In the middle of his struggle with the commons house over its appointment of the colony's agent, Governor Wright asked the legislature to comply with another unpopular parliamentary measure, the Mutiny Act of 1765, which required American colonies to furnish basic provisions to British troops stationed within their borders. Georgia had just two small garrisons (nineteen men at Augusta and ten at Frederica) so the cost of provisioning the outposts was modest. Still, the lower

²⁸ James Habersham to William Knox, 28 October, 30 October 1765, Habersham, *The Letters of Hon. James Habersham, 1756-1775*, VI:44-49, quote on p. 44. Habersham to Samuel Lloyd, 5 September 1767, *Ibid.*, VI:58-60. Georgia appointed Knox agent in 1761; see *CRG* 13: 627-28. On William Knox, see Bellot, *William Knox*.

²⁹ *CRG* 14:293-94. On the clash between the governor and assembly over selection of an agent, see Greene, *The Quest for Power*;, 425-28; Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 24-25; Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775.*, 135-36. James Habersham provided a concise explanation of the controversy (including a brief overview of the structure of the colony's government) in a letter to Samuel Lloyd of London, 5 September 1767, Habersham, *The Letters of Hon. James Habersham, 1756-1775*, VI:58-60.

house considered Governor Wright's request for nearly a month before voting it down. "With regret," Speaker Alexander Wylly informed the governor, members of the house had concluded that to obey the Mutiny Act would violate "the Trust reposed in them by their Constituents" and establish "a precedent they by no means think justifiable."³⁰

The house's action startled Governor Wright. If suffered to go unchecked, he feared that Georgia's lower house of assembly and other American legislatures would "assume & actually take to themselves every kind of Power, make Cyphers of the Council & in some degree of His Majesty's Governors too." American representatives, he complained, "think themselves & their House at least equal to & poss[ess]ed of all the Laws Rights Customs & Powers of the House of Commons in Great Britain."³¹

Subsequent events demonstrated the validity of Wright's concern. Speaker Wylly and other assembly leaders scrutinized every piece of proposed legislation and carefully avoided surrendering any power—even those they did not legally have. In 1767, the lower house passed two bills to license ferry traffic across the Savannah River, but neither bill allowed free passage for postmen as required by a longstanding parliamentary statute. At Governor Wright's direction, the upper house amended the bills to comply with the law. The assembly objected to the changes and refused to compromise; both bills eventually died in conference.

³⁰ CRG 14: 413, 441-42; Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775.*, 126-28.

³¹ James Wright to Board of Trade, CRG 37 (Typescript), Georgia Archives.

Wright deplored the fate of the ferry acts, the result of what he viewed as the “improper spirit” of rebellion that had taken hold in the province and its assembly. The “true & avowed Reason” for the lower house’s obstinacy, he charged, “was because they would not seem to adopt, or submit to an Act of Parliament.” He observed that the “Sovereignty of Great Britain in America, has rec[eiv]ed such a wound as I doubt it will scarce ever recover.”³²

The Townshend Acts, adopted by Parliament in mid-1767, further fueled opposition movements in Georgia and other colonies. The proposed tax on lead, glass, paper, painter’s colors, and tea revived the debate over taxation at the same time that the suspension of the New York Assembly and the creation of the American Board of Customs Commissioners raised questions about parliamentary interference in America’s internal affairs. The *Georgia Gazette* printed installments of John Dickinson’s *Letters of a Pennsylvania Farmer* alongside reports of growing support for nonimportation in Boston. While the notion gained little traction in Savannah, the Sons of Liberty kept in close touch with opposition leaders elsewhere in the colonies.³³

In the spring of 1768, Governor Wright gave in to persistent calls from lower house leaders and agreed to dissolve the assembly and issue writs of election. Partisans on both sides of the political debate recognized the importance of this first election since the Stamp Act. At John Lyon’s Savannah tavern, liberty men toasted William Pitt, the

³² James Wright to Board of Trade, *CRG 37* (Typescript), Georgia Archives.

³³ Governor Wright referred to Dickinson’s essays as the “Pennsylvania Farmer’s poison.” See James Wright to Lord Hillsborough, 6 August 1768, *CRG 37*: 332-35.

Pennsylvania Farmer, and “all those who dare to be honest in the worst of times May we never want men of spirit and abilities to support our liberties,” they urged, and may “friends of the Stamp Act never preside in our Assemblies.”³⁴

The Stamp Act could claim few friends in 1768, but Georgians who considered themselves “friends of government” viewed the election as a chance to temper debate. They feared that the lower house’s stubborn refusal to acknowledge the supremacy of Parliament would jeopardize the colony’s subsidies, which ironically would force Georgians to pay more taxes to cover the costs of administering the colony.³⁵

Savannah’s four representatives faced little opposition in May 1768. Liberty men who gathered at Lyon’s Tavern counted three of them—Noble Wimberly Jones, John Milledge, and Speaker Alexander Wylly—among “the worthy fifteen who so nobly supported the liberties of their constituents in the late assembly.”³⁶ Indeed, the three Savannah delegates had formed the nucleus of the opposition and had steadfastly guarded every right and privilege due the lower house, to Wright’s great consternation. Jones, Milledge, and Wylly wielded such influence, in part, because they were seasoned officeholders who among them had thirty-three years’ experience in the lower house

³⁴ GG 27 April 1768. Also, Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775.*, 145–57.

³⁵ See James Habersham to William Knox, Habersham, *The Letters of Hon. James Habersham, 1756-1775*, VI:64–65.

³⁶ GG 27 April 1768. The fifteen were toasted along with William Pitt and American Liberty. Among the “worthy fifteen” most likely were: Wylly, Milledge and Jones (Savannah); John Smith, Joseph Gibbons, and William Jones (St. John); George McIntosh (St. Andrew); Joseph Butler (St. Philip); John Mulryne and Henry Bourquin (Christ Church); William Ewen, and Josiah Tatnall (St. Matthew).

(which had only existed for thirteen years at the time). Archibald Bulloch, the Savannah delegation's fourth member, was a relative newcomer to the colony. Prior to entering the assembly in a special election in January 1768, he had not held office, but Bulloch was a known liberty man and, like his Savannah colleagues, won re-election in May 1768.³⁷

Outside of Savannah, electors complained about bold electioneering and intimidation. In Vernonburgh district of Christ Church Parish, Heriot Crooke and her daughter Elizabeth Mossman paid calls and reportedly told voters that, "if the people did not vote for Sir Patrick [Houstoun], they would pay thirteen and six pence tax for negroes, and would be liable to pay all the Indian expenses." Voters in St. Andrew Parish complained that partisans carried weapons to the polls and used "threatening and insulting methods...to deter electors from giving their votes freely." In early May, James Habersham complained, "The spirit of opposition never was more violent, than now." He wrote William Knox that all the Christ Church elections, including Vernonburgh, had gone "against, what are now called, the Governor and his party, or more properly the friends of Government."³⁸

Even more troubling, several Savannah men who supported the liberty faction won seats in outlying parishes. Merchant Edward Telfair won a spot in the St. Paul delegation; William Young joined three other Christ Church men in the St. Matthew

³⁷ *CRG* 7-10.

³⁸ *GG* 11 May 1768; Grand Jury Presentments, June Session 1768, published in *GG* 6 July 1768; James Habersham to William Knox, 7 May 1768, in Habersham, *The Letters of Hon. James Habersham, 1756-1775*, VI:64. W. W. Abbot called the election of 1768 "pivotal." See Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775.*, 145.

delegation; William Graeme successfully stood for election in St. George; and John Simpson retained the sole seat from St. James Parish.³⁹ A beleaguered James Wright confided to his superiors that he felt powerless “where the Voice of the People is so general & strong against the Measures” of the British government. “I fear its in vain,” Wright lamented, “for a Governor to expect to set the People right by reasoning. A Demosthenes or a Cicero would spend his breath in vain.”⁴⁰

No classical orator, Wright was a shrewd observer of the political climate and a smart judge of interest politics. He did not call the newly elected assembly into session until the following fall when the stir created by the elections had abated. In his welcoming address, the governor instructed members of the lower house to stick to business, warning that he would dissolve the assembly should it turn its attention to external developments such as the Townshend Acts.⁴¹

³⁹ Results are in *CRG* 10: 646. The Savannah men who stood for election in outlying parishes tended to belong to the opposition camp. Whether their election should be read as an endorsement of their positions, however, is open to debate. It is entirely possible that voters selected men who lived close to or in the capital because they wanted their communities to have a presence in the assembly during what promised to be volatile sessions. Prolonged sessions placed a great burden on backcountry legislators who had to leave their plantations and businesses for extended periods.

⁴⁰ James Wright to Hillsborough, 6 August 1768, *CRG* 37: 334 (Typescript) Georgia Archives.

⁴¹ Wright to Hillsborough, 6 August 1768, *CRG* 37: 332-36 (Typescript), Georgia Archives; Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 28–29. Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 28-29. Wylly’s reply to the Circular Letter was published in the *Georgia Gazette*, 31 August 1768. Just after the assembly session opened, James Habersham wrote, “Our Assembly are met, and after truly a great deal of Temper on the part of the Governor, I think our public Business will go on very well,” Habersham to Charles Pryce, 10 November 1768, Habersham, *The Letters of Hon. James Habersham, 1756-1775*, VI:76–77. On the Circular Letter, see, among others, Bonwick, *The American Revolution*, 74–75; Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause*, 160–62.

Initially Speaker Noble Wimberly Jones steered the assembly through routine legislation—acts to prevent fraud, revisions to the slave code, and an amended patrol law. Then, on Christmas Eve, Jones allowed three members—Alexander Wyly of Savannah, William Belcher of Acton, and William Ewen of Ebenezer—to introduce a draft petition to George III. The petition acknowledged Americans’ firm attachment to and affection toward England and recognized “a constitutional Subordination to its Supreme Legislature.” It also stated “with unexpressible Concern” that Parliament’s effort to collect internal taxes threaten to deprive us “of the Privilege . . . [and] our indubitable right . . . of granting away our own property.”⁴²

The lower house approved the petition, voted to commend the Virginia and Massachusetts legislatures for their leadership in the fight against parliamentary taxation, and ordered that copies of its proceedings appear in the *Georgia Gazette*. An incensed Governor Wright summoned the speaker and members to the council chamber, where he condemned their actions, especially their praise for opposition leaders in other colonies. The distinction between internal and external taxes, which colonial leaders made so much of, Wright dismissed as “a Distinction without a Difference.” Either the American colonies are “bound by and subject to all the Acts of the British Parliament in which they are mentioned,” he argued, or they “are subject to None of any kind whatever and are consequently to be considered as independent of the legal or Parliamentary Power of Great Britain.” Then Governor Wright reiterated a warning he had first issued at the time of the Stamp Act troubles: “if America could be or was to become Independent of the

⁴² CRG 14: 467-69, 483-84; Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 29.

Mother Country, from that Day you might date the Foundation of your Ruin and Misery.” On that note, with a mix of frustration and anger, he dissolved the assembly after just six weeks in session.⁴³

Nearly a year passed before Wright called for elections. With Jones once again serving as speaker, the assembly worked productively for four sessions over fourteen months (October-December 1769; January-May 1770; October-December 1770; and January-February 1771). Serious issues continued to divide the governor and assembly, but they conducted the public business with little acrimony until February 1771, when a committee of the house called Thomas Moodie, Deputy Secretary of the colony, to answer questions related to assembly investigations.

Provincial officials often appeared before house committees. In this instance, however, the committee asked Moodie to swear an oath. He refused, claiming that no one had sworn an oath before and he did not wish to set a precedent. Moodie recognized, as did the assemblymen who asked him to take an oath, that the committee wanted to assert a Parliamentary privilege not previously extended to colonial assemblies. Ignoring the constitutional novelty of their position, members of the committee took umbrage at Moodie’s refusal and charged Moodie with “a presumptuous Breach of the Privilege of

⁴³ *CRG* 14: 656-59. James Habersham agreed with Wright; two years earlier he wrote: “I am persuaded our happiness depends on our subordination to the Mother Country, and no longer; than that subsists no longer shall we be a free & flourishing People,” Habersham to Samuel Lloyd, 5 September 1767, Habersham, *The Letters of Hon. James Habersham, 1756-1775*, VI:58–60.

the House.” Speaker Jones issued a warrant for the secretary’s arrest and Moodie spent the next several days in the common jail.⁴⁴

Angered by the house’s presumption of the parliamentary privilege and even more so by Moodie’s arrest, Wright dissolved the assembly and vowed that Jones would not again serve as speaker of the assembly. When, after new elections, the Seventh Assembly convened in Savannah in April, members immediately adopted a resolution that denied that the governor had constitutional authority to approve the assembly’s selection of speaker. Wright dissolved the Seventh Assembly on its fourth day.

Shortly after the aborted session, Governor Wright left the province on a long planned visit to England. He advised council member James Habersham, who would act as governor in his absence, to let matters cool before calling elections for a new assembly. Habersham waited a year but when the Eighth Assembly finally convened in April 1772, the members made it clear that time had not changed the majority’s belief that the house and the house alone should select the speaker. After four days of stalemate over the issue, Habersham dissolved the assembly.⁴⁵

The speaker controversy moved from the assembly room to the *Gazette* where Chief Justice Stokes, signing as *G.B.*, cited precedent in Charles II’s reign to defend the right of the crown to negative a speaker and, by extension, the authority of the governor to approve or disapprove the lower house’s selection. Stokes drew from his extensive

⁴⁴ *CRG* 15: 295-6.

⁴⁵ On Habersham and his travails as acting governor, see Lambert, *James Habersham*, 170–72; Smith, “Georgia Gentlemen: The Habershams of Eighteenth-Century Savannah,” 217–37.

library and quoted liberally from Sir Edward Coke and others in defense of the crown's prerogative. He also attacked assembly leaders for refusing to acknowledge what he viewed as settled constitutional law and reminded them that their powers were limited to those detailed in the Governor's Instructions.⁴⁶

In several essays later published as *Calm and Respectful Thoughts on the Negative of the Crown on a Speaker chosen and presented by the Representatives of the People*, John Joachim Zubly asked how an assembly could have the right to elect a speaker but not the right to elect whom they wanted? "To talk of a free choice," that another party could annul "seems inconsistent with the very nature of choice," he wrote. Zubly also feared that *G.B.*'s harsh criticism of the assembly's actions would create the wrong impression about the colony's loyalty to the king and hurt its standing in London.⁴⁷

Zubly rejected *G.B.*'s claim that Georgia's assembly enjoyed only those rights specified in the Governor's Instructions—rights that did not include unchecked election of a speaker. The minister who had celebrated Georgians' identity as Britons at the Stamp Act's repeal argued that all Englishmen, including Englishmen living in Georgia, believed themselves "entitled to English laws, which . . . implies Legislation anywhere and every where in the British dominions." Further, "this right is prior to any charter or

⁴⁶ James Habersham identified Stokes as G.B. in James Habersham to James Wright, Savannah, 13 June 1772 in Habersham, *The Letters of Hon. James Habersham, 1756-1775*, VI:185. Issues of the Gazette from this period do not survive but John Joachim Zubly quoted and paraphrased Stokes' essays in "Calm and Respectful Thoughts," Miller, *A Warm & Zealous Spirit*, 96–119.

⁴⁷ Miller, *A Warm & Zealous Spirit*, 101.

instruction, and is held not by instruction to a Governor, but is his natural right, which nothing but outlawry can deprive him of.”⁴⁸

Most intriguingly, Zubly called attention to *G.B.*'s intellectual condescension toward those who did not understand the law as he did. Acknowledging that his rival owned the largest library in the province and that “what books and arguments in this case are not found” in Stokes’ house “will in vain be looked for anywhere else in this province,” Zubly resented “how contemptibly” the chief justice spoke of “who do not understand an ambiguous passage of Coke.” As a multi-linguist whose own writings betray a brilliant intellect and deep scholarship, Zubly’s tone seems curious at first. But, his response to *G.B.* displayed a populist critique of legal professionals that had a long history in the colony (the trustees had banned lawyers from settling in Georgia) and would play an essential role in determining the shape of the judiciary under the state’s first constitution.⁴⁹

In the years after the Stamp Act’s repeal, assembly leaders took every opportunity to assert rights and privileges not necessarily theirs to enjoy—at least from Governor Wright’s perspective. He responded with stern admonishments and used his powers to convene, adjourn, and dissolve assemblies to manage political turmoil as well as to demonstrate the power of his office. Generous parliamentary subsidies allowed him to

⁴⁸ Ibid., 118.

⁴⁹ In a rare surviving attribution of authorship, Habersham identified *G.B.* as Chief Justice Anthony Stokes in a letter to Wright dated 24 July 1772 in Habersham, *The Letters of Hon. James Habersham, 1756-1775*, VI:195.

cover essential costs of government without depending on his opponents to pass annual tax bills, a lucky circumstance he also used to his advantage.

After Wright's 1772 departure for London, Secretary of the Colony James Habersham and Chief Justice Anthony Stokes vigorously defended efforts by the lower house to, as James Wright had written, "make Cyphers" of the council and governor. Stokes' arguments in support of the king's and by extension the governor's right to negative a speaker elicited a stinging response from John Joachim Zubly, who argued passionately that an Englishman's rights existed outside of charters and instructions. Britons, whether by birth or immigration, had natural rights that no amount of legal reasoning could ignore and that all Englishmen, even those without access to the grand legal libraries, understood.

Ironically, just two years before the speaker controversy found them on different sides of a contentious debate, Stokes and Zubly had worked together to spare the life of a common horse thief—an act of compassion that unintentionally set off a firestorm. We turn to that case to get a fuller understanding of the range and locations of opposition to Governor Wright and by doing so we recognize a fundamental issue animating political unrest in late colonial Georgia.

The Grand Jury

In 1769, Thomas Jones stole a horse in South Carolina and crossed the Savannah River into Georgia. When he tried to sell the horse near Augusta, a group of Georgians arrested him. At December Sessions of the General Court in Savannah, petit jurors convicted Thomas Jones of horse-stealing and recommended that he hang. As required by

law, Governor James Wright reviewed the sentence and “determined that justice should have its course”—Thomas Jones would go the gallows the last week in February 1770.⁵⁰

Jones did not hang; instead, he captured the interest of minister John Joachim Zubly, who regularly visited prisoners in Savannah’s gaol.⁵¹ Inspired by a “desire to save the life of a fellow creature,” Zubly looked into Jones’ case and learned that although Jones had a notorious reputation as a “heinous offender,” he had no prior convictions. Moreover, he had stolen the horse in South Carolina, where the law did not call for death for first-time horse thieves. Indeed, had South Carolinians rather than Georgians captured him, Jones would not have stood trial for a capital offense.⁵²

Zubly presented the facts to Chief Justice Anthony Stokes, who promised to look into the matter, and to Governor Wright, who agreed to postpone the prisoner’s execution for one month while Stokes consulted his law books. Stokes and Wright, both of whom had studied at the Inns of Court in London, carefully considered the legal issues raised by

⁵⁰ “The Case of Thomas Jones,” *Georgia Gazette (GG)* 27 June 1770. This issue is not included in the microfilm edition of the *GG*. A copy was inserted in Governor Wright’s correspondence and can be found in British Colonial Office (CO) records, Series 5: 660, microfilm frames 123-128.

⁵¹ Zubly made a name as a dissenting minister and moderate Whig. He served in the Continental Congress until suspicions that he was carrying on a secret correspondence with Governor Wright compelled him to return to Georgia. On Zubly, see Miller, *A Warm & Zealous Spirit*, 1–27; Pauley, “Tragic Hero: Loyalist John J. Zubly”; Locke, “Compelled to Dissent”; Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 13–14, 24, 58, 91–92, 176; Davis, *The Fledgling Province*, 202–04.

⁵² GG 27 June 1770, CO 5: 660, microfilm frames 123-128.

Jones' predicament.⁵³ In early February 1770, Stokes recommended that the governor pardon Jones. Stokes reasoned that Georgia should not impose a higher penalty for continuing a crime than the colony where the initial crime took place would impose for its commission.⁵⁴

Wright discussed the chief justice's report with his council and, with their agreement, commuted Thomas Jones' sentence to transportation and banishment. In March, the acting provost marshal placed Jones aboard a vessel bound for the West Indies and warned the prisoner never to return to Georgia. When the wily Jones jumped ship at Cockspur just south of Savannah, rumors circulated that he had "joined a set of horse thieves" plaguing backcountry settlements.⁵⁵

At the next session of the General Court in June 1770, grand jurors launched a full-scale assault on Governor Wright and his government. First, they issued an extraordinary presentment against "the too great latitude to which the prerogative power is extended, in pardoning notorious felons after being convicted by a due course of law." Jurors had "duly and legally condemned" Thomas Jones only to have their will

⁵³ Stokes, who practiced law in England, Antigua and St. Kitts prior to his appointment as royal chief justice of Georgia in the fall of 1769, tried to regularize court proceedings in Georgia. See Surrency, "Directions for Holding Court in Colonial Georgia" also ; Lawrence, "Anthony Stokes." James Wright had built a successful legal practice in Charles Town for two decades and served briefly as South Carolina's attorney general. On Wright, see Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775.*, 84–86; Canady, *Gentlemen of the Bar*, 281–83.

⁵⁴ GG 27 June 1770, CO 5: 660, microfilm frames 123-128. On the Stokes cited "legal fiction" of continuance, Stokes quoted Hawkins, *A Treatise of the Pleas of the Crown Or, a System of the Principal Matters Relating to That Subject, Digested under Their Proper Heads. In Two Books. By William Hawkins.*

⁵⁵ GG 27 June 1770, CO 5: 660, microfilm frames 123-128.

overturned by the governor. What is more, the presentment continued, “it may be presumed [Jones] will commit the same felonious practices he formerly was convicted of, to the great damage of his Majesty’s good subjects.”⁵⁶

Next they condemned Governor Wright’s supposed partiality for the Indian trade and denounced the chief justice for ignoring past presentments. Then, as if to ensure the governor and chief justice understood the grand jury’s ancient role in criminal prosecution, jurors refused to issue indictments in two cases the attorney general had laid before them. In the first case, Augusta Indian trader James Grierson accused several men of harassing him when he attempted to load ammunition and supplies for a trip to the Creek nation. “In an armed and riotous manner,” they ordered Grierson to return the goods to his storehouse or risk having them seized. The second case the grand jury dismissed involved multiple charges against assemblyman William Graeme for public drunkenness and disorder.⁵⁷

As soon as the grand jury concluded its business, the governor’s supporters launched a furious defense of Wright and the chief justice. The 27 June *Gazette* printed the chief justice’s summary of the Thomas Jones Case, depositions supporting the attorney general’s pursuit of charges against Grierson’s attackers and William Graeme, and evidence refuting the jury’s claim that the government had ignored prior

⁵⁶ *GG* 27 June 1770, CO 5: 660, microfilm frames 123-128.

⁵⁷ Wright to Hillsborough 11 May 1770, *CRG* 37: 443-48, quote on p. 443 (Typescript), Georgia Archives; also record of Grierson’s petition to Governor and Council, 7 May 1770, *CRG* 11: 48. Several depositions described Graeme’s erratic and unlawful conduct. In an unusual supplement, the *Georgia Gazette* printed the several depositions that the grand jury had reviewed. See *GG* 27 June 1770, CO 5: 660, microfilm frames 123-128.

presentments. Essays in that issue and the next defended the governor and chief justice as principled men with the highest regard for law.

Supporters argued that by safeguarding a notorious felon's rights, Wright and the chief justice had preserved the liberty of all Georgians. The governor had rightly refused "to extend the criminal law" and "depart from the strict rule of justice." Chief Justice Stokes, one defender explained, "is . . . ignorant of the method of putting men to death for convenience"—a practice, he implied, many Georgians seemed to favor.⁵⁸ *A South Briton*, whose choice of name distanced his politics from that of English radical John Wilkes' *North Briton*, charged that grand jurors, not the chief justice and the governor, had misused their power. Addressing a juror he called Dr. Sangrando, the author claimed that a small number of the June grand jurors had perverted justice and coerced others in the jury room to sign presentments against Wright and Stokes. As a native of "that part of Great-Britain where Magna Charta is in force," *A South Briton* wrote, "I look upon juries to be one of the greatest bulwarks of liberty." Nevertheless he warned, they were not

⁵⁸ *GG 27* June 1770, CO 5: 660, microfilm frames 123-128. True friends of liberty, along with "the unprejudiced and uninfluenced people of this province," should find the "highest satisfaction" and "the strongest assurances" in the knowledge that:

in matters of judicature there will be no respect of persons of what rank, nation, or profession, soever; and that the meanest subject, however unconnected or unknown, (as was the case with Jones) will not be sacrificed to answer any particular end.

immune from the manipulations of men of “unparalleled wickedness” who “have lately assumed the mask of liberty to accomplish . . . revenge on men” they do not like.⁵⁹

Libero, a self-styled defender of the rights of juries, charged that Jones’ pardon threatened nothing less than the Englishman’s sacred right of trial by jury. “Now is the time when the ancient rights of grand juries are baffled and confused in the multifarious chicaneries of the Common Law, the caprice of its ministers, and the tools of authority,” he warned. Jurors serve “the publick, by apprising them of impending evils,” but their efforts come to naught when “supposed ministers of law and justice” ignore presentments and overturn sentences.

A Late Grand Juror, who proudly proclaimed himself a “novice in common or civil law,” defiantly argued that no amount of legal schooling (a pointed comment aimed at both Stokes and Wright) could justify pardoning the notorious Thomas Jones, “who acknowledged after his conviction the many murders and the most atrocious crimes he had committed.” Thomas Jones deserved to die, he concluded, “by the laws of civil society, which I am better acquainted with than civil or statute law.”⁶⁰

⁵⁹ *GG* 11 July 1770 Supplement, CO 5: 660, 132-36 . At least one juror reportedly grew so disgusted with the proceedings that he “declared he would rather pay his fine than serve on another such jury.”

⁶⁰ *GG* 4 July 1770, CO 5: 660: 128-31. The anonymous grand juror proudly asserted that, in contrast to more learned men, he could not:

be influenced (against my conscience) even by Mr. Hawkins or Mr. Hales whose doctrine sometimes may be so mysterious as even, after diligent searches, not to be explained by modern Judges, I mean so far as to influence Jurors to depart from their duty.

Why did the pardon of a common horse thief excite such animus? Pardons were hardly unusual in Georgia or in England in the eighteenth century. In the years before the Jones case, Governor Wright had shown mercy to John McCartin, a convicted slave-stealer from St. John Parish (1766); William Miles, a Savannah cordwainer found guilty of manslaughter (1767); and Lundy Hurst, a St. Paul yeoman convicted of horsestealing (1767), with no popular outcry.⁶¹ To the contrary, observers often hailed such instances of executive largesse as evidence of the nearly perfect form of justice enjoyed by Englishmen. One scholar has argued that, “roughly half of those condemned to death during the eighteenth century did not go to the gallows.” The exercise of mercy by government officials legitimized both the law of capital punishment itself and the authority of those men who enforced it. So why did Georgians suddenly challenge Wright on his exercise of the governor’s prerogative to pardon?⁶²

In a letter to Lord Hillsborough in the midst of the controversy, Wright explained the uproar as the work of “two or three . . . weak and infatuated” jurors who had fallen under the influence of his political enemies. The governor had good reason to suspect the hand of political opponents in his troubles over the Jones case. He had taken notice of the obstructive behavior of three members of the Commons House of Assembly that met at

⁶¹ See “Governor’s Proclamation Book H, 1754-94” Georgia Archives; esp., 16 January 1766, p. 111; 24 December 1767, p. 125; 29 July 1767, p. 121. Zubly had interceded on behalf of Lundy Hurst. Ford, *John J. Zubly, Opponent of British and American Oppression, 1724-1781*, 20–21.

⁶² In an important discussion of the criminal law in England, Douglas Hay relates the exercise of mercy to patterns of deference and argues that the pardon was “important because it often put the principle instrument of legal terror, the gallows, directly in the hands of those who held power,” and thus continually reinforced elite social and political power. See Hay, “Property, Authority and the Criminal Law,” quote on p. 48.

Savannah from October 1769 to May 1770. Calling them “men of Turbulent Spirits, great Liberty Boys, . . . very loquacious,” the governor accused the three of “protracting business,” and “doing a great deal of mischief.”⁶³

Wright saw the triumvirate’s influence in the assembly’s failure to pass a bill regulating the Indian trade and held them responsible for adding language contemptuous of the crown’s right to review colonial legislation to another bill. Most troubling, Wright blamed the three “men of bad hearts” for a bill that exempted residents of four newly created parishes from taxes until a revised election law allowed those parishes to send representatives to the assembly. One of those three troublesome assemblymen was the same William Graeme who the grand jury had refused to indict despite several depositions attesting to his drunk and disorderly conduct. Another was suspended council member Jonathan Bryan.⁶⁴

Wright’s suggestion that political enemies had influenced the grand jury reflected a keen understanding of politics on the ground and a deep knowledge of the dense connections that existed among the men who comprised political Georgia. Georgians who served as justices of the peace, jurors, vestrymen, militia officers, assemblymen, colonial officers and council members in 1770 numbered fewer than 250, approximately 10% of the heads of households in the colony. Wright understood that in such a small population

⁶³ Wright to Hillsborough 20 July 1770, *CRG* 37: 464-68 (Typescript), Georgia Archives. Wright singled out William Graeme, who died at the end of June, and his associates, charging that they had deliberately stirred dissent among the people. Graeme’s death is reported in *GG* 27 June 1770 and referenced in Wright to Hillsborough, 20 July 1770, *CO* 5:660, 120-31.

⁶⁴ Wright to Hillsborough, 11 May 1770, *CRG* 37: 443-48 (Typescript), Georgia Archives; Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775.*, 154. *CRG* 7: 49, 54-56.

of politically engaged men, the actions of just a few “men of bad hearts” could seriously disrupt the harmony and good government enjoyed by the majority.

The eighteen jurors included several candidates for the “weak and infatuated” jurors suggested by the governor. Merchant (and former member of the lower house from Augusta) Edward Telfair had supported suspended councilor Jonathan Bryan’s stance on nonimportation. At least four men belonged to the Congregational community in St. John Parish, which maintained close ties to New England and developed a reputation for “Oliverian” principles. Two St. John’s men called Savannah juror, Andrew Elton Wells “brother” by marriage. A brewer and sea captain, Wells kept in contact with his sister and her husband, Samuel Adams of Boston. Six men lived in Savannah River parishes, including three in St. George, whose residents feared trouble from Indians and the traders who traveled through their settlements and might have reason to forgive the men who harassed the Indian trader packing ammunition for sale in Indian Country. And, the troublesome juror who *A South Briton* called Dr. Sangrando was James Cuthbert, Jonathan Bryan’s brother-in-law.

In a strictly political context, it is tempting to speculate that the June 1770 grand jury presentments represented a grand compromise among different interests, all with something of a grudge against Governor Wright. Perhaps Christ Church and St. John’s men spared the westerners who attacked James Grierson in exchange for Savannah River jurors overlooking William Graeme’s disorderliness. Maybe condemnation of the Jones pardon satisfied coastal opposition forces and the presentment against the governor’s support for traders pleased upcountry jurors. If—and it must remain a speculative *if*—

jurors did negotiate along these regional interest lines, the June 1770 grand jury might indicate that the St. John's-western coalition that historians have identified in 1775 began to form as early as 1770.⁶⁵

While the grand jury's actions reveal that Georgia's opposition politics extended beyond the assembly room, the spirited public response afterward suggests that Governor Wright's pardon raised crucial issues reaching far beyond Savannah. From its first year in press (1763) and onward, the *Georgia Gazette* reprinted British press accounts about radical John Wilkes and his legal and political struggles against what his followers characterized as fundamental threats to English liberty. A brilliant manipulator of the press and the public, Wilkes could count on his equally effective attorney, John Glynn, to lead juries to exercise broad powers in matters of law as well as fact. Working together and with their associates in the Bill of Rights Society, they created a political movement that attracted followers to the banner of "Wilkes and Liberty" in the colonies as well as in England.⁶⁶

In May 1768, British troops fired on a crowd of Wilkes' supporters who had gathered in St. George's Field outside King's Bench Prison, where Wilkes was confined awaiting a ruling on a seditious libel conviction. Among the dead, William Allen, a youth reportedly killed in a case of mistaken identity, captured popular imagination and became the symbol of what Wilkesites called the Massacre of St. George's Field. When a court

⁶⁵ Jackson, "Consensus and Conflict"; Cashin, "The Famous Colonel Wells."

⁶⁶ Among others, see 23 April 1763 notice of his arrest, 25 August 1763 news of court appearance. On Wilkes, Glynn and the Bill of Rights Society, see Thomas, *John Wilkes*.

granted bail to soldiers accused in Allen's death, Wilkes' allies charged (falsely) that one of the soldiers was related to Lord Mansfield, a leading jurist and member of the House of Lords whose role in Wilkes' seditious libel trial made him a target of radical conspiracy claims for the rest of his career. The shooters' eventual acquittal did little to counter popular narratives of corruption and conspiracy in the courts.⁶⁷

The shadow of Allen's death, and the failure of the English justice system to punish those responsible, found its way to Boston two years later. In late February 1770, Ebenezer Richardson, a man Bostonians suspected as a customs informer, fired into a crowd of men and boys gathered outside his home. One of the shots mortally wounded Christopher Snider, a youth of 11 or 12 years of age. In the tense days after the fatal incident, Samuel Adams orchestrated a mass funeral for the boy, keeping the case at the forefront of patriot consciousness until the evening of March 5, when a confrontation between British troops and a Boston crowd resulted in five deaths and presented an even greater outrage, the Boston Massacre, around which Adams mobilized popular indignation.⁶⁸

The 11 April issue of the *Georgia Gazette* carried reports of Snider's death and funeral, as well as the events of 5 March, already labeled a massacre, and the solemn internment organized by the town for its first four victims. Two weeks later, an entry referred to what happened in Boston as "a more dreadful tragedy" than St. George's

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Wilf, *Law's Imagined Republic*, 14–38; Brewer, "The Wilkesites and the Law, 1763-74." Although Boston jury convicted Richardson, an English court later pardoned him.

Field. When, in mid-May, readers learned that the Massachusetts court had postponed trial of the accused soldiers, perhaps some Georgians feared that justice would elude Boston's victims as it had young William Allen.⁶⁹

Readers of the *Georgia Gazette* and those who heard stories from its pages read aloud and retold in late spring and early summer 1770 understood the actions of the June grand jury within the broad context of Anglo-American concerns about power and its abuses. Fears of corruption permeated American and British politics. When *A South Briton* took up his pen to defend Governor Wright's pardon of Thomas Jones, he expressed fears about the dangers of unchecked power in the hands of jurymen every bit as passionate as the grand jurors had expressed in their condemnation of the governor's use of prerogative to overturn a jury's verdict.

In addition to deep concerns about power, Governor Wright's pardon of a common horse thief placed him and the learned chief justice who quoted Sir Edward Coke and Sir Matthew Hale squarely in the middle of a contentious Anglo-American debate about the relative authority of trained jurists and ordinary jurors. At one extreme, proponents of jury supremacy, such as *Libero* and *A Late Grand Juror*, argued that juries could and should decide matters of law as well as fact. At the other extreme, proponents of a more abstract and replicable form of justice, such as *A South Briton*, supported an enhanced role for professionally trained legal professionals in deciding cases and

⁶⁹ *GG* 11 April 1770; *GG* 25 April 1770; *GG* 16 May 1770. Only two pages of the 16 May issue survive and, with the exception of the 27 June, 4 July and 11 July issues enclosed in Governor Wright's correspondence, no issues from May 1770 through December 1774 are known to survive.

interpreting the law. The bruising public response to the June grand jury illustrates how the larger and ultimately more consequential debates of the day impinged on practical, day-to-day experience in one locale at the same time that it highlights the significance of debates about jury authority in Revolutionary Georgia.

Conclusion

The opposition party that formed in Georgia after the Stamp Act was as much about the colony's distinct, and short, history and the political skills of its governor as it was about the larger imperial crisis. Centered in the lower house of assembly, the opposition sought to expand that body's power at the same time that it sought to persuade the larger public to support colonial resistance to Britain's efforts to raise revenue in the colonies. The governor could and repeatedly did thwart opposition leaders' efforts to join other colonies in resistance but he could not control the autonomous voice of the grand jury, which, in June 1770, soundly and very publicly denounced him. By itself, the controversy over a common horse thief's pardon might seem anomalous, an isolated incident. But the issues it raised about jury supremacy and executive prerogative did not disappear from Georgia's political discourse. To the contrary, the Thomas Jones case highlighted important concerns that resonated with many ordinary Georgians.

In February 1773, the provincial government welcomed Governor James Wright home to Georgia with bonfire, illuminations, "and other marks of joy." He brought with him a new title of baronet, conferred by the king, and the crown's approval for a scheme to exchange approximately two million acres of Creek and Cherokee land for forgiveness of debts owed to Indian traders. Ever the strategic actor, Wright may well have thought

that he had taught his enemies an important lesson about imperial politics—his loyalty and firm commitment to duty had after all delivered real rewards. The governor could not know that he returned to America just months before the forced ending of the so-called “pause in politics,” a period of relative calm after the tempers of nonimportation. Nor could he imagine that within two years, what had begun as an opposition movement fueled largely by personal resentment of the governor would transform into outright rebellion against the empire he served.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ See *Pennsylvania Chronicle* 8-15 March 1773 for reprint of Savannah news; Wright to Dartmouth, 24 March 1773, quoted in Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775*, 158.

Chapter Three: Rebellion

When viewed from a distance of more than two and a quarter centuries, the American Revolution has an aura of inevitability, an internal narrative logic of economic, political, ideological, and social causes brilliantly navigated by a group of men, mostly New Englanders and Virginians, possessed of extraordinary courage and fierce attachment to liberty. Their rhetorical flair combined with the righteousness of their arguments convinced other, more hesitant, colonists to join the effort. However, a crucial question remains unanswered: how did ordinary colonists living hundreds of miles away from Boston and Williamsburg come to identify the Patriot cause as their own and take the audacious step toward rebellion?

Georgia presents an especially rich venue in which to probe this question because of its youth, its dependence on parliamentary subsidies to pay administrative expenses, and its exposed frontier. A half-century ago, historians W. W. Abbot and Kenneth Coleman detailed the sequence of events that led to the collapse of Georgia's royal government in January 1776. In the 1980s and 1990s, Harvey H. Jackson and Edward J. Cashin advanced those narratives by exploring the roles of factionalism and regionalism in the early years of the Revolution. This chapter builds on their important contributions in order to explore the transformation of opposition politics from a movement of elite, politically engaged individuals concentrated in Savannah to a network of local committees comprised of ordinary men selected by neighbors to govern their communities.

From late spring 1774 through winter 1775, Georgians responded to news of the Coercive or Intolerable Acts as they had the Stamp Act and Townsend Duties. Putting pen to paper and holding public meetings in Savannah, opposition leaders employed a politics of persuasion to convince the community that Georgians should join other colonies in supporting Boston. They stumbled, however, and found themselves repeatedly out-manuevered by Governor Wright and his supporters.

Frustrated by the governor's ability to thwart opposition leader's efforts to win widespread support for the Continental Association, more radical elements began to act in the winter of 1775. Their overt actions against British authority introduced a politics of defiance that reflected strong connections between actors in Georgia and the broader colonial resistance movement. Most importantly, this new form of popular politics confounded the governor, who found himself unable to maintain command of the rapidly unfolding situation.

In July 1775, Georgia's provincial congress agreed to adopt the Continental Association and called on all white men who contributed to the general tax to elect local committees to enforce its terms. In this final stage of transition, ordinary Georgians embraced defiance as they stepped forward to challenge colonial authorities and take control of local governments. By the summer of 1775, the reins of Georgia's royal government had frayed; six months later, they broke.

A Politics of Persuasion

A band of 100 or more men who threw £10,000 worth of tea into Boston Harbor in 1773 set in motion a chain of events that led to the overthrow of British rule in the

thirteen colonies. In response to what Americans later called the Boston Tea Party, an outraged British ministry easily shepherded punitive legislation through Parliament in the spring of 1774. The Coercive or Intolerable Acts closed Boston's port until the town compensated the East India Company for its loss of property, diminished the Massachusetts assembly's powers and limited its town meetings to one per year, authorized quartering of troops, and allowed British officials charged with offenses in Massachusetts to face English rather than American juries. The scope of Boston's punishment prompted a broad based colonial response supported by twelve of the thirteen colonies—only Georgia held back.¹

When news of the Coercive Acts reached Savannah in spring 1774, it rekindled old debates and stimulated a new round of sparring in the pages of the *Georgia Gazette*. Hoping to sway public opinion, writers appealed to concerns they knew had currency. Opponents of British policy advanced arguments based on the rights of Englishmen and sought to convince readers that British policies directed at Massachusetts threatened Georgians' liberty as well as Bostonians'. The government's defenders emphasized Bostonians' bad behavior and Georgia's precarious defensive situation to distance the southernmost colony from New Englanders' troubles.²

¹ On the events in Boston, see Carp, *Defiance of the Patriots*; Labaree, *The Boston Tea Party*. For accounts of King George III's and Lord North's certainty that Massachusetts deserved harsh treatment, see O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 22–23, 51–54.

² A brief notice about Bostonians' destruction of tea appeared in the 2 February 1774 *Georgia Gazette*. Word of parliament's response to the Boston Tea Party could have reached Savannah in late May; the text of the laws did not appear in the *Gazette* until mid-July.

In an essay addressed to the Freemen of the Province, *A Georgian* touched on two issues of great concern to readers of the *Georgia Gazette*: the right to trial by jury and the status of lands granted in the king's name. "Every privilege you at present claim as a birthright, may be wrested from you by the same authority that blockades the town of Boston," he warned. Drawing attention to the right to answer charges before a jury of one's peers, he noted that the "town of Boston has been tried, condemned, and punished" without a hearing. Then he suggested that if Parliament could revoke the colonial charter of Massachusetts, it "may take from you . . . land" granted by the king.³

The author of "The Case Stated" argued that the question before colonists was plain: does Parliament have the right to levy taxes on Americans without their consent? Opposing this view, *Mercurius* rejected the notion that taxation had anything to do with the current crisis. "The question is not now, whether the Parliament has a right to *tax* the Americans," he wrote, "but whether the Americans have a right to destroy private property with impunity." Instead of worrying about Bostonians, who had brought their troubles on themselves, he called on readers to turn their attention westward where "those haughty Creeks" presented grave danger to the colony's well-being.⁴

In the midst of this spirited rhetorical exchange, two former speakers of the lower house joined with two other pro-Boston men to call a meeting to discuss the colony's response to the ministry's latest efforts "to deprive . . . American subjects, of their constitutional rights and liberties." Gathering at the watch house on 27 July, attendees

³ *GG* 27 July 1774.

⁴ *GG* 27 July 1774; *GG* 10 August 1774

elected attorney John Glen chair and shared letters received from Boston, Philadelphia, Charles Town and elsewhere. Resolutions in support of a non-importation agreement reached the floor, but the meeting tabled them after participants expressed concern about the lack of representation from Savannah River and western parishes.⁵ Leaders agreed to a second meeting and sent messengers into the countryside urging freeholders in St. Matthew, St. George, and St. Paul to send delegations equal in size to the number of representatives in the lower house.⁶

The second meeting convened at Tondee's Tavern on 10 August. After declaring themselves "a General meeting of the inhabitants of this province," the men in attendance named a committee of correspondence and pledged support for all lawful measures taken to defend "the Constitution of our Country." They agreed to work with other colonies but rejected a resolution to send delegates to the general congress called for September in Philadelphia. Disappointed by the meeting's refusal to participate in the Continental Congress, delegates from St. John's invited parishes to send representatives to a third meeting, this one at Midway Meeting House. When only a handful of men from two parishes attended the Midway meeting, St. John's men recognized defeat—even if they did not fully acknowledge it.⁷

⁵ Noble W. Jones, Archibald Bulloch, John Houstoun and John Walton, 14 July 1774, in *GG* 20 July 1774. Reprinted in White, *Historical Collections of Georgia*, 1854, 44. Also see Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 40.

⁶ Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 40.

⁷ See *RRG* 1: 11-15; *GG* 17 August and 7 September 1774. See Anonymous, "Force, American Archives," 4: 1, 766-7.

After three public meetings and several months of contentious debate, Georgia's opposition leaders had won few new supporters by September 1774. An observer noted that, "it would be highly imprudent and ungenerous" for the colony to join an inter-colonial protest because of its dependence on parliamentary subsidies and fears of an impending war with the Creeks. Most Georgians seemed to agree.⁸

In addition to concerns about fiscal and border security, many in the colony did not like the opposition's tactics. In late August and September, seven different dissenting petitions appeared in the *Gazette*. Signed by more than 600 freeholders, at least 500 of whom lived in Savannah River and western parishes, the petitions claimed that the meetings' organizers had made specious claims to trick parishes into sending delegates.⁹ Nearly four dozen St. Matthew's residents charged that "certain persons" had told them that the meeting's purpose was to petition the king for Bostonians' relief, "as a child begs a father when he expects correction." Further, organizers had warned that if they did not support the Savannah meeting, Georgians "must expect the Stamp Act imposed on us." Believing themselves deceived, the St. Matthew's men called the resolutions passed in Savannah "very wrong" and feared that the actions of the Savannah meeting might "incur

⁸ Unknown, "Force, American Archives," 1: 773.

⁹ The dissent of "Several Inhabitants and Freeholders of the Town and District of Savannah" appeared in the *Gazette* 7 September 1774. Some residents of Skidoway Island and Vernonburgh signed the same statement. Other dissents appeared in subsequent issues of the *Gazette*. They are collected and printed in *RRG* 1: 18-34. Coleman compared the reprints to originals in the *Gazette* and noted that the reprints contain just one-third of the signatures in the *Gazette* versions. Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 43, note 14.

the displeasure of his Majesty so as to prevent us from having soldiers to help us in case of an Indian war.”¹⁰

Residents of neighboring St. George echoed the St. Matthew’s complaints. The parish sent two men to the 10 August meeting only because someone told them that if they did not participate, “we should have the Stamp Act put in force.”¹¹ Signers from the frontier parish of St. Paul registered the most pointed dissent: Bostonians, not Georgians, had destroyed the tea so they, not Georgians, should endure the “ill consequences resulting from such a conduct.” In addition, they distanced themselves from fellow Georgians, chiefly Savannahians and St. John’s men, who had promoted the 10 August meeting. Coastal residents did not have to worry about an Indian war, they said, but those who lived in the “back settlements” did and they depended on “such powerful aid and assistance as none but Great Britain can give.” They wanted no part of the Savannah resolutions.¹²

Opposition response to the dissents came swiftly. One writer charged that one-third of the signers of the Christ Church dissent were placemen who owed their livelihood to government.¹³ Another charged that some of the persons listed as dissenters from St. Matthew and St. Paul parishes “have been long since dead.”¹⁴ *Philopolis*, a

¹⁰ *GG* 21 September 1774.

¹¹ *GG* 28 September 1774.

¹² *GG* 12 October 1774; reprinted in *RRG* 1: 24-26.

¹³ *GG* 21 September 1774.

¹⁴ *GG* 19 October 1774.

“plain country planter,” asked whether the men of St. George Parish could “be such noodles, as not to know that the Stamp Act, and every part thereof, was repealed many years ago.”¹⁵ *A Briton*, however, launched the most devastating counterattack. He acknowledged the serious threat of war with the Creeks but he discounted the likelihood that British troops would defend Georgia’s frontier settlements. They had a more important task, he wrote: to subjugate the citizens of Boston, who would, at least, “live and die FREEMEN.” The colonies, not the British, “are our best and only friend,” he wrote.¹⁶

Two crucial developments in October 1774 changed the dynamics of Georgians’ internal debates about how the colony should respond to the Coercive Acts. The 19 October *Gazette* published the Continental Association adopted by the twelve colonies represented at the Philadelphia Congress. Along with a general nonimportation agreement to go into effect on 1 December, the Association called for cessation of the slave trade and an immediate halt to the consumption of East India Company tea. In a provision directed at Georgia, the delegates had agreed to suspend all “trade, commerce, dealings or intercourse whatsoever, with any colony or province in North America, which shall not accede to, or which shall hereafter violate this association.” The Association, in effect, threatened to end Georgia’s trade with South Carolina and the northern colonies.¹⁷

¹⁵ *GG* 5 October 1774.

¹⁶ *GG* 12 October 1774.

¹⁷ *GG* 23 November 1774; on the Continental Congress, see Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause*, 243–49. Georgia’s failure to adopt the Association strained relations between Savannah merchants and their Carolina colleagues and put many business transactions on hold.

The day after the Association appeared in the press, Governor Wright and a delegation of Creek leaders agreed to a peace settlement, which put an end to fears that an Indian war would erupt in western settlements. As word of the accord filtered into the back settlements, initial relief turned to anger when whites learned that Wright had accepted Creek demands that his government prevent settlers' encroachments on Creek hunting grounds. St. George and St. Paul Parishes, both of which had objected to the 10 August meeting now circulated a petition charging that the governor favored Indian traders' financial interests over settlers' safety. This controversy recalled charges leveled by grand jurors in 1770, and opened the door to a rapprochement between coastal opposition leaders and backcountry settlers.¹⁸

By early December 1774, it seemed that a new political calculus had taken shape in Georgia—one that responded to broadly held concerns about colonists' rights as well as very practical worries about trade and frontier settlement. Opposition leaders and Governor Wright recognized a shift in favor of adopting the Association. On 8 December, Savannah freeholders, including some who had denounced earlier meetings, went to the polls to elect delegates to attend a provincial congress that would meet at the same time as the General Assembly the following month. A week later, the editor of the *Georgia Gazette* called on all men in the colony to “follow so laudable an example” and to select representatives ready to defend American liberties threatened by an ill-advised and over-reaching ministry. Governor Wright, who just two months earlier had clung to

¹⁸ Cashin, “Sowing the Wind: Governor Wright and the Georgia Backcountry on the Eve of the Revolution” See the discussion of the June 1770 grand jury in chapter 2 above.

hopes that he could forestall the rising tide of unrest, blamed South Carolina radicals for the turnaround. They had returned from the Philadelphia congress determined to deliver Georgia to the side of the Association, he claimed, and “we have been in hot water ever since.”¹⁹

In mid-January 1775, deputies from five parishes (Christ Church, St. George, St. Paul, St. Matthew, and St. Andrew) convened as a provincial congress to consider whether Georgia should adopt the Association. Delegates deliberated for six days before agreeing that a non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation agreement “would probably prove the most speedy, effectual, and peacable measure to obtain redress of *American grievances*.” They adopted a modified version of the general agreement and elected three men (Archibald Bulloch, John Houstoun, and Noble Wymberly Jones) to represent Georgia when the Continental Congress next met in May. Believing its work finished, the congress adjourned, hoping that the lower house would embrace its recommendations.²⁰

¹⁹ Unknown, “Extract of a Letter from Savannah, GA., to a Gentleman in Philadelphia, Dated December 9, 1774.” *GG* 14 December 1774; Wright, “Extract from a Letter by Sir James Wright to Lord Dartmouth, Dated December 13, 1774.”

²⁰ *RRG* 1: 43-48; White, *Historical Collections of Georgia*, 1854, 58–61; Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 46–47. In a letter to the president of the Continental Congress, the three men chosen to represent the colony in Philadelphia explained that Georgia’s Provincial Congress had believed itself constrained by the absence of delegates from several parishes (seven parishes did not participate) and had therefore schemed to adjourn quickly and have the general assembly endorse its work. Governor Wright thwarted this strategy by proroguing the assembly before it could adopt a version of the Association. See Noble Wymberly Jones, Archibald Bulloch and John Houstoun to the President of the Continental Congress, 6 April 1775, in White, *Historical Collections of Georgia*, 1854, 61–63. The Association adopted by Georgia’s Provincial Congress closely followed the Association of the Continental Congress. For a reading of the cultural import of the moral program contained in the Associations

Governor Wright had taken no action against the congress, fearing that any effort to block it would excite popular unrest. Instead, he monitored developments in the lower house; as soon as leaders introduced resolutions sympathetic to the provincial and Continental Congresses, he prorogued the legislature.²¹ He also succeeded in his “endeavours to counteract and prevent” the provincial congress from publishing its proceedings. Wright knew that the deputies had adopted an Association, but he also knew that he could blunt the congress’ effectiveness by limiting its exposure. He made it clear to opposition leaders that “if anything was published or any one act or step taken” to implement the Association, he would “immediately issue a proclamation declaring their offense in the strongest terms and give them every kind of opposition.”²²

In the winter and early spring of 1775, more than a year after Boston’s Sons of Liberty had dumped the East India Company’s tea into the harbor, friends of government and members of the opposition in Georgia had reached yet another stalemate. On the surface, at least, it appeared that Governor Wright and his supporters had weathered the worst of the troubles. They had stymied all efforts to bring Georgia into the fold of the rebellious colonies. The port of Savannah remained open to British ships and the town’s

(restrictions on funerary practices, horse-racing, cockfighting, and the like) see Withington, *Toward a More Perfect Union*.

²¹ White, *Historical Collections of Georgia*, 1854, 50–58; Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 47–49.

²² James Wright to the Earl of Dartmouth, 1 February, 24 April 1775, reprinted in Great Britain. Colonial Office, *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783*, 9: 42–43, 106–07. .

shops continued to sell British goods.²³ Archibald Bulloch, John Houstoun, and Noble Wymerly Jones, the three men selected as delegates to the Continental Congress, did not attend the congress in Philadelphia. They could not pretend to represent the inhabitants of the province, they wrote, because the people of Georgia remained deeply divided over the Association, with some “virtuously for the measures; others strenuously against them; but more who called themselves neutral than either.”²⁴

A Politics of Defiance

As long as opposition leaders engaged in political maneuvering with Governor Wright, they stood little chance of accomplishing their goal. In a decade of sparring with the lower house, Wright had learned how to play factions, regions, and personalities against one another. He was a master tactician who understood how to use the power and influence of his office and he did not hesitate to do so. He knew his foes and their weaknesses as well as he knew the strength of his own position and, even more importantly, he recognized the limits of his power and knew when to exercise restraint.

²³ Because Savannah merchants continued to trade with British ships, the colony fell under the censure of merchants from other colonies, especially South Carolina, who refused to do business with Georgia. See James Habersham to Messieurs Clark and Milligan, 7 April 1775: “The fiery Patriots in Charleston have stopped all Dealings with us, and will not suffer any Goods to be landed there from Great Britain,” Habersham, *The Letters of Hon. James Habersham, 1756-1775*, VI:235.

²⁴ Noble Wymerly Jones, Archibald Bulloch and John Houstoun to the President of the Continental Congress, 6 April 1775, in White, *Historical Collections of Georgia*, 1854, 61–63. Impatient with the reticence of fellow colonists, the St. John Parish committee appealed unsuccessfully to the Charles Town committee to allow them to associate with South Carolinians rather with Georgians. Governor Wright referred to the St. John committee as “poor insignificant fanatics” who, as descendants of “New England people of the Puritan Independent sect . . . still retain a strong tincture of republican or Oliverian principles.” See Wright to Earl of Dartmouth, 24 April 1775. Great Britain. Colonial Office, *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783*, 9: 106–07.

In early 1775, members of Georgia's opposition movement adopted a confrontational politics of defiance that engaged the public in ritualized performance out of doors. This stage of activism involved a wider circle of men and women than before in a series of staged enactments that openly challenged Governor Wright's authority as well as his government's ability to enforce order.

The first incident took place in February and might have remained an isolated example of smugglers confronting customs agents had not a British sailor died. On the night of 15 February 1775, a group of men with blackened faces attacked a tidewater and two British sailors guarding a shipment of molasses and sugar that the customs collector had seized earlier that day at Wells Wharf, a quarter mile from Savannah. The men "Stripped, Tarr'd and feathered" the tidewater and one of the sailors disappeared in the river as he tried to flee. Authorities presumed him drowned. The governor offered a £50 reward and the guarantee of a pardon in return for the identities of the men responsible. No one came forward. When questioned, the wharf owner and his wife both admitted that they saw the faces of the attackers, one of whom was a Savannah ropemaker. But they claimed that they could neither identify him nor recognize him if they saw him again.²⁵

Despite his outrage, Governor Wright did not force the issue. It could not have escaped his notice that the wharf where the incident took place belonged to Andrew Elton Wells, a former captain in the West India trade who operated a wharf and a brewery on

²⁵ Hawes, *The Proceedings and Minutes of the Governor and Council of Georgia, October 4, 1774, through November 7, 1775, and September 6, 1770, through September 20, 1780*, X:12–14. The loyalist claim filed by James Edgar, the King's Waiter, Weigher and Gauger, which contains statements from Governor Wright and the Collector of Customs. AO 13 American Loyalist Claims, Series II (034) Claims A-F, Georgia, microfilm frame 446-54, digital frames 524-36.

the outskirts of Savannah. Related by marriage to several prominent St. John's men, Wells had served on the June 1770 grand jury that issued harsh presentments against Wright and he did not hide the fact that he corresponded with his sister's husband, Samuel Adams of Boston. A month after the incident, Wells complained to Adams about the low state of liberty in Georgia. "I truly blush for the want of Spirit of the Greatest part of this province," he wrote. Wells characterized the association adopted by the provincial congress as "lukewarm" and denounced many in the colony as "a Self Interest[ed] penurious Set not worthy the freedom of Americans or the Notice of its meanest Subjects." Wells belonged to the tight, shadowy circle of Savannah's liberty men, quickly losing patience with the high politics of persuasion employed by opposition leaders more accustomed to political sparring in the assembly or pages of the *Gazette* than in the streets.²⁶

Chief Justice Stokes later wrote that after news of gunfire at Lexington and Concord reached Savannah in the second week of May, "the People in Georgia hurried fast into Rebellion." On 2 June, the royal schooner *Saint John*, under the command of Lieutenant William Grant, arrived in Savannah's harbor intending to prosecute those responsible for the death of David Martin, the sailor killed in the February incident at Wells Wharf. That night, "persons unknown" spiked the twenty-one cannons that overlooked the battery and threw the guns down the bluff. Grant took the hint and

²⁶ Andrew Elton Wells to Samuel Adams, March 18, 1775, quoted in Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 49. Wells was the brother of Elizabeth Wells Adams, Samuel's second wife. The few letters between Wells and his famous in-law that survive make clear that the two discussed Georgia politics. See Samuel Adams to Andrew Elton Wells, 21 October 1772, in Adams, *The Writings of Samuel Adams*, 2: 337-39..

decided that the “times are such as . . . prevents justice from taking place, this colony being like all others through America in anarchy and confusion.”²⁷

Three days later, celebration of the king’s birthday occasioned a standoff between friends of government and Savannah’s Sons of Liberty. While Governor Wright entertained supporters and officeholders at the courthouse, the Sons of Liberty marked the day in their own way. First, they delivered notes to the lodgings of four men, supposed enemies of American liberty, warning the men to leave the province within seven days or “abide by any consequences that may follow.” Next, they erected a liberty pole, and when the governor set off fireworks to honor the king, the Sons of Liberty answered by firing thirty rounds of ammunition into the air. Finally, at a dinner at Tondee’s Tavern, the liberty men raised their glasses to King George III. Along with the king, they also toasted the Continental Congress, John Hancock, Benjamin Franklin, John Dickinson, American liberty, and the “Sons of Freedom in every part of the Globe.”²⁸

Like the commander of the schooner *St. John*, Governor Wright believed that the tide had indeed turned against the king’s government in Georgia. He even confessed to officials in England that he feared for his life. Friends in Carolina had alerted him of

²⁷ “Humble Memorial,” 5 January 1778, *CRG*, 39: 36 (Transcript), Georgia Archives; Lieutenant William Grant to Vice-Admiral Samuel Graves, 18 June 1775, in Great Britain. Colonial Office, *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783*, 9: 176–78. According to the 7 June 1775 *Gazette*, “some of the inhabitants, assisted by the Commanders of several vessels and their people,” had the guns brought up again” in time to fire salutes for the king’s birthday “as customary” on Sunday, 4 June.

²⁸ *GG* 7, 14 June 1775; Lieutenant William Grant to Vice-Admiral Samuel Graves, 18 June 1775, *Ibid.*; James Wright to Earl of Dartmouth, 9 June 1775, *Ibid.*, 9: 167–68. Affidavit of William Tongue, 7 June 1775, *Ibid.*, 9: 166–67.

plans to seize him, apparently in retaliation for his successful efforts to keep Georgia out of the Continental Congress. Militia officers from Savannah and the neighboring districts had assured the governor that he could depend on them for protection, but they had also warned that they could “not answer for their men.” Loyal supporters fell away every day, Wright reported, because they had “not any place of the least security or defense to retire to” and could not hope to escape the “resentment of the people.”²⁹

On 13 June, the day that the court of sessions convened in Savannah, between three and four hundred men assembled, “put up a Liberty Tree and a flag and in the evening paraded about the town.” Governor Wright and Chief Justice Stokes viewed the hoisting of the Liberty flag as further evidence of the people’s “contempt and defiance of the court and of all law and government.” Although the Sons of Liberty did not attempt to prevent the court from meeting, local officers, such as bailiffs, sheriffs, and magistrates, encountered groups of angry men who threatened them with harm if they attempted to deliver writs or otherwise carry out their duties.³⁰

Customs officers at the port of Sunbury complained that the day after they had seized a sloop from the West Indies, a “party of Armed Men entered on Board the said Sloop and forcibly put the Officer who had possession of her on Shore, after which they Conducted the Vessell to Sea.” William Bennet, a deputy provost marshal, received an anonymous letter threatening “Punishment if he serves any Writ or process against any of

²⁹ James Wright to Earl of Dartmouth, 9 June 1775, Great Britain. Colonial Office, *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783*, 9: 167–68.

³⁰ James Wright to Earl of Dartmouth, 9 June 1775, *Ibid.*

the Persons Concerned in rescuing the Vessell and Cargoe lately seized at Sunbury or any other process whatever.”³¹

In Savannah, the commissary general saw a “Number of Men . . . removing the Cannon and other Stores belonging to his Majesty” from the public storehouse. When he ordered them to stop and warned that he would “take a list of the Persons Concerned” if they persisted, they responded that they take the supplies and “when they were done, they would give him a list of their Names, and of what stores they had taken.” The government could neither stop nor punish them. As the “powers of Government are at present Totally Unhinged,” the council advised Governor Wright not to attempt prosecution.³²

Such unlawful proceedings had become the norm. In fact, a growing number of Georgians recognized defiance of the government as proper, even patriotic. In mid-June, a meeting of Savannah residents agreed to heed the instructions of the Continental Congress and to elect delegates to a second provincial congress to meet in Savannah in early July. Alarmed by “the bloody scene now acting in Massachusetts Bay,” they resolved “never to become slaves” and declared themselves bound by “religion, honour,

³¹The customs officers had seized the sloop “for having on Board upwards of one hundred cases of jyn.” See Hawes, *The Proceedings and Minutes of the Governor and Council of Georgia, October 4, 1774, through November 7, 1775, and September 6, 1770, through September 20, 1780*, X:28. On 8 July 1775, James Wright wrote Lord Dartmouth about “a Pretty Extraordinary Procedure which has happened at the Port of Sunbury,” Wright, “Letters from Governor Sir James Wright to the Earl of Dartmouth and Lord George Germain, Secretaries of State for America, from August 24, 1774 to February 16, 1782,” 191–92.

³²Hawes, *The Proceedings and Minutes of the Governor and Council of Georgia, October 4, 1774, through November 7, 1775, and September 6, 1770, through September 20, 1780*, X: 27–30.

and love to our country” to support the efforts of the Continental and Provincial Congresses in “preserving our constitution, and opposing the execution of the several arbitrary and oppressive acts of the British Parliament.” They also agreed to name a committee of safety to enforce the Association.³³

Georgia’s second provincial congress met at Tondee’s Tavern in Savannah on 4 July 1775.³⁴ One hundred delegates from all parts of the province assembled and selected Archibald Bulloch as president and George Walton as secretary.³⁵ On the second day of the congress, the men voted to ask Governor Wright to “appoint a day of Fasting and Prayer . . . on account of the disputes subsisting between America and the parent State.” A “dutifull and Loyal” request, it nevertheless put the governor in a difficult position:

³³ GG 14 June 1775. Governor Wright complained that the committee of safety and local parochial committees compelled people to sign the Association by threatening them with punishments ranging from tarring and feathering to banishment. See James Wright to Lord Dartmouth, 7 August, 17 August 1775, Wright, “Letters from Governor Sir James Wright to the Earl of Dartmouth and Lord George Germain, Secretaries of State for America, from August 24, 1774 to February 16, 1782,” 204–09. Georgia’s Council of Safety functioned as an executive body: it commissioned militia officers, apportioned resources, investigated reports of violation of the Association, and corresponded with other colonies and the Continental Congress. On the role of committees of safety generally, see Breen, *American Insurgents, American Patriots*; Hunt, *The Provincial Committees of Safety of the American Revolution*.

³⁴ See GG 14 June 1775. The same issue reported that Lyman Hall, a delegate appointed by the committee of St. John to represent the *parish* at the Continental Congress, had arrived in Philadelphia and taken his seat—the lone Georgian at the proceedings.

³⁵ White, *Historical Collections of Georgia*, 1854, 65. Whigs made much of the number of delegates to the congress, arguing that the “Province never was more fully represented in any Assembly.” See Archibald Bulloch to James Wright, in Hawes, *The Proceedings and Minutes of the Governor and Council of Georgia, October 4, 1774, through November 7, 1775, and September 6, 1770, through September 20, 1780*, X: 30–33. Of the 100 delegates, seventeen had served in the colonial assembly, and eight held seats in both bodies simultaneously. Christ Church Parish had a commanding presence in the congress: Savannah alone sent twenty-two men; Vernonburgh, Acton and Little Ogeechee each sent three and the Sea Islands 7. St. Andrew Parish selected thirteen delegates; St. Matthew, twelve; St. John, eleven; St. George and St. Paul, eight each; St. Philip, seven; St. David, two; and St. Thomas and St. Mary, one.

neither he nor his council considered the provincial congress a constitutional and lawful body, yet to deny a day of prayer seemed imprudent. The governor acceded to the request and set aside Wednesday, 19 July, as the day.³⁶

Even this seemingly conciliatory measure sparked controversy. Shortly after Governor Wright proclaimed 19 July as a day of fasting and prayer throughout the province, the Provincial Congress received word that the Continental Congress had selected the following day, Thursday, 20 July, as a day of prayer throughout all the American colonies. Haddon Smith, the rector of Christ Church Parish, preached a sermon on the 19th, but refused to observe the 20th and thus offended the newly formed council of safety. Five men delivered a message: because he refused to preach a sermon as directed by the Continental Congress, the council of safety would not permit him any longer to “preach in the Church of Savannah or Officiate as a Clergyman.” Smith appealed to the governor for help, but Wright had little aid to offer him or anyone else.³⁷

At around nine o'clock on the evening of 24 July, “a very great huzzaing in the streets” outside his home drew Governor Wright to the window where he saw “a horrid

³⁶ White, *Historical Collections of Georgia*, 1854, 66; Hawes, *The Proceedings and Minutes of the Governor and Council of Georgia, October 4, 1774, through November 7, 1775, and September 6, 1770, through September 20, 1780*, X: 30. For the text of both the congress' request and Wright's response, see Wright, “Letters from Governor Sir James Wright to the Earl of Dartmouth and Lord George Germain, Secretaries of State for America, from August 24, 1774 to February 16, 1782,” 193.

³⁷ Hawes, *The Proceedings and Minutes of the Governor and Council of Georgia, October 4, 1774, through November 7, 1775, and September 6, 1770, through September 20, 1780*, X: 33–35. James Wright to the Earl of Dartmouth, 29 July 1775; Great Britain. Colonial Office, *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783*, 11: 58–59. The Reverend Haddon Smith's 25 July 1775 affidavit appears in Wright, “Letters from Governor Sir James Wright to the Earl of Dartmouth and Lord George Germain, Secretaries of State for America, from August 24, 1774 to February 16, 1782,” 203–04.

spectacle.” John Hopkins, a pilot, stood, tarred and feathered, in a cart. He held a candle in his hand and was surrounded by “a great many” men carrying candles. For “upwards of three hours,” the crowd paraded through “most of the streets in town.” Hopkins had reportedly “behaved disrespectfully towards the Sons of Liberty and drank some toasts which gave great offense.” The morning after Hopkins’ ordeal, Haddon Smith fled the colony. For his part, Hopkins asked authorities not to prosecute his tormenters, saying that Joseph Habersham, “one of the leading men in Savannah, who had the Mob at Command,” had threatened him “to his Face if any Warrants issued.”³⁸

Young Habersham and other leaders of Savannah’s Liberty men taunted Governor Wright by displaying their strength right before his eyes. They did have “the Mob at Command,” and, for the most part, it was an orderly and purposeful, even disciplined, mob. Consider the events surrounding the arrest of Ebenezer McCarty, a South Carolina man held without bail on a charge of having enlisted men in Georgia for a Carolina regiment. When the chief justice denied a writ of habeas corpus filed on McCarty’s behalf, a crowd of men went to the gaol, forced open the door, and released McCarty. Two days later, McCarty and four others walked through the town—passing “close by the chief justice’s door” and “very near” the governor’s house—beating a drum and calling for volunteers for their South Carolina regiment. So dismal was the state of government in Georgia that Wright could do nothing more than report the incidents of “Unparalleled

³⁸ James Wright to Earl of Dartmouth, 29 July 1775, Great Britain. Colonial Office, *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783*, 11: 58–59; Humble Memorial of Anthony Stokes, 5 January 1778, CRG 39: 37 (Typescript), Georgia Archives; Wright, “Letters from Governor Sir James Wright to the Earl of Dartmouth and Lord George Germain, Secretaries of State for America, from August 24, 1774 to February 16, 1782,” 201–03.

insolence” to his superiors in London. Insolence notwithstanding, the gaol keeper, Thomas Corns, reported what was perhaps the most remarkable part of the McCarty story. Corns had not been present when the crowd freed McCarty. He returned to find his prisoner gone and two new locks in place of locks the crowd had broken.³⁹

This was not the work of mindless, lawless men. Quite the contrary, liberty men seized goods from customs officials; they did not burn the customs office. When they removed gunpowder and supplies from the public magazine, they did so openly and peacefully and offered to give an accounting of what they had taken. Even the tarring and feathering of Hopkins—albeit a “horrid spectacle”—was a contained, orderly event. The leaders of Savannah’s liberty party could do what the governor could not: they could preserve order in the midst of political crisis.⁴⁰

Who were these liberty men? Only a very few men are known with certainty to have belonged to Savannah’s Sons of Liberty. The unfortunate Hopkins named Joseph Habersham as one of the men who led the mob that tarred and feathered him. Habersham, the second son of council member James Habersham, found himself in both Philadelphia and London at politically tumultuous times. While studying at the College of New Jersey,

³⁹ James Wright to Earl of Dartmouth, 7 August 1775, and Affidavit of Thomas Corns, 7 August 1775, in Great Britain. Colonial Office, *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783*, 11: 67–68, 68–69.

⁴⁰ The orderliness of revolutionary crowds was not unique to Savannah. Studying Charleston, Pauline Maier has suggested that popular efforts to find institutional alternatives to collective violence set the stage for popular organized politics. See Maier, “The Charleston Mob and the Evolution of Popular Politics in Revolutionary South Carolina, 1765-1784”; Maier, *From Resistance to Revolution*; Carp, *Defiance of the Patriots*. Carp’s account of the Boston Tea Party also comments on the orderly conduct of the rebels even as they destroyed the East India Company’s valuable cargo.

he traveled to Philadelphia in the fall of 1765 just in time to observe public meetings in response to the Stamp Act. Later he spent three years in London (1768-1771) clerking for a mercantile firm during a time that coincided with a high point of Wilkesite controversy, including the aftermath of the massacre in St. George's Field. In 1770, in response to a letter in which Joseph discussed politics, the elder Habersham warned his son that leaders could more easily "inflame the populace," than calm it. Yet, he encouraged his son to develop his own views as long as he based them on the "first principles of Government, and our Constitution in particular."⁴¹

Hopkins also recognized Francis Henry Harris, the son of another member of the governor's council, among the "mob" that assaulted him as well as a bricklayer and two sea captains, George Bunner and William McCleure. Bunner captained the Brig *Georgia Packet*, which usually sailed between Philadelphia and Savannah. In mid-April 1775, he sailed for Philadelphia; he would have arrived just when the city began to mobilize for war after having learned about Lexington and Concord. From there he sailed to Dominica, returning to Savannah in July, days before he joined the crowd to tar and feather John Hopkins. McCleure sailed the Schooner *Three Friends* in the West India trade and unloaded his goods at Andrew Elton Wells' Wharf.⁴²

⁴¹ See James Habersham to Mr. Wm Symonds, Merchant in Philadelphia, 4 December 1765; James Habersham to Joseph Habersham, 10 May 1768; and James Habersham to Joseph Habersham, 13 October 1770 in Habersham, *The Letters of Hon. James Habersham, 1756-1775*, VI:51-52, 68-71, 89-91.

⁴² Kilbourne, *Savannah, Georgia, Newspaper Clippings (Georgia Gazette)*, 2: 69, 97, 119, 124, 147, 158. Ryerson, *The Revolution Is Now Begun*, 89-147.

Habersham, Bunner, McClellan, and Wells suggest the myriad ways that Savannah's political community engaged with the broader network of Anglo-American protest that developed in the 1760s and 1770s. Georgians followed developments in the *Georgia Gazette*, which connected its readers and listeners, when read aloud, to a universe of print culture by reprinting foreign news, letters, essays, parliamentary debates, and items of interest or curiosity from other papers. Travelers, ship captains, and sailors brought a different dimension of connection. They exchanged stories, rumors, and information in every port they visited as well as with ships they passed on the seas and then recirculated that information in Savannah. Perhaps most powerfully, individuals with family and associates in England and other colonies learned about developments elsewhere from people they knew and whose judgments they trusted. Together, they created a rich body of political narrative and ideas that propelled men to express their defiance of the greatest empire in the world.

Quiet Rebellions

In the summer of 1775, leaders of the opposition joined with the more radical liberty men to affect a non-violent revolution in provincial and local government. They first broadened the electorate to include all white male taxpayers and directed parishes and districts to elect delegates to a provincial congress with nearly four times the number of delegates as the royal assembly. The congress adopted the Continental Association, effectively ending trade with British carriers and shuttering the ports of Savannah and Sunbury. Next, they authorized a council of safety to act as a collective executive and manage the colony's internal and external defenses. Then they called on parishes to

choose parochial committees to enforce the Association and carry on the functions of local government, including courts of law. These new bodies and new political relationships spurred a series of events in different parts of the colony that illustrate how ordinary men engaged with one another and with their government in what became a new political order. This section examines three sites of peaceful, quiet rebellion: the militia field, the St. George parochial committee and the provincial court of sessions.

Militia Revolters

In July 1775, the Council of Safety called on Governor Wright to commission new militia officers “for the preservation of Peace and good order, and the General protection and defence of the whole” colony. The council charged that many of the men who held commissions had proven “disagreeable to the People over whom they Command,” and “such Officers . . . ought to be removed; as no set of Men could be Expected to fit under Banners, for which they had no good Opinion or respect.” The freemen of the colony “desire to be Commanded by Officers of their own chusing,” and they chose to follow the command of men who had subscribed to the Association.⁴³

Thomas Netherclift, captain of a company of light infantry, found that out for himself when he met his men on the muster field in early August. A member of the company stepped forward and presented Netherclift with a copy of the Association and asked him to sign it. The captain declined, declaring that, “it was contrary to my political

⁴³ Hawes, *The Proceedings and Minutes of the Governor and Council of Georgia, October 4, 1774, through November 7, 1775, and September 6, 1770, through September 20, 1780*, X:37–38. See James Wright to Lord Dartmouth, 7 August, 17 August 1775, Wright, “Letters from Governor Sir James Wright to the Earl of Dartmouth and Lord George Germain, Secretaries of State for America, from August 24, 1774 to February 16, 1782,” 204–09.

Principles and . . . I was determined not to serve in a Military Capacity under any Authority than that of the King's representative." The men then told Netherclift that they had orders from the congress or council of safety, in case of his "refusal to become one of them, as they term'd it, to Elect a person of their own choice to supercede" him in command. Netherclift and the few in his company "who joynd me in opinion" found themselves "no longer considered as a part of the Light Infantry Company."⁴⁴

The men of the Fifth Company of Foot Militia in Ebenezer made it clear that they would no longer serve under Captain Jacob Meyer, who, they claimed, "neither knows or ever Attempts to Train them in the Militia Art." To take his place, they drafted John Stirk, who already held a captain's commission in the Fourth Company of Militia in Savannah. Stirk mustered the men of the Fourth Company and "after a few Manoeuvres. . . Informed the Company it was the direction of the Congress and Council of Safety 'that they the Company Elect their Officers, and that those officers, be Men, who had signd, or would sign the Association.'" He then announced that he had accepted command of the Ebenezer company and therefore would resign his commission in the Savannah regiment. He recommended that the men who had served as his lieutenant and ensign continue in their offices—perhaps one of them might even serve as elected captain—so long as they signed the Association.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Thomas Netherclift to James Wright, 10 August 1775, Hawes, *The Proceedings and Minutes of the Governor and Council of Georgia, October 4, 1774, through November 7, 1775, and September 6, 1770, through September 20, 1780*, X: 44–45.

⁴⁵ John Stirk to James Wright, 29 July 1775, and William Stephens and William Johnston to James Wright, 9 August 1775, *Ibid.*, X:36.

In front of the company, Stirk asked two junior officers, William Stephens and William Johnston, if they had signed. They answered in the negative. Next he asked whether they would sign, and they “made no direct Answer yea or nay upon which the Company proceeded by Ballot to Elect other Officers.” Stephens and Johnston reported to Governor Wright that the royal commissions he had given them conveyed only an “Ideal Authority,” one not recognized by the men formerly under their command, who “would not be Commanded by any Officers but those of their own Choosing.”⁴⁶

The militia “revolters,” as the deposed Captain Netherclift dubbed them, provide dramatic evidence that the sphere of political actors had expanded beyond officeholders, essayists, and even freeholders to include rank and file militia men. In September, Wright informed his superiors in London that every militia company in Georgia had chosen their own officers and observed that soldiers who had “Signed the Association will now be considered by the Provincial Congress and the other Bodys as under their Authority and Direction and not the Kings or mine.”⁴⁷ Common soldiers had overthrown officers; they had collectively defied the governor and his commissioned officers. The new militia officers owed their positions to their men and every officer and foot soldier knew it.

Halifax Committee

In late August 1775, more than a dozen men intercepted a marshal’s bailiff as he and a courier attempted to serve a writ on a St. George Parish planter. The crowd carried

⁴⁶ William Stephens and William Johnston to James Wright, 9 August 1775, Wright, “Letters from Governor Sir James Wright to the Earl of Dartmouth and Lord George Germain, Secretaries of State for America, from August 24, 1774 to February 16, 1782,” 43–44.

⁴⁷ James Wright to Lord Dartmouth, 16 September 1775, *Ibid.*, 209–11.

the two men to the home of James Herbert, who had sworn out the writ for a lawsuit he had filed against a neighbor. After threats of tarring and feathering, Herbert agreed to withdraw the writ and stop his suit in the general court. The crowd then used a show of hands to let the bailiff and courier know that until the ports reopened, they would answer all efforts to serve writs in St. George Parish with thirty-nine lashes to the back and a suit of tar and feathers.⁴⁸

A month later, some of the same men met once again at James Herbert's home, this time for the first meeting of the parochial committee of the Lower River District of St. George Parish, commonly known as Halifax. The committee took over the role of the court of conscience, initially hearing cases of petty theft and small debt and gradually expanding jurisdiction to include matters previously reserved for provincial courts in Savannah.⁴⁹

The Halifax committee consisted of twelve men, nine of whom received land grants in the colonial period with median size of 550 acres. John Green, one of the ringleaders in the assault on the bailiff and courier, appears to have had the most extensive public experience of those elected to the committee. He represented the parish in the provincial congress in July and had previously served as a justice of the peace, militia officer, and grand juror. Most of the others held militia commissions or had served

⁴⁸ Lane, "Thomas Lane Affidavit, September 11, 1775," 617–23; Strohaker, "Martin Strohaker Affidavit, September 2, 1775," 603–05.

⁴⁹ St. George Committee, "St. George's Parish & Lower River District (commonly Called Halifax) of Said Parish Committee Minutes."

as grand jurors at least once. The twelve selected Thomas Burton, a man with no known prior public role, as chair.

Herbert, at whose home the committee met for several months, did not belong to the committee, but his frequent appearance as plaintiff suggests that his litigious nature was just as easily satisfied by the Halifax court as by the king's court in Savannah.⁵⁰ At the first session, the committee heard Herbert's suit against Josiah and Isaac Cartwright for debt and lawyer's fees. Committee member James Roberts gave £13 security for the Cartwrights' debt—an amount exceeding the court of conscience maximum of £8, which suggests that the committee had *defacto* expanded the scope of disputes to be decided at the local level. At the next meeting, Herbert tried to recover damages that an earlier court had awarded him from defendants of two different suits. One defendant, George Meads, refused to give security for quick payment, agreeing instead to allow the Liberty Officer to seize his effects. The court also ordered the Liberty Officer to seize the effects of transient John Marpole who owed money to committee member John Conyers. In each case, two freeholders would appraise the belongings and the officer would sell the goods to satisfy the court's judgments.⁵¹

Transactions recorded in the committee's ledger reveal the web of credit and interdependence that defined the cash-strapped Halifax community. The committee chair and two others agreed to act as security for Joseph Deas, who lost a suit brought by

⁵⁰ For Herbert's suits at the first three meetings, see *Ibid.* 28 September 1775, p. 11; 19 October 1775, p. 11 (2 cases); and 23 October 1775, p. 12.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 2 November 1775, p. 12.

Thomas Simmons over 75 bushels of corn.⁵² When Thomas Lane sued Thomas Innes for payment of a debt of more than £7, committee member John Casper Greiner, whose land holdings exceeded 2,000 acres, agreed to pay a portion of Innes' debt, taking as security Innes' next crop of corn. The committee ordered Innes to pay the remainder to Lane by the first of the year. When Innes did not meet his obligation, Greiner went before the committee to obtain an order requiring Innes to deliver his corn as payment.⁵³

Meeting once and sometimes twice a month, the Halifax committee heard minor criminal as well as civil cases and managed the kinds of conflicts common in frontier areas with few fences and livestock roaming the countryside. Robert Humphries confessed to charges that he had stolen a bag of meal from Francis Parris' mill. The committee ordered 25 lashes "on his bare back" as penalty. John Green charged that John Pettinger carried off unmarked hogs from a swamp next to Green's plantation. The committee ruled against Pettinger and ordered him to give notice to his neighbors whenever he thought he found unmarked and presumably wild hogs. In another case of unmarked stock, the committee sided with James Nesmith who complained that his neighbor William Redding's practice of allowing slaves to raise their own hogs threatened his neighbors' unbranded stock running loose in the woods and swamps.⁵⁴

⁵² Ibid., 10 Sept 28, 1775.

⁵³ St. George Committee, "St. George's Parish & Lower River District (commonly Called Halifax) of Said Parish Committee Minutes," 28 September 1775, p. 10; 29 February 1776, p. 13.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 23 November 1776, p. 15.

William Christy's suit against Quintin Pooler over the estate of William McDaniel offers a view into how the Halifax committee negotiated its role in relation to the provincial council of safety. Pooler, a Savannah merchant and liberty man, reportedly seized 19 slaves, beef and cowhides from William Christie's plantation, claiming that he had purchased the property from McDaniel before his death. Christie countered that the slaves and other goods belonged to his wife, who had received them from McDaniel years before his death. The committee found for Christie and returned the slaves, beef, and hides. Pooler appealed to the provincial council of safety, which initially supported his claim and ordered the Halifax committee to deliver the disputed property to Pooler. The committee met again and once again reviewed depositions and other evidence and stood by their earlier ruling. This time the council of safety deferred to the committee and ordered Pooler to return all property belonging to the McDaniel estate under penalty of arrest.⁵⁵

The quiet proceedings of the Halifax committee suggest a view of revolution seldom found in dramatic accounts of urban misrule, land riots or confrontations with British soldiers. A dozen men elected by their neighbors governed their community with steady and deliberate decision-making consistent with their understanding of the law and the difference between right and wrong. Although some people undoubtedly bristled at paying fines to the "liberty officer," they nevertheless resorted to the committee as the

⁵⁵ Ibid., 29 February 1776, p. 13; 28 March 1776, p. 13; Candler, *The Revolutionary Records of the State of Georgia ... / Comp. and Pub. under Authority of the Legislature by Allen D. Candler.*, 1: 142–3; 157; 163–64.

only effective means of settling local civil and criminal disputes. Rebels in the sparsely settled parish of St. George had successfully commandeered control of local government.

General Court

By the fall of 1775, the powers of royal government in Georgia had steadily declined to a degree that the governor's council declared they were "almost totally Annihilated."⁵⁶ The provincial congress had superseded the general assembly and the council of safety had assumed many of the functions of the colonial executive. Together the two bodies had brought the militia under rebel control and had authorized local committees to carry out functions of local government and enforce the Association. Only the colonial courts had not yet faced a direct challenge. In the fall of 1775, rebel leaders took aim at the courts not by building bonfires and parading as they had the previous June, but by encouraging individual jurors to refuse to serve and then by discouraging attorneys from filing civil actions.

The October session of the General Court opened in Savannah on 10 October without the blessing of the provincial congress, the council of safety, or the local parochial committee. Only eleven of thirty-six jurors appeared on the first day, and five of them refused to take the required oath. The clerks of the court summoned an additional twenty-nine men to appear. Of the second group, fourteen refused to take the juror's oath.⁵⁷ Randall Ramsay, a St. George planter, informed the court that he would not serve

⁵⁶ Hawes, *The Proceedings and Minutes of the Governor and Council of Georgia, October 4, 1774, through November 7, 1775, and September 6, 1770, through September 20, 1780*, X: 40.

⁵⁷ "Extracts from the Minutes of the General Court," *CRG* 38, pt. 2: 7-12; also James Wright to Earl of Dartmouth, 14 October 1774, Great Britain. Colonial Office, *Documents of the*

because he “had Signed Liberty.” Furthermore, he believed it wrong to sit as a juror at this time, “as it would be hard on the Country People to have their Effects sold when there was no Trade.” Savannah butcher Lewis Cope explained that if he sat “on the Jury, he should not get any more Cattle” from the backcountry. Michael Griffin of St. Paul Parish simply “Did not chuse” to take the oath. Three jurors who did take oaths failed to return on the second day of court. The jurors’ obstructionism infuriated Chief Justice Stokes, who, after expressing “himself with great Warmth and Indignation . . . ordered them into the Custody of the Marshal” before a sympathetic attorney showed him that the law allowed jurors who failed to attend court a 30-day grace period before they had to pay fines or suffer penalties.⁵⁸

In early December, the provincial congress attempted to limit further the effective power of the General Court by publishing resolutions prohibiting the dozen or so licensed attorneys who practiced in Savannah from prosecuting civil actions. Attorney General James Hume announced his intention to ignore the edict and immediately received an order requiring his attendance before the congress. This, Hume also ignored. Congress issued a warrant for his arrest, and a party of men captured him and carried him to

American Revolution, 1770-1783, 11: 144–45. Stokes presided alone because one associate justice was ill and the two others held rebel sympathies and absented themselves. James Wright to Lord Dartmouth, 14 October 1775, Hawes, *The Proceedings and Minutes of the Governor and Council of Georgia, October 4, 1774, through November 7, 1775, and September 6, 1770, through September 20, 1780*, X: 215–17.

⁵⁸ See “Extracts from the Minutes of the General Court,” *CRG* 38, pt. 2: 7-12 (Typescript), Georgia Archives. The names of the jurors who did not appear together with the names (and, in a few cases, words) of the jurors who refused to be sworn were also published in the *Gazette*, see *GG* 18 October 1775. Stokes, *A Narrative of the Official Conduct of Anthony Stokes, of the Inner Temple London ... [electronic Resource]*, 10.

congress where “not acknowledging or submitting to their authority,” Hume listened as members of the Provincial Congress debated whether to hand him over to the “mob.” Instead of the mob, Hume, who considered himself “the first victim” of the people’s revenge, received an order to leave Georgia within a month.⁵⁹

Chief Justice Stokes tried to hold court in December and again in January and went so far as to threaten to remove from the roll any attorneys who delayed their clients’ actions because of the provincial congress’ resolution. It was an empty threat, and he acknowledged as much when he admitted that recent events had “left nothing but the Shadow of Office to the King’s Servants.”⁶⁰ In his charge to the grand jury in December, he drew from the Old Testament Book of Judges and compared the current state of America to a time when Israel had no king and “every man did what was right in his own eyes.” Only now, according to Stokes, the people of Georgia proposed to do what was right in their own eyes under the authority of an unlawful provincial congress and local committees who assembled in taverns without the sanction of oaths or knowledge of the law.⁶¹

⁵⁹ James Wright to Earl of Dartmouth, 9 December 1775, Great Britain. Colonial Office, *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783*, 11: 208–10. On Hume, see his Memorial in Loyalist Claims AO 13 American Loyalist Claims, Series II (035) Claims F-J R, Georgia, microfilm frames 332-34, digital frames 426-28.

⁶⁰ Stokes, “Humble Petition,” *CRG* 39: 35-47 (Typescript), Georgia Archives.

⁶¹ Stokes, *A Narrative of the Official Conduct of Anthony Stokes, of the Inner Temple London ... [electronic Resource]*, 20–24.

Conclusion

At seven o'clock on the morning of 23 January 1776, Savannah gunsmith Adam Eirick called at the home of Henry Preston and asked Preston to surrender his keys to the courthouse. Preston, who served as Clerk of the Crown, protested that he did not have keys to the building, only to his own office, and those he "was determin'd no man should have." Eirick pressed: Didn't Preston have "a private or back door key?" "If I had the Keys of the Court House," the clerk answered, "I had orders not to deliver them." The messenger left empty-handed.

A few hours later, three men, George Walton, William Ewen, and John Wereat, armed with swords, appeared at Preston's door and announced that they had come for the keys to the Preston's office. Preston insisted that he would hold onto his keys, "be the consequences what they would," because "no man whatever should keep the keys to that office but myself." Ewen begged Preston to cooperate and suggested a compromise: If the clerk would just tell the men where he stored the keys, in the pocket of a waistcoat, for example, "they could in a minute take them." Congress would then have what it wanted, and Preston could truthfully say that he had not surrendered his keys. What is more, Ewen offered, "it would save the Country the Expense of New Doors & locks for they were determined to be into the Court House at all Events."

Preston stood firm. What they asked him to do, he said, "was contrary to my duty and my Oath," and he "thought it wrong to ask one to break that oath." Walton, "seemingly in a passion," responded that it would not violate Preston's oath "if they were [to] take them by force which they intended to do." Then, within earshot of Mrs. Preston,

Walton promised that congress would send “a file of musketeers” to take both Preston and his keys into custody. Undaunted, the clerk vowed that he would honor his oath and “abide by the Consequences.” He conceded, however, that “if they did break open the office & take the records” from his office, he would “attend as a private person & direct them how, & in what manner to take them down,” so that important documents would not “be greatly injured, or much mislaid.” Having gained what little satisfaction they could, Ewen, Walton, and Wreat left Preston’s home.

A short time later, the gunsmith Eirick appeared once again at Henry Preston’s door and escorted him to the courthouse where the clerk found “his office broke open” but his papers and record books undisturbed. “Thinking it part of my duty to see them as much taken care [of] as I possibly could,” Preston supervised as Walton’s men packed the papers of Georgia’s colonial courts into two large cases and one small trunk. His business concluded, Preston returned home and prepared to flee the province. That same evening, Francis Henry Harris, a member of the council of safety, visited Preston and placed him under parole of honor not to “go without the limit of the town without leave from the Commanding officer.” Like all royal officers in Georgia, Henry Preston was under arrest.⁶²

Without firing a shot, Georgia rebels had wrested power from the hands of British officials by January 1776. What started as a rhetorical exchange among lettered men in

⁶² Preston, “Henry Preston Narrative.” On the confinement of colonial officials, see Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 69–70.

the pages of the *Georgia Gazette* in summer 1774 morphed over eighteen months into a series of orderly, if frightening, appropriations of government authority. Opposition leaders first engaged a familiar politics of persuasion to convince Georgians to join with the other twelve colonies in a general grievance against British measures. The colony's politically astute British governor and his associates successfully neutralized those efforts through the early spring of 1775. Impatient with the governor's ability to contain opposition forces, more radical leaders began to borrow tactics from northern colonies to introduce a politics of defiance in which larger numbers of the public acted out against British rule in early 1775. Word of British troops firing on colonists at Lexington and Concord sparked a series of public protests the governor could not control and tipped the balance of power toward those who favored joining the Association, which the Second Provincial Congress adopted in July.

The final six months of 1775 saw a series of overt challenges to the royal governor's control of events and government functions. First, common militiamen refused to honor men holding commissions and demanded the right to elect officers of their choosing. Next, local committees elected by parishes and districts to enforce the Association assumed the powers of courts of conscience and beyond to administer local justice. Then, jurors refused to hear cases of debt in the general court. Finally, the chief justice acknowledged that he and other royal officials had just a shadow of power and he prepared to leave the colony. A revolution for local authority and home rule had come to Georgia.

Chapter Four: Revolution

News that the Continental Congress had adopted the Declaration of Independence sparked public displays of anti-monarchical sentiment throughout the colonies in July and August 1776. New Yorkers toppled a statue of George III on horseback and melted his likeness (and that of the horse) into bullets. Crowds in Boston and Baltimore smashed and burnt royal images. In Savannah, the largest crowd that “ever appeared on any occasion before in this Province” ceremoniously buried George III in front of the courthouse to the beat of muffled drums. An orator denounced the British monarch as a tyrant who “hath most flagrantly violated his Coronation Oath, and trampled upon the Constitution of our country, and the sacred rights of mankind.” The crowd then committed George III’s “political existence to the ground” and with it, banished “corruption to corruption—tyranny to the grave—and oppression to eternal infamy.”¹ After a decade of ferment, rhetoric, and agitation, the ritualized killing of the king and its retelling by word of mouth and in print signaled the beginning of a new era of politics throughout the Atlantic World.²

If many in the Savannah crowd shared a sense of excitement about ridding the colony of an oppressive regime, they did not necessarily agree on what to do next. Support for American independence had grown slowly in Georgia, too slowly for those

¹ White, *Historical Collections of Georgia*, 1854, 200–201.

² Scholarly treatment of the symbolic killing of George III is rich and provocative. See, especially, Jordan, “Familial Politics”; Marks, “The Statue of King George III in New York and the Iconology of Regicide”; Waldstreicher, “Rites of Rebellion, Rites of Assent”; McConville, *The King’s Three Faces*, 306–311.

who believed that their neighbors' caution masked "a self-interest . . . not worthy the freedom of Americans."³ Now, with independence a fact and the common enemy removed at least temporarily, factional distrust within Georgia's liberty movement became the central animating force at precisely the time the state needed to establish new structures of government and to mobilize for war.

This chapter opens with an analysis of the Constitution of 1777, a boldly democratic document that created a weak executive, a one-house legislature, and a county-based judicial system that placed control of all decisions and appeals in the hands of local juries. We turn next to the troubles of George and Lachlan McIntosh, standard stories of Georgia's revolutionary history that reveal deep concerns about personal and family loyalty as well as the fragility of safeguards against personal abuse of power in the early days of revolution. The final section follows the enactment of a draconian measure intended to rid the state of secret enemies. Operating outside of judicial processes, the committees created by this law provoked the first county grand jury meeting under the constitution to re-assert the ancient right of grand jurors to check the power of government.

The Constitution of 1777

The Declaration of Independence formalized the de facto independence that Georgia's rebel leaders had seized earlier in the year. In January 1776, as reports of armed British ships prowling along the coast swirled through the colony, the council of safety arrested

³ Andrew Elton Wells to Samuel Adams, 18 March 1775, quoted in Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 49.

Governor Wright, Chief Justice Stokes, and members of the governor's council.⁴ The following month, Wright and several provincial officials fled with their families to the safety of the HMS *Scarborough* at Cockspur. When the fleet sailed away in March, no pretense of royal rule remained in the province.⁵

In its place, the provincial congress adopted the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia in April 1776. Intended as a temporary measure, the Rules and Regulations remained in force for less than a year. It provided for broad suffrage with unspecified apportionment in an all-powerful provincial congress that elected a thirteen-member council of safety, five delegates to the Continental Congress, and a president and commander-in-chief who served a six-month term. Within days of learning that the Continental Congress had declared independence, President Archibald Bulloch called for elections to a new congress that would draft a more permanent frame of government as well as conduct the normal business of the state. Elections took place the first week of September and the new congress convened in early October.⁶

⁴ See *RRG* 1: 101-4; and "Proceedings of the Georgia Council of Safety," 38-39.

⁵ Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 68-70. For an account of the confinement of Wright and the others, see "Reminiscences of Dr. William Read, Arranged from His Notes and Papers," in Gibbes, *Documentary History of the American Revolution [electronic Resource]*, part 2, 248-93, esp. 250-53. Read studied medicine with Benjamin Rush in Philadelphia and returned to Savannah in time to see the Governor and members of his council, including William's father James Read, arrested. According to his reminiscences, young Read advised Wright to flee to the British man of war when he heard rumors that the militia guarding the governor had grown weary of service and "talked of breaking in and destroying the prisoners."

⁶ Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 76-78.

Four months later, on 5 February 1777, the provincial congress unanimously adopted the first constitution of the state of Georgia and ordered 500 copies distributed. Perhaps to establish the legitimacy of the process that produced the constitution, printer William Lancaster inserted a “true copy from the minutes” of the final stages of the convention at the front of his pamphlet. According to the minutes, on 24 January the convention elected a committee of seven men to “reconsider and revise the form of the Constitution.” Five days later, Button Gwinnett, one of the seven, presented the committee’s report, which the house read for the first time on 29 January. After several readings and debates on the wording of each paragraph, members of the convention read the constitution a final time on 5 February and approved the Constitution of 1777 without dissent.⁷

Still, the origins and adoption of the Constitution of 1777 remain shrouded in mystery. With the exception of the sketchy “true copy from the minutes,” of the final days of deliberation, no records of the convention survive, not even a roster of delegates. The fragmentary minutes reveal the name of the secretary (Edward Langworthy) and the names of the seven men elected to prepare the final draft of the constitution: William Belcher, Button Gwinnett, Henry Jones, Josiah Lewis, John Adam Treutlen, George Wells, and Joseph Wood.

⁷The printed pamphlet of the Georgia Constitution of 1777 is accessible through the *Early American Imprints, Series 1, no. 15308*, filmed and digitized by Newsbank and the American Antiquarian Society 2002.

The Committee

The convention had turned to an unlikely group of founders to finalize the state's first constitution. Collectively, the seven members of the committee had served in elected office less than a dozen years; four had commissions as justices of the peace; one held a militia commission and two had no known prior public roles. With one exception, all of the committee members had moved to Georgia within the past decade, having grown to maturity and lived as adults in other places—England, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and North Carolina. Although no documentary evidence confirms that they corresponded with relations and associates “at home,” it is likely that at least some of the committee members maintained contact with family and associates outside of Georgia and thus brought broad perspectives to bear on the political and constitutional issues of the day.

Button Gwinnett had the most extensive public experience prior to the convention; he served one term in the colonial assembly and represented Georgia in the Continental Congress while the congress debated independence in the summer of 1776. Gwinnett's brief tenure in Philadelphia had little impact on continental politics (after scouring journals, papers, letters, and miscellaneous records from the Continental Congress, his biographer found just nine words describing Gwinnett's position on any issue under debate). In Savannah, however, Gwinnett exercised considerable influence, some said because of nightly meetings at a tavern, but also perhaps because his time in Philadelphia allowed him to speak about the issues of the day with a level of familiarity and experience that only a handful of other delegates could rival. After all, he had sat in

the same chamber with John and Samuel Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and other men whose ideas animated political conversation throughout the colonies.⁸

A second committee member, William Belcher, could claim acquaintance with at least one of the leaders of the independence movement. A native of Braintree, Massachusetts, Belcher knew John Adams as a young man and later did business with Richard Cranch, the husband of Abigail Adams's sister Mary. In 1761, Belcher operated a retail and wholesale shop in Boston on the "Lower End of the South-Side of the Town Dock," where he sold an assortment of British goods and local products, including whale oil candles produced by Richard Cranch and Company. In Boston's bruising post-war economy, Belcher saw Cranch's ventures fail and his brother Samuel's once enviable estate fall into insolvency. He watched helplessly as his widowed sister-in-law sold a "large commodious house, . . . Yard, Garden, Store, Chaise House, Blacksmith's Shop, and a Stable" capable of holding twenty horses in the city of Boston and a house, land and church pew in Braintree to satisfy creditors. William Belcher may also have experienced financial setbacks of his own—advertisements for his Boston shop stopped abruptly in 1762.⁹

⁸ In John Adams' "Notes on Debates," he reported that Gwinnett favored Congress having the power to regulate the Indian trade: "Gwinnett is in favour of Congress having such power." Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett, Signer of the Declaration of Independence*, 79.

⁹ For ads, see *Boston Gazette and Country Journal* 22 June 1761; *Boston Evening Post* 11 January 1762. On Cranch's business failings, see Holton, *Abigail Adams*, 11, 37.

A few years later, he sailed into Savannah with a few trunks of merchandise, and finding the market more accommodating than Boston's depressed economy, he stayed.¹⁰ By 1768, he had acquired at least four slaves (including a man named Boston), a wharf and coastal acreage. That same year, he stood for election to a seat in the commons house of assembly. He attended the session for just a couple weeks "on account of sickness" but still managed to help draft a memorial protesting Parliament's efforts to raise revenue in America. That memorial, together with the assembly's acknowledgment of circular letters from Massachusetts and Virginia, provoked Governor Wright to dissolve the house on Christmas Eve 1768.¹¹ Except for a few petitions to the governor and council and a commission as justice of the peace, Belcher faded from view for the next several years, so we can only speculate how the man John Adams once called "my friend Billy Belcher" reacted to news from Boston in 1774 and 1775. By 1777, however, he had become a staunch supporter of Savannah's liberty party.¹²

¹⁰ Belcher is a common name, especially in eighteenth-century New England. We can be confident that the William Belcher in Savannah is the same William Belcher that appeared in Boston advertisements because of a receipt book in the Massachusetts Historical Society that contains entries referencing settlement of the estate of William's brother Samuel and, on the final page, refers to William Belcher "now in Savannah."

¹¹ *GG* July 6, 1768 December 14, 1768. See *CRG* 10: 519 for land petition claiming four slaves and *GG* March 1, 1769 for advertisement for runaways Christian and Boston.

¹² Belcher was the son of Moses "Deacon" Belcher, who owned land adjacent to Adams' property in Braintree. Adams' *Diary* contains numerous references to Billy Belcher and the Deacon. See, for example, the entry for March 22, 1756: "A fair but cool morn. Mounted for Boston, arrived around 11 o'clock, went to friend Wm. Belchers, drank a bowl of punch." Also, entry following 11 February 1759: "I spent one Evening this week at Billy Belchers." Adams, *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*, 1: 17, 77.

Alone among members of the committee, John Adam Treutlen had deep roots in Georgia and in the colony's politics. He migrated with his widowed mother and siblings as a young boy in the 1740s. First as a clerk, then as a schoolmaster, and eventually as a merchant and licensed retailer of spirits, Treutlen played a crucial role as a cultural broker and negotiated commercial and political relations among the German-speaking colonists of St. Matthew Parish and between residents of Ebenezer and the merchant houses and royal government in Savannah. Twice elected to the assembly (1764, 1771), Treutlen held a commission as justice of the peace and served on at least one grand jury before his neighbors selected him as a delegate to the Second Provincial Congress in July 1775.¹³

Two others on the committee, George Wells and Joseph Wood, enjoyed prominence in Augusta and Sunbury, respectively. A practitioner of physic, or physician, Wells came to Georgia in the early 1770s from Maryland by way of Chowan County, North Carolina. He belonged to an extended Wells family that included a brother (or cousin) Humphrey Wells, who also settled in Augusta.¹⁴ Wells reportedly left his wife in North Carolina to settle in Georgia, infuriating his wealthy father-in-law, who agreed to provide Mrs. Wells a generous inheritance with the proviso that she would have no more to do with George. The abandoned Mrs. Wells (Marion Boyd Wells) provides an intriguing link to broader political circles—she and a sister signed the Edenton

¹³ Jones, "John Adam Treutlen's Origin and Rise to Prominence."

¹⁴ Absolom Wells Sr. petitioned for land, claiming he had recently moved from North Carolina (*CRG* 10: 238). Other Wells' sought land near Absolom's lands in St. George's and St. Paul's Parish.

Resolutions of October 1774 in which fifty one North Carolina women vowed to boycott tea as a sign of their support for Boston and American liberty.¹⁵ In 1776, George Wells won election as colonel in the St. Paul militia and shortly afterward, he challenged the legitimacy of an Augusta committee formed to enforce the Continental Association, claiming that a committee he headed was the rightfully elected body for the town. Notwithstanding his propensity for interpersonal conflict, Wells apparently made fast friends of Gwinnett, Belcher, and committee member Joseph Wood.¹⁶

Wood, a native Pennsylvanian, had moved to Sunbury, St. John Parish, as a merchant in the 1760s. An early member of the St. John committee, Wood grew impatient with Georgians' equivocations about supporting independence and traveled to Pennsylvania briefly in 1776, returning to Georgia in time to sit in the convention and serve on the final drafting committee of the constitution.

The last two members of the committee, Henry Jones and Josiah Lewis, both of St. George Parish, left even less evidence about their lives and their political beliefs than their colleagues. Jones first received land in 1774 in the western region and again in the Savannah River region the following year for a total of 500 acres. He attended the First Provincial Congress in January 1775 and signed the Georgia Association, a document denounced as "lukewarm" by those who preferred the Continental Association. Lewis's

¹⁵ Kierner, "The Edenton Ladies: Women, Tea, and Politics in Revolutionary North Carolina," 22–23.

¹⁶ Cashin, "'The Famous Colonel Wells.'"

name does not appear in the land or other records before, or indeed, after his service on the committee.¹⁷

Finally, the convention's secretary, Edward Langworthy, reportedly grew up at Bethesda Orphan House. An entry in the *Georgia Gazette* in June 1768 noted his return from a visit to England and his intention to serve as a tutor at the Orphan House. By October 1769, he had left Bethesda and he offered instruction in Latin, Greek, writing, and mathematics to young men and private lessons in English grammar and writing to Savannah's young women. In December 1775, Georgia's Council of Safety appointed him secretary; the following month he became secretary of the provincial congress.¹⁸ He went on to serve in the Continental Congress and, after the war, he moved to Maryland where, among other publishing pursuits, he edited the *Memoirs of Charles Lee*.¹⁹

¹⁷ Although Jones does not appear in the minutes of the governor and council as a petitioner, his name does appear in the survey records. See Bryant, *English Crown Grants in St. George Parish in Georgia, 1755-1775.*, 101; Hemperley, *English Crown Grants in St. Paul Parish in Georgia, 1755-1775.*, 1974, 98. Also, Weeks and Lowery, *Georgia Land Owners' Memorials, 1758-1776*, 250, 261. The Georgia Association appears in *RRG 1*: 43-48. Jones' name is on a list of signers on p. 48. For a reference to Andrew Elton Wells calling the Georgia Association lukewarm in a letter to Samuel Adams, see Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 49.

¹⁸ On Langworthy, see *GG* 29 June 1768, 25 October 25 1769, and 8 November 1769, and *RRG 1*: 20, 69. In a letter to Benjamin Rush, Langworthy wrote he was in London in 1768. Langworthy to Rush, 26 December 1777 in Smith and Gephart, *Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774-1789*, 8: number 426 (etext accessed April 2013).

¹⁹ Konkle, "Edward Langworthy"; Burnett, "Edward Langworthy in the Continental Congress"; Mackall, "Edward Langworthy and the First Attempt to Write a Separate History of Georgia, with Selections from the Longlost Langworthy Papers."

The Structure of Government

A plainly written document, Georgia's Constitution of 1777 reflected the creative ferment of the age as well as the state's particular history. The document established a weak executive wholly dependent on a unicameral assembly elected annually by a broadly representative electorate of white men who either possessed a modest amount of property (£10) or practiced a trade. It created counties and located judicial authority at the county level.

Many states limited the executive (even John Adams had recommended stripping "most of those badges of domination called prerogatives" from the executive), but Georgia went further than all except Pennsylvania and created a governor without veto power who could neither convene the assembly nor make temporary appointments to state offices without consulting an executive council selected by the legislature.²⁰ The executive council consisted of two representatives from each of the newly created counties whose electors totaled 100 or more. It could comment on proposed legislation

²⁰ There is no surviving evidence that members of the Georgia's convention reviewed copies of the constitutions of New Hampshire (January 1776), South Carolina (March 1776), Virginia (June 1776), New Jersey (July 1776), Delaware (September 1776), Maryland (November 1776) and North Carolina (December 1776). It is possible that these models, all of which had bicameral legislatures, were considered and rejected. All of these constitutions, except New Hampshire's, specified a state level judicial appeals process. New Hampshire's constitution was extraordinarily brief and did not address the issue of judicial appeal. A convenient source of revolutionary state constitutions is the Yale Law School's Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/18th.asp. On restructuring the governor's role more generally, see Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787*, 132-43.

and elect a president to stand in for the governor in his absence. It could not propose or formally amend legislation and did not function as an upper chamber.²¹

Following the example of Pennsylvania and Georgia's own Rules and Regulations, the legislature consisted of a single house whose sessions began annually on a date specified in the constitution but otherwise controlled its own calendar—a stark departure from the days when Governor James Wright dissolved sitting assemblies when he disapproved of the chamber's leadership or direction. The constitution allocated seats in the general assembly to counties based roughly on population, and it envisioned increases in the number of delegates as population growth and ongoing settlement justified the creation of new counties.

Based on a formula introduced by Governor Wright in the early 1770s, each county would receive one representative as soon as ten electors settled within its borders. The number of representatives would increase proportionally until the number of electors surpassed 100, at which time the county would have ten assembly seats and two seats on the executive council.²² The ports of Savannah and Sunbury were allowed four and two representatives respectively to “represent their trade,” bringing the total number of representatives to seventy-two or more than two-and-a-half times the size of the colonial assembly. Electors, too, would be more numerous under the constitution, which decreased the property requirement for voting from £50 under royal rule to £10 or a trade.

²¹ Adams, *Thoughts on Government: Applicable to the Present State*, 9; Lutz, *Popular Consent and Popular Control*, 92–94.

²² Article IV and V, *RRG* 1: 284–85. Liberty's fourteen representatives were justified by the county's inclusion of three colonial parishes—St. John, St. Andrew, and St. James.

Only Pennsylvania, which allowed all male taxpayers to vote, had a lower eligibility level than Georgia.²³

If the new constitution recognized the people as the source of political sovereignty, it also recognized the county as the appropriate unit for organizing the public functions of government. The newly established counties would not only serve as units of representation in the legislature; they would also provide local infrastructure for the day-to-day functions of government, including administration of probate and all civil and criminal court matters. In the coastal region, the parish of Christ Church and the lower part of St. Philip became Chatham County; St. John, St. Andrew and St. James parishes merged into Liberty County; and the four southern parishes formed Camden (St. Thomas and St. Mary) and Glynn (St. Patrick and St. David) Counties. The Savannah River parishes of St. Matthew and St. George became Effingham and Burke Counties; Richmond County encompassed St. Paul Parish and Wilkes County emerged from the newly settled Ceded Lands.

The men who drafted the constitution announced their strong support for leading British Whigs through the names they chose for the new counties. With the notable (and noteworthy, on its own account) exception of *Liberty* County, all of the counties took the names of British politicians identified as supporters of American or radical Whig causes. Edmund *Burke*, Baron *Camden* (Charles Pratt), the Earl of *Chatham* (William Pitt), and the Duke of *Richmond* (Charles Lennox) had first earned the admiration of Americans with their votes to repeal the Stamp Act in 1766. Thomas Howard, the Earl of *Effingham*,

²³ Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787*, 162–96.

won notice in April 1775 when he resigned his commission rather than “take up arms against my fellow subjects” in America. Although John Wilkes did not directly address the American cause, he of course emerged as the unparalleled spokesperson for liberty and radical politics in England and America in the decade before independence. A staunch proponent of juries having the authority to decide matters of law as well as fact, John Glynn rose to fame by representing Wilkes. He successfully stood for election when the ministry disallowed Wilkes’ election as MP from Middlesex, and, as an MP, Glynn opposed the Coercive Acts, especially the Quebec Act and the Massachusetts Government Act.²⁴

The constitution’s location of final judicial power at the county level was perhaps its most distinctive and democratic feature. As did other state constitutions, Georgia’s recognized the “inherent privilege of every freeman . . . to plead his own cause” and guaranteed the right to trial by jury.²⁵ In keeping with John Glynn’s expansive view of jury power and reminiscent of debates that erupted over the Thomas Jones case in 1770, however, the Constitution of 1777 went further than others by declaring jurors “judges of law as well as of fact” and making trial juries, rather than appellate judges, the final

²⁴ Colonists who had admired Edmund Burke’s spirited rebuke of the Stamp Act and his efforts to effect conciliation (Draper, pp 487-90), Lord Camden’s declaration that “taxation and representation are inseparable,” appeared in the *South Carolina Gazette* in May 1774 (SCG 30 May 1774). The *Georgia Gazette* published Effingham’s principled resignation of his commission rather than take up arms against the colonists. Later in 1777, North Carolina formed counties named for Burke and Wilkes.

²⁵ Articles LVIII and LXI, *RRG* 1: 297. Attorneys could plead in Georgia courts only if licensed by the legislature, which also sat in judgment in all cases of malpractice, a charge punishable by suspension from the practice of law in the state.

deciders of a case.²⁶ Disappointed defendants and plaintiffs in criminal and civil cases could ask for new trials, which would sit before so-called special juries drawn in the same fashion and from the same pool of jurors as the original.²⁷

The combination of a weak executive, a broadly democratic legislature, and a locally based judiciary made Georgia's revolutionary state government one of the most radical republican experiments on the continent. Why did Georgia's convention follow Pennsylvania's example and establish a one-house legislature rather than follow the examples of South Carolina and Virginia with bicameral legislatures? Just as importantly, why did it vest ultimate legal authority in the hands of county-level trial juries rather than in the hands of legal professionals and an appellate review system?

We can understand Georgia's adoption of a unicameral legislature in part as the result of the previous decade of conflict between opposition leaders in the lower house and Governor Wright and his council. In the two decades of royal rule, the upper house functioned as both an expression of and an extension of the royal governor's power rather than as a legislative body with an independent voice. Nominated for membership by the governor, members of the upper house spent most of their time sitting as the governor's council distributing lands, much of it to themselves and to their associates. The more the

²⁶ "But if all, or any, of the jury have any doubts concerning points of law, they shall apply to the bench, who shall each of them in rotation give their opinion," Article XLI, *RRG* 1: 294. The Constitution did not address whether justices the legislature would appoint justices, but that is what developed in practice.

²⁷ The disappointed party had to appeal the verdict within three days of the original decision. Each side, plaintiff and defendant, selected six potential jurors; a court officer pulled an additional six names from the jury box and the special jury came from that pool of eighteen. There was no appeal of special jury verdicts. Article XL, *RRG* 1: 294.

lower house tried to expand its own reach, the more the governor relied on members of his council as individuals and acting collectively as an upper chamber of the legislature to buttress his efforts to preserve his own and their standing in the colony.

In addition to the upper house's close association with Governor Wright, many Georgians distrusted the concentration of provincial offices held by members of the upper house. In January 1775, the St. Andrew Parish parochial committee proclaimed colonial officeholders "more dangerous to our liberties than a regular Army." Georgians viewed provincial officeholders warily in part because they received salaries from Parliament and hence could act independently of the appropriations made by the people's representatives in the lower house. In the 1770s, the deeply unpopular chief justice, the widely distrusted Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Southern Department, and the attorney general, who happened to be Governor Wright's brother-in-law, joined the council. These appointments did little to improve relations between the assembly and the upper house and further undermined the notion of the upper house as anything more than an arm of the executive.²⁸

In December 1776, Lachlan McIntosh, a man often identified as "conservative" by historians, wrote a friend, "We are but a few people and a plain Simple Form of Government, with few Offices or Temptations will in my opinion, suit us best." He went on to suggest that "One Single house of representatives, and an Executive Council Chosen by the people at Large in their several Counties & parishes would I think answer every purpose." McIntosh's words reflected broad antipathy toward the proliferation of

²⁸ *RRG* 1: 38-43, quote on 41.

colonial officeholders as well as a desire for a simple, direct republican government responsible to the people.²⁹

The conventions' decision to vest final legal jurisdiction at the county rather than at the state level reflected popular resentment against a royal government that had failed to establish courts outside of Savannah. The constitution addressed the desire for formal institutions of local government by creating counties and county courts. The insistence on keeping appeals of criminal and civil judgments within the scope of local jurors rather than yielding that authority to a panel of men schooled in the law reflected something deeper and recalled the spirited public response to Chief Justice Stokes' intervention in the Thomas Jones case seven years earlier. The men who wrote Georgia's constitution embraced an expansive view of the right to trial by jury that saw the community's right to enforce standards of behavior as fundamental to good government. At least some of them also distrusted the "complicated chicaneries of the common law" that lawyers pursued and the abstract notions of legal reasoning that thwarted the common-sense judgments of freeholders whose rights and interests the constitution jealously guarded.

Despite the overwhelmingly democratic nature of the constitution, there is evidence of both compromise and some strong-arm politicking having occurred among the delegates on at least two important points. First, in the case of voting requirements, the Rules and Regulations that governed selection of the men who sat in the convention allowed all taxpayers to cast ballots as did the Pennsylvania Constitution of 1776.

²⁹ Lachlan McIntosh to George Walton, December 15, 1776, in Hawes, *The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1779 [sic, I.e. 1799]*, 23–24.

Assuming that some members of the convention favored a more generous provision and that some preferred a higher property requirement (as both North and South Carolina's constitutions instituted), perhaps the more democratic members of the convention conceded some ground to conservative delegates by agreeing to the modest requirement of £10 or a trade.

Second, the constitution established a legislature that, while much larger than the colonial assembly, had 25% fewer delegates than the legislature called for by the provincial congress in July 1775. The issue of apportionment of delegates commanded a good bit of attention in the months following the convention, with several prominent Savannahians complaining that the size of the Liberty County delegation (fourteen plus two for Sunbury) disadvantaged Chatham County (ten plus four for Savannah). The text of the constitution explains this imbalance on the basis that Liberty "contains three parishes" (St. John, St. Andrew, and St. James). True, but those three parishes together accounted for just 8% of individuals who received colonial grants compared to 20% of grantees in what became Chatham County. Without a doubt, the convention delegates from the parishes that formed Liberty County must have exercised a remarkable mix of persuasion and browbeating to have won the right to send so many representatives to future legislatures. When Chatham County men looked for men to blame for whatever deals had brought about the imbalance, two names jumped to the top of their list: Button Gwinnett and Joseph Wood, the two delegates from Liberty County who had served on the committee that prepared the final draft of the constitution.

The Brothers McIntosh, and Ties of Consanguinity

Even before the first assembly under the new constitution met in early May 1777, state leaders became embroiled in an ugly dispute that would consume their attention for months. In late February, the president of the council of safety, Archibald Bulloch, died unexpectedly, and the council elected Button Gwinnett to complete Bulloch's term.³⁰ The council had recently granted President Bulloch authority to "take upon himself the whole Executive Power of Government" and to act on the advice of just "five persons of his own choosing." An emergency measure designed to enable the president to respond quickly to a rumored British invasion from the south at a time when most members of the council of safety were in the country for planting season, the expanded powers gave Gwinnett wide latitude. It enabled him to perform the duties of the president of the council of safety—appoint magistrates, pardon criminals, muster the militia, and command all state troops—without check in the short time before the new constitution, with a deliberately weakened executive, would take force.³¹ Gwinnett served in this extraordinary role for a little over two months, during which time he ordered the arrest of a political enemy, unilaterally launched a disastrous military attack on Florida, and set the stage for a vitriolic political firestorm that would divide factions of Georgia's leaders for the duration of the war.

³⁰ The exchange between McIntosh and Gwinnett on 4 March was reported in Anonymous, *The Case of George M'Intosh, Esquire, a Member of the Late Council and Convention of the State of Georgia*. Also, see Johnston, *The Houstons of Georgia*, 352; Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett, Signer of the Declaration of Independence*, 122, 135–36.

³¹ Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett, Signer of the Declaration of Independence*, 122–24.

The political enemy whom Gwinnett targeted was council of safety member George McIntosh. McIntosh belonged to one of the oldest settler families in the state. His father and uncle had founded New Inverness (later called Darien) as a defensive outpost at the behest of the Trustees in the late 1730s. Tensions between Gwinnett and the McIntosh family apparently stemmed from the appointment of George's brother, Lachlan McIntosh, as colonel of the state's first regiment of Continental Army troops, a commission Gwinnett had hoped to claim for himself. Because of the death of his wife, McIntosh had not attended the council of safety session at which Gwinnett won the presidency. On his return to council, he told Gwinnett that he would never have voted for a man of his character. "By God then, this will be the last day you and I will ever sit together in Council," President Gwinnett replied.

Later that month, Gwinnett got hold of an intercepted letter that implicated George McIntosh in a scheme to sell rice to the British in St. Augustine. Gwinnett, no doubt relishing the opportunity to exact revenge on a man who had so recently insulted him, had his nemesis placed in irons in Savannah's gaol and directed Colonel John Sandiford of Liberty County to seize McIntosh's plantation "in behalf of the public."³² When Gwinnett presented the evidence against McIntosh to the council of safety, the council immediately voted to remove him from irons. McIntosh's brother-in-law, the council member John Houstoun, argued that the prisoner's already poor health would further deteriorate if he remained confined in the "dirtiest and most offensive gaol

³² The letter is printed in *Ibid.*, 215–21, quote on p. 215. Sandiford had served on the June 1770 grand jury that criticized Governor Wright and Chief Justice Stokes (see chapter 2).

perhaps in the world.” Over Gwinnett’s objection, the council released McIntosh on £20,000 bond.³³

Meanwhile, Button Gwinnett had at last gained the military command he coveted. As president, he commanded the state’s naval and land forces, and he had the authority to direct an attack against British East Florida, where marauding parties that crossed the Satilla and St. Mary’s Rivers to steal cattle and other livestock in Georgia found refuge.³⁴ British and loyalist troops garrisoned in St. Augustine provided protection to the raiders in exchange for much needed provisions.³⁵ A mid-February assault on Georgia’s Fort McIntosh gave rise to the fear that British strategists intended “to make a General Attack on the province” and provided the catalyst for Gwinnett’s Florida expedition.³⁶

³³ John Smith (Jonathan Bryan’s brother-in-law), Lachlan and William McIntosh, Peter Bard, Basil Cowper, and John Wreath posted McIntosh’s bond. See Anonymous, *An Addition to the Case of George M’Intosh, Esquire, Earnestly Recommended to the Serious Attention of Every Reader, Particularly Those of the State of Georgia*.

³⁴ Records from the 4 March 1777 Council of Safety meeting do not appear in minutes published by the Georgia Historical Society or in *RRG*. Gwinnett described the council’s authorization in a 28 March 1777 letter to John Hancock, reprinted in Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett, Signer of the Declaration of Independence*, 215–21. Reports of cattle stealing were widespread. Lyman Hall estimated that Georgians had “Lost 3 or 4 perhaps 5 or 6000 Head of Cattle & had our Settlements broke up in all the southern part of this State.” Lyman Hall to Roger Sherman, 16 May 1777 in *Ibid.*, 226–30, quote on pp. 227–28. Virtually every contemporary entry in Lachlan McIntosh’s letterbook discusses the vulnerability of southern settlements. See Hawes, *The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1779 [sic, I.e. 1799]*, 1–49.

³⁵ On the military role of British Florida in the American Revolution, see Searcy, *The Georgia-Florida Contest in the American Revolution, 1776-1778*; Wright, *Florida in the American Revolution*; Cashin, *The King’s Ranger*.

³⁶ Button Gwinnett to John Hancock, 28 March 1777, in Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett, Signer of the Declaration of Independence*, 215–21, quote on p. 218. Joseph Clay speculated that the British assault on Fort McIntosh signaled the beginning of a general campaign against Georgia. Clay to Joseph Burnley, 24 February 1777, Clay, *Letters of Joseph Clay Merchant of Savannah 1776-1793*, 20–21.

General Robert Howe, commander of the Southern Department of the Continental Army, traveled from Charleston to assess the situation and refused to take part in what he viewed as a foolhardy venture. He informed Gwinnett and the council of safety that he intended to remove most of the continental troops under his command to South Carolina, leaving only a small defensive force at Sunbury and a regiment under the command of Brigadier General Lachlan McIntosh, George's elder brother. Howe's lack of support for an assault on St. Augustine enraged the president, who accused the general not merely of indifference but of attempting "to render the military independent of, and superior" to civil authorities. "He came, he saw, and left us in our low Estate," Gwinnett quipped about the Continental Army commander.³⁷

Howe's departure left Gwinnett with just state troops and militia with which to launch his attack unless he enlisted the cooperation of Brigadier General Lachlan McIntosh, which he delayed doing until the last possible moment.³⁸ The two men and their respective forces suffered a couple of weeks of awkwardness at camp in Sunbury preparing for the planned attack before receiving instructions from the newly installed

³⁷ Button Gwinnett to John Hancock, 28 March 1777, in Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett, Signer of the Declaration of Independence*, 215–21, quote on p. 220.

³⁸ In the days leading up to Gwinnett's expedition, McIntosh complained to other continental officers that Gwinnett had failed to inform him of the planned expedition. See McIntosh to Colonel Sumter 2 March [1777] in Hawes, *The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1779 [sic, I.e. 1799]*, 43.

governor and executive council to turn over command to subordinates and return to the capital.³⁹

Back in Savannah, Gwinnett and McIntosh, as well as their surrogates, sparred over responsibility for the military debacle. Following a heated exchange in front of the legislature, McIntosh called Gwinnett “a Scoundrell & lying Rascal,” to which Gwinnett responded with a challenge to a duel. Early on the morning of 16 May, the two met in a pasture outside of town where, with “a number of spectators” watching, they “politely salut[ed] each other,” took aim and fired. Each man sustained a shot to his thigh, and they were preparing for a second round when their seconds “declar'd they both behav'd like Gentlemen and men of honor,” and pronounced the duel done. McIntosh and Gwinnett shook hands and left the field.⁴⁰

Within days, Gwinnett’s wound became infected, “a Mortification came on,” and he died on 19 May 1777. Word of Gwinnett’s death spread quickly. Savannah merchant Joseph Clay informed Henry Laurens of Gwinnett’s death in a letter drafted that same afternoon. Lyman Hall of Liberty County added an account of the events leading to his friend’s death in a letter to Roger Sherman, with whom both he and Gwinnett had served in the Continental Congress. “The Friends of Liberty on a whole Continent” must “deplore” the loss of a man “so attached to the Liberty of this State & Continent, that his whole Attention, Influence & Interest, centered in it, &

³⁹ Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett*, 141-49; Jackson, *Lachlan McIntosh*, 58-63. In reporting the failure to a friend, McIntosh dubbed the aborted attack, “Our late Don quixot Expedition to Augustine.” See McIntosh to George Walton, 14 July 1777 in Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett*, 256-60, quote on p. 259.

⁴⁰ Jackson, *Lachlan McIntosh and the Politics of Revolutionary Georgia*, 60-70; Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett, Signer of the Declaration of Independence*, 150-57.

Seem'd Riveted to it," Hall wrote. News of the deadly duel had reached Philadelphia by June 16, when Rhode Island's William Ellery commented that the "People of New England are not so prodigal of Life as the Southern People," who settle disagreements with pistols.⁴¹

No sooner had one McIntosh earned the eternal enmity of Gwinnett's friends by firing what turned out to be a fatal shot than the other McIntosh enraged many of the same men by leaving the state in violation of the terms of his parole. In early June, George McIntosh learned that the legislature had passed a resolution to send him to Philadelphia to answer treason charges before the Continental Congress. He met with Governor John Adam Treutlen and the executive council and asked to stand trial in Savannah at the October Superior Court instead, urging "that he not be sent with unmerited disgrace thro' the continent at the distance of Nine hundred Miles, at a great and unnecessary expense, and even at the risk of his life."⁴²

According to a petition McIntosh submitted to the Continental Congress, Governor Treutlen and members of the executive council "admitted the justice of his claim, but determined . . . that the Resolves of the Assembly must be complied with." Rather than submit to travel under armed guard and in irons, McIntosh set off on his own. Just south of the Virginia border, an officer of the 2nd Georgia Battalion caught up with

⁴¹ Ironically, the duel took place on land seized from Governor Wright. Wells, "George Wells Affidavit, June 1777"; Clay to Laurens, 19 May 1777 in Clay, *Letters of Joseph Clay Merchant of Savannah 1776-1793*, 31-32; Lyman Hall to Roger Sherman Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett, Signer of the Declaration of Independence*, 226-30. Ellery to Oliver Wolcott, June 16, 1777 in Smith, *Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774-1789*, Vol. 7, pp. 198-99 (no. 182 etext version).

⁴² "The Humble Memorial and Petition of George McIntosh, Esquire of Georgia," *Papers of the Continental Congress: The Correspondence, Journals, Committee Reports, and Records of the Continental Congress*, M247, Vol 6: 33-40.

him and escorted him the remainder of the way to Philadelphia, where they arrived just in time to join the American evacuation of the city. The congressional committee appointed to investigate McIntosh's case found insufficient cause for prosecution, and he eventually returned to Georgia a free man.⁴³

After George McIntosh left the state, friends of Gwinnett turned their attention and their rhetoric to a campaign to remove Lachlan McIntosh from his Continental command. Many of those who led the charge had served with Gwinnett on the committee that prepared the Constitution of 1777. William Belcher, president of the recently formed Liberty Society, circulated a letter to parochial committees around the state urging them to collect signatures on a petition urging Congress to strip McIntosh of his rank in the Continental Army.⁴⁴ Although Belcher signed the letter, some believed that Edward Langworthy, secretary of the constitutional convention, had authored it and perhaps the petition as well. Recalling the evils of the "Corrupt & venal Ministry of Great Britain," the letter suggested that, by protecting his brother George, General McIntosh had attempted "to subvert & oppose" the civil authority of the new state government.⁴⁵

⁴³ "The Humble Memorial and Petition of George McIntosh, Esquire of Georgia," *Papers of the Continental Congress: The Correspondence, Journals, Committee Reports, and Records of the Continental Congress*, M247, Vol 6: 33-40.

⁴⁴ John Wereat, a close friend and supporter of General McIntosh believed that, although Belcher had signed the circular letter, Edward Langworthy was the author. See the Circular Letter and comments by John Wereat in Hawes, *The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1779 [sic, I.e. 1799]*, 73–74. Elsewhere Wereat and McIntosh refer to Belcher as a man "formerly well respected" who lately "has rendered himself extremely ridiculous in public, and infamous in private life." See Anonymous, *Remarks on a Pamphlet, Entitled, "Strictures on a Pamphlet, Entitled the Case of George M'Intosh, Esq. Published by Order of the Liberty Society."*

⁴⁵ Hawes, *The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1779 [sic, I.e. 1799]*, 73–74.

The sitting governor, John Adam Treutlen, allegedly presented the anti-McIntosh petition to Effingham County freeholders at the site of an election, and refused to allow a man to vote “till he first signed a petition against the General.” The first signature on the petition from the Ceded Lands belonged to George Wells, and McIntosh’s allies blamed “that infamous wretch” Joseph Wood, “who never stood charged with one honest Action in his life” for fanning the flames within the legislature.⁴⁶ In all, 574 men signed the anti-McIntosh petitions, which the governor forwarded to Congress in fall 1777 along with a remonstrance from the legislature detailing reasons that McIntosh should no longer command troops in the state.

With a toxic mix of temperament, circumstance, and family connections, the brothers McIntosh antagonized all but the dearest of their friends and associates in the year 1777, a year that had opened with the circulation of Thomas Paine’s prescient warning in *The American Crisis*: “These are the times that try men’s souls.”⁴⁷ Together, their stories reveal two areas of concern and uncertainty in the newly independent state.

First, like all Americans, Georgians worried about the progress of the war with Britain. The initial *rage militaire* of the early days of the conflict had settled into a constant call for more—more troops, more supplies, more money—that strained relations between military and civilian leadership. In its memorial to the Continental Congress, the

⁴⁶ Cashin, “The Famous Colonel Wells.” John Wreath to George Walton, 30 August 1777, Hawes, *The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1779 [sic, I.e. 1799]*, 68. The Liberty County militia officer was almost certainly Colonel John Baker. Baker’s contempt for McIntosh eventually led him to resign his commission. See Baker, “Colonel John Baker to Brigadier General Lachlan McIntosh.”

⁴⁷ Paine, *The American Crisis. Number 1. By the Author of Common Sense..*

Georgia assembly detailed “sundry reasons” for McIntosh’s removal, starting with the fact that his promotion to Brigadier General had happened “without any Application of ours, either to the Honorable the Congress, or to our Delegates.”⁴⁸

Next, they pointed to the failed Florida campaign as an instance in which McIntosh’s “Aversion . . . to comply with the requests of the legislature & executive Authority of this State” had ultimately led to a “Duel between himself & Button Gwinnett Esq, our late President, in which the latter received a mortal wound, to the great Loss of the public.” The legislature had informed McIntosh that it “judged him incapable of command” while the assembly examined his role in Gwinnett’s death, but instead of acceding to the “Opinion of the House,” the general refused to submit to its authority. His perceived disdain for civil authority had given “Universal Offense” and eroded confidence among the people of the state who, according to their representatives, “would with great reluctance join under his Command in any Opposition whatever to the Enemy.”⁴⁹

Although the case was of singular importance to Georgians (and no doubt to McIntosh), when it reached Congress at its temporary quarters behind the American lines in south central Pennsylvania, it was but one of dozens of cases of alleged abuse and

⁴⁸ Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War*; “The Address of the House of Assembly” to the Continental Congress is in *Papers of the Continental Congress. The Correspondence, Journals, Committee Reports, and Records of the Continental Congress, 1774-1798*. M247 Georgia State Papers, 1777-88, pp 115-117.

⁴⁹ “The Address of the House of Assembly” to the Continental Congress is in *Papers of the Continental Congress. The Correspondence, Journals, Committee Reports, and Records of the Continental Congress, 1774-1798*. M247 Georgia State Papers, 1777-88, pp 115-117.

proven distrust among civil and military officials and within the command of the Continental Army itself. With little discussion, Congress ordered Lachlan McIntosh to join George Washington's staff in Pennsylvania.⁵⁰

The bundle of documents that Georgia's state officials forwarded to Congress revealed a second and deeper worry, one that threatened to pit an individual's commitment to the American cause against what many recognized as the natural bonds of family and ethnic affinity. Governor Treutlen used graphic language to express the government's view of the loyalist threat: "our small friends, the Tories, within our Bowels, are so very numerous & have such ties of Consanguinity, that all our Efforts against these enemies of American freedom have hitherto been languid and ineffectual." As someone who had conducted business and politics in colonial Georgia for decades and who now served as governor, Treutlen knew the dense connections that linked many of the state's prominent families. He knew that while many supporters of the British governor had left the state when troubles broke, dozens of their relations remained and many of them held positions within the army and the new government.

In a small capital in a small state, the small network of wealthy and interconnected coastal families that had prospered under royal rule stood out with their large land- and slaveholdings, fine imported clothing, English furniture and carriages, and beginning in the early 1770s, their portraiture that commemorated family connections. Several early leaders of the patriot movement in Savannah—Joseph Habersham, Noble

⁵⁰ Higginbotham, *The War of American Independence Military Attitudes, Policies, and Practice, 1763-1789*, 204–225; Christopher Ward, *The War of the Revolution / Edited by John Richard Alden*, 285–290.

Wymberly Jones, William Read, Francis Harris—had fathers who had served on Governor Wright’s Council. Despite their individual and very public commitment to the American cause, they found themselves suspect because they did not renounce their ties to their old regime families.

As if to underscore the role of family, Governor Treutlen forwarded to Congress two letters and a petition from the recently widowed Ann Gwinnett. Demurring that “tho from a Woman, & it is not our sphere, yet I cannot help” stepping out of that sphere to acquaint the Congress with the sad situation of friends of America in Georgia, she asked that Congress punish not only General McIntosh but also the man who had acted as his second, Colonel Joseph Habersham of the Continental forces. Habersham himself, she noted, had escaped prosecution for the murder of a Lieutenant Nathaniel Hughes just a year before when, after an angry exchange of words, “by some means or other Colonel Habersham’s Sword” pierced the lieutenant’s body. Habersham’s associates claimed that Hughes had fallen on the sword and killed himself. “Had Colonel Habersham been the Dead Man Law enough wou’d have been found in Georgia, to have handg’d poor Lieutenant Hughes,” she charged. Instead, Habersham’s older brothers spirited him away from Savannah, and away from prosecution, much like George McIntosh’s connections had done more recently.⁵¹

The “disconsolate” and “exceedingly dejected widow” rehearsed for the Congress the Liberty Society view of Georgia politics, explaining that Liberty County or “St. Johns men was your first friends, they sent Rice to the Bostonians to their ability; the western

⁵¹ Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett, Signer of the Declaration of Independence*, 233–40.

people are likewise very true & most in Number, had we but officers the men are true.”

As for Savannah, “there is some very good people . . . but they are but few.” Gwinnett rehearsed what must have been familiar complaints of the Liberty Society, when she claimed that General Howe “feasted with the Tories” while in Savannah. She suggested a causal relationship between Howe’s unwillingness to support her husband’s failed Florida campaign and the fact that he socialized with Lachlan McGillivray and Edward Telfair and that he “was at their dances several Evenings & spent His time mostly with them, tho in the time of War.”⁵²

The names of McGillivray, Telfair, McIntosh, Houstoun, and Baillie and references to “their dances” conjured images of Scotsmen and no doubt intentionally drew on anti-Scots sentiment that lived just below the surface of popular politics in Georgia for decades. In the 1760s and early 1770s, both supporters of the royal governor and his opponents had made use of anti-Scot rhetoric to score political points. For example, when opponents of the Stamp Act had accused merchants Simon Munro and George Baillie of secretly holding commissions as stamp masters, their defenders objected that the suspicion reflected national prejudice and nothing more. In 1770, supporters of Governor Wright suggested that Scotsmen who sat on the June Grand Jury that had issued presentments critical of the governor and chief justice had banded

⁵² Ibid., 239.

together to shield one of their own (William Graeme) and had sacrificed truth in the bargain.⁵³

In the end, the McIntosh brothers' respective fates rested in the hands of a Continental Congress besieged with far more daunting issues than a single cargo of rice finding its way to St. Augustine and a haughty general's disdain for a brash interim governor who displayed more ambition than judgment during his two months in office. Ironically, in their campaign against the McIntosh's in the summer of 1777, Georgia's General Assembly and the Liberty Society spent considerable energy and ink defending the memory of a man who had played a leading role in creating a constitution with a very weak executive but who had later seized the chance to exercise extraordinary executive power. Inadvertently, Button Gwinnett's tenure as governor illustrated the dangers of an unfettered executive. Next, the House of Assembly would confirm the fears of men who worried about the consequences of establishing a legislative branch without check.

The Rule of Law and Not Men

The third installment of *The American Crisis* appeared in Charleston in late May 1777, just in time to capture the attention of Georgia readers already anxious about the course of the Revolution. "The circumstances of the times," Paine wrote, "require that the public characters of all men should *now* be fully understood." This message no doubt resonated with members of Savannah's Liberty Society and their associates in the House

⁵³ Governor John Adam Treutlen received the petitions and quickly forwarded them to the Continental Congress. The petitions, which are identical except for handwriting and signatures, can be found in *Papers of the Continental Congress* M247, r. 87. Harvey Jackson and Kenneth Coleman confirmed the number of signatures as 574. Jackson, *Lachlan McIntosh and the Politics of Revolutionary Georgia*, 67; Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 89.

of Assembly through the long and contentious summer of 1777.⁵⁴ In fact, questions of how and who could tell whether a man supported American liberty had consumed Georgians ever since the euphoria of Independence faded. In the early days of rebellion, the most notorious men associated with royal government fled with their families, but many more stayed behind, hoping to wait out the troubles. Some signed paroles promising not to take up arms against America, but the state was large and the reach of its committee system was no match for its widely dispersed population.⁵⁵

By the fall of 1777, many Georgians saw enemies all around them. Along the coast, lookouts daily searched the horizon for sightings of rumored British war ships while residents of Savannah eyed one another warily, not knowing whether neighbors would fight for independence when the anticipated invasion force arrived. Privately, some men who had screamed for liberty just a couple years earlier voiced concern about the character and judgment of the men who rose to leadership after independence. Those close to the new government interpreted private concerns as public betrayal and equated reasoned debate with treason and toryism.

Inland, ubiquitous raids on cattle and slaves plagued settlers from the Florida border into South Carolina. No one knew whose cowpen, barn or slavequarters would

⁵⁴ See *The South Carolina and American General Gazette* 26 May 1777 (no issues of the *Georgia Gazette* from this period survive).

⁵⁵ Stokes, *A Narrative of the Official Conduct of Anthony Stokes, of the Inner Temple London ... [electronic Resource]*, 39–40. Stokes reported that the rebels allowed limited the number of slaves he could remove from the province to 5. His total slaveholdings in 1776 were “five men, ten women, two boys, and 16 children, from about 13 years of age down to sucking infants.” Graham, “Loyalist Claim of John Graham”; Simpson, “Loyalist Claim of John Simpson.”

take the next strike, but everyone knew that some of the marauders who rode with the Florida Scouts had once lived amongst them and had fled to St. Augustine rather than sign the Association. Those displaced Georgians knew the woods, the swamps, and the trails that connected isolated farms with larger settlements as well as anyone and better than the Continental or state troops trying to catch them.

In this climate, the first assembly elected under the new constitution passed “An Act for the Expulsion of the Internal Enemies of This State” in September 1777. In keeping with the constitution’s deference to county government, the law established county loyalty committees and gave them the legal power to compel any white male twenty-one years or older to produce “two or more undoubted friends to American freedom, to vouch” for his patriotism. Committees could order any man who failed to demonstrate that he was indeed a “friend to American independence” to leave the state within forty days and forfeit half of his real and personal property. The law instructed local committees to report the names of all men who refused to honor the summons to the state’s executive council, which could then authorize the delinquents’ arrest and confinement “without bail.”⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Robertson, “Georgia’s Banishment and Expulsion Act of September 16, 1777.” Of course, Georgia was not the only state to enact punitive legislation aimed at residents who remained loyal to Great Britain. In New York, for example, a 1776 law authorized a committee to arrest and exile persons of “a suspicious and equivocal character” “without judicial oversight. See Countryman, *A People in Revolution the American Revolution and Political Society in New York, 1760-1790*. New Jersey’s revolutionary government empowered a twelve-man Council of Safety to “jail any man who was even suspected of opposing the state.” See Haskett, “Prosecuting the Revolution.” For a list of punitive laws that targeted loyalists, see Van Tyne, *The Loyalists in the American Revolution*, 318–26.

The Georgia Assembly named seventy-two men to serve on five committees, one each for Chatham, Effingham, Richmond, and Wilkes Counties and one to cover Liberty and the sparsely settled Camden and Glynn Counties. Fifty-four committee members appear in colonial land records, fifty-one had received colonial headright grants and three had purchased acreage in the Ceded Lands. Among those, the median holding was 400 acres, with regional medians of 650 for coastal, 350 for Savannah River and 300 for western landholders. They were respectable freeholders, men of mid-range property, some of whom had served on colonial grand juries and all of whom would have qualified as electors in colonial elections.

Strikingly, not a single man appointed to one of the loyalty committees had received land in either St. Andrew or Christ Church Parishes. Men on the Chatham County committee had claimed land outside Savannah, but none in Christ Church proper or Savannah, which suggests that they did not belong to the older, more settled families. St. Andrew Parish fell under the jurisdiction of the committee for Liberty, Camden, and Glynn, all of whose members were from Liberty, formerly St. John Parish. Here, as in other cases, there is room to speculate that by merging St. Andrews and St. John's into a single new county, St. John's men intended to undermine the local political authority of the McInstosh family that dominated St. Andrews.

Minutes from four sessions of the Liberty County committee survive in the Loyalist claim of mariner William Lyford.⁵⁷ Meeting alternately at the Midway Meeting House and the Sunbury home of William Bennett, committee members swore an oath to

⁵⁷ Lyford, "Loyalist Claim of William Lyford."

“judge and determine . . . without favour or affection” the political sentiments and attachments of men in their community. Seven men attended the first meeting on 23 September 1777: Parmenas Way, Sr., Lyman Hall, John Baker, Sr., John Sandiford, William Baker, Sr., John Roberts, and John Elliott. All belonged to the Midway Congregational Church and had impeccable liberty credentials.⁵⁸

Way had lived in St. John’s Parish/Liberty County for two decades, having moved from South Carolina with other members of the Congregationalist meeting in 1755. He served one term in the colonial lower house and held a justice of the peace commission under royal rule. Connecticut-born Hall moved to St. John Parish in 1760, took an early role in the liberty movement, and signed the Declaration of Independence in July 1776. John Baker and John Sandiford served on the June 1770 grand jury that issued dramatic presentments against Governor Wright. The committee elected Parmenas Way chair.

The committee instructed the sheriff to summon a dozen men to appear at 10 am on 2 October. The minutes give no reason for the committee’s suspicions of those ordered to produce evidence of their allegiance, but half had Scots surnames (Baillie, Creighton, McIntosh, Munro, Patterson, and Spalding) and three had some connection to the McIntosh or Houstoun families (Baillie, McIntosh, and Chapman).

When the committee next met, four more members of the Midway Congregation joined the committee: Edward Ball, Hepworth Carter, Josiah Powell, John Kell. Ball had

⁵⁸ Stacy, *History of the Midway Congregational Church, Liberty County, Georgia.*; Stacy, *History and Published Records of the Midway Congregational Church, Liberty County, Georgia / by James Stacy ; with Addenda by Elizabeth Walker Quarterman; and New Index by Margaret H. Cannon.*

represented St. John's in the July 1775 Provincial Congress, Powell had held an assembly seat for one term. A fifth new committee member, Samuel Miller, had held a militia commission under the colonial government, and stood out from the others because unlike the others he did not belong to Midway; he had belonged to the parish's Anglican vestry.

Four men who had received summons did not show on 2 October; instead sending a message that, "they could not think of condescending to look for Vouchers &c. and that they were preparing for departure." The eight who attended the meeting failed to produce vouchers or witnesses to demonstrate their allegiance and received orders to forfeit property and leave the state in 40 days.⁵⁹ William Lyford, one of those banished by the Liberty committee, estimated he lost more than £3,800 in land, furnishings, stock and crops when he fled to Florida in October 1777. He reported that nine slaves ran away immediately and were later captured and put to work by Americans. As an experienced mariner who had navigated the waterways of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, Lyford offered his services to the British garrison at St. Augustine as soon as he arrived in Florida.⁶⁰

On 15 October, "in consequence of some private information," the committee ordered eight more residents of Liberty County to present themselves and their evidence at Midway Meeting House on the last day of the month. William LeConte, Murdock McLeod, and John Gardner produced vouchers, took the oath of allegiance prescribed by

⁵⁹ The men who appeared were _____ Chapman, Alexander Creighton, Thomas Goldsmith, William Lyford, Simon Munro, Simon Paterson, Robert Porteus, and Thomas Young, Lyford, "Loyalist Claim of William Lyford," microfilm frame 489, digital frame 560.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, microfilm frames 489, 500–01; digital frames 561, 575.

law, and left the session “as friends to the freedom and Independency of America in general, and to the freedom and independency of this State in particular.” The committee ordered the men who failed to appear to forfeit half their property and leave Georgia in forty days.⁶¹

Across the state, county committees ordered dozens of men to leave their homes, their livelihoods and their families. Many fled to Florida, hoping to support an anticipated British assault on the southern colonies. Some sought fresh starts in the Bahamas or other parts of the West Indies. Attorney James Robertson had hidden in plain sight at the plantation of John Hume for a year-and-a-half, “taking no part either with or agt Great Britain,” before the Chatham County Loyalty Committee ordered him to appear in October 1777. After refusing to take an oath professing loyalty to the Continental Congress rather than the king, Robertson sailed for the Bahamas in December 1777.⁶² Josiah Tatnall also headed for the Bahamas that month, but not without first telling the Chatham County committee “he despis’d them & their Oath.”⁶³

The most prominent Georgian called before a loyalty committee in 1777 was the Reverend John Joachim Zubly, who responded as he had so often before by using the occasion to write a stirring celebration of English liberty. An early proponent of American rights, the Swiss-born Presbyterian minister had authored numerous pamphlets,

⁶¹ Ibid., microfilm frames 492–93, digital frames 563–64.

⁶² “Memorial of James Robertson, Esq.,” 23 December 1783, in Coke and Egerton, *The Royal Commission on the Losses and Services of American Loyalists, 1783-1785.*, 61–62.

⁶³ “Memorial of Josiah Tatnall, Esq.,” 28 February 1785; in Ibid., 318.

essays, and sermons espousing Whig principles in the years following the Stamp Act. In 1772, he defended the right of the lower house of assembly to elect a speaker of its own choosing without threat of veto by the governor. Three years later, he delivered a sermon later published as “The Law of Liberty” to Georgia’s second provincial congress. He cautioned against both oppression and licentiousness and called for a peaceful resolution of America’s grievances within the empire. In September 1775, he traveled to Philadelphia as a delegate to the Second Continental Congress, but his hasty departure just two months later fueled rumors that he had conducted a clandestine correspondence with British Governor James Wright. He returned to Georgia to suffer the censure of his former associates.⁶⁴

The chair of the Chatham County loyalty committee asked Zubly just one question: Had he signed the Association before he went to Congress? He had not. He “offered to swear” before the committee that while he enjoyed the protection of the state, he would do his “Duty as a good and faithful Freeman . . . would give no Intelligence to, nor take up Arms in Aid to the Troops of Great Britain.” However, he would not and could not swear allegiance to Congress. The committee banished Zubly from the state and ordered him to forfeit one-half his real and personal property.⁶⁵

An incensed Zubly penned an angry appeal “To the Grand Jury of the County of Chatham,” in which he warned that the state verged toward “a fatal Precipice” that

⁶⁴ See Miller, *A Warm & Zealous Spirit*; Schmidt, “The Reverend John Joachim Zubly’s ‘The Law of Liberty’ Sermon.”

⁶⁵ John J. Zubly, “To the Grand Jury of the County of Chatham, 1777,” in Miller, *A Warm & Zealous Spirit*, 165–70, quote on p. 169.

threatened law, decency, and the rights of freemen. “Formerly in a Tryal, the Issue of which might not be above Ten Pounds, we had a Jury of twelve Men, any of whom might be challenged,” he wrote. Now the assembly had empowered as few as seven men to seize a man’s property and banish him from the state without having to file a charge or present evidence of wrongdoing. The committee’s power “annihilates Grand Juries altogether, and effectually renders Petty Juries useless.”⁶⁶

Zubly challenged the Chatham Grand Jury, the first to meet under the new constitution, to defend its role as “the people’s panel,” and the jurors responded by delivering a stinging rebuke to the excesses of the state’s young government. Two presentments condemned the executive for its treatment of George McInstosh, particularly the use of militia to seize “the property of a citizen of this State . . . before he was convicted of any crime, or brought to a trial by his peers” and more generally for “interfering in and obstructing the judiciary department.” Next, the grand jurors turned to the legislature, which they complained was imbalanced in representation, too large, too expensive, and displayed a tendency “to introduce a venality and corruption at this early period of American independency.” Most of all, the grand jurors objected to “the whole legislative power being lodged in one body, without any controul or check whatever.” The very assembly in which they believed themselves under-represented was, they charged, far too powerful.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Ibid., 168.

⁶⁷ *South Carolina and American General Gazette*, 30 October 1777.

As evidence of the dangers of an unchecked legislative body, the grand jurors pointed to the “Act for the expulsion of the internal enemies of the State,” which, they claimed, set a most “dangerous precedent,” by depriving free citizens of the right to trial by a jury of their peers. “Any man who has taken the oaths of allegiance and abjuration” should at least enjoy the right to defend himself before his peers, they argued. The grand jurors (perhaps inspired by the Reverend Zubly’s *Appeal*) insisted that they did not intend to protect known enemies of Georgia, nor did they want to shield those who acted with what they called “contemptible neutrality.” They sought, instead, to safeguard what they considered the sacred right of trial by jury, a right guaranteed in the state’s constitution and one of the “natural rights of mankind.”⁶⁸

Conclusion

The grand jury’s denunciation of the excesses of the new state government signaled a shift away from the Liberty Society’s zealous hold on legislative power. When the new assembly met in Savannah in January 1778, the delegates chose John Houstoun as governor. The election of Houstoun, a man who, despite unquestioned personal loyalty to the American cause, maintained ties to relatives of suspect beliefs, including his brother-in-law George McIntosh, represented a mix of fatigue with the McIntosh controversies and realism about the material dangers facing the state.

In fact, conditions in Georgia had deteriorated markedly in 1777. Factional rivalries had distracted the state’s political leaders from the critical business of preparing for war and maintaining the peace. Bands of marauders, who had long plagued southern

⁶⁸ Ibid.

and internal settlements, now made frequent raids on the capital itself. The “want of money in the Treasury” and the constant—and real—threat of imminent enemy attack would dominate the government’s agenda throughout 1778, leaving neither time nor energy for political sniping and factional warring. In place of bitter political battles in which men traded insults and hurled barbed words, Georgians turned their attention to the gathering of British and loyalist troops along the state’s western and southern borders and prepared for a far more deadly kind of exchange.

Chapter Five: War

Historians typically divide the Revolutionary War into two stages, with the Americans' momentous victory at Saratoga in the fall of 1777 as the turning point. Prior to Saratoga, military activity centered in the northern colonies, primarily in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. After Saratoga, the theater of war shifted to the south where the British hoped to rally Loyalists by restoring peace and civilian government, first in Georgia, then the Carolinas and eventually Virginia, Maryland, and the Middle Colonies. The Southern Strategy reflected the widespread belief among exiled Loyalists that attachment to the British Empire remained strong in the southern colonies and that moderate whigs and neutrals would choose the protection of the king's government over war and the uneven record of the Continental Congress and the new state governments¹

For Georgians, the war's second phase began in late 1778, when a force of approximately 3,500 British, Hessian, and Loyalist troops landed near Savannah and began to implement the British Southern Strategy. They faced minimal, disorganized opposition from Continental and militia units and quickly gained control of the town. The following July, James Wright became the first and only colonial governor to return to America and attempt to govern a conquered province. Dozens of royal officials followed,

¹ Higginbotham, "The War for Independence, to Saratoga"; Higginbotham, "The War for Independence, after Saratoga"; Shy, "British Strategy for Pacifying the Southern Colonies, 1778-1781"; Gruber, "Britain's Southern Strategy." On the role played by Governor Wright, John Graham and William Campbell of South Carolina in developing and advocating this strategy, see Furlong, "Civilian-Military Conflict and the Restoration of the Royal Province of Georgia, 1778-1782." On the role of William Knox, Undersecretary for American Affairs and one of the largest landowners in Georgia, in developing and advocating this and other strategies based on loyalists, see Bellot, *William Knox*, 163–69.

some bringing with them their families and resuming their civil roles and private ventures. Loyalists who had fled to East Florida or other friendly provinces in the Americas returned to Savannah. The chief justice held court, the printer of the *Georgia Gazette* added “*Royal*” to the masthead and resumed weekly publication, and hundreds of formerly rebellious men swore oaths of allegiance to George III. When combined French and American forces attempted to lay siege to the capital in October 1779, the British withstood the assault and won victory. Seven months later, Charles Town fell and still more Georgians sought protection from Governor Wright’s government. The British strategy looked promising.²

Ultimately, however, the strategy failed. After the fall of Charles Town, Wright and his supporters watched with frustration as British efforts to win the American war deflected precious resources from their efforts to preserve the peace in Georgia. Outside the immediate environs of Savannah, loyalists and patriots alike suffered years of lawlessness as organized bands of raiders and ordinary criminals roamed the countryside, rustling cattle, stealing or burning crops, plundering homes, and assaulting civilians.³

This chapter looks at the civilian experience of war in Georgia, specifically the physical dislocation that so many experienced as they fled first political retribution and then armies. For most of the period, a good portion of the province lay outside the control

² Hall, *Land & Allegiance in Revolutionary Georgia*.

³ The ferocity of conflict in the southern backcountry has received considerable attention in scholarly and popular works. Among the best recent scholarly treatments is Piecuch, *Three Peoples, One King*. Piecuch challenges the familiar narrative that characterizes British and loyalist units as more bloodthirsty than American troops and argues instead that American militia units were especially violent.

of either the colonial authorities based in Savannah or the rebel government that met sporadically in Augusta or further north when on the run. Neither American nor British authorities could guarantee non-combatants the security they craved, which eroded support for all but the most local authorities.

Wartime Worlds in Motion

Perhaps because of Georgia's experience in the Civil War and its complex racial histories of African slavery and Indian warfare, violence has long played an important role in how scholars and lay people alike have understood the state's and the region's past. Nineteenth-century historian William Bacon Stevens called "the partizan warfare in Georgia one of the darkest spots in the history of the American Revolution."⁴ By birth a New Englander, Stevens first went to Georgia for his health in 1833. Six years later, having married and started a medical practice in Savannah, he helped to found the Georgia Historical Society. The first volume of his *History of Georgia* appeared in 1847 to somewhat mixed reviews. The *North American Review* and the *Southern Quarterly* welcomed the work, but the Savannah native and grandson of original settler Noble Jones, George Wimberly Jones De Renne, found considerable fault from start to finish, complaining about the author's "presumptuous egotism" in the preface and the "shallowness and incapacity" of the rest of the volume.⁵

⁴ Stevens, *A History of Georgia [electronic Resource]*, 251.

⁵ Coulter, "William Bacon Stevens." De Renne offered Stevens an unwelcome suggestion that many aspiring writers should take to heart: "Whenever you have written anything which you think particularly fine—strike it out." De Renne, *Observations on Doctor Stevens's History of Georgia [electronic Resource] / [by George Wymberley Jones De Renne].*, 23.

Undeterred, Stevens published his second volume, which covered the years 1760 to 1798, while serving as rector of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, and no doubt, while watching the deteriorating political climate between North and South. The chapters of his history that deal with the Revolutionary War read as a cautionary tale aimed at Stevens' contemporaries who were approaching their own dark conflict. He warned them against

the social feuds of civil war—the hand-to-hand contests of neighbors—the mutual jealousy of adjoining hamlets—the embittered strife of once bosom friends; and the murders, assassinations, ravishments, burnings, thefts, and barbarities of the most revolting kind, which daily result from such partisan warfare . . . which filled Georgia with blood, and ashes, and tears, during the years of its revolutionary history.⁶

Twenty-five years later, Charles Colcock Jones echoed Stevens' prose about the bitter nature of the war in Georgia: "Surely no darker picture was ever painted in the history of civil wars." As destructive as armies were when they clashed on the battlefield, he wrote, the "fratricidal conflict which disrupts the ties of blood, unseats mercy, dethrones humanity, abolishes the right to private property, and gives the region to general confiscation, plunder and murder" does even greater damage. Jones continued by claiming that no state experienced "the calamities of a divided government and the horrors of internecine dissensions" more than did Georgia.⁷

Modern scholars have continued to document the destructiveness of the war. One recent work convincingly describes the brutal acts of Whig militia as barbaric,

⁶ Stevens, *A History of Georgia [electronic Resource]*, 252.

⁷ Jones, *The History of Georgia.*, 424.

particularly in the closing days of the war.⁸ Another includes a chapter entitled “Pillaged, Plundered and Carried Off: The Laying Waste of Georgia, 1779-1782.”⁹ Indeed, Georgia historians’ attention to violence against people and against property deviates from the more normative national histories that until recently have tended to downplay the coarse destructiveness of the Revolutionary War elsewhere.

Yet, despite their willingness to confront the damaging nature of the war, students of the Revolution in the South have not taken the next step and explored the political consequences of that experience. In a provocative essay written a decade ago, Alan Kulikoff explicitly linked wartime violence to postwar democracy and suggested that ordinary folk leveraged their participation in the war effort to secure greater levels of democracy in its aftermath. His argument complements the scholarship of Woody Holton and Michael McDonnell, whose studies of Virginia have made similar claims about the political gamesmanship of ordinary Virginians in the revolutionary era.¹⁰

Unlike the ordinary folks of Virginia, Georgians did not have to leverage support for the war effort in order to gain post-war political power. They already had it. The

⁸ Piecuch, *Three Peoples, One King*, 297. In an impressively researched and forcefully argued study of loyalists, Native Americans and slaves in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, historian Jim Piecuch makes the case that Whigs perpetrated far more cruelties than the British and their allies—a rebuttal to two centuries of tradition passed down by the victors. Noting that the British Empire abolished slavery in 1833, he laments that British leaders failed to attack the “soft underbelly of the rebellion, the southern provinces,” in 1776 and muses that the war’s outcome would likely have differed if they had. Of course, it is just as likely that had the southern colonies had remained within the empire, British abolitionists would have faced an even tougher battle and emancipation might have come later to the West Indies as a result.

⁹ Hall, *Land & Allegiance in Revolutionary Georgia*, 137–59.

¹⁰ Kulikoff, “Revolutionary Violence and the Origins of American Democracy.” Also see Holton, *Forced Founders*; McDonnell, *The Politics of War*.

Constitution of 1777 assured it—as long as the Americans won. The re-conquest of Georgia and re-establishment of civilian government presented the single greatest challenge to American victory in the South. If the British had delivered peace to Georgians in 1778 instead of three-and-a-half more years of war, the British Southern Strategy might well have succeeded. But they did not deliver peace. The resulting turmoil undermined social and political authority and left many Georgians distrustful of any claims on their allegiance beyond those immediately at hand, thus reinforcing the place of local institutions controlled by ordinary freeholders.

The King's Friends Leave, 1776-1778

Physical dislocation, the single most common experience shared by thousands of Georgians of all political affiliations and social positions, often appears in the historical record in simple, almost understated prose that masks the profound disruption to every facet of life that leaving one home and settling into another represented. Whether by choice, coercion or some combination of both, wartime Georgians were a people on the move. They moved as individuals, as families, and occasionally as whole neighborhoods. Sometimes they carried with them furnishings, clothing, important papers, and cherished possessions, and sometimes they carried only the clothes on their backs. The duration of their time away from “home” ranged from days to forever. Who moved and the locations to which they moved changed over time and with the shifting fortunes of American and British political control and military fortune.

Between 1776 and 1778, supporters of the king and Parliament fled to England, the West Indies, East or West Florida, or sometimes just to the countryside where they

hoped to wait out what many could only fathom as an unnatural and temporary spirit of rebellion. Not surprisingly, the first to leave included men and families most closely aligned with the apparatus of the colonial government. In March 1776, Governor James Wright and his two daughters sailed for London by way of Halifax, Nova Scotia on the H.M.S. *Scarborough*. The *Scarborough* landed in Halifax in mid-April and after just a couple of weeks stay in Nova Scotia, Wright and his party took passage on one of five ships in a convoy headed for England. Other passengers included Peter Oliver and the families of several Massachusetts loyalists.¹¹

In May, Chief Justice Anthony Stokes left Savannah with his wife, children, and “so many negroes as . . . necessary to wait upon” the family, which the rebel government limited to five. Lieutenant Governor John Graham sailed at the same time as Stokes, taking with him his wife Frances, their 10 children, his sister, and a niece as well as several slaves to tend to the needs of his large family. Council member John Simpson also relocated his family to England in spring 1776.¹²

¹¹ Wright’s arrival in Halifax was noted in Thomas’ *Massachusetts Spy, or American Oracle of Liberty* (Worcester) 18 May 1776, *Dunlap’s Pennsylvania Packet or, the General Advertiser* (Philadelphia) 27 May 1776. See *The American Gazette or Constitutional Journal* (Salem) 19 June 1776; *The Essex Journal and New Hampshire Packet* (Newburyport) 21 June 1776; *The New England Chronicle* (Boston) 27 June 1776; *Dunlap’s Pennsylvania Packet or, the General Advertiser* (Philadelphia) 1 July 1776; *The Pennsylvania Evening Post* (Philadelphia) 2 July 1776.

¹² Stokes, *A Narrative of the Official Conduct of Anthony Stokes, of the Inner Temple London ... [electronic Resource]*, 39–40. Stokes reported that the rebels allowed limited the number of slaves he could remove from the province to five. His total slaveholdings in 1776 were “five men, ten women, two boys, and 16 children, from about 13 years of age down to sucking infants.” Graham, “Loyalist Claim of John Graham,” microfilm frames 185–86, digital frames 235–36; Simpson, “Loyalist Claim of John Simpson,” microfilm frames 1314–15, digital frames 592–93.

Rather than leave the province, council members James Edward Powell, Henry Yonge, and James Read signed parole, pledging not to take up arms against the newly installed rebel government, and retired to properties in the country. Attorney James Robertson moved to the plantation of Attorney General James Hume. Robertson acted as the overseer of Hume's several properties (ironically, one of which was called *Retreat* Plantation) on and off for more than a year, during which time he resisted several attempts to make him swear an oath that he would "be true & faithful to the Cause of America." Eventually, however, he satisfied himself that the oath did not involve "an Abjuration of the King of Great Britain," and he relented. Robertson, like many other men of loyal persuasion, signed what he characterized as an "oath of Neutrality" that he hoped would allow him to remain in Georgia until what they would later call *the troubles* subsided.¹³

British East Florida attracted hundreds of Loyalists from the Carolinas and Georgia, including many who relocated slaves with the intention of establishing working plantations.¹⁴ In August 1776, "finding it altogether incompatible with his Principles to live under the Tyrannical and Usurped Authority" of Georgia's Council of Safety, Charles William MacKinnen set sail for St. Augustine with his wife Helen, four children, and thirty-eight slaves. After a twelve-day passage on the Ship *Clarissa*, the MacKinnen family and two of their slaves disembarked to spend the night on solid ground in St.

¹³ Coke and Egerton, *The Royal Commission on the Losses and Services of American Loyalists, 1783-1785.*, 62–63.

¹⁴ On East Florida in the Revolution, see Williams, "East Florida as a Loyalist Haven."

Augustine. Overnight, a rebel privateer seized the *Clarissa* and carried it and the three dozen MacKinnen slaves who remained on board to Charleston.¹⁵

James and Judith Shivers left important papers, including the grant for their Ogeechee River indigo plantation, with a trusted widow neighbor when they left their home in September 1776. Supposing that western trails offered “the safest way to the province of East Florida” the family headed west to Creek Indian territory with several wagons carrying their children and belongings as well as slaves and livestock. After nearly two weeks on the road, a rebel militia troop overtook them and robbed them of provisions, guns, horses, cattle, and other moveable property, including eight slaves. Judith later recalled “the inexpressible Hardships” her family endured when left “in the woods at great distance from any settlements” and “deprived of Food and every necessary by the Plundering Rebel Party.” She credited the “more humane Savage Indians” who found the family and conducted them first to the Creek Indian Nation and then to St. Augustine with saving their lives.¹⁶

James Shivers quickly found work as a courier and spy in service to British Governor Patrick Tonyn of East Florida; many more exiles joined one of the loyalist militia troops organized with Tonyn’s encouragement. Most famously, Thomas Brown, who had suffered physical torture at the hands of Augusta Whigs the previous year, found his way to St. Augustine, where he organized disaffected Georgians and Carolinians into

¹⁵ MacKinnen, “Loyalist Claim of Helen MacKinnen.”

¹⁶ Shivers, “Loyalist Claim of Judith Shivers,” quotes on microfilm frame 1271, 1273 and digital frames 551, 555. Governor Tonyn wrote the commission that he trusted James Shivers and used him to gather intelligence, microfilm frame 1280, digital frame 562.

the Florida Rangers (or Florida Scouts, as Georgia's rebel government called them). In Brown's telling, the rangers defended Florida against rebel incursions and repelled the "Plundering Banditti [that] infested" the region. To his American enemies, Brown's scouts were notorious villains who raided settlements from the St. Mary's River in the south to the Savannah River and into South Carolina in the north, seizing livestock and slaves and recruiting more disaffected to their ranks as they rode. Brown's unit attracted hundreds of men, most from backcountry settlements in North and South Carolina as well as from Georgia.¹⁷

David Russell, Matthew Lyle, and William Love were among the Georgia freeholders who joined Brown's Florida Rangers after having refused to sign the Association. Russell left his "respectable farm" of several hundred acres in Burke County (St. George's Parish) in the care of his wife Janet and five children. Matthew Lyle cultivated a smaller farm not far from Russell's Brier Creek land where he and a single teen-aged male slave ironically named Liberty raised cattle and hogs as well as Indian corn, peas, and potatoes. When he refused to renounce his loyalty to the king, the local committee of safety arrested Lyle and transported him under guard to Savannah. He escaped the notoriously porous guardhouse and went to St. Augustine, where he enlisted with the rangers. William Love owned 400 acres in nearby Effingham County (St. Matthew's Parish) on which he and two sons raised cattle and swine and produced beef,

¹⁷ The Augusta committee charged that Brown had reneged on his promise to support the rebel cause. An account of his punishment appeared in the 30 August 1775 *Gazette*. For a thoroughly researched and authoritative account of Brown's life and role in the War for Independence, see Cashin, *The King's Ranger*. Also, Piecuch, *Three Peoples, One King*, 96–103; Hall, *Land & Allegiance in Revolutionary Georgia*, 72–73.

tanned hides and bacon for market before he and his sons left to ride with Brown's men rather than sign the Association.¹⁸

In addition to disaffected landowners such as Russell, Lyle, and Love, Brown's unit also attracted the same kinds of landless men that colonial officials viewed as disreputable vagabonds or hunters a decade earlier.¹⁹ Families of a "number of men inimical to the measures of America" established a settlement of huts along the Ogeechee River not far from Savannah, where state officials suspected they harbored fathers and sons who rode with the rangers. In August 1778, the executive council ordered a militia troop to destroy the settlement and escort the displaced women and children to coastal estates that the state had seized from absent loyalists where they would live under surveillance until they received paroles to leave the state.²⁰

The divisions among Georgia Whigs in the wake of the McIntosh-Gwinnett affair in spring and summer 1777 contributed to a tense political climate in which declarations of neutrality were suspect and men whose loyalties had been tolerated as long as they agreed not to carry arms against the rebellion fell victim to liberty party harassment. In June, after having "suffered Nightly insults and Outrages by having his Windows,

¹⁸ For Russell, Lyle and Love, see Russell, "Loyalist Claim of David Russell (1)"; Russell, "Loyalist Claim of David Russell (2)"; Russell, "Loyalist Claim of David Russell (3)"; Lyle, "Loyalist Claim of Matthew Lyle"; Love, "Loyalist Claim of William Love."

¹⁹ *RRG* 2: 39, 108.

²⁰ *RRG* 2: 97; Marsh, "Women and the American Revolution in Georgia," 167.

Shutters and Sashes battered to pieces and his Doors attempted to be forced open,” James Edward Powell gathered his “sick family” and left for England.²¹

The adoption of the state’s controversial law to expel enemies in fall 1777 forced still more men of suspect or divided loyalty to leave. Henry Yonge, Sr. had served in the general assembly as well as on the governor’s council and as deputy survey general under royal rule. When called before the Chatham County committee, he told them that, “he could not comply” with their request to take the required oath. The committee ordered him to leave the state, but gave him several extensions so he could arrange for his wife and children to remain in Georgia. The committee granted extensions to other banished men, but Yonge’s extraordinary indulgence of several months perhaps reflected the committee’s respect for the memory of his wife’s brother. Christiana Bulloch Yonge’s brother, Archibald Bulloch, had served as the state’s rebel governor in 1776.

Christiana Yonge and her three minor children would not again see Henry Yonge after he left the state in March 1778. On his way to the Bahamas with two adult sons from an earlier marriage, Yonge’s ship crossed paths with a British privateering vessel that carried it and all aboard to St. Augustine. There Yonge fell ill under the strain of his misfortune and died, leaving a tangled estate that would take more than a decade to settle and a family forever divided by conflicted allegiance.²²

²¹ Quote in Powell, “Loyalist Claim of James Edward Powell,” microfilm frame 1124, digital frame 391.

²² Coldham, *American Loyalist Claims Abstracted from the Public Records Office Audit Office Series 13, Bundles 1-35 & 37*, 1:542; Yonge, “Loyalist Claim on Behalf of the Widow and Children of Philip Yonge.”

Josiah Tattnall also ran into trouble when he sailed from Savannah on board a French vessel in December 1777. An English Man of War captured the ship and escorted it to Providence in the Bahamas, where Tattnall, his wife, children, and servants stayed for several months while he appealed to the Vice Admiralty Court for return of his seized property. Setting sail again for Great Britain in July 1778, his vessel fell into the hands of the French fleet, which carried it to Philadelphia. There Tattnall found himself “an absolute Stranger to the Place and its Inhabitants.” Distressed but unbroken, Tattnall petitioned the American army for parole for himself and his family to travel to British-held New York.²³ While making their way through New Jersey, Tattnall and his party found shelter with the Continental Army officer William Read of Savannah, who opened his quarters to the refugee family he had long known in Georgia.²⁴

The Tattnall family reached London the first week in December 1778, just in time to read reports of a convoy carrying British, Hessian, and Loyalist troops on its way from New York City to South Carolina or Georgia in the London press. Early accounts explained that Sir Henry Clinton, commander in chief of British forces in America, had

²³ Tattnall, “Loyalist Claim of Josiah Tattnall,” quotation from Thomas Boone to the Commissioners, 23 October 1778, microfilm frames 256–57, digital frames 313–14. Louisa Susannah Wells writes of the Tatnalls in New York in Wells, *The Journal of a Voyage from Charlestown, S. C., to London* [electronic Resource].

²⁴ Gibbes, *Documentary History of the American Revolution* [electronic Resource], 248–93. Read’s father James served on Governor Wright’s council. The younger Read studied medicine in Philadelphia where he fell under the guidance of Benjamin Rush and began drilling with a Pennsylvania militia unit. His support for the liberty party must have truly disturbed his father’s associates, all the more so because he was, in the words of council member Lewis Johnston, “a sober young man, very diligent in his application to business.” Lewis Johnston to William Martin Johnston, 13 March 1774, printed in Johnston, *Recollections of a Georgia Loyalist*, 174–76 quote on pp. 174–75.

ordered the expedition in response “to an invitation from a powerful party of Carolina, who are resolved to make a vigorous effort to free themselves from the tyranny of Congress.”²⁵ Across the Atlantic at around the same time, lookouts on the Carolina coast spotted the fleet, and American forces under General Robert Howe hurriedly prepared to defend Charles Town. Shortly afterward, those on shore determined that Savannah rather than Charles Town was the destination and learned that the enemy’s plan included troops from St. Augustine as well as those arriving by ship from New York.²⁶ On 29 December approximately 3,500 troops landed two miles south of Savannah and quickly took the town. An estimated 450 American troops, many of whom could not swim across the swamps that surrounded the capital, surrendered.²⁷

Rebel Leaders Run, 1779-1781

The fall of Savannah in the last days of 1778 handed the Americans a humiliating defeat and launched another round of civilian dislocation. Over the next three years, dozens of well-known rebel leaders and their families would leave Georgia and establish themselves first in South Carolina and later, after the British captured Charles Town in

²⁵ The Tatnalls arrived on 5 December 1778. Tatnall, “Loyalist Claim of Josiah Tatnall,” microfilm frames 254–55, digital frames 310–12. See for example the *Gazeteer and New Daily Advertiser* 4 December 1778.

²⁶ The invasion of Georgia came as no surprise. For months, speculation had swirled about General Clinton’s plans to send a force by water from the north to join with troops from Florida and re-take first Savannah and then Charleston. See Joseph Clay to Bright & Pechin, 2 June 1778, and again 2 September 1778 and Clay to John Lewis Gervais, 7 September 1778 in Clay, *Letters of Joseph Clay Merchant of Savannah 1776-1793*, 79, 101–02, 109–10.

²⁷ Lawrence, “General Robert Howe and the British Capture of Savannah in 1778”; Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 116–29.

May 1780, North Carolina and Virginia, with some moving as far north as Pennsylvania. Hundreds more would be forced from their homes by threats of raids by Indians or Loyalist militia. As whites moved for political and safety reasons, they often moved their slaves or, more often, *some* of their slaves, disrupting slave families and communities that in most cases had formed just a generation before.

Within days of taking the capital, the British captured dozens of prominent and well-known rebels. Soldiers raided the plantation home of Jonathan Bryan, expecting to find his son-in-law, the recent state governor, John Houstoun. Instead, they found Bryan and his son James and carried them to Savannah, where they joined other prisoners on board a prison ship in the harbor. The two Bryans eventually sailed to New York and took parole on Long Island, where they found expenses high and “few instances of generosity or hospitality.” The elder Bryan especially lamented his separation from Mary (Mollie), his wife of more than forty years. He expressed sadness at “being deprived of the happy seasons of bending our knees in union before the Throne of Grace.” Having reached what he referred to as “the dregs of life,” he feared that he would see her “no more on this side of time,” but their faith taught them that they would “meet . . . in heaven, where the wicked will cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.” Events proved his fears well founded; Mollie Bryan died at the family’s Brampton plantation in 1781 with her husband and son 800 miles north on Long Island.²⁸

²⁸ Jonathan Bryan to “My Dear Wife,” 2 June 1780 and Jonathan Bryan to “Dear Wife,” 3 June 1780, in Redding, *Life and Times of Jonathan Bryan, 1708-1788.*, 81–82. On Bryan’s life and career, see Gallay, *The Formation of a Planter Elite.*

The Savannah merchant Mordecai Sheftall and his seventeen-year-old son Sheftall Sheftall found themselves on board prison ship *Nancy* in January 1779, as did the Reverend Moses Allen of Liberty County (St. John's Parish), who served as chaplain for Georgia's Continental troops. The three shared a stateroom until the night of 9 February, when Allen attempted to escape by jumping overboard and swimming to shore. He drowned, leaving a widow and young son.²⁹

The elder Sheftall soon received parole and removed to Sunbury, from where he wrote his wife, Frances (Fanny) Hart Sheftall in April 1779. Fanny had taken their four younger children to Charles Town and stayed with friends before finding a King's Street house to rent. Her husband congratulated her on settling into her own quarters: "I am Happy to here [sic] that you are once more become Mistress of your own house, as I very well Know, that notwithstanding the Kindness of our friends, home is home." William Hopton, the owner of the house she rented, might well have congratulated himself as well, because on the same day that he collected the first quarter's rent of £75, he informed Fanny that she would owe £100 for the next quarter, the increase reflecting the demand for housing as well as the falling value of Continental currency. In spite of his concern about expenses, Mordecai begged his wife to attend to the children's schooling,

²⁹ Sheftall's birth on 8 September 1762 was recorded by his uncle Levi Sheftall in Sheftall, "Levi Sheftall Diary, 1733-1808." Also see Sheftall, "Capture of Mordecai Sheftall"; Levy, *Mordecai Sheftall*. Young Allen's death is referenced in his son's eulogy, see Allen, *Particular Providence a Source of Comfort to Mourners: A Funeral Sermon on the Death of Mr. Moses Allen, of the State of Georgia Who Departed This Life in New-York, of the Fever Prevailing There on Tuesday, the 13th Day of October, 1801 in the 25th Year of His Age and Delivered in the Family of Elisha Lee of Sheffield on the 24th Day of the Same Month for the Consolation of the Afflicted Parents / by Thomas Allen.*; Stacy, *History and Published Records of the Midway Congregational Church, Liberty County, Georgia / by James Stacy ; with Addenda by Elizabeth Walker Quarterman; and New Index by Margaret H. Cannon.*, 45-46.

“that they may not be intirely lost in this Corrupt Age.” He also wrote his son who remained on board the *Nancy* and perhaps thinking of their friend Moses Allen’s fate, Mordecai told him that he prayed to God “that he may arm you with fortitude to bear your confinement with patience.”³⁰

Fanny Sheftall drew on family connections in the small but close community of Charles Town Jewry to provide her children with a secure home, but no amount of friendship and good wishes could shield her family from the difficulties of the times. When the British bombarded the city in spring 1780, she and her children retired to the country “with a great many of our people.” In July, having returned to Charles Town, she wrote her husband that several Jewish children had died recently, two of small pox. In addition:

Mr DeLyon lost his two grand children. Mrs. Mordecai has lost her child. Mrs. Myers Moses had the misfortune to have her youngest daughter, Miss Rachel, killed with the nurse by a cannon ball during the siege.³¹

The Sheftall home did not escape the twin scourges of small pox and yellow fever that swept through Charles Town after the siege. Fanny reported that each of the family’s slaves had “been at the point of death,” and “of no use to me for these six weeks past.” Happily, they were now on the mend, except for young Billey, who succumbed to yellow fever. Her own children “all got safe over the small pox” that season, which was surely

³⁰ Sheftall, “Mordecai Sheftall, Sunbury, GA, Letter to His Wife, Frances Sheftall, [Charleston, SC]”; Hopton, “Receipt from Wm. Hopton to Mrs. Frances Sheftall for Partial Rent”; Sheftall, “Mordecai Sheftall to Sheftall Sheftall, April 9, 1779.”heftall, “Mordecai Sheftall, Sunbury, GA, Letter to His Wife, Frances Sheftall, [Charleston, SC].”

³¹ Sheftall, “Letter from Frances Hart Sheftall to Mordecai Sheftall, July 20, 1780.”

welcome news to their father and brother, who by the time they read Fanny's newsy letter were reunited and living under terms of parole in Antigua. Less welcome, to be sure, was the news that Fanny had had to take in needlework to earn what little she could even though she feared that the pittance she earned would not come close to the amount needed to pay the doctor's bills and rent and to feed her household.³²

Later in 1780, Mordecai Sheftall and his son obtained their freedom and sailed to Philadelphia, where Mordecai entered one of the few thriving businesses of the war—the privateering trade. In August, he joined seven other men in an appeal to Congress for help getting their “wives & little ones” out of Charles Town. Eight months later, a flag vessel from South Carolina carrying the men's families finally arrived in the northern port; for the first time in more than two years, the Sheftalls slept under the same roof.³³

Like Fanny Sheftall, the wives and children of men who served in the Georgia Line or militia often moved on their own and (if they were lucky) relied on friends and extended family to help them with transportation and re-settlement. Sarah McIntosh, the wife of General Lachlan McIntosh first relocated to Savannah from her Liberty County (St. Andrew's Parish) home in 1776 when partisan raiders from St. Augustine ravaged the McIntosh plantation. She remained in the capital after the city fell to the British in late 1778 and was present with her five children (ranging in age from around twelve to

³² Ibid.

³³ The first signature on the petition belonged to George Bunner, the master of the Georgia Packet, which sailed between Savannah and Philadelphia in 1774 and 1775. Bunner participated in crowd actions with Savannah's Liberty Boys in 1775. Bunner, “Remonstrances and Addresses.”

twenty one) when French and American forces attempted to retake Savannah in October 1779. She later moved first to Camden, South Carolina, and then to Salisbury, North Carolina. In August 1780, her husband wrote of his concern when he “could obtain no certain account for a Long time of the rout you had taken, all I could Learn was that you had left Cambden, which I was sorry to hear.” He worried about her “Travelling near three hundred Miles from home with so large a Family, & Little or no Conveniency” and instructed her to tell their eldest son Lackie that he must stay with her “& give every assistance in his power to the Family.”³⁴

Polly Jones, the wife of one of General McIntosh’s aides, left her home in Liberty County (St. John’s Parish) when British forces from East Florida marched into the region in 1778. She and her two young children (one an infant) took refuge in South Carolina, probably at Jacksonboro, a hamlet on the coast between Charles Town and Beaufort, with Hannah Bryan Houstoun, wife of former Governor John Houstoun.

A handful of letters that Polly’s husband wrote her in October 1779 reveal both the trivialities and the tragedies of family life during the war. From camp outside Savannah where he and an estimated 7,000 French and American troops waited for the British force that numbered less than 5,000 to surrender, Major Jones wrote the welcome news that he had visited their Liberty County home and had found “all of our old female acquaintances” well. Although British forces had burnt many homes and structures, including his own, he reported that he had surveyed their losses and found that “many

³⁴ Lawrence, *Storm over Savannah; the Story of Count d’Estaing and the Siege of the Town in 1779.*, 52; Hawes, *Lachlan McIntosh Papers in the University of Georgia Libraries.*, 41.

more things are saved, than we imagined,” including “household goods, your sheets, Bed quilts, China etc.” The enemy had taken “6 cups & saucers” of Polly’s “best enameld china,” but the rest survived unharmed. “Upon the whole,” he wrote, “we are much better than I expected.”³⁵

The next day, the major’s thoughts turned to the danger at hand. Bombardment of the city had started the night before and continued unabated on 4 October. “I feel most sincerely for the poor women and children” in the town; he feared what would happen to them if the firing went on much longer. Then he addressed Polly’s concerns for his safety: “But pray do not be unhappy on my account, and believe that if it is my fate to survive this action, I shall; if otherwise, the Lord's will must be done. Every soldier and soldier's wife must believe in predestination.” He immediately followed those calm but chilling words with, “What shall I do for clothes? I have but one pair of breeches left.”³⁶

On the 5 October, John asked his wife to send some of his belongings. He gave exact instructions: she should pack “a pr thick Breeches that will hide dirt . . . also my Blue Coat with 3 ruffle shirts . . . [and] one pr of Black Silk Breeches.” She should take care to pack his “Cloaths in such a manner as that they may not sustain any damage—particularly my Coat” and she should add cigars and tobacco to the package. His tone

³⁵ Jones, “John Jones to ‘My Dear Polly.’” A few days before Jones informed Polly that many of her possessions had survived, another soldier wrote his wife that “a plundering Rascal” had stolen her jewelry but he hoped to recover it because he knew the rascal. See Habersham, “Joseph Habersham to ‘My Dear Bella,’ September 28, 1779.” Wilson, *The Southern Strategy*, 273–75.

³⁶ Jones, “John Jones to Polly Jones, Oct 4, 1779.”

then shifted to melancholic fatigue: “I really begin to be tired of this life the time I have been absent from you appears almost an age.”³⁷

Two days later, Jones fretted that his servant Jacob might not arrive with the package before the battle ended and added that he hoped she had thought to include a bottle of gin. Horrific stories about cannon balls killing women and children as they huddled in cellars had reached the American lines. Surely, he thought, the enemy’s capitulation must come soon; and then he closed by writing, “adieu my good wife and believe me to be with sincerity yr ever affec^t Jn^o Jones.”³⁸

Polly Jones, too, must have grown tired of her side of what her husband called “this life.” She wrote, “I would to God the great affair was over, . . . How I dread it, no tongue can express. I am convinced, my dear, you ever will act like a man of spirit; but do not run rashly into danger, if you can avoid it. Consider you have two dear children and a wife whose whole happiness depends on yours.” On 9 October, the battle for Savannah finally ended—in victory for the British and defeat for the French and Americans. Major John Jones died on the Spring Hill redoubt on that final day. Polly Jones later married another soldier, Major Philip Low. After the war, they rebuilt the Liberty County home that Polly had shared with Jones and called it Liberty Hall.³⁹

³⁷ Jones, “John Jones to Polly Jones Camp before Savannah, October 5, 1779.”

³⁸ Jones, “John Jones to Polly, Camp before Savannah, October 7, 1779.”

³⁹ Quoted in White, *Historical Collections of Georgia*, 1854, 537. The children of Polly and John Jones and the children of their slaves went on to build an extraordinary legacy, which is beautifully reconstructed in Clarke, *Dwelling Place*. Charles Colcock Jones quoted at the start of this chapter was Polly and John Jones’ great grandson.

Unlike so many Georgians separated from family during the war, the Savannah merchant Joseph Clay managed to keep his extended white household together for most of the contest while dividing his black household among several sites in Georgia, South Carolina, and Virginia. Within weeks of Savannah's fall, he moved his family and slaves to a plantation along the Ashley River about fifteen miles outside of Charles Town. He had left "12 or 13 of my best slaves" and "Considerable property in goods[,] household furniture, Cattle, Hogs Sheep etc." behind in Georgia and doubted he would ever see them again. After he organized spring planting, Clay rented a house in Charles Town where he could more easily perform his duties as deputy paymaster for the army and where he hoped to resume his own trading concern.⁴⁰

When the British marched into South Carolina a year later, Clay loaded his family, a family friend Miss Elizabeth Harris, slaves, and what moveable property they could carry into carts and headed to the Virginia piedmont. After more than two weeks of arduous travel, Clay met his cousin Joseph Habersham and an estimated 150 Habersham family slaves in Henry County, Virginia. The diary of a Moravian bishop who passed the Habersham party on the road describes the roads as "very bad" with sections where "steep hills washed by the heavy rains alternated with deep bottoms and swampy places." The constant jostling caused belongings to fall out of the wagons and into the mud. June brought oppressive heat that broke only after daily downpours. Refugees from South

⁴⁰ Joseph Clay to Nathaniel Rice, 15 March 1779 and Joseph Clay to James Clay, 2 November 1779 in Clay, *Letters of Joseph Clay Merchant of Savannah 1776-1793*, 127–28, 157–60.

Carolina and Georgia heading north and soldiers heading south clogged the roads even as the heavy traffic contributed to the poor condition of the highway.⁴¹

After reaching Virginia, Clay and Habersham set about settling their slaves and property at several different plantations and farms. They first called on former Governor Patrick Henry, who agreed to hire seven men and six women for £13.4 per month and to store two trunks filled with books and papers, a chest of sundries, one box and a small case with a clock at his home.⁴² At the plantation of Colonel William Tunstall, Clay negotiated the hire of four slaves and two children and arranged to store six silk dresses belonging to his wife Anne and Elizabeth Harris. At Joseph Morton's, Habersham left a harness for two horses, a rum case, four pewter plates, and a chair. Morton did not hire any slaves, but two near neighbors did: a sadler hired four adults and planter Francis Cox agreed to pay the equivalent of twelve bushels of corn per month for the labor of 4 men, Calipha, Bacchus, Moody, and Kendy, and eight bushels per month for Kendy's wife Kate. The agreement, which extended from June through October 1780, also included without charge Kendy and Kate's children, Primus and Hard Times.⁴³

All told, Clay and Habersham settled more than fifty slaves on ten different plantations in what appear to have been family groups. They hired nine slaves to "Capt

⁴¹ Reichel, Reichel and Heckewelder, "Extract from the Travel Diary of the Beloved Br. and Sr. Reichel and the Single Br. Christ. Heckewelder from Salem to Lititz" in Mereness, *Travels in the American Colonies / Edited under the Auspices of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America by Newton D. Mereness.*, 585–602, quotations on pp. 597–99. Also, see Smith, "Georgia Gentlemen: The Habershams of Eighteenth-Century Savannah," 296–97.

⁴² Habersham, "Joseph Habersham Account Book."

⁴³ *Ibid.*

Hoard and one Dunlap,” who agreed to let Old Prince and four children live with the nine laborers. They placed Andrew and Doll at Edward Smith’s small tobacco farm in Henry County and an unnamed “wench and child” with Martin Bibb in Amherst County more than 100 miles north. In addition to making money from the hiring out of their slaves, Clay and Habersham intended to protect and provide for their human property. The hiring agreements included provisions for clothing and shoes, prohibited sub-hiring, and allowed the Georgians to reclaim the slaves should disputes arise. After having hired out as many of their slaves as possible in the piedmont, Clay and Habersham reportedly traveled to the vicinity of Richmond, where their families remained through the war.⁴⁴

After their jarring journey to Virginia, the Clay and Habersham slaves found themselves in unfamiliar surroundings with starkly different labor demands and social contours hundreds of miles away from the homes and extended communities they had built at most a generation before. In Georgia, most of the Clay and Habersham slaves would have toiled on large coastal rice plantations. In Virginia, they found themselves living in smaller groups on considerably smaller tobacco-producing farms and plantations.

The soil requirements, growing seasons, and labor associated with the two crops differed greatly—so greatly that by the 1780s, the social environments of the lowcountry region of South Carolina and Georgia and the piedmont region that ran from Georgia to Virginia represented two distinct modes of plantation organization. While some slaves on

⁴⁴ Ibid. In September 1780, Joseph Habersham wrote his “Dear Bella” that Clay and the Habersham brothers intended to settle slaves near Richmond. Habersham, “Joseph Habersham to ‘My Dear Bella,’ September 12, 1780.”

rice plantations would have tended livestock and raised subsistence crops not unlike slaves in the piedmont, most would have performed the various tasks that rice cultivation demanded: digging trenches, weeding, hoeing, stacking, threshing, and pounding. When they completed their daily quota of backbreaking tasks, lowcountry slaves could turn attention to raising crops or poultry for themselves and acquire independent resources for swapping, trading or selling. Not so in Virginia, where slaves were more likely to work from dawn to dusk, often alongside their white masters and members of the master's family. The relatively small size of piedmont farms meant that Virginia's slaves lived and moved in closer proximity to whites than in the majority black districts of Georgia's rice plantations.⁴⁵

The experience of the Clay-Habersham slaves who were transported and then hired out in Virginia, as well as that of countless others carried to the West Indies or St. Augustine, provides a stark contrast to the inspiring stories of slaves who escaped bondage during the war. Their stories remind us that the overwhelming majority of individuals held in slavery in the American South in 1775 who survived the war remained slaves at its conclusion. Rather than liberation, the war brought danger, dislocation, and disruption to enslaved Georgians.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint*.

⁴⁶ Recent scholarship has explored the extraordinary stories of courageous men and women who escaped slavery and made their way to freedom during the revolutionary period. See, for example, Pybus, *Epic Journeys of Freedom*; Schama, *Rough Crossings*; Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*; Nash, *The Forgotten Fifth*; Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution*; Egerton, *Death or Liberty*.

Loyalists Return, 1779-1781

As prominent rebels moved north, supporters of the king made plans to return to Georgia. Some arrived with the invading armies from New York and East Florida. John Lightenstone, who had fled as far as Halifax, Nova Scotia, with Governor Wright three years before, arrived as part of Colonel Campbell's 3,000-man strong force from New York. His knowledge of Savannah area waterways, gained through years as captain of the colony's scout boat, ensured that the men-of-war and the flatboats that ferried troops to shore found good sites at which to moor and to land. Shortly after Savannah fell, Lightenstone secured permission for his fifteen-year old daughter Betsey and her aunt to travel from the Delegal family's plantation on Little Ogeechee River to town. She later wrote of the strangeness of having to show a pass to a Hessian guard on the outskirts of the capital, followed by the absurd sight of Savannah's sandy streets strewn with feathers and papers, the result of an adrenaline-fueled destructive rampage by a regiment of Scots Highlanders.⁴⁷

Lightenstone's friend William Martin Johnston returned to his Savannah home as a member of the New York Loyalist Militia unit that participated in the re-conquest. The taking of Georgia allowed Johnston to reunite with his family, which included his father, council member Lewis Johnston, and three brothers, one of whom arrived shortly after the fall of Savannah as one of Thomas Brown's Florida Rangers.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Johnston, *Recollections of a Georgia Loyalist*, 48–49; Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*, 42–43.

⁴⁸ Johnston, *Recollections of a Georgia Loyalist*, 48–49.

Early in January, the triumphant military commanders, Commodore Hyde Parker and Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell, issued a proclamation offering peace, freedom, and protection to all who would “acknowledge their just Allegiances to the Crown, and with their Arms support it.” According to British and American sources, hundreds responded to the promise of peace. A troop of Highlanders marched to Augusta and received word from western settlers that they would surrender arms and forts to the British in exchange for protection from Native Americans and rebel militia. By the second week of February, a reported 1,100 men had sworn allegiance to George III and formed twenty militia companies pledged to oppose the rebellion.⁴⁹

British success was short-lived, however. Through a combination of threatened retaliation and offensive maneuvers by a regrouped American army under the direction of General Benjamin Lincoln, the Americans forced the British to evacuate Augusta and to retreat toward the coast. Backcountry settlers who had accepted the British offer of protection learned quickly the value of British protection—a lesson that many sometime loyalists would learn over-and-over during the course of the war.

⁴⁹ Parker and Campbell, “By Hyde Parker Jun. Esq; Commodore of a Squadron of His Majesty’s Ships of War, and Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell ... A Proclamation. Whereas the Blessings of Peace, Freedom and Protection, Most Graciously Tendered by His Majesty to His Deluded Subjects of America; Have Been Treated by Congress with Repeated Marks of Studied Disrespect ... Given at Head Quarters at Savannah, This Fourth Day of January, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy-Nine ...” The proclamation appears in the Hall, *Land & Allegiance in Revolutionary Georgia*, 82–85; Piecuch, *Three Peoples, One King*, 134–39.

Rumors that British forces had retaken Georgia appeared in the London press as early as mid-January 1779; confirmation followed in the third week of February.⁵⁰ On 2 March, James Wright informed a contact in the Treasury that he expected to return to America soon, and he hoped that the government would consider his memorial for lost income and property losses so that he could pay his English creditors before departing. His attorneys in Georgia had written that they had recovered “Many of my Lands, and to the value of about £15,000 of my Negroes and Personal Estates,” but that “My improved Plantations . . . laid Wasted, many of the Buildings and Machines Destroyed, the Banks and Ditches Torn to pieces and Vastly Injured” by rebels. Moreover, “I have not a Horse or a Cow or a Carriage or a bit of Furniture of any kind left.”⁵¹

A little more than a week later, Wright wrote that he had received “His Majesty’s Command” to return to Georgia “immediately” and had arranged transportation for himself and his daughter Ann and expected to leave in just a few days. His debts still weighed on him, especially because he had to pay to ship furniture and household goods from London to Savannah and would then face the costs of rebuilding his plantations if he hoped to regain his footing and restore his wealth.⁵² Governor Wright set sail on the

⁵⁰ Anonymous, “Yesterday Advices Were Received at Lord George Germain’s Office . . .”; Anonymous, “Postscript London.”

⁵¹ Wright, “James Wright to John Robinson Esq., March 2, 1779.”

⁵² Wright, “James Wright to John Robinson, Esq., March 11, 1779.” An inventory of belongings shipped by Wright includes 6 cases of books, a hamper of bottled liquor, looking glasses, beds and bedsteads, tables and sundry furniture, 10 mahogany chairs, and two trunks of “the Negro woman Charlotte’s Clothes. See Ball, “Measurement of Sir James Wright’s Furniture, Shipt 1 June 1779 per Brittainia Capt Ball for Saint Augustine.”

Ship *Experiment* on 1 May, accompanied by Lieutenant Governor John Graham and Attorney General Stokes. Unlike the governor, Graham and Stokes chose to leave their families in the safety of England.⁵³

The three reached Savannah in mid-July and found the town filled with refugees and the province in far worse condition than expected. Two weeks after returning, Wright wrote, “The more I am able to see into the True State of Affairs here, the more I am Convinced of the Wretched Situation the Province is in & how nearly it was being totally lost.” Rebels controlled the territory above Augusta and “almost the whole Settlements down to Briar Creek are Broke up or the Inhabitants skalking about to avoid the Rebel Partys.” To his dismay, Wright quickly learned that rebel raiding parties were not the only threats to order. The British army employed bands of men who to procure provisions and slaves for the army’s use, and these men had “committed very great waste and destruction on many well settled Estates and Plantations . . . and had Pillaged, Plundered and Carried off a Considerable Property in Rice, Cattle & other moveable Effects.”⁵⁴

Despite unsettled conditions, each arriving vessel brought more returnees and even some new settlers to the province. Printer James Johnston returned from the West

⁵³ Stokes, *A Narrative of the Official Conduct of Anthony Stokes, of the Inner Temple London ... [electronic Resource]*, 48–49. The *Experiment* and the fleet in which it sailed became embroiled in a sea battle with French forces off the coast of Jersey. The ship returned to port at Portsmouth for repairs and did not sail again until 25 May.

⁵⁴ Stokes, “Anthony Stokes, Chief Justice of Georgia, to His Wife.” Wright, “Gov. James Wright to Sec. Lord G. Germain, August 9, 1779”; Jollie and Kelsall, “Report of the Commissioners of Claims.” On McGirth, see among others Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*, 98–99; Piecuch, *Three Peoples, One King*, passim; Hall, *Land & Allegiance in Revolutionary Georgia*, 151–54; Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 133.

Indies to resume printing the now *Royal Georgia Gazette*. Attorneys John Hume and James Robertson, reportedly two of just three Savannah attorneys who did not join the rebellion, presented their credentials to Chief Justice Stokes and went back to the business of practicing law. By summer, Governor Wright had commissioned new justices of the peace for the coastal and Savannah River parishes, the Vice Admiralty Court was hearing cases of prizes taken at sea and the *Gazette* again carried notices of runaway slaves, missing canoes, and strayed horses.

Through the summer of 1779, Governor Wright and others worried about the “vast numbers of Negroes” who roamed the capital and countryside seemingly without white masters or overseers. Some were loosely associated with the military: men who served as “pioneers” who dug ditches and latrines and carried out other disagreeable tasks and women who served as cooks and laundresses. Others, who had run away from abandoned plantations or who had been seized and later released by plundering parties, hired themselves out along the town’s now busy wharves. The mere presence of large numbers of blacks, without badges or passes, in and about Savannah presented constant reminders to Wright and all returned Loyalists how disordered their world had become. Civilian authorities determined to construct a “Strong and convenient House or Prison” to hold “all such negroes as may prove unruly.”⁵⁵

⁵⁵ The earliest issues of the *Royal Georgia Gazette* were published by John Daniel Hammerer. Johnston, who printed the *Georgia Gazette* between 1763 and 1776, reappears as publisher and printer in August 1779. *Royal Georgia Gazette* 11 February 1779 and 29 August 1770. Wright, “Gov. James Wright to Sec. Lord G. Germain, July 31, 1779,” 256. *CRG* 12: 443-51

Before they could build a structure in which to confine unruly blacks, however, Savannah residents turned their attention to a French fleet that laid anchor thirteen miles south of Savannah in early September 1779. Some 1,200 French and Haitian soldiers disembarked with the intention of joining American militia marching east from Augusta and Continentals marching south to lay siege to Savannah and expel the British from Georgia.

For close to a month, both sides prepared for an overwhelming display of firepower from French guns. British, Hessian, and Loyalist troops as well as free and enslaved African-Americans worked to build fortifications for the town and to destroy buildings in the surrounding area that might provide shelter to the invaders. Governor Wright authorized the destruction of barns and outhouses on some of his lands so that soldiers could reuse the material for defensive structures. He and other members of the council committed the labor of hundreds of their own slaves to the effort and they ordered others, including the families of rebel leaders, to do the same. On 6 September, 1779, the Council issued a summons to the widow Mary Morel, whose father Jonathan Bryan remained on parole in Long Island, and ordered her to send thirty “working Negroes, at least two thirds Males, to work on the Fortifications for six working Days” beginning at sunrise the next day. While the British built defensive structures around the town’s perimeter and arranged to relocate women and children to cellars, harbor islands

and even under the wharves, American forces dug trenches and fashioned redoubts or places of supposed safety along the lines.⁵⁶

The bombardment began on the night of 3 October. For five days and nights, shells and cannonballs intermittently rained down on Savannah. On 7 October, the French began throwing bombs filled with combustibles into the town, expecting to set wooden structures ablaze. The assault did considerable damage to buildings, but it failed to break the defenders' determination to hold their ground. Savannah's sandy ground actually worked in favor of the British because cannonballs and shells sank into the sand, often without exploding, and flaming carcasses that hit the ground burnt out without contacting flammable material. By 8 October, allied commanders knew that their hopes for a quick victory were unfounded; moreover, they were running low on supplies. The next day they launched a ground attack, storming the capital's defensive positions in a final effort to force the British to surrender. This proved disastrous; the Franco-American force suffered more than 500 casualties to 60 for the British in what one scholar called "one of the bloodiest [battles] of the American Revolution."⁵⁷

News that the British had withstood the siege encouraged more exiles to return to Georgia in 1780. Josiah Tatnall and his elder son arrived in Savannah in time for the spring planting season, as did William Wyly, who described himself as the only American studying law in England in the 1770s who maintained his allegiance to the king

⁵⁶ Lawrence, *Storm over Savannah; the Story of Count d'Estaing and the Siege of the Town in 1779*, 28; Georgia Historical Society, *Collections of the Georgia Historical Society*, 10:49–50.

⁵⁷ Lawrence, *Storm over Savannah; the Story of Count d'Estaing and the Siege of the Town in 1779*, 50–85.

and Parliament. Matthew Lyle and others who two years earlier had fled to St. Augustine and joined Brown's Florida Rangers returned to their lands in Georgia and organized local loyalist militia units in Burke County (St. George's Parish). The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts sent the Rev. Mr. James Brown to act as a missionary to St. George Parish. In late May 1780, Charles Town fell and the following month, Augusta, to the delight of Governor Wright, who believed that a British military presence in the upcountry would curtail plundering by rogue and rebel bands.⁵⁸

Instead of quieting the region, however, the establishment of three loyalist forts near Augusta (Cornwallis, Galphin, and Grierson) focused rebel militia attacks on the area and unleashed a brutal campaign against civilians. Rebel units stationed themselves in the great swamps south and east of the town to intercept "the Savannah trade, both in the river and road;" to the southwest, to prevent "the intercourse between the enemy and the unfriendly Creeks;" and to the northward, "to cover the Whigs in Wilkes from surprize." After one rebel attack at his plantation outside of Augusta, the Reverend James Seymour hid in a "deep thick swamp" for five days and nights; he later escaped to Savannah after a party of "Rebel Banditti . . . murdered thirty five innocent Loyalists in their Houses and committed various Outrages." Planter William Lee thought that he might escape the notice of raging rebel parties because he had only recently purchased his St. George Parish farm and "was a stranger." Not so—a militia company paid a visit and

⁵⁸ Tatnall, "Loyalist Claim of Josiah Tatnall"; Wylly, "Evidence of William Wylly on Behalf of Alexander Campbell Wylly"; Coldham, *American Loyalist Claims Abstracted from the Public Records Office Audit Office Series 13, Bundles 1-35 & 37*, 1:541; Brown, "Rev. James Brown to Rev. Mr. Morice, April 15, 1780"; Robertson, "The Second British Occupation of Augusta, 1780-1781."

warned that if he did not join them he would die. He hid in the woods for several nights, concealing money, clothes, watch, and other valuables in hollowed trees, waiting for his pregnant wife to give birth. As soon as she delivered a healthy daughter, Lee left his family to fend for itself and fled to Savannah.⁵⁹

In retaliation for rebel attacks on civilians, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Brown, commander of Fort Augusta, ordered the removal of hundreds of women and children, the families of rebel militiamen, in hopes of disrupting the rebels' ability to secure provisions and find sanctuary in the region. These newest refugees went north, over the mountains, into North Carolina with what few belongings they could carry.⁶⁰

Over the next year, the tide of war on the southern frontier turned in favor of the rebels. American victories at King's Mountain (October 1780) and Cowpens (January 1781) emboldened General Nathaniel Greene to take aim at British positions at Ninety-Six, South Carolina, and Augusta. By the end of June 1781, both posts fell to American forces. Two months later, a newly elected state legislature convened at Augusta and Governor Nathan Brownson issued a proclamation ordering "all such as may look on themselves as citizens" of the state to come home.⁶¹ Those who returned from the Carolinas or Virginia found a devastated countryside, with barns and fences burnt and

⁵⁹ Seymour, "Rev. James Seymour to Rev. Mr. Morice, April 26, 1781"; Lee, *The True and Interesting Travels of William Lee, Born at Hadfield, near Doncaster [electronic Resource]*, 29–30.

⁶⁰ Davies, "Extract of a Letter from the President of the Council of Georgia, to the Delegates of That State"; Hawes, "Miscellaneous Papers of James Jackson, 1781-1798, Part 1," 20.

⁶¹ Brownson, "A Proclamation"; Jones, *Biographical Sketches of the Delegates from Georgia to the Continental Congress*, 11–13.

fields overgrown. One man wrote, “This country is in the most wretched situation imaginable. . . . In short families who not long past lived in ease and affluence, are reduced almost to extremities of the most abject poverty.”⁶²

American victories—and some would claim atrocities—in the backcountry forced hundreds of refugees into Savannah. Governor Wright begged his superiors to provide provisions for the town, where “there is not a single Barrel of Beef or Pork to be Purchased . . . , even if I had the *Money* to buy it.” He eventually used his own money to purchase flour, beef, and pork for the militia and the many refugees who poured into town penniless, desperate, and afraid. By December 1781, the situation of the displaced people had grown so acute that the commons house appointed a five-man committee “to enquire into the distresses of the Back Country People who have taken shelter in Savannah from the barbarities of the Rebels.”⁶³

A war of plunder, retaliation, and destruction would drag on in Georgia for another year as General Anthony Wayne’s Continentals and state militia troops slogged towards Savannah and Governor Wright waited helplessly for reinforcements he knew would not arrive. Fewer than 300 soldiers, mainly Hessians, remained at Savannah, compared to twenty times that number in Charles Town. Even as he ordered loyal Georgians to burn their crops rather than let them fall into the hands of Wayne’s army, Wright grew increasingly bitter over the British military’s abandonment of the province.

⁶² Anonymous, “Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman at Augusta, in Georgia, Dated March 12 [1782].”

⁶³ Jenkins, “To Refugees and Other Persons in Distress.”

To his friend William Knox, he confided: “The Generals . . . have always Set their faces against this Province, as I have frequently Wrote you, and I can’t tell why, unless it is because the King has thought Proper to Re-establish his Civil Government here—which the Military Cannot bear.”⁶⁴ On 14 June 1782, the small garrison at Savannah received orders to evacuate, delivering Wright and his fellow loyalists a devastating final blow.⁶⁵

Over the next month, loyalists prepared to leave Georgia once again, many for the last time. Though “anxious to get away,” Chief Justice Anthony Stokes took time to receive Communion from Christopher Frederick Treibner, the Lutheran minister from Ebenezer, who was himself making plans to leave the province. Stokes explained that he had “endeavoured to prepare himself to meet the dispensations of providence; and to leave the world in peace with all men.” He acknowledged that he “had indeed spoken with great vehemence of the people in rebellion, whose cause he always condemned and opposed,” and he recognized that his actions had often irritated the British military commanders in America. Now that he faced a long journey and an uncertain future, he wished to apologize for any unchristian acts or language and “conciliate the favor of that being, on whom his existence momentarily depended.”⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Wright, “Gov. Sir Jas. Wright to Under Secretary Knox, February 16, 1782.”

⁶⁵ Stokes, *A Narrative of the Official Conduct of Anthony Stokes, of the Inner Temple London ... [electronic Resource]*, 92; *The Particular Case of the Georgia Loyalists*. Also see Wright, “Narrative of Governor Sir James Wright, September 3, 1782,” 116–19.

⁶⁶ Stokes, *A Narrative of the Official Conduct of Anthony Stokes, of the Inner Temple London ... [electronic Resource]*, 93–94.

While Stokes fretted about his soul, many of his fellow loyalists worried more about their property. Governor Wright arranged for a convoy of six ships to transport between 1,500 and 2,000 slaves belonging to him and Lieutenant Governor Graham and a dozen others to Jamaica. Men like David Russell, William Love and Matthew Lyle sold what they could and evacuated with the army as did free man of color George Bryan, who raised money for his and his family's fare by butchering hogs in the final days of royal Savannah.⁶⁷

Conclusion

In the midst of so much violence, destruction of property, and disruption to people's lives, evidence of the everyday business of governing gets lost. Yet, it is just that evidence that highlights what so many white Georgians fought for in the War for Independence. The freeholders of Wilkes County inhabited the so-called Ceded Lands north of Augusta, approximately 1.5 million acres conveyed by Creek and Cherokee headmen in exchange for forgiveness of their debts by the 1773 Treaty of Augusta. Political rebellion, the war that followed, and the constant threat of Indian war did not dissuade settlers from moving to the fertile, newly available acreage.

As was true in neighboring St. Paul Parish/Richmond County, many who settled in Wilkes came most recently from North and South Carolina, having migrated south from Pennsylvania or Virginia a generation before. Sturdy Scots-Irish, they brought with them a fierce Protestantism inspired by the mid-century awakenings that had created

⁶⁷ Rippon, "An Account of the Life of Mr. David George, from Sierra Leone in Africa; given by Himself in a Conversation with Brother Rippon of London, and Brother [Samuel] Pearce [1766-1799] of Birmingham."

armies of itinerant preachers who traveled the backcountry and brought the *Word* to isolated communities that rarely saw regular church services. Many had lived through (and some had taken part in) the Regulator movements that rocked South Carolina in the late 1760s and North Carolina a few years later. Although they were two distinct movements with different objectives and outcomes, the Carolina Regulators shared a fundamental concern for justice and a strong preference for local control of the courts.⁶⁸

Two volumes of early Wilkes County records reflect those same values. The first volume, labeled “Register Wilkes County” begins in December 1777 and continues through the end of the war. In it, a clerk recorded wills, estate inventories, and occasionally other legal transactions proved before Barnard Heard, the Register of Probate. The documents follow the conventions of the times. The wills open with the familiar “In the Name of God Amen,” and statements of the individual being of sound mind and weak body. The Estate inventories itemize slaves, livestock, and household goods and list the appraised value agreed upon by three or four men whose names appear at the bottom. The language used to appoint the appraisers echoes the formulaic construction used by colonial authorities for decades. At first look, the volume appears to be an ordinary eighteenth-century record of what later generations would call a court of ordinary or inferior court record. Its significance arises from the location of its creation (most likely Barnard Heard’s frontier home rather than the governor’s chamber in

⁶⁸ Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*; Kars, *Breaking Loose Together*.

Savannah) and the fact that Heard, not the governor, had the authority to appoint the men who would appraise the estates of the deceased.⁶⁹

The second volume contains minutes of the earliest grand jury sessions and the first criminal cases tried in Wilkes County. The British conquest of Georgia in 1778 disrupted the scheduled meetings of county courts outlined in the constitution. In the areas of the province under British control, no county courts would meet until after the British evacuation in 1782; but in August 1779, the state's executive council ordered that courts convene in Richmond and Wilkes Counties, which rebels controlled. On 26 August, the Wilkes County Court of General Sessions convened, perhaps for the first time.⁷⁰ Over the next several days, the grand jury returned bills of indictment against ten men for crimes ranging from hog stealing to treason against the state. The judges held one case for the next session to allow the state to produce its witnesses. Petit juries convicted nine defendants and the court sentenced all of the men to death by hanging the first week in September. Because the jurors had recommended mercy in some cases, the justices forwarded the court's verdicts to the executive council for review of the sentencing. The executive council, which included a man whose brother had been hanged because of his actions in support of the North Carolina Regulation, voted to pardon seven

⁶⁹ Wilkes County Probate Court, Miscellaneous Estate Records, 1778-1864, microfilm, Georgia Archives.

⁷⁰ No records of earlier sessions exist and no references to earlier sessions appear in other sources. Wilkes County Superior Court, Minutes, 1778-1904, microfilm, Georgia Archives and published in Davidson, *Early Records of Georgia ... / Abstracted and Compiled by Grace Gillam Davidson (Mrs. John Lee)*, 417-26.

of the condemned men if they agreed to serve on “one of the vessels of War of the United States.”⁷¹

In any other state, these records would excite little attention and carry only slight significance. In Georgia, however, they represented the creation of a truly new democratic order in which freeholders exercised direct control over the structures and practices of government. The Constitution of 1777 located power in the new counties and the freeholders of Wilkes intended to use it.

⁷¹ Candler, *The Revolutionary Records of the State of Georgia ... / Comp. and Pub. under Authority of the Legislature by Allen D. Candler*, 2: 177–78.

Chapter Six: Reconstruction

On July 12, 1782, Lt. Colonel James Jackson and his Georgia Light Dragoons led a procession of civil officials into the streets of Savannah to reclaim the capital in the name of the sovereign state of Georgia. Over the next several years, they and others across the state determined who could claim citizenship in this new political community. They did so against the backdrop of the slow, yet deliberate, redevelopment of plantation agriculture and Atlantic trade networks in the coastal region and the rapid migration into and expansion of markets in the Savannah River and western regions of the state. Like other parts of the American confederacy, Georgia suffered chronic shortages of specie and rampant speculation in land in the 1780s. Unlike many other areas, however, Georgia enjoyed something of a boom as settlers streamed to its fertile upcountry acreage to take advantage of the state's generous land policies and welcoming embrace of slave labor.

By the time of the first federal census in 1790, Georgia's population had more than doubled from Governor Wright's estimate of 33,000 in 1773 to 82,000. It would almost double again in the final decade of the eighteenth century, exceeding 162,000 in the 1800 Census. Even before the invention of the cotton gin in 1793, the settlers who poured into Georgia from Virginia and the Carolinas brought with them at first hundreds then thousands of slaves to clear the piedmont forests and raise tobacco, foodstuffs, and cattle. Despite the removal of at least 2,500 Loyalist-owned slaves in the British evacuation and widespread reports of runaways in the disruption of war, the state's enslaved population grew from an estimated 12,000 to 15,000 before the war to more

than 29,000 in 1790. The number of non-free Georgians would more than double to just over 60,000 by 1800.

This chapter focuses on two overlapping issues of the post-war decade. The first section follows early efforts to punish loyalists and to purge the state of men deemed dangerous to the new republic. The second part explores how postwar Georgians exercised their new political authority, not in the legislature, which has received considerable scholarly attention, but in the grand jury, a forum that deserves closer attention from historians.

Settling Scores

In August 1782, as hundreds of professed enemies to American independence sailed away from Georgia, the state's assembly turned to the important work of ensuring that no "improper or Disaffected Persons" settled in the state. Members passed a law requiring all immigrants from other states to produce certificates attesting to their "Attachment to the Liberties and Independence" of America as well as to their individual "honesty, Probity, and Industry." The law went on to ban natives of Scotland who had not "exerted themselves" on behalf of America and threatened "idle and disorderly" white men who could not satisfy a magistrate of their good character with compulsory military service. These measures, the legislators declared, were "absolutely necessary for the peace safety and Good Government of this State." Historian Kenneth Coleman referred to this law as the state's first effort to define citizenship, a claim that has significant merit but overlooks similarities between this act and the 1777 law that established loyalty committees in order to purge the state of internal enemies (see chapter

4 above). Indeed, both measures reflected deep and widespread fears about pretended friends who hid amongst good citizens, fears that mirrored white concerns about slave violence.¹

In 1782 and 1783, worries over internal threats to political order found expression in ongoing debates about loyalists who wished to remain in the state. Although Georgia enacted some of the harshest laws against loyalists, it could not possibly punish all who had taken oaths of allegiance to the king during the years of restored royal government. Instead, state leaders carried out very public auctions of select loyalists' estates even as they relaxed penalties against men whose social connections made their exclusion politically untenable. Georgians who opposed lenient treatment of men they viewed as enemies revived claims that family connection—"ties of consanguinity" as Governor Treutlen characterized them in 1777—compromised allegiance. After commanding public attention in the first two years after the British evacuation, the treatment of loyalists quietly receded from public debate as state leaders turned to land, an issue that never failed to hold Georgians' interest.

Confiscation and Banishment

After years of bitter rhetoric and bruising battle, Georgians disagreed among themselves about whether and how to re-integrate loyalists into their communities in 1782. While one leading rebel proclaimed his willingness "to forgive everyone now the war is at an end," sixteen-year-old Mary Clay vowed to choose carefully "what persons I

¹ CRG 19 pt 2, pp. 162-66; Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, 200.

associate with” for the “great while” it would take “before the animosity of parties subsides.”² Most members of the state’s assembly shared Mary Clay’s sentiment, at least initially, and in May 1782, they ordered 272 men to leave the state and forfeit half their property in the Act of Confiscation and Banishment. Listed by county of residence, the condemned men included royal officeholders, British and Scottish merchants, wealthy planters, middling farmers, three ordained ministers, and at least two Baptist preachers. Some of those named had never wavered in their loyalty to the king and Parliament; others had joined the British cause only after the fall of Charles Town, when prospects for American victory appeared bleak. Most had built careers, fortunes, and families in the province before the war; but a few had first moved to Georgia during the period of restored royal government and had no family in America.³

In mid-June, a month before the British evacuated Savannah, the Board of Commissioners for the Sales of Confiscated Estates auctioned properties seized from Governor Wright and several of his close associates. Other tracts sold that day included Lieutenant Governor John Graham’s Mulberry Grove plantation and Knoxville, the property of William Knox, the former colonial agent who had vigorously defended the Stamp Act. As further insult to Governor Wright, a committee charged with securing

² Lambert, “The Confiscation of Loyalist Property in Georgia, 1782-1786,” 89–90. Clay, “Mary Clay Letter, Circa 1783.” The library, following the donor’s instruction, dates the letter as 1783. However, Mary’s father Joseph Clay wrote in January 1783 that he had recently returned from a trip to “bring my family from Camden” to Savannah. Mary most likely wrote this letter to her sister Nancy in the fall of 1782. See Joseph Clay to Mr. John Green, Newbern, January 20, 1783, in Clay, *Letters of Joseph Clay Merchant of Savannah 1776-1793*, 170–71.

³ *RRG*: 1, 373-97.

land for American generals Nathaniel Greene and Anthony Wayne selected more than 4,000 acres formerly belonging to him and his son Alexander.⁴

A week later, the commissioners met at James Butler's White Oak Plantation to dispose of Liberty County properties, many of which they had seized from British and Scottish merchants in Sunbury. One of the first lots sold belonged to attorney John Glen, who had entered the war firmly attached to the American cause and shifted allegiance only after the fall of Charles Town. Glen's defection to the British had incensed his former rebel colleagues, perhaps especially his father-in-law, the rebel stalwart Noble Wimberly Jones. Commissioners also sold several properties of merchant-turned-planter Thomas Young, who had angered his neighbors as early as 1765, when he helped Governor Wright enforce the Stamp Act. (His was the only vessel to leave Georgia with legally stamped papers.)⁵

Commissioners traveled to Ebenezer in early July to sell land and other property seized from Effingham County loyalists, beginning with 500 acres belonging to the Reverend Christopher Frederick Triebner. The "late Minister of the German Congregation at Ebenezer," had earned the ire of liberty men by using "his Influence with those under his charge to prevent their joining" the rebels at the start of the Revolution and later welcoming the British re-conquest and restoration of government. Other property sold in Effingham County included cattle seized from the Florida Scout Matthew Lyle, blacksmith's tools and livestock from Philip Dill, Jr., and cattle from

⁴ RRG 1: 414-68.

⁵ Young, "Loyalist Claim of Thomas Young."

Henry Cooper and several of his kinsmen, notorious plunderers of livestock and slaves throughout the war.⁶

Next, commissioners moved to John Thomas's 600-acre plantation in Burke County. Although he later described himself as a "strenuous opposer of the Measures of Congress against the British Interest," Thomas led the county's patriot militia at the start of the war and served on a committee responsible for overseeing seized loyalist property in 1778. With the restoration of royal authority in 1779, however, he renounced his commission and raised a loyalist unit that fought against the same men he had once led. As the commissioners auctioned his land, furnishings, and farm equipment, Thomas was settling his family into life in East Florida, where they would live for three years before moving on to Nova Scotia.⁷

Amercement and Relief

Not all men denounced as traitors left the state. In August, the assembly passed a bill allowing ninety-three men named in the confiscation act to escape banishment by paying fines or performing military service. Several members of the wealthy and well-connected Houstoun family regained citizenship through amercement as did the merchant James Mossman and the physician John Irvine. Legislators offered printer James Johnston the option of amercement so that he could revive the state's only newspaper and publish journals of the house of assembly for "the Information of the publick." Men of

⁶ Triebner, "Loyalist Claim of Christopher Frederick Triebner." Quote is from John Graham to the Claims Commission, 2 August 1786, microfilm frames 419-420, digital frames 492-93. Effingham County sales appear in *RRG* 1: 504-23.

⁷ Thomas, "Loyalist Claim of John Thomas," microfilm frame 468, digital frame 532.

lesser fortune, many from Savannah River settlements in Burke and Effingham Counties and the western counties of Richmond and Wilkes, agreed to serve two years in the state legion in return for restoration of voting rights and other privileges after three years.⁸

Loyalists still subject to confiscation and banishment who wished to return to Georgia spent the next several years lobbying for relief through family and personal networks. Wives and mothers of exiled men flooded the governor and assembly with petitions, employing rhetorical conventions that emphasized the petitioners' feminine vulnerability. Sarah Jones explained that she had lost one son "in the service of Georgia" and another to "a fever he received in the defence of Charles Town," when she appealed for her son-in-law John Glen's rehabilitation. The full burden of supporting her daughter and six grandchildren would fall on Sarah and her husband unless the governments of South Carolina and Georgia restored Glen's property and ability to practice law. Releasing Glen from his punishment, she argued, would relieve his extended family, a family that had suffered considerably for America's independence.⁹

The most compelling appeals for re-instatement came not from the men themselves or even from family members, but from members of the community whose

⁸ RRG 3: 221.

⁹ Kierner, *Southern Women in Revolution, 1776-1800*, 33–35; Candler, *The Revolutionary Records of the State of Georgia ... / Comp. and Pub. under Authority of the Legislature by Allen D. Candler.*, 3: 245. On reintegration of South Carolina loyalists, see Brannon, "Reconciling the Revolution." Brannon's evidence suggests that South Carolina established a robust system of public hearings at which loyalists and their supporters (and opponents) could present evidence of character and behavior to local committees, which then made recommendations to the legislature. South Carolina adopted a more general lifting of banishment and confiscation than was the case in Georgia.

testimonials of an individual's usefulness or uprightness of character often persuaded legislators to relax sanctions.¹⁰ Sixteen men and ten women, all "faithful & Loyal Whig Inhabitants in and about the Town of Savannah," petitioned on behalf of Dr. Andrew Johnston, whose "medical abilities" would prove useful to the community.¹¹ Nearly three dozen former Continental Army officers signed a memorial supporting Thomas Young, the Liberty County merchant-planter who had helped Governor Wright enforce the Stamp Act. He had, they explained, opened his home to American officers held prisoner in Sunbury. Through his hospitality, he displayed "a conduct, in those days, not very Common." As further evidence of his worthiness, the men reported that, after the war, Young worked "to Secure Such Negroes as had run away from their lawful owners" in Georgia. He located and returned more than forty slaves to rebel owners, a service that earned him the gratitude of even the most partisan of his Georgia neighbors.¹²

Thomas Young simultaneously sought to recover confiscated property in Georgia and to receive compensation from the Loyalist Claims Commission in Britain. While exiled in Charles Town and later East Florida, he settled his wife and family in a rented home in Savannah, keeping "an open house" there from 1782 through 1785 in order "to

¹⁰ Brannon, "Reconciling the Revolution" demonstrates that this was the case in South Carolina.

¹¹ "Petition of the Faithful & Loyal Whig Inhabitants in and about the Town of Savannah on Behalf of Dr. Andrew Johnston."

¹² Robert Scott Davis, *Georgia Citizens and Soldiers of the American Revolution* / by Robert S. Davis, Jr., 80–82. Young included a contemporary copy of this petition in his loyalist claim, microfilm frames 344-45, digital frames 416-17, in Young, "Loyalist Claim of Thomas Young." Also see Hall, *Land & Allegiance in Revolutionary Georgia*, 169.

accommodate his friends and to remove the prejudices of his Enemies.” He assiduously followed public sales of confiscated properties in Georgia and arranged for friends to purchase his former properties. His loyalist claim contains certificates from state authorities documenting post-war sales of confiscated properties as well as regular updates of Young’s steady recovery of his lands.¹³

Young’s efforts to make his fortune whole after the war reveal an exceptionally shrewd, pragmatic, and tenacious business sense. His argumentation and documentation rivaled those of the most prominent Georgia loyalists, led by former Governor James Wright and, after Wright’s death, former Lieutenant Governor John Graham, who established themselves as fierce lobbyists, going so far as to publish a pamphlet on the “particular case” of loyalists who supported Georgia’s restored civil government. What distinguished Young from these men, however, was his unwavering determination to remain in Georgia and the considerable support he garnered among Georgians to allow him to stay.¹⁴

Others bitterly accepted their fate. Henry Cooper, an acknowledged plunderer who led a band of horse and cattle thieves for much of the war, nevertheless refused to go quietly. In August 1783, Cooper addressed a bitter farewell to “the Inhabitants of Georgia,” in which he promised, “Whatever Mischief may be Done from this Day forward, it shall not be by me or by my orders.” He pledged to leave the country as soon as possible. “I Do not pretend to Excuse my Self,” he wrote, but “I can assure you, all

¹³ Young, “Loyalist Claim of Thomas Young.”

¹⁴ *The Particular Case of the Georgia Loyalists.*

good men, that you have men among you call^d good Whigs who are as great Villains as Henry Cooper.”¹⁵

James Herriot, another loyalist forced to leave, responded to his banishment with a sarcastic rhyme he asked James Johnston to print in the *Georgia Gazette*. Herriot had lived in Savannah for two decades, first practicing his trade as a cooper and then venturing into commerce. In 1776, he helped Governor Wright and other British officials escape imprisonment before fleeing to New York himself. When Georgia fell to British troops at the end of 1778, Herriot returned to Savannah where he operated a commercial house and served in the royal assembly. At the evacuation, he went to Charles Town and waited for an opportunity to plead his case before the legislature. When word that peace commissioners had agreed on preliminary terms of the treaty that would formally end the war, Herriot thought the time was right to travel to Georgia and seek permission to return permanently:

I thought they'd strike me from their bills,
 And clear me of such plagues and ills. . . .
 With wind and tide too in my tail,
 I steer'd along with oar and sail;
 Well stock'd with wine and British beer,
 Good old Jamaica, and such like cheer;
 Said to myself, "Now men are civil
 "They'll treat me well, I'll fear no evil;
 "The Tories now are but in name,
 "The law sure ne're will be the same.
 Alas I was for once mistak'n
 Though not by any friend forsaken.

¹⁵ *GG* September 4, 1783; original dated August 17, 1783.

Upon docking at a Savannah wharf, Herriot learned that the assembly had adjourned after just a few days and would not convene again until August. Disappointed, he wandered through the town only to hear the next morning that his arrival had spurred much whispering among former associates:

“James Herriot’s come, by God it’s true;
 “He was proscribe’d, is in the *Bill*,
 “He’ll be secur’d like thief in mill,
 “They’ll sweat his person and his purse,
 “And for his health give him a Nurse,¹⁶
 “For which he’ll pay both deep and dear,
 “And be confin’d perhaps a year.
 “Says one, if he were my own brother,
 “Poor man, he’s wrong in coming hither, . . .
 So thus they talk’d of me poor Herriot
 As if as bad as an Iscariot . . .
 Said they, “the Tories swarming here,
 “Will overrun us ev’rywhere,
 “Will all be with us in a trice,
 “And spread among us ev’ry vice.

Herriot’s friends warned him that at least one well-known Whig wanted to arrest him:

But being suspicious and aware,
 I look’d well out and took good care,
 Oft chang’d my quarters and my house,
 When chas’d and hunted like a mouse.
 Thinks I, this trade will never do,
 I’ll push my boat, and bid adieu
 To all my friends and hearty fellows,
 That never wish’d me on the gallows;
 So off I came, quite vexd with kings,
 And ministers, those worthless things.

¹⁶ A note in the original explained that by “Nurse,” the author meant the Sheriff.

Herriot returned to Charles Town, still hoping to remain in America, but in the fall, an anti-Tory mob beat him “until he was deaf and stupid.” Ordered once again to leave America, Herriot sold his inventory and sailed for England.¹⁷

James Herriot badly misjudged the political climate of 1783. Although most Americans welcomed news of the peace (as he clearly did), many expressed concern about sections in the preliminary treaty that dealt with loyalists and their property. The treaty distinguished three classes of loyalists: (1) so-called “real British subjects” who could legally have fought with the British in the war; (2) residents of British lands who did not take up arms, which would include non-combatants who had fled to East Florida or the Bahamas or Britain; and (3) all others, a vaguely general class. It also prohibited future confiscations and prosecutions and provided for the immediate release of prisoners confined at the time of the treaty’s ratification. And, it called on Congress to “earnestly recommend” that states restore rights and all estates and property to the first two classes and allow the third class to return or remain in America for twelve months “unmolested in their endeavours to obtain the restitution of such of their estates, rights and properties as may have been confiscated.”¹⁸

From New England to Georgia, word of the treaty’s language of conciliation provoked anti-loyalist editorials, public meetings, and petitions that testified to

¹⁷ Herriot’s rhyme, titled “Reflections,” appeared in the *Georgia Gazette* May 29, 1783. An account of Herriot’s beating in Charleston is included in Herriot, “Loyalist Claim of James Herriot.”

¹⁸ The Definitive Treaty of Peace 1783, Articles 5 and 6 accessed at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/paris.asp.

simmering anger about the war and popular anxiety about the stability of state and national governments.¹⁹ In a letter to the *Boston Evening Post* later reprinted in the *South Carolina Weekly Gazette*, BURTUS rejected any suggestion that Americans extend mercy to loyalists, whom he branded a “POISONOUS ROOT.” Of course the British wanted to rid themselves of “Tories [who] have ever given the British Ministry more trouble than any set of people in the nation,” the author argued. That did not mean that Americans should forget that these very men had wanted “to conquer and destroy us” and “would have nipped our oppositions in embryo.” Now, “with feigned friendship,” they wanted to return to their country “and JUDAS like betray their SAVIOURS with a KISS.”²⁰ The sense that loyalists had betrayed fellow Americans reinforced and revived concerns about the strength of political commitments even among those who had ostensibly supported independence.²¹

In Georgia, the imminence of peace provoked an almost demagogic desire to engage in another round of loyalty tests reminiscent of the bitter partisan contest of the Gwinnett-McInstosh feud and the loyalty committees of 1777. Many Georgians, including Governor Lyman Hall (who had served on the Liberty County loyalty committee), believed that well-placed friends and family had already extended leniency too far. When, in July 1783, the general assembly voted to remove John Glen, Thomas

¹⁹ Jacobs, “The Treaty and the Tories,” 64–84; quote on p. 64.

²⁰ *South Carolina Weekly Gazette* June 21, 1783.

²¹ Roberta Tansman Jacobs charted the occasionally violent response to those provisions, which began in March and peaked in June, July and August 1783 in Jacobs, “The Treaty and the Tories,” 59–89; Lamplugh, *Politics on the Periphery*, 29–33.

Young, and several others from the confiscation act, Hall and others seized a procedural technicality to challenge whether the assembly's resolution had the force of law because the assembly had not passed an amercement act as it had done a year earlier. Attorney General Samuel Stirk pointed to a "maxim in law, that it requires the same strength to dissolve as to create an obligation," and ruled that the assembly could not simply "resolve" to move the men from the confiscation act onto the amercement act.

Glen, Young, and the others remained subject to confiscation and banishment regardless of the assembly's intent and in defiance of what was widely known to be the spirit of the impending peace. For extra measure, and to reassure Georgians that the state government would not coddle its enemies, the governor and the executive council ordered the attorney general's opinion published in the *Gazette*.²²

Through the summer and fall of 1783, anti-loyalist sentiment grew in Georgia as elsewhere in America, stoked by the revival of political associations and practices that recalled the inter-colonial response to the Intolerable Acts nearly a decade before. In June, the *Georgia State Gazette* printed the Boston Town Meeting's resolve to "oppose every enemy to the just rights and liberties of mankind," especially "certain ingrates, most of them natives of these states, and who have been refugees and declared traitors to their country." Members of the meeting agreed, with just one dissenting vote, that loyalists "ought never to be suffered to return," and should instead "be excluded from having lot or portion among us." Three months later, having learned that several other states had once again followed Boston's lead, "a great number of respectable characters"

²² Lamplugh, *Politics on the Periphery*, 30–32. *GSG* August 21, 1783.

from Savannah invoked “honour, and everything that is dear and sacred” and vowed that to prevent “particularly obnoxious” men from finding asylum in the state.²³

On October 1, a reported 263 “Associators” gathered at the Chatham County court house to pledge their support for the “Laws and Constitutional freedom” for which they had fought and to demonstrate their resolve against allowing the state to become a safe harbor for loyalists. They urged the governor to strictly enforce the Act of Confiscation and Banishment and promised to support “with their lives and fortunes” the executive’s efforts to remove obnoxious persons from the state. The Associators also resolved to both publish their resolves and to send circular letters urging other counties to take similar action. In early November, the men of Effingham gathered and adopted identical resolves. At October sessions of superior courts in Burke and Wilkes Counties, grand jurors named names. The Burke Grand Jury issued a presentment against two women accused of “harbouring outliers” and seventeen men for “having violated their allegiance to the state” and helping the British to “subjugate this country.” In Wilkes, grand jurors presented as “a great grievance” that the state’s confiscation act had failed to name twenty-two men from their community.²⁴

At the end of November just one week before assembly elections, a letter to the “Freemen Electors” of the state took up most of the first page of James Johnston’s *Gazette*. The author styled himself *MENTOR* and adopted a tone befitting the name. Likening the state and the nation to a young man standing “on the stage of probation” and

²³ *GSG* 12 June 1783 and 25 September 1783.

²⁴ *GSG* 1 October 1783 and 28 November 1783.

about to form “an indelible impression of esteem or contempt,” he turned attention away from the frenzied hunt for secret enemies and focused instead on the state’s dire economic position. “Have you more than one European ship in port?” he asked. “Can you purchase any article at less than 50 or 100 per cent on the Charleston prices?” The answer to both questions was “no.” *MENTOR* minced few words in assigning blame to members of the last assembly who had allowed the sales of confiscated estates to fuel speculation rather than rebuild the state’s credit. Even worse, he suggested, many members of the assembly had themselves defaulted on payments owed the state. “Elect no man because he is noisy, nor reject every man who may have taken protection or have sought refuge in another country . . . ; But for God’s sake, and your country’s, elect no publick defaulter.”²⁵

Considering the anti-loyalist fervor on display through most of 1783, *MENTOR*’s recommendation that electors not reject a candidate solely because he had taken protection from the British or sought safety outside of Georgia during the war seems like exactly the kind of language that would spark an angry response in the next issue of the *Gazette*. Instead, the fever appears to have broken with the election. When the newly elected assembly convened in January 1784, members expressed more interest in settling scores with now-former Governor Hall over legislative powers than with worrying about loyalists. The assembly “reaffirmed the validity of its amercement policy,” and moved on to more timely debates about fiscal and land policies.²⁶

²⁵ *GSG* 27 November 1783.

²⁶ Lamplugh, *Politics on the Periphery*, 46–47.

In 1785, the legislature removed Thomas Young, John Glen, Andrew Johnson, and fifteen others from the confiscation act, granting full rights of citizenship to four men and providing for the others to regain their rights to vote, serve on juries, and hold office after fourteen years. The legislature also permitted two others banished by the 1782 act, Solomon Kemp and John Mulryne, to stay in the state for seven years “without molestation or injury” and restored Kemp’s unsold property to his wife and children. Similar acts followed every year or so through the 1780s and beyond, restoring rights and privileges to men named in the 1782 Act of Confiscation and Banishment, extending the vote to men in the amercement acts, and vesting confiscated yet unsold property in the hands of their heirs. In 1787, Henrietta Goldwire recovered lands that had belonged to her deceased husband John after she married Philip Hornsby, a good Whig. Elizabeth Sharp, the daughter of John Thomas, whose Burke County plantation had been among the first parcels sold by commissioners of confiscated estates in 1782, had her father’s unsold properties restored to her in 1788.²⁷

Over time, the state relaxed sanctions against 122 or 45% of men named in the 1782 act. When President George Washington visited Savannah on his tour of the southern states in 1791, the city’s welcome party included Mayor Thomas Gibbons, one of the many former Loyalists restored to citizenship in the 1780s. Ten years later, at the dawn of the nineteenth century, Governor Josiah Tatnall, whose youth had prevented him from playing a role for most of the war, signed a law that removed his father and

²⁷ Watkins and Watkins, *A Digest of the Laws of the State of Georgia [electronic Resource]*, 306–7, 347, 378–79, 381.

namesake from the Act of Confiscation and Banishment—a poignant close to Georgia’s long and bitter war.²⁸

Settling Into the Peace

In the last decades of the eighteenth century, thousands of men moved their families from the long-settled and long-cultivated acres of the eastern states to new lands. New Yorkers and New Englanders headed north to settle Vermont and Maine before turning west to the Ohio Territory. Pennsylvanians, Virginians, and North Carolinians went west and south to Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Georgia. They made individual decisions based on what they knew about the productivity of lands they, their families and, in some cases, their slaves, had cultivated for one or more generations. They weighed reports of native peoples and their resistance to encroachment on the lands coveted by American settlers and their prospects for prosperity in the new territories against accounts from relatives and neighbors who had already made the move.

While many men decided to relocate in the decade after the close of the American Revolution, not all of them did so by choice. Crippling debt, shortage of specie, and desperate creditors forced thousands to load the few possessions spared from the auction block and seek new beginnings elsewhere. Many of these families joined the waves of squatters or “white Indians” in the Ohio Valley or became what Georgians derisively termed Crackers or hunters—rootless individuals and families who left few traces in legal documents and just passing references in other sources. A 1782 law threatening white

²⁸ On Gibbons, see Lamplugh, *Politics on the Periphery*, 65–70; Coulter, “Presidential Visits to Georgia During Ante-Bellum Times.”

men with no visible means of support with compulsory military service made it clear that Georgia would not welcome displaced poor from other parts of America.²⁹

The state adopted two means of attracting settlement by the right sort, by which leaders meant industrious and honest men committed to American independence and liberty. First, it extended bounty land warrants to all men who could produce certificates from commanding officers documenting they had fought in the late war. Next, the assembly re-instituted a headright system and limited the number of acres awarded for slaves to 1,000. By limiting acreage granted for slaves, the assembly intended to prevent individuals from accumulating vast uncultivated estates and, instead, to give hand to men whose families would settle and improve it. The Land Office Act of 1783 granted the authority to issue warrants to county justices of the peace, essentially relegating the governor and, indeed, the state, to passive roles in the distribution of public lands. This decentralized system at once reflected the political power of counties under the Constitution of 1777 and expanded local officials' authority.³⁰

In 1784, the assembly created Washington and Franklin Counties, and two years later, Greene County—adding as many as thirty seats to the legislature, empowering new county land courts to issue more land grants, and requiring the appointment of still more county officials, including county surveyors, constables, sheriffs, probate registers, tax

²⁹ Nobles, *American Frontiers*; Bouton, *Taming Democracy*; Candler and Knight, *The Colonial Records of the State of Georgia*, 19 pt 2, 162–66.

³⁰ Heath, *Constructive Liberalism*, 84–92, 93–95.

collectors. (In 1790, Franklin had just 225 white males over sixteen years of age and the coastal counties of Camden and Glynn reported eight-one and seventy respectively.)³¹

This boisterous expansion of civil jurisdictions troubled observers who feared both corruption and the crippling expense of administration—two evils associated with the late colonial government that they feared would undermine the experiment of independence. “Frugality, economy, and industry ought always appear conspicuous in a republican government,” wrote *A Citizen*, who advocated a smaller legislature and lower salaries for state officers. “The means of acquiring an affluent fortune formerly was a close and unremitting application to a trade, commerce, or cultivation, but at present the votaries of a fickle goddess are hangers on upon government, and as beasts of prey, fatten upon the carcass of their country as they devour it.”³²

Notwithstanding critics’ concerns about the corrupting potential of so many new offices, the state’s expansive political culture offered extraordinary opportunities for men moving from more settled areas of the Confederation to participate in local government and to define their communities’ values and directions. The next section focuses on the

³¹ Candler and Knight, *The Colonial Records of the State of Georgia*, 19 pt.2, 292–304; United States. Census Office, *Return of the Whole Number of Persons within the Several Districts of the United States [electronic Resource]*, according to “An Act Providing for the Enumeration of the Inhabitants of the United States;” Passed March the First, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety-One [i.e., 1790].

³² *Gazette of the State of Georgia* 10 January 1783. As discussed in chapter 4, the Constitution of 1777 allowed new counties to send one representative for every ten electors and capped the number of representatives at ten once a county had one hundred electors. Compare with the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which allowed representation in the state assembly when a district or county had 5,000 free male inhabitants. http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/nworder.asp.

state's grand juries as sites of vital political engagement for a broad section of the state's new settlers.

The Bulwark of Liberty

At least since the 1820s and 1830s, the right to vote has served as the defining marker of citizenship and its expansion has served as a register of the condition of the nation's democracy. Historic restrictions on access to the ballot box based on property, gender and race provoked the epic struggles to broaden the electorate that serve as touchstones of the heroic American narrative. Georgia's Constitution of 1777 not only expanded suffrage by lowering property requirements, it also imposed penalties for failing to vote. Yet the few returns we have of elections suggest that only a fraction of men eligible to vote did so. (Abbot found that only one in six adult white males voted in Georgia's congressional election of 1790.)³³

By concentrating first on electoral and legislative politics and then on the cultural politics of the people out of doors, scholars have overlooked another facet of participatory government, one that played a crucial role in framing popular understanding of citizenship in the early republic.³⁴ When the assembly removed former loyalists from the penalties of confiscation and banishment, among the rights and privileges restored was jury service. Seen today as more of a burden than a privilege, jury service denoted a level of standing in the eighteenth century. This was especially true in the case of grand

³³ Abbot, "The Structure of Politics in Georgia," 55; Keyssar, *The Right to Vote*.

³⁴ See, for example, Holton, *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution*; Irvin, *Clothed in Robes of Sovereignty*; Pasley, Robertson, and Waldstreicher, *Beyond the Founders*; Smith, *The Freedoms We Lost*.

jurors, whose names appeared at the bottom of presentments regularly published in newspapers and who took seriously their very public exercise of civic responsibility.³⁵

By the 1780s, the grand jury was a 700-year old institution long viewed as an independent “bulwark of the rights and privileges” of a free people in both England and America. Originally intended as a check against false charges, the grand jury’s first purpose was to ensure that government had sufficient evidence linking an individual to a criminal act before subjecting the accused to the expense and trouble of defending a charge at trial. Over time, grand jurors expanded their role beyond criminal matters to include commentary on officeholders and the government itself. A 1783 Georgia grand jury proclaimed that the panel represented “the surest, most natural, and constitutional mode of knowing the grievances of the citizens.”³⁶

Georgia’s constitution called for grand juries to meet two times a year in each county on rotation beginning in Chatham, moving upriver to Wilkes and returning inland to reach the coastal counties of Liberty, Camden, and Glynn. The chief justice, whom the assembly appointed annually, convened sessions of the general court (which included both the grand jury and superior or trial court) with two local assistant justices, also

³⁵ My point here is engagement rather than representativeness per se. The twenty year-old discussion among J.R. Pole, James A. Henretta and James D. Rice, Bruce Mann, and Peter C. Hoffer focused on a model of competing interests sharing a courtroom and determining outcome. For 1780s Georgia, I am more intrigued by the potential impact that publishing summary proceedings might have had on the developing notion of political community.

³⁶ Younger, *The People’s Panel the Grand Jury in the United States, 1634-1941*, 2. GSG April 8, 1783. See chapter 2 above for discussion of the June 1770 grand jury.

legislative appointees. County sheriffs summoned panels of jurors who risked fines if they failed to serve.

Two official documents emerged from a grand jury session: a charge in which the presiding judge instructed grand jurors about their duties and highlighted issues the jury might examine, and presentments in which the jurors announced whether they believed the state had sufficient evidence to pursue charges against accused criminals and commented on public matters they had discussed in session. In the 1760s, with the publication of the *Georgia Gazette*, colonial juries adopted the practice of ordering publication of their presentments. In the 1780s, they frequently ordered publication of the charge and the presentments, the common English practice.³⁷

The Chief Justice's Charge

Scholars agree that Georgia's early judiciary had little independent authority. Justices, including the chief justice, owed their tenure completely to the legislature, and, they did not have appellate jurisdiction. The chief justices convened courts and could respond to questions, but jurors decided matters of law as well as fact—no legal expertise required. Yet, despite the office's apparent weakness office, Georgia's chief justice also enjoyed unparalleled visibility because he traveled the state, regularly meeting with county leaders and ordinary citizens in all regions. Alone among state leaders and other politically ambitious men, he had a regular and recurring platform from which he addressed pressing issues of the day—local, state, and national—and he could count on

³⁷ Lamoine, *Charges to the Grand Jury, 1689-1803*, 5–6; Pole, *Contract & Consent*, 100–1.

one or more newspapers to print his remarks. The platform of course was his charge to the grand jury, a staple of English legal practice since at least the sixteenth century.³⁸

Grand jury charges delivered through the mid-1780s reflect the fact that communities were plagued by differing rates of recovery from the war's devastations. In the first of three consecutive terms as chief justice (1783-85), George Walton congratulated Richmond County for Augusta's economic prospects and praised local efforts to open an academy to educate the region's youth. In Effingham and Burke Counties, he cautioned against "too readily indulging strangers" and urged the Burke grand jury to "drag to publick justice" anyone suspected of sheltering plunders and miscreants. In Wilkes, Walton highlighted the "sacred and important" role played by justices of the peace and called on them to do their jobs and establish order or risk losing "the effects of that freedom and independence which you have so gallantly fought for." Closing the circuit in Liberty County, he acknowledged that the area's citizens "drank deeply in the stream of distress" during the war, and suggested that residents honor their common sacrifices by working to "perfect and perpetuate" the new system of government.³⁹

In 1784, attorney Walton expressed frustration at the proliferation of lawsuits pouring into courthouses. He urged court officers in Burke County to dissuade people from filing "trifling and litigious" civil actions and congratulated Liberty County residents for not indulging the "passion for suits" that had taken root elsewhere in the

³⁸ Lamoine, *Charges to the Grand Jury, 1689-1803*, 6; Pole, *Contract & Consent*, 99-100.

³⁹ Krauss, *Gentlemen of the Grand Jury*, 44, 45, 46, 47-48, 49.

state. Efforts by loyalists and their agents to recover pre-1776 debts especially angered him. He warned against relaxing restrictions on men named in the confiscation and banishment act and lamented that good citizens would suffer if the state failed to enforce the law. Walton condemned the “technical phraseology” of English laws and called on the legislature and the courts to guard against the pernicious influence of that “species of supremacy” found in laws that had originated in Britain.

Concerns about the state’s finances found expression in Walton’s grand jury charges, as did worries about the stability of the American confederation. He recognized that both the state and national governments needed reliable revenue streams and supported efforts to tax property and imported goods. When the state imposed a general tax in 1785, Walton encouraged county courts to collect what residents owed expeditiously. He also recommended that if the national government did not impose a “sufficient impost” on ready-made furniture, the state should. Such a measure would raise much-needed revenue and protect the interests of the “ingenious, industrious and useful mechanics” of Georgia who otherwise would suffer from cheap imports from foreign markets.⁴⁰

Walton’s three years as chief justice proved anomalous. Between 1786 and 1789, the assembly elected four different men into the role and grand jury charges became predictable recitations against immorality and in favor of better roads, honoring the Sabbath, and educating children.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 1: 62, 58, 78.

In 1789, Virginia-raised Nathaniel Pendleton assumed the post of chief justice and, although he held the office for just one term before moving on to a federal judgeship, Pendleton's eloquent charges promoted national Federalist policies and signaled a new political tone with a more national perspective.⁴¹ He welcomed the federal constitution and urged states to make necessary reforms to restore the country's "reputation of good faith and justice." Condemning policies that interfered with private contracts, he argued that state-issued paper money and laws that compelled creditors to accept the depreciated bills violated "the immutable principles of natural justice." Pendleton told grand jurors, "It is a duty you owe to God, to your country, and to yourselves, to suffer no person to disturb the public peace, interrupt the authority of government, or violate the sacred rights of personal liberty, and private property, with impunity."⁴²

The Grand Jury's Presentments

Two decades ago, a small circle of scholars grappled with the question of the representative nature of colonial and revolutionary juries. On one side, J. R. Pole took seventeenth-and-eighteenth-century Whig commentators at their word and advanced the bold argument that juries, especially grand juries, "made a distinctive and essential contribution both in social psychology and in substance to the *representative* character of colonial government." Critics, who included Bruce Mann, Peter Hoffer, James Henretta

⁴¹ At least one of Pendleton's charges was reprinted in Charleston, Baltimore, New York City, Poughkeepsie, Boston and Providence. *Ibid.*, 96 note 1.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 95–98.

and James Rice, challenged Pole's implication that grand or petit jurors represented social or political interests that differed from those of the court itself. Henretta and Rice made the valid point that as white men of property, American jurors "at best . . . represented the outlook of the political community," not that of society as a whole.⁴³

If we accept the important distinction between society as a whole and a more bounded *political community*, what can 1780s grand juries tell us about that community in Georgia? Following the constitution, Georgia grand juries excluded women, property-less white men, servants, slaves, or Native Americans. The property qualification for grand jury service was just 250 acres. Considering that the state's military bounties awarded a minimum of 200 acres to all veterans and another fifty acres per family member, a man with a wife, servant, slave or child technically qualified for service.

Between 1783 and 1789, 482 men served on grand juries, the overwhelming majority (402 or 83% served just once). A small number of men (sixty-two or 13%) served two times. Only Richmond County had significant numbers of repeat jurors (forty-six or 32% of jurors served two or more times, seventeen or 12% more than twice). This pattern suggests that the county sheriffs, who summoned grand jury panels, maintained lists of eligible freeholders as called for by law and did not manipulate the process to select certain men. It also suggests that freeholders viewed grand jury service as a shared responsibility.

⁴³ Pole, "Reflections on American Law and the American Revolution"; Hoffer, "Custom as Law"; Mann, "The Evolutionary Revolution in American Law"; Pole, "Further Reflections on Law in the American Revolution"; Henretta and Rice, "Law as Litigation," 177.

The lack of systematic land and tax records precludes definitive claims about the distribution of wealth among grand jurors, but a comparison of 1783 and 1784 Wilkes County grand jurors with 1785 tax records suggests that grand jurors were more likely to own slaves than most of their neighbors and that they owned considerably more land than the law required. At tax time in 1785, Wilkes officials reported more than 2,000 heads of households in the county, 30% of whom reported owning slaves. The median number of slaves in households with slaves was three. Seventy-eight men served as grand jurors in 1783 and 1784, forty-five of whom appear in surviving tax returns. Of those, 67% (forty-five) reported slaves, ranging in number from one to twenty-seven with a median holding of six. The median taxable Wilkes County acreage reported by grand jurors in this small sample was 844, considerably higher than the minimum 250 required by law.⁴⁴

If Wilkes grand jurors had slightly larger estates than many of their neighbors in the mid-1780s, a median slaveholding of six hardly qualified them as members of a recognizable gentry or planter class. Perhaps that would come later, with the explosion of cotton production after 1794. Instead, through the 1780s, the men who served on Georgia grand juries were solid freeholders, exactly the kinds of men state leaders hoped to attract with generous post-war land policies and exactly the kind of citizens the new county and state governments needed to carry out the dual experiments of independence and local self-government.

⁴⁴ Hudson, *Wilkes County, Georgia, Tax Records, 1785-1805*. Hudson's compilation of all extant tax digests includes all heads of household and taxable property for a 20-year period. The percentage of households declaring slave property was constant at 30% through 1794, and rose to 49% in 1795 after the spread of cotton to the county.

After listening to the variably inspiring words of the chief justice, grand jurors proceeded to their business, starting with review of criminal evidence presented by the state's attorney then moving on to reports of individuals' bad behavior and complaints about local or state officials. Bad roads, the lack of jails and courthouses, disorderly slaves, and vagrants drew frequent attention from grand jurors, as did moral lapses in the community. Very occasionally, only when prompted by the chief justice's charge (and not always then) county grand jurors commented on national issues, but mostly they focused their attention on local matters that threatened their very small political communities.⁴⁵

In October 1783, the Burke County Grand Jury presented as a grievance "the number of children that are unlawfully begotten in this county" and complained that too many people "assemble together on the Sabbath-day at taverns and tippling houses, to the great hurt of civil society."⁴⁶ Two years later, Burke grand jurors still found too much drinking and carousing and called on the legislature to pass "a law for the punishment of vice and immorality."⁴⁷ The prevalence of vice also troubled Liberty County jurors who noted, "the dissipated conduct and licentious manner . . . is not only immoral, and disturbing the laws and the peaceable and good order of society, but is of evil and dangerous example to the rising generation."⁴⁸ Occasionally presentments went beyond

⁴⁵ *GSG* 18 November 1784.

⁴⁶ *GSG* 30 October 1783.

⁴⁷ *GSG* 7 April 1785.

⁴⁸ *GSG* 21 April 1785.

condemnations of general behavior and named names as when Mary Wade sought the help of grand jurors to shame her husband “for disorderly behavior, drunkenness, neglect and ill-treatment of his wife and family.”⁴⁹

Grand juries often assigned blame for local problems to the state legislature for either failing to act or for enacting poor policies. The state’s handling of fiscal matters drew strong language from Chatham grand juries, which often included merchants and tradespeople among its ranks and needed little prompting by the chief justice to complain about paper money and bad debt. A 1787 Chatham grand jury deplored the “deranged state of our finances, and the contemptible situation of our public credit.”⁵⁰ Session after session, grand juries complained that magistrates did not have compilations of the laws. State printers James Johnston in Savannah and later John E. Smith in Augusta published individual laws or pamphlets of session laws, but sheriffs, justices and lawyers would wait until 1799 for the first digest of laws to appear. A seemingly minor complaint, the lack of a digest of state laws (and colonial laws still in effect) contributed to inconsistencies in the enforcement of laws and exacerbated problems related to the state’s extraordinarily decentralized judicial system.⁵¹

Grand jury presentments provide glimpses into the values and concerns of particular communities at distinct moments, but their larger political significance lies in

⁴⁹ *GSG* 6 October 1785.

⁵⁰ *GSG* 18 October 1787; 20 *GSG* March 1788.

⁵¹ Watkins and Watkins, *A Digest of the Laws of the State of Georgia* [electronic Resource]. *GSG* 30 October 1783.

the form by which they became public. During court season (April through June and October through December), readers of Savannah and Augusta newspapers regularly saw one or more sets of charge and presentments in a single issue. When published, presentments masked internal debate or dissension among jurors. Readers saw only the calm and dispassionate statement of grievances and the names of the jurors who signed them. The mode of presentation reinforced a notion that an informed and virtuous citizenry comprised of respectable men with a stake in society could reach consensus in an orderly and respectful manner.

Contrast this with the practice of publishing pointed and even vitriolic attacks on political enemies under cover of assumed names, such as *Brutus* or *A Citizen*, which continued through the 1780s. Grand jurors did not shroud their identities. Nor did they confound the public by drawing obscure references to historical figures known only to an educated public. In that way, grand juries played a crucial role in demonstrating to a broad public how a sovereign people could identify problems and hold members of the community as well as local and state officials accountable for their actions. In this context, Professor Pole's insightful suggestion that grand juries contributed to the "social psychology" of representative government merits further attention.

Conclusion

At the end of the war, Georgians and other Americans faced the crucial question of defining their political community. Who deserved the hard-won blessings of liberty? Legislators quickly identified hundreds of men whose loyalty to the British seemingly disqualified them from any claims to Americans freedom. Within a few years, however,

nearly half of those excluded returned in some fashion and re-integrated with the family and commercial networks they had built before the war. Despite occasional outbursts against tory interests and corruption, Georgians moved beyond settling scores by 1785.

One reason the state moved on was that so many new settlers moved into Georgia in the 1780s. Generous military bounties attracted veterans to newly claimed lands and the state's headright system allowed them and others to claim unsettled lands in the western counties. Along with land, these new men assumed political power in Richmond, Wilkes and three new counties formed before 1786 (Washington, Franklin and Greene). Shifting demographics resulted in realignment of legislative coalitions (a sectional story familiar to Georgia historians), but even more importantly, the establishment of each new county created another group of men who exercised local power. They became justices of the peace, surveyors, constables, sheriffs, militia captains, jurors and grand jurors and they acted as intermediaries between the community and the state. They were indeed masters of small worlds.

Conclusion

In early 1788, Georgia became the fourth state, and the first southern state, to ratify the Constitution of the United States. It did so after a single day's formal debate and in the midst of ongoing concerns about war with the Creeks. Despite its rapid acceptance, the Constitution had its critics in Georgia, including Lachlan McIntosh, who recommended that instead of "binding ourselves & posterity for ever," Georgians should adopt the Constitution for a set number of years, at the end of which the state could renew membership in the union or chose to leave. McIntosh rightly feared that northeastern states would seek to abolish slavery sooner than southern states found it "convenient" to do so. A half century after Georgia's establishment as a colony that prohibited slave labor, the son of a founding settler presciently foretold that the South's dependence on slavery would lead to a clash that "must be termed rebellion."⁵²

The Georgia Trustees could not imagine such an outcome when they launched their bold, if somewhat quixotic, philanthropic experiment in 1732. Instead, they envisioned Georgia as a haven for deserving Protestant families who would build modest, self-sufficient farms on the southern frontier. After two decades of relentless pressure from slavery's advocates, however, the trustees abandoned their ban on slave labor in 1751 and surrendered their charter the following year. As its proponents had claimed it would, slavery transformed Georgia from a struggling outpost to a prosperous colony. By

⁵² "Rough Copy of a Letter to Jno Wereat, Esqr. December 17, 1787," in Hawes, *The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1779 [sic, I.e. 1799]*, 144–46, quote on p. 146.

the mid-1770s, Georgia's population had grown from an estimated 3,000 to more than 30,000 combined black and white.

As the colony expanded in size and its increasing population grew more dispersed, the structures, functions and symbols of royal government remained concentrated in Savannah. The only courthouse stood in the capital, where all criminal and civil trials involving more than £8 took place. Parish-based courts of conscience decided small debt claims in private homes, with neither bewigged justices nor elaborate court rituals. Like the court system, the established church had little presence beyond Savannah's Christ Church and Augusta's St. Paul's Church.

In contrast to the weak presence of royal authority outside the capital, Georgia's long-serving governor, James Wright, dominated provincial politics in Savannah. Aided by generous parliamentary subsidies that freed him from dependence on the colonial assembly, Wright skillfully managed the early years of inter-colonial resistance to British efforts to raise revenue in America. He repeatedly thwarted attempts by leaders of the lower house of assembly to expand their powers and he limited the opposition's ability to join other colonies in a unified colonial response to unpopular British policies. Wright's maneuverings, and their success, earned him fierce enemies. In June 1770, a grand jury comprised of men from around the colony issued two extraordinary presentments against the governor, a development that demonstrated that anti-Wright sentiment had spread beyond the small group of leaders in the lower house and had gained currency in different regions of the colony. The presentments also showed that eighteenth-century Georgians

recognized the grand jury as an important political tool that gave voice to popular sentiment.

Local and colonial politics ebbed in the early 1770s until news of the Boston Tea Party and the Coercive or Intolerable Acts reached Savannah in the spring of 1774. Initially, opposition leaders employed familiar tools of persuasion to gain support for Boston. They held public meetings and waged a vigorous newspaper campaign to convince undecided Georgians that the same government that had closed Boston's port and rescinded the Massachusetts charter threatened Georgians' liberties and their land grants. As long as the opposition relied on rhetoric, the governor and his allies were able to answer with stirring counterattacks of their own, reminding Georgians of the colony's exposed borders and dependence on British might.

A brasher form of resistance emerged in Savannah after Georgians learned about the exchange of gunfire at Lexington and Concord. In the summer of 1775, disciplined and purposeful crowds under command of Savannah's Sons of Liberty seized gunpowder, spiked cannons and paraded men covered with tar and feathers past the governor's home. By fall, Georgia had joined the Continental Association and local committees were encouraging—some would say coercing—men to “sign liberty.” Rare minutes of the St. George's Parish committee reveal that the newly elected committeemen assumed the functions of the court of conscience, hearing cases and settling disputes among neighbors, in effect usurping the powers of government.

In February 1777, the state's first constitutional convention adopted a constitution with a broad franchise, a unicameral legislature, a weak executive, and an even weaker

judiciary. Partisan personal politics, exacerbated by deep concerns about hidden enemies, presented the new constitution's first serious challenge the following fall when the assembly empowered county committees to test men's loyalty. Modeled on the committees that had enforced the Association, the new committees required men to produce references attesting to their support for independence or face immediate banishment. The law provoked an angry response from the Chatham County grand jury, which denounced the legislation and the constitution itself. The next assembly enacted a bill of attainder banishing many of the men committees had targeted, most of whom had already left the state.

In December 1778, British and Loyalist forces recaptured Savannah and laid the groundwork for the restoration of civilian government in the capital the following summer. Convinced that hundreds of neutrals and quiet loyalists would flock to the British standard and swear allegiance to the crown, a contingent of Scottish Highlanders marched to Augusta and pronounced the colony restored to British rule. Hundreds of backcountry settlers did seek protection, sign oaths, and promise not to take up arms against the king's soldiers only to watch the Highlanders abandon Augusta when challenged by an assault from Whig militia. For the next three-and-a-half years, this pattern of pacification, oaths of allegiance, and reversal of fortune would re-play itself over and over again as British and American armies both gained and lost control of territory, leaving civilians vulnerable to the shifting fortunes of war.

Ironically, the British Southern Strategy might well have worked had military leaders not insisted on fighting the war rather than preserving the peace. Instead of

committing sufficient forces to protect civilians from marauding bands of irregulars and outlaws, the British moved onto Charles Town and eventually Virginia. After a series of reversals, the British ordered the evacuation of Savannah in June 1782.

American victory did not put an end to partisan divisions among Georgians. To the contrary, assembly leaders spent several years in the early 1780s debating how to deal with men whose support for American independence had wavered through the war. Anti-loyalist stirrings in Boston and other northern sites provoked local controversies, but by the middle of the decade, most Georgians had moved on to more pressing issues of settling new lands and governing new jurisdictions. To attract industrious settlers who would cultivate the land, make improvements, and defend the state's borders, Georgia provided generous land bounties to veterans and revived the headright system. Ironically, although the state in the 1780s was fiercely committed to slavery, the ideal settler it wished to attract did not differ significantly from the deserving Protestant families the trustees had sought to lure to the southern frontier a half century before.

What does this reconsideration of the American Revolution in Georgia contribute to our understandings of early Georgia and early America?

First, it adds a twist to the important work of Woody Holton and Michael MacDonnell that showed how ordinary Virginians leveraged their vital contributions to the patriot cause and the war effort to negotiate expanded political roles in the new republic. By contrast, Georgia freeholders had no unified gentry or elite with whom to negotiate for political power. To be sure, there were wealthy and powerful families, principally in the coastal region, and some of them had begun to intermarry. However,

nothing comparable to the celebrated “cousinages” of Virginia and South Carolina developed in Georgia before 1776 or even 1790. When those families divided over independence and the war forced many of them to flee, ordinary men designed a new form of government that vested power in small, locally controlled counties.

That leads to the second contribution this dissertation makes—an appreciation for the radicalness and enduring significance of the Constitution of 1777. Political scientists and historians who study early Georgia share near universal disdain for the unicameral structure, impotent executive and weak judiciary of the first constitution. These characteristics reflected some of the era’s most democratic notions of how republican government should respond to the will of the people and perhaps carried special resonance for those Georgians who had come to see Governor Wright and his associates as immune from popular pressure.

The most radical provisions of the Constitution of 1777 dealt with the relative powers of lay jurors and learned justices. By empowering trial jurors to determine matters of law as well as fact and leaving final judgments in the hands of jurors rather than judges, the constitution promoted an extreme form of legal localism.⁵³ Georgia’s localism reflected both faith in the judgment of ordinary men and suspicion of trained lawyers whose use of obscure legal reasoning could deny the community what it considered a just verdict.⁵⁴

⁵³ Georgia lagged behind national trends toward weakening jury powers. See Smith, *The Freedoms We Lost*, 205–6.

⁵⁴ For a recent discussion of local law in the south, see Edwards, *The People and Their Peace*.

A quick glimpse of a map of twenty-first century Georgia reveals that the most enduring legacy of the earliest state constitutions is the proliferation of counties. Less visible but no less important is their power and even more so the local power enjoyed by the numerous white men who held (and hold) county offices. Arguably, for much of its history, Georgia's county rather than state governments controlled real political power in the state.

Finally, this work demonstrates that, despite a tendency among scholars to view Revolutionary-era Georgians as impressionable opportunists more interested in personal squabbles than politics, Georgians believed themselves deeply engaged in the broader political debates of the times. At the start of the Revolution, there were no Georgians in the sense that Jefferson and Washington were Virginians or the Adams cousins were New Englanders. Georgia was a colony of newcomers. Most of the men who debated the merits of Independence in Savannah, Augusta or the countryside in between had arrived in the province as adults, having moved from Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Virginia or the Carolinas. Those connections played crucial roles in Georgians' understanding of the unfolding imperial crisis and subsequent establishment of a new state government.

Historians of colonial and revolutionary Georgia have always known that Georgia stood outside the normative narratives of colonial development and subsequent movement toward rebellion and independence. Its late founding, initial prohibition of slavery and financial dependence on parliamentary subsidies contributed to its distinctive early history. W.W. Abbot referred to it as "the inconvenient exception" that forced

historians to “note its peculiarities in an aside.”⁵⁵ Among other peculiarities, the Constitution of 1777 and the political geography of small units of representative government firmly in the control of a broadly enfranchised community of white male freeholders stands alone in its enduring impact.

⁵⁵ Abbot, “The Structure of Politics in Georgia,” 47.

Appendix A: Inbound Vessels, 1752-1775

Type	Vessel	Master	From	Source (Naval Office or <i>Georgia Gazette</i>)	Mo.	Day	Year
Sloop	Sybil	Laurence	Antigua	NO	2	19	1752
Sloop	Mary	Newbould	Spanish Town VI	NO	2	19	1752
Brig	Defiance	Street	Poole	NO	3	12	1752
Brig	Experiment	Carlton	Barbados	NO	4	6	1752
Schooner	Bredah	Gilbert	St. Christopher	NO	4	18	1752
Sloop	Bermuda	Powell	Charles Town	NO	5	22	1752
Sloop	Industry	Tuten	St. Christopher	NO	5	28	1752
Sloop	Endeavour	Wingood	Charles Town	NO	6	10	1752
Snow	Neptune	Rutherford	Beaufort	NO	6	10	1752
Sloop	Elizabeth & Mary	Tucker	Jamaica	NO	6	22	1752
Schooner	Smithfield	Smith	Beaufort	NO	7	21	1752
Brig	William	Hunt	Charles Town	NO	8	1	1752
Sloop	Peggy	Darrell	Bermuda	NO	8	15	1752
Sloop	Mary	Newbould	Bermuda	NO	9	26	1752
Brig	Experiment	Carlton	Barbados	NO	10	2	1752
Brig	Carolina	Boyd	Philadelphia	NO	10	5	1752
Sloop	Union	Corey	Rhode Island	NO	10	28	1752
Ship	Oldbury	Brown	Rotterdam & Portsmouth	NO	11	23	1752
Sloop	Ranger	Miller	Jamaica	NO	11	25	1752
Ship	Success	Isaac	London	NO	11	27	1752
Ship	Randall	Randall	Antigua	NO	1	2	1755
Ship	Endeavour	Cunningham	South Carolina	NO	1	2	1755
Sloop	Nabby	Wilson	Jamaica	NO	1	11	1755
Ship	Minerva	James	South Carolina	NO	2	12	1755
Ship	Arianna	Read	South Carolina	NO	2	19	1755
Sloop	Margaret & Mary	Gordon	South Carolina	NO	2	19	1755
Sloop	Charming Peggy	Guilford	New York	NO	2	28	1755

Brig	Warren	Rutherford	St. Christopher	NO	3	10	1755
Sloop	Peggy	Winthrop	St. Christopher	NO	3	14	1755
Sloop	Union	Warren	Jamaica	NO	3	24	1755
Sloop	Francis	Dickerson	South Carolina	NO	3	26	1755
Sloop	Catherine	Taylor	Santa Croix	NO	3	29	1755
Brig	Pompey	Dorden	Jamaica	NO	4	1	1755
Sloop	Exchange	Howe	Jamaica	NO	4	1	1755
Sloop	Betsey	Stevenson	Virgin Islands	NO	4	14	1755
Sloop	Nabby	Wait	Antugua	NO	4	14	1755
Sloop	Elizabeth	Annell	Santa Croix	NO	4	17	1755
Brig	Cumberland	Manchester	Jamaica	NO	5	3	1755
Coastal Schooner	Dove	Drummond	South Carolina	NO	5	10	1755
Sloop	John & Mary	Braddock	New Providence	NO	5	10	1755
Sloop	Charming Nancy	Moreland	Anguilla	NO	5	26	1755
Sloop	Exchange	Goffe	St. Christopher	NO	6	2	1755
Schooner	Katherine	Ralph	Barbados	NO	6	2	1755
Sloop	Martha	Seymour	South Carolina	NO	6	20	1755
Sloop	Morning Star	Keating	New York	NO	6	28	1755
Coastal Schooner	Stono	Williams	South Carolina	NO	7	30	1755
Sloop	Mary	Carey	New York	NO	8	5	1755
Schooner	Dispatch	Blake	Virgin Islands	NO	8	15	1755
Sloop	Charming Nancy	Martin	Philadelphia	NO	8	20	1755
Schooner	Franklin	Bruce	St. Christopher	NO	8	22	1755
Coastal Schooner	Dove	Drummond	South Carolina	NO	8	28	1755
Schooner	Charming Sally	Hutter	New Providence	NO	8	29	1755
Coastal Schooner	Stono	Williams	South Carolina	NO	9	8	1755
Sloop	Dolphin	Powers	Turks Island	NO	9	22	1755
Sloop	Exchange	Goffe	St. Christopher	NO	9	22	1755
Snow	Juno	McClelland	London	NO	10	1	1755
Coastal Schooner	Anna	White	South Carolina	NO	10	6	1755

Coastal Schooner	Dove	Drummond	South Carolina	NO	10	6	1755
Coastal Schooner	Nancy	Loskey	South Carolina	NO	10	6	1755
Sloop	Margaret	Phenix	New York	NO	10	25	1755
Sloop	FreeMason	Stevenson	Curacoa	NO	11	3	1755
Sloop	Olive Branch	Body	Barbados	NO	11	15	1755
Sloop	Catherine	Taylor	New York	NO	11	17	1755
Coastal Schooner	Nancy	Foskey	South Carolina	NO	11	17	1755
Coastal Schooner	Dove	Drummond	South Carolina	NO	11	17	1755
Schooner	Chelsea	Edwards	Santa Croix	NO	11	20	1755
Schooner	Jolly Phillip	Waite	Bay of Fundy	NO	11	20	1755
Brig	Pompey	Dorden	Rhode Island	NO	12	8	1755
Ship	Prince Frederick	Fratler	Bay of Fundy	NO	12	13	1755
Sloop	Betsy	Himmon	St. Christopher	NO	12	15	1755
Coastal Schooner	Dove	Drummond	South Carolina	NO	12	15	1755
Schooner	Wilmington	Gale	Antigua	NO	12	16	1755
Sloop	Jeane	Walker	South Carolina	NO	12	18	1755
Sloop	Hardwick	Lynn	Rhode Island	NO	1	3	1757
Schooner	Dispatch	Phenix	Virgin Islands	NO	1	3	1757
Sloop	Catherine	Taylor	Curacoa	NO	1	10	1757
Ship	Charming Martha	Thomson	London	NO	1	17	1757
Coastal Schooner	Dover	Drummond	South Carolina	NO	2	9	1757
Snow	Anson	Hamley	Santa Croix	NO	2	12	1757
Brig	Three Brothers	Reddiars?	London	NO	2	16	1757
Snow	Sally	Hay	South Carolina	NO	3	3	1757
Coastal Schooner	?	Tucker	South Carolina	NO	3	8	1757
Sloop	Argos	Carpenter	Rhode Island	NO	3	9	1757
Snow	Rassatoted	Oswald	St. Christopher	NO	3	28	1757
Coastal Schooner	Dover	Raddeley	South Carolina	NO	4	6	1757

Coastal Schooner	Kouli Kan	Tucker	South Carolina	NO	4	18	1757
Schooner	Charming Nancy	Carter	Jamaica	NO	4	18	1757
Sloop	Isabella	Martin	Philadelphia	NO	4	29	1757
Coastal Schooner	Koulo Karri	Tucker	South Carolina	NO	5	13	1757
Snow	Juno	Leslie	London	NO	5	20	1757
Brig	Mary	Moore	St. Eustatius	NO	6	2	1757
Coastal Schooner	Kouli Kan	Tucker	South Carolina	NO	7	1	1757
Brig	Thomas & Sarah	Minors	South Carolina	NO	8	1	1757
Sloop	Isabella	Laws	Philadelphia	NO	8	17	1757
Schooner	Dispatch	Phoenix	Philadelphia	NO	8	17	1757
Schooner	Fair Susannah	Pr?	St. Christopher	NO	8	17	1757
Sloop	Phenix	Fleming	St. Eustatia	NO	8	19	1757
Schooner	Charming Nancy	Carter	New York	NO	8	19	1757
Sloop	Reynolds	Martin	Philadelphia	NO	8	26	1757
Sloop	Coxspur	Goffe	Philadelphia	NO	9	2	1757
Coastal Schooner	Dover	Drummond	South Carolina	NO	9	24	1757
Coastal Schooner	Kouli Kan	Tucker	South Carolina	NO	9	24	1757
Coastal Schooner	Kouli Kan	Stower	South Carolina	NO	10	21	1757
Sloop	Charming Polly	Oliver	New York	NO	11	4	1760
Sloop	Little Betsey	Demill	New Providence	NO	11	6	1760
Brig	Milford	Blair	Jamaica	NO	11	6	1760
Sloop	Hunter	Miller	South Carolina	NO	11	11	1760
Schooner	Hannah	Smyth	South Carolina	NO	11	12	1760
Sloop	Arbuthnot	Knox	Santa Croix	NO	11	14	1760
Schooner	Sea Horse	Tree	Boston	NO	11	25	1760
Sloop	Speedwell	Brown	South Carolina	NO	11	26	1760
Ship	Nancy	McAuley	Jamaica	NO	12	13	1760
Schooner	Barrington	Howard	Philadelphia	NO	12	16	1760

Brig	Elizabeth	Gray	Jamaica	NO	12	16	1760
Schooner	Elizabeth	Cox	St. Augustine	NO	12	17	1760
Schooner	Jenny & Nancy	West	Boston	NO	12	22	1760
Sloop	Charming Sally	Alger	Rhode Island	NO	12	26	1760
Sloop	Catherine	Neilson	St. Christopher	NO	12	29	1760
Sloop	Venture	Martin	Philadelphia	NO	1	7	1761
Sloop	Humbird	Bunker	Rhode Island	NO	1	17	1761
Sloop	Polly	Holmes	New York	NO	1	28	1761
Sloop	Three Friends	Nichols	St. Christopher	NO	2	3	1761
Sloop	Ann	Newbould	St. Thomas	NO	2	5	1761
Sloop	Charming Polly	Wilson	South Carolina	NO	2	7	1761
Schooner	Dolphin	Hickey	St. Croix	NO	2	13	1761
Brig	Medway	Peacock	Gibraltar	NO	2	18	1761
Sloop	Prince Orange	Pratt	New Providence	NO	2	18	1761
Schooner	Pope's Head	Adams	Antigua	NO	2	19	1761
Brig	Alletta	Lightenstone	Tortola	NO	2	19	1761
Snow	Two Friends	Irland	New York	NO	2	23	1761
Sloop	Patience	Hickey	Turks Island	NO	3	3	1761
Schooner	Barrington	Drummond	South Carolina	NO	3	3	1761
Sloop	Culloden	Miller	Castlehaven, Ireland	NO	3	19	1761
Sloop	Charming Sally	Alger	Philadelphia	NO	3	30	1761
Brig	King of Prussia	Biard	Lisbon	NO	1	12	1762
Ship	Elizabeth	Smith	London	NO	1	13	1762
Sloop	Betsey	Boulton	South Carolina	NO	1	16	1762
Sloop	Cecelia	Wilson	Jamaica	NO	1	20	1762
Sloop	Sally	Sutton	St. Croix	NO	1	23	1762
Schooner	Mary	Haig	St. Eustatius	NO	2	19	1762
Brig	Nancy	Austin	Teneriffe	NO	2	20	1762
Schooner	Industry	Harrington	New York	NO	3	3	1762
Ship	Nancy	McAulay	Jamaica	NO	3	22	1762
Schooner	Rachel & Sally	Holmes	Curacoa	NO	3	23	1762

Brig	Catherine	Wells	St. Croix	NO	3	24	1762
Sloop	Amherst	Dunbar	St. Martins	NO	3	31	1762
Brig	Betsey	Walton	St. Christopher	NO	3	31	1762
Ship	Vigilent	Webster	Gibraltar	NO	4	3	1762
Sloop	Cecelia	Wilson	Havanna	NO	1	7	1763
Brig	Greenwich	Marshall	Bristol & South Carolina	NO	1	12	1763
Sloop	Roby	Durfee	Rhode Island	NO	1	17	1763
Schooner	Mary	Walden	St. Christopher	NO	1	19	1763
Sloop	Hope	Bickford	Boston	NO	2	2	1763
Sloop	Fanny	Stevenson	St. Christopher	NO	2	7	1763
Snow	Boscowen	Dobbs	Curacoa	NO	2	7	1763
Snow	John & Elizabeth	Lundberry	London	NO	2	8	1763
Sloop	Polly & Betsey	Hamer, Jr	Montserrat	NO	2	21	1763
Brig	Oxford	Anderson	Havanna	NO	2	24	1763
Sloop	Mary	Robbins	St. Croix	NO	2	25	1763
Schooner	Tybee	Tucker	Charles Town	GG	3	7	1763
Schooner	Tybee	Tucker	Charles Town	GG	3	7	1763
Brig	George	Donnell	Jamaica	NO	3	7	1763
Brig	George	Donnel	Jamaica	GG	3	8	1763
Sloop	Savannah	Dunbar	St. Eustatia (Eustatius in NO)	NO	3	25	1763
Brig	Darby	Boardman	St. Kitts (GG), St. Christopher (NO)	NO	3	25	1763
Schooner	Mary	Wright	Charles Town	GG	3	28	1763
Schooner	Charming Nelly	Brown	Charles Town	GG	3	28	1763
Brig	Betsey	Campbell	St. Croix	NO	4	6	1763
Schooner	Rebecca	Wright		NO	4	9	1763
Sloop	Sally	Upton	Rhode Island	NO	4	11	1763
Schooner	Friendship	Morey	Curacoa	NO	4	11	1763
Brig	Sally	Scolley	Salem	NO	4	11	1763
Brig	Laleah & Susannah	Anderson		NO, GG 7/21/63	4	12	1763
Sloop	Sally	Gooding	Rhode Island	NO	4	16	1763
Sloop	Nancy	Whitehead	Philadelphia	NO	4	18	1763

Ship	Richard & Benjamin	Robinson	London & New York	GG	4	27	1763
Ship	Richard & Benjamin	Robinson	London & New York	NO	5	2	1763
Sloop	John	Holmes		NO	5	3	1763
Sloop	Molly	Chase	Rhode Island	NO, GG	5	10	1763
Schooner	Charming Nelly	Brown	Charles Town	GG	5	18	1763
Brig	John & Sukey	Rait	London	GG, GG	5	25	1763
Sloop	Charming Kitty	Vicary	Jamaica	NO	5	25	1763
Snow	Augusta	Rogers	Havana	NO	5	26	1763
Sloop	Dispatch	Young	Philadelphia	NO	5	30	1763
Schooner	Seaforth	Smith	Charles Town	GG	6	4	1763
Schooner	Sally	Appelby	New Providence	NO	6	4	1763
Schooner	Elizabeth	Oram	Piscataqua	NO	6	11	1763
Brig	Industry	Morton	Boston	NO	6	14	1763
Sloop	Two Friends	Farrell	New York	NO	6	22	1763
Schooner	Ogechee	Drummond	Havana	NO	6	24	1763
Brig	Savage	Durham	Charles Town	NO	6	25	1763
Ship	Francis	Glazenby	London	NO	6	27	1763
Sloop	Charming Sally	Simmons	Rhode Island & New York	NO	7	2	1763
Sloop	Pandora	Dickenson	Philadelphia	NO	7	2	1763
Ship	Friendship	Fitzherbert	South Carolina	NO	7	3	1763
Snow	Neptune	Lightenstone	St. Kitts	GG	7	5	1763
Sloop	Savannah Packet	Ware	South Carolina	NO	7	6	1763
Snow	Providence	Lightenstone	St. Croix	NO	7	6	1763
Sloop	Neptune	Malbone	Rhode Island	NO	7	9	1763
Schooner	Friendship	Morey	Curacao	NO	7	12	1763
Schooner	Adventure	Alger	South Carolina	NO	7	16	1763
Schooner	Dolphin	Deadman	Salem	NO	7	20	1763
Schooner	Dispatch	Butler	Charles Town	GG	7	21	1763
Schooner	Jonathan	Williams	Charles Town	GG	8	1	1763
Sloop	Two Friends	Lucas	Jamaica	NO	8	1	1763
Schooner	Blakeney	Annond	Beaufort	GG	8	16	1763

Brig	Laleah & Susanna	Anderson	St. Kitts	GG	8	19	1763
Brig	Laleah & Susannah	Anderson	St. Kitts	NO, GG 9/1/63	8	20	1763
Brig	Margaret	Wells	St. Kitts	NO	8	22	1763
Sloop	Charlotte	Robinson	Bermuda & Turks Island	NO	8	22	1763
Sloop	Irishtown Droger	Eve	St. Christopher	NO	8	24	1763
Schooner	Polly	Jones	Philadelphia	NO	8	25	1763
Sloop	Ann & Betty	Greatbeach	St. Martins	NO	8	29	1763
Schooner	Nancy	Banks	St. Kitts & St. Martins	NO	8	30	1763
Sloop	Betsey	Archer	Salem	GG	9	2	1763
Schooner	Pitt	Minott	Charles Town	GG	9	3	1763
Schooner	Polly	Bennet	Charles Town	GG	9	5	1763
Schooner	Seaforth	Smith	Charles Town	GG	9	7	1763
Schooner	Jolly Robin	Brown	Tortola	NO	9	12	1763
Schooner	Polly	Taylor	New Providence	NO	9	12	1763
Sloop	Georgia Packet	Martin	Antigua	NO	9	16	1763
Schooner	Jonathan	Williams	Charles Town	GG	9	23	1763
Schooner	Dispatch	Adams	Charles Town	GG	9	24	1763
Brig	Orford	Anderson	Jamaica	NO	10	13	1763
Sloop	Charming Molly	Daggett	Rhode Island	NO	10	22	1763
Brig	Greenwich	Marshall	Bristol	NO	10	26	1763
Snow	John & Elizabeth	Lundbury	London	NO	10	31	1763
Schooner	Phoenix	Humphrey	South Carolina	NO	11	5	1763
Sloop	Rachel	Bolitho	Philadelphia	NO	11	5	1763
Ship	Sea Nymph	Grant	London	NO	11	10	1763
Sloop	Dolphin	Deadman	Monti Christi	NO	11	15	1763
Sloop	Savannah Packet	Somerville	Mobile	NO	11	21	1763
Sloop	King George	Finglass	New York	NO	11	21	1763
Schooner	Dispatch	Adams	Charles Town	GG	11	23	1763
Brig	Polly	Quince	London	NO	11	25	1763
Schooner	Elizabeth	Brown	Charles Town	GG	11	28	1763

Brig	Fanny	Stark	London	NO	12	2	1763
Brig	Fanny	Bevins	Jamaica	NO	12	8	1763
Brig	Union	Fries	St. Thomas & St. Croix	NO	12	10	1763
Sloop	Ann	Stapylton	Turks Island	GG	12	13	1763
Sloop	Martha	Ward	Salem	NO	12	14	1763
Brig	Two Brothers	Tripp		NO	12	14	1763
Schooner	Sally	Anderson	St. Croix	NO	12	17	1763
Schooner	Mary	Walden	St. Kitts	GG	12	19	1763
Ship	America	Lightbourn	St. Kitts	NO	12	19	1763
Schooner	Ogechee	Drummond	Virginia	NO	12	19	1763
Snow	Providence	Lightenstone	St. Croix	NO	12	19	1763
Ship	Admiral Forbes	Anderson	London	NO	12	21	1763
Sloop	Abigail	Whittong	Marblehead	NO	12	24	1763
Schooner	Pope's Head	Adams	Antigua	NO	12	26	1763
Schooner	Yamacraw	Miller	St. Augustine	GG	12	28	1763
Schooner	Three Sisters	Owens	Jamaica	NO	12	29	1763
Sloop	John	Holmes	New York	NO	12	31	1763
Sloop	Bilboa	Crooker	Boston	NO	1	4	1764
Schooner	Friendship	Morey	Curacoa	NO	1	6	1764
Sloop	Adventure	Dougall	Jamaica & Turks Island	NO	1	9	1764
Sloop	Marquis of Granby	Jenkins	Boston	NO	1	13	1764
Brig	Lapwing	Wright	St. Kitts	NO	1	13	1764
Brig	Providence	Higgin	Montserratt	NO	1	14	1764
Ship	Loyal Pitt	Caston	Boston	NO	1	16	1764
Sloop	Ranger	Miller	Philadelphia	GG	1	19	1764
Sloop	Rachel	Bolitho	Philadelphia	GG	1	19	1764
Sloop	Kingbat	Allen	Rhode Island	GG	1	19	1764
Brig	Nelly	Campbell	Bristol	NO	1	19	1764
Schooner	Georgia Packet	Lyford	Mobile	NO	1	20	1764
Sloop	---	Fenton	St. Eustatia	GG	1	21	1764
Schooner	Tryal	Knight	Salem & Sunbury	GG	1	30	1764
Sloop	Prosperity	Nielson	St. Thomas	NO	1	30	1764
Sloop	Charming Sally	Fenton	St. Eustatia	NO	1	31	1764

Schooner	Tryal	Knight	Salem & Sunbury	NO	1	31	1764
Schooner	Tybee	Tucker	Charles Town	GG	2	6	1764
Ship	Brotherly Love	Bell	Jamaica	NO	2	6	1764
Schooner	Dolphin	Deadman	Cape Francois	NO	2	8	1764
Sloop	Free Mason	Bethel	New York	GG	2	10	1764
Ship	Wolfe	Kemp	Malaga & London	NO	2	11	1764
Brig	Laleah & Susannah	Crossley	St. Christopher	NO	2	13	1764
Brig	Margaret	Wells	St. Christopher	NO	2	14	1764
Sloop	Free Mason	Bethell	New York	NO	2	15	1764
Schooner	Ogechee	Drummond	Charles Town	NO	2	17	1764
Sloop	Savannah Packet	Somerville	Mobile	NO	2	20	1764
Schooner	William & Mary	Corey	Rhode Island	GG	2	22	1764
Schooner	Willing Maid	Corey	Rhode Island	NO	2	24	1764
Sloop	Elizabeth	Morgan	Curacoa	NO, GG 3/1/64	2	27	1764
Schooner	Dove	Howard	South Carolina	NO, GG 3/1/64	2	27	1764
Brig	Hannah	Austin	Rhode Island	NO, GG 3/1/64	2	29	1764
Schooner	Georgia Packet	Lyford	Charles Town	NO, GG 3/1/64	2	29	1764
Schooner	Tybee	Tucker	Charles Town	GG	3	4	1764
Sloop	Dolphin	James	Nevis	NO, GG 3/15/64	3	15	1764
Sloop	Savannah Packet	Somerville	Charles Town	NO, GG 3/22/64	3	19	1764
Sloop	Charming Kitty	Earle	Tortola	NO, GG 3/22/64	3	22	1764
Schooner	Georgia Packet	Lyford	Charles Town	GG	3	28	1764
Schooner	Polly	Tucker	South Carolina	NO, GG 4/5/64	4	4	1764
Schooner	Willing Maid	Corey	Beaufort	NO, GG 4/19/64	4	12	1764

Brig	Rose	Hill	London	NO	4	16	1764
Sloop	Cecelia	Wilson	Jamaica	NO, GG 4/19/64	4	16	1764
Schooner	Charlotte	Tucker	South Carolina	NO, GG 5/3/64	5	1	1764
Schooner	Robert	Banks	Granada	NO, GG 5/3/64	5	1	1764
Sloop	Ready Money	Joell	Bermuda	NO, GG 5/10/64	5	5	1764
Schooner	Georgia Packet	Lyford	South Carolina	NO, GG 5/10/64	5	7	1764
Sloop	Charming Sally	Simmons	Bermuda	NO, GG 5/10/64	5	7	1764
Brog	Elizabeth	Scott	London & Lisbon	NO, GG 5/24/64	5	24	1764
Schooner	Ogechee	Drummond	South Carolina	NO, GG 5/24/64	5	24	1764
Ship	Harrietta	Raines	London	GG	5	26	1764
Ship	Harrietta	Rains	London	NO	5	28	1764
Schooner	Charlotte	Tucker	South Carolina	NO, GG 6/7/64	6	1	1764
Schooner	Georgia Packet	Lyford	South Carolina	NO, GG 6/7/64	6	2	1764
Ship	Carolina Merchant	Gordon	London	NO, GG 6/14/64	6	12	1764
Schooner	Polly	Hazelton	South Carolina	NO, GG 6/21/64	6	14	1764
Brig	Venus	Manchester	Grenada		6	17	1764
Sloop	Savannah Packet	Somerville	Mobile	NO, GG 6/21/64	6	17	1764
Sloop	Betsey	Arvin	New York	NO	6	20	1764
Schooner	Success	Myers	Beaufort	GG	6	21	1764
Schooner	Liver Oak	Jones	St. Augustine	NO, GG 6/21/64	6	21	1764
Schooner	Friendship	Morey	Curacoa	NO, GG 6/28/64	6	21	1764
Sloop	Betsey	Arwin	New York	GG	6	22	1764
Brig	Benjamin	Glover	Marblehead & Salem	GG	6	24	1764

Schooner	Augustine Packet	Goffe	St. Augustine	NO, GG 7/12/64	7	7	1764
Schooner	Georgia Packet	Lyford	South Carolina	NO, GG 7/12/64	7	12	1764
Brig	Benjamin	Glover	Marblehead & Salem	NO	7	20	1764
Sloop	Patience	Evans	Philadelphia	NO	7	23	1764
Ship	Polly & Deborah	Anderson	Philadelphia	NO	7	24	1764
Schooner	Three Sisters	Parkinson	Jamaica		7	25	1764
Schooner	Three Sisters	Parkinson	Jamaic	NO	7	27	1764
Sloop	Pandora	Dickenson	Sunbury	NO	7	31	1764
Schooner	Polly & Betsey	Lightbourne	South Carolina	NO, GG 8/16/64	8	10	1764
Schooner	Liberty	McLish	South Carolina	NO, GG 8/16/64	8	11	1764
Sloop	Three Friends	Gorham	Boston	NO	8	20	1764
Brig	Laleah & Susannah	Crossley	St. Kitts	NO	8	23	1764
	Packet Suffolk	Bull	St. Augustine	GG	8	24	1764
Sloop	Betsey	Benson	Jamaica	NO, GG 8/30/64	8	30	1764
Sloop	Ann	Toutming	St. Kitts & Augustine	NO	9	3	1764
Brig	Margaret	Wells	St. Kitts	NO	9	3	1764
Sloop	Industry	Hughes	Philadelphia	NO	9	5	1764
Sloop	Prosperity	Nielson	St. Thomas	NO	9	6	1764
Schooner	Pitt	Richardson	South Carolina	NO	9	10	1764
Sloop	Polly	Phillips	Montserrat	NO	9	13	1764
Sloop	Two Brothers	Dunwell	Rhode Island	NO	9	14	1764
Schooner	Jonathan	Williams	South Carolina	NO	9	18	1764
Schooner	Nonparel	Godwin	South Carolina	NO	9	18	1764
Sloop	Charming Kitty	Earle	Tortola	NO	9	19	1764
Ship	Albemarle	Tatem	Jamaica	NO	9	24	1764
Schooner	Peggy	Boyd	Charles Town	GG	10	12	1764
Sloop	Industry	Hughes	Philadelphia	GG	10	12	1764
Schooner	Elizabeth	Vauchier	South Carolina	NO	10	12	1764

Sloop	Elizabeth	Fristh	Turks Island	GG	10	13	1764
Ship	Friendship	Ball	Charles Town	GG	10	13	1764
Schooner	Augustine Packet	Goffe	Philadelphia	NO, GG 10/18/64	10	15	1764
Sloop	Cecelia	Wilson	New Providence	NO, GG 10/18/64	10	17	1764
Schooner	Isabella	Martin	St. Kitts	NO, GG 10/25/64	10	19	1764
Sloop	Ready Money	Joell	Jamaica	NO, GG	10	22	1764
Sloop	Sally	Chapman	Montserrat	NO, GG 10/25/64	10	22	1764
Sloop	Industry	Robinson	Bermuda	NO, GG 10/25/64	10	27	1764
Schooner	Nancy	Browne	St. Augustine	NO	11	6	1764
Schooner	Peggy	Boyd	South Carolina	NO	11	13	1764
Ship	Friendship	Ball	London & South Carolina	NO	11	14	1764
Sloop	Elizabeth	Frith	Bermuda & Turks Island	NO	11	14	1764
Sloop	Industry	Hughes	Philadelphia	NO	11	14	1764
Brig	Edgar	Maitland	New York	NO, GG	11	16	1764
Schooner	Industry	Walden	St. Kitts	NO, GG 11/22/64	11	20	1764
Schooner	Liberty	Bishop	South Carolina	NO, GG	11	29	1764
Snow	Charming Nancy	Ballingall	Philadelphia & Charles Town	NO, GG	11	30	1764
Brig	Charlotte	Walking----	Jamaica	NO	12	4	1764
Schooner	Augustine Packet	Goffe	St. Augustine	NO, GG	12	4	1764
Sloop	Rachel	Bolitho	St. Augustine	GG	12	6	1764
Schooner	Ogecgee	Drummond	Mobile	GG	12	7	1764
Schooner	Ogechee	Drummond	Mobile	NO	12	8	1764
Sloop	Rachel	Bolitho	St. Augustine & Philadelphia	NO	12	10	1764
Schooner	Cicero	Lovitt	St. Kitts	NO, GG	12	15	1764
Snow	Indian Queen	Purss	Poole	NO, GG	12	17	1764
Sloop	Providence	Williams	Curacoa	NO, GG	12	18	1764
Sloop	Industry	Hughes	South Carolina	NO, GG	12	19	1764

Ship	Polly & Deborah	Anderson	Jamaica	NO, GG	12	26	1764
Snow	Fanny	Sampson	St. Kitts	NO, GG	12	28	1764
Sloop	Three Brothers	Dunwell	Jamaica		1	1	1765
Sloop	Two Brothers	Dunwell	Jamaica	NO	1	4	1765
Brig	Salisbury	Morong	Salem	NO, GG 2/7/65	1	8	1765
Ship	Lord Strange	Scott	London & Antigua	NO	1	10	1765
Sloop	Prosperity	Nash	South Carolina	NO, GG 1/17/65	1	11	1765
Schooner	Fly	Renton	Boston	NO, GG 1/17/65	1	14	1765
Ship	Industry	Dear	London	GG	1	15	1765
Sloop	Ready Money	Gibson	St. Vincent & Turk's Island	NO	1	15	1765
Brig	Nelly	Campbell	Bristol & Pensacola	NO, GG 1/17/65	1	17	1765
Ship	Industry	Dear	London	NO	1	21	1765
Sloop	Industry	Hughes	South Carolina	NO, GG 1/24/65	1	23	1765
Brig	Ranger	Southward	Salem	NO, GG 2/7/65	2	4	1765
Snow	Leghorn Galley	Reid	St. Christopher	NO, GG 2/7/65	2	5	1765
Ship	Harrietta	Stark	Cowes	GG	2	7	1765
Sloop	Brotherly Love	Lawrence	St. Croix	NO, GG 2/14/65	2	9	1765
Schooner	Nancy	Stone	St. Christopher & Anguilla	NO, GG 2/14/65	2	11	1765
Schooner	Friendship	Morey	Jamaica	NO, GG 2/14/65	2	11	1765
Sloop	Prudence	Farmer	Montserrat	NO, GG 2/14/65	2	11	1765
Sloop	?	Smith	Bermuda	NO	2	14	1765
Sloop	Hope	Nelson	St. Martin	NO, GG 2/14/65	2	14	1765
Sloop	Two Brothers	Dunwell	St. Augustine	GG	2	15	1765

Brig	Margaret	Wells	St. Christopher	NO, GG 2/14/65	2	15	1765
Sloop	Prosperity	Nash	St. Augustine	GG	2	16	1765
Ship	Harrietta	Stark	Cowes	NO	2	18	1765
Sloop	Two Brothers	Dunwell	St. Augustine	NO	2	18	1765
Brig	Laleah & Susanna	Crosley	St. Kitts	NO	2	18	1765
Sloop	Abigail	Bartlett	Salem	NO	2	18	1765
Sloop	Sally	Clark	Montserrat	NO	2	27	1765
Sloop	Industry	Robinson	St. Christopher	NO, GG	2	28	1765
Sloop	Sally	Sloo	South Carolina	NO	3	1	1765
Sloop	Three Friends	Gybuat	Boston	NO	3	1	1765
Brig	Peggy & Hannah	Waters	Boston	NO, GG	3	2	1765
Brig	Abigail	Gorham	Boston	NO, GG	3	5	1765
Ship	The John Galley	Hallam	South Carolina	GG	3	7	1765
Sloop	Dolphin	Roberts	St. Croix	NO	3	8	1765
Sloop	Hannah	Lovit	Salem	GG	3	13	1765
Ship	Richard & Benjamin	Robinson	Havanna	NO	3	21	1765
Ship	John Galley	Hulme	South Carolina	NO	3	21	1765
Sloop	Prudence	Farmer	South Carolina	NO	3	22	1765
Sloop	Sally	Sloo	South Carolina	NO	3	29	1765
Sloop	Culloden	McCarthy	Cork & South Carolina	NO	4	1	1765
Sloop	Pembroke	Mountany	Antigua	NO	4	3	1765
Brig	Nelly	Campbell	St. Augustine	NO	4	11	1765
Ship	Polly & Betsey	Brewton	London	NO	4	12	1765
Brig	Porgey	Bassett	South Carolina	NO	4	15	1765
Brig	Chance	Bourk	Rhode Island	NO	4	15	1765
Sloop	Charming Ann	Stirrup	Bermuda	NO	4	20	1765
Sloop	Providence	Gilbert	Curacoa	NO	4	25	1765
Sloop	Kitty	Austin	Granada	NO	4	27	1765
Sloop	Industry	Theobald	Mobile	NO	5	1	1765
Sloop	Colloden	McCarthy	South Carolina		5	3	1765
Sloop	Sally	Clarke	St. Augustine		5	3	1765

Schooner	Success	Myers	South Carolina		5	3	1765
Sloop	Roving William	Lawrence	Tenerife & St. Aug		5	3	1765
Sloop	Sally	Clark	St. Augustine	NO	5	4	1765
Sloop	Roving William	Lawrence	Teneriffe & St. Augustine	NO	5	4	1765
Sloop	Ready Money	Gibson	Bermuda		5	6	1765
Schooner	Success	Myers	South Carolina	NO	5	6	1765
Sloop	Culloden	McCarthy	South Carolina	NO	5	6	1765
Sloop	Ready Money	Gibson	Bermuda	NO	5	7	1765
Schooner	Seaforth	Smith	South Carolina	NO	5	9	1765
Schooner	Jonathan	Williams	South Carolina	NO	5	11	1765
Sloop	Industry	Hughes	Mobile	NO	5	14	1765
Schooner	Henrietta	Winslow	South Carolina	NO	5	17	1765
Sloop	Courtney	Henderson	St. Augustine	NO	5	20	1765
Schooner	Chance	Hopkins	South Carolina	NO	5	22	1765
Schooner	Isabella	Martin	Granada	NO	5	27	1765
Sloop	Abigail	Freeman	Boston	NO	5	28	1765
Schooner	Augustine Packet	Dickenson	Sunbury	NO	6	1	1765
Schooner	Queenby	Boyd	South Carolina	NO	6	5	1765
Sloop	Friendship	Gilbert	Bermuda	NO	6	8	1765
Schooner	Harrietta	Williams	South Carolina	NO	6	12	1765
Schooner	Friendship	Morey	Curacoa	NO	6	17	1765
Brig	William & Elizabeth	Simon	Pensacola	NO	6	19	1765
Ship	Diana	Cheesman	London & South Carolina	NO	6	24	1765
Schooner	Juliana	Donne	can't read	NO	6	26	1765
Schooner	Ogechee	Drummond	South Carolina	NO	6	27	1765
Sloop	Henry	Todd	Kingston, Jamaica	NO	6	29	1765
Sloop	Industry	Hughes	South Carolina	NO	7	2	1765
Schooner	Liberty	Fitzsimons	South Carolina	NO	7	5	1765
Schooner	Augustine Packet	Goffe	St. Augustine	NO	7	13	1765
Sloop	Seven Brothers	Totervine	Maryland & bermuda	NO	7	18	1765

Schooner	Jenny	Harrison	New Providence	NO	7	22	1765
Snow	Neptune	Arbuckle	London	NO	7	25	1765
Sloop	Charming Kitty	Lightenstone	St. Eustatius	NO	7	30	1765
Schooner	Liberty	Fitzsimons	South Carolina	NO	8	1	1765
Snow	Leghorn Galley	Reid	St. Christopher	NO	8	1	1765
Ship	Hawke	Duthie	Jamaica	NO	8	5	1765
Schooner	Elizabeth	Cox	South Carolina	NO, GG	8	12	1765
Schooner	Queenby	Wells	South Carolina	NO, GG	8	15	1765
Schooner	Tryal	Tucker	South Carolina	NO	8	22	1765
Schooner	Mary	Dale	Montserrat	NO	8	22	1765
Brig	Susie	Kelburn	St. Croix		8	24	1765
Snow	Sally	Stanton	Boston		8	24	1765
Brig	Charlotte	Alger	Jamaica	GG	8	24	1765
Brig	Laleah & Susannah	Waldern	South Carolina		8	26	1765
Brig	Charlotte	Alger	Jamaica	NO	8	27	1765
Brig	Susie	Heilburn	St. Croix	NO	8	27	1765
Snow	Sally	Stanton	Boston	NO	8	27	1765
Ship	Friendship	Ball	London		8	30	1765
Schooner	Nancy	Stone	St. Kitts		8	30	1765
Brig	Laleah & Susannah	Walden	St. Christopher & South Carolina	NO	8	30	1765
Schooner	Nancy	Stone	St. Christopher	NO	8	31	1765
Brig	Nancy	Mills	Pensacola	NO	9	7	1765
Ship	Friendship	Ball	London	NO	9	9	1765
Schooner	Neptune	Peacock	South Carolina	NO	9	13	1765
Schooner	Jonathan	Williams	South Carolina	NO	9	14	1765
Sloop	Sally	Clark	Jamaica	NO	9	16	1765
Schooner	Sally	Robertson	South Carolina	NO	9	16	1765
Sloop	Industry	Harriott	St. Croix	NO	9	26	1765
Brig	Abigail	Gorham	St. Eustatius	NO	9	26	1765
Sloop	Peggy &	Devereux	St. Augustine	NO	9	27	1765
Schooner	Ann	Peniston	St. Croix	NO	9	28	1765
Ship	Minerva	Stirling	South Carolina	NO	9	30	1765
Schooner	Friendship	Morey	Curacoa	NO	10	12	1765
Snow	Freemason	Wilson	St. Eustatius	NO	10	14	1765

Sloop	Providence	Gilbert	Curacoa	NO	10	14	1765
Schooner	Ogechee	Drummond	St. Christopher	NO	10	14	1765
Sloop	Hope	Neilson	St. Thomas	NO	10	14	1765
Snow	Pretty Polly	Bean	St. Christopher	NO	10	15	1765
Schooner	Liberty	Fitzsimons	South Carolina	NO	10	16	1765
Sloop	Betsey	Arven	New York	NO	10	19	1765
Schooner	Juliana	Sullivan	Jamaica	NO	10	21	1765
Schooner	Elizabeth	Coe?	South Carolina	NO	10	24	1765
Schooner	Betsey	Heath	New York	NO	10	26	1765
Sloop	Defiance	Winslow	Rhode Island	NO	10	26	1765
Sloop	Prudence	Farmer	Philadelphia & St. Martins	NO	10	28	1765
Schooner	Jenny	Edgecombe	New Providence	NO	10	28	1765
Schooner	Industry	Harvey	Guadeloupe	NO	10	31	1765
Sloop	Friendship	Gilbert	St. Eustatius	NO	11	4	1765
Ship	Friendship	Ball	South Carolina	NO	11	12	1765
Schooner	Friendship	Gillmour	Pensacola	NO	11	13	1765
Sloop	Molly	Hall	Maryland	NO	11	16	1765
Brig	Ranger	Southward	Salem	NO	11	18	1765
Ship	County of Sussex	Gray	Philadelphia	NO	11	22	1765
Sloop	Sarah	Greene	Boston	NO	11	25	1765
Schooner	Patty	Archer	Salem	NO	11	28	1765
Brig	Nelly	Campbell	Jamaica	NO	12	7	1765
Schooner	Augusta Packet	Goffe	St. Augustine	NO	12	9	1765
Sloop	Savannah	Smith	Bermuda	NO	12	14	1765
Brig	Charlotte	Alger	Jamaica	NO	12	19	1765
Ship	Polly & Betsey	Brewton	Portsmouth	NO	1	2	1766
Snow	Bance Island	Hay	Grenada	NO	1	2	1766
Snow	Nelly	Wilson	Grenada	NO	1	9	1766
Brig	Albion	Bank	London	NO	1	9	1766
Snow	Sally	Stanton	Savannah la Mar, Jamaica	NO	1	10	1766
Snow	Eagle	Marr	London	NO	1	10	1766
Brig	Mercury	Gray	London	NO	1	10	1766
Schooner	Polly	Anderson	St. Christopher	NO	1	14	1766

Schooner	Betsey	Tucker	New Providence	NO	1	15	1766
Schooner	Mary	Dale	Montserrat	NO	1	16	1766
Brig	Chance	Bourk	Teneriffe	NO	1	18	1766
Sloop	Culloden	Creogh	Baltimore & Ireland	NO	1	20	1766
Ship	Neptune	Thornton	London	NO	1	21	1766
Brig	Providence	Elliott	Lisbon	NO	1	21	1766
Brig	Jenny	Caldwell	St. Christopher	NO	1	21	1766
Brig	Argyle	Cunningham	Jamaica	NO	1	25	1766
Snow	Hercules	Breckinridge	Antigua	NO	1	25	1766
Snow	Ann	Thomason	Tortola	NO	1	27	1766
Brig	Wolfe	Shillings	Barbadoes	NO	1	27	1766
Snow	Sally	Purss	Poole	NO	1	27	1766
Brig	Elizabeth	Sarling	Jamaica	NO	1	27	1766
Sloop	Crosslane	Durham	Bermuda & Turks Island	NO	1	27	1766
Schooner	Fly	Gybuar	Boston	NO	1	27	1766
Schooner	Betsey	Wederburn	St. Augustine	NO	1	27	1766
Snow	Betsey	Higgin	Montserrat	NO	1	27	1766
Brig	Kingston	Blan	Jamaica	NO	1	27	1766
Sloop	Nancy	Thompson	New Providence	NO	1	27	1766
Snow	Brittania	Campbell	Grenades	NO	2	3	1766
Snow	Jonathan	Bennett	Tortola	NO	2	13	1766
Sloop	Maryboron	Morton	Senegal in Africa	NO	4	9	1766
Schooner	Friendship	de Witt	Curacoa	NO	4	11	1766
Sloop	Two Friends	Harvey	St. Christopher & St. Eustatius	NO	4	14	1766
Schooner	Industry	Butts	St. Eustatius	NO	4	14	1766
Sloop	Defiance	Sayre	Philadelphia	NO	4	16	1766
Brig	Betsey	Benson	Kingston, Jamaica	NO	4	16	1766
Schooner	Georgia Packet	Whipple	South Carolina	NO	4	22	1766
Schooner	Betsey	Barrett	Pensacola	NO	4	24	1766
Schooner	Elizabeth	Cox	South Carolina	NO	5	5	1766
Sloop	Betsey	Currie	St. Croix	NO	5	5	1766
Sloop	Industry	Langford	North Carolina	NO	5	5	1766

Sloop	Mercury	Fuller	St. Christopher	NO	5	5	1766
Sloop	Hibernia	Somerville	South Carolina	NO	5	5	1766
Brig	Prince Frederick	Fletcher	South Carolina	NO	5	7	1766
Brig	Birkbeck	Hutchens	Jamaica	NO	5	9	1766
Brig	Charlotte	Alger	St. Christopher	NO	5	17	1766
Ship	Redhead Galley	Neale	Pensacola & Mobile	NO	5	20	1766
Ship	Georgia Packet	Anderson	London	NO	5	20	1766
Schooner	Pedee	Cox	South Carolina	NO	5	22	1766
Ship	Samuel & Betsey	Pierson	St. Christopher	NO	5	31	1766
Sloop	Butterfly	Germain	South Carolina	NO	6	3	1766
Schooner	Union	Myers	South Carolina	NO	6	11	1766
Schooner	Queenby	Wells	South Carolina	NO	6	11	1766
Snow Harriot	Boyd	William	Antigua	NO	6	12	1766
Sloop	Live Oak	Lawrence	New York	NO	6	12	1766
Snow	Indian Trader	McMin	Pensacola	NO	6	16	1766
Schooner	Union	Myers	South Carolina	NO	6	17	1766
Schooner	Esther	Williams	Jamaica	NO	6	18	1766
Schooner	Ogeeche	Drummond	Philadelphia	NO	6	19	1766
Sloop	Hannah	Gilmour	Pensacola	NO	6	25	1766
Sloop	Dove	Eaton	Sierra Leone in Africa	NO	6	27	1766
Schooner	Elizabeth	Cox	South Carolina		7	5	1766
Schooner	Success	Howard	South Carolina		7	9	1766
Schooner	Success	Howard	South Carolina	NO	7	9	1766
Schooner	Grampus	Smyth	South Carolina	NO	7	24	1766
Sloop	Betsey	Currie	New York	NO	7	25	1766
Sloop	Brotherly Love	Lazardes	St. Martins	NO	7	30	1766
Brig	Antelope	Paley?	Africa	NO	7	31	1766
Schooner	Two Batchelor's Adventure	Williams	South Carolina	NO	8	4	1766
Sloop	Nancy	Farmer	Guadeloupe	NO	8	8	1766

Ship	Margaret of Granby	Ronnald	South Carolina	NO	8	9	1766
Sloop	Friendship	Sutton	Barbadoes	NO	8	9	1766
Schooner	Esther	Williams	South Carolina	NO	8	16	1766
Schooner	Phaenix	Gardner	Philadelphia	NO	8	18	1766
Schooner	Jonathan	Williams	South Carolina	NO	8	19	1766
Sloop	Savannah	Stowe	Antigua	NO	8	21	1766
Ship	Christian	Stiell?	Cadiz	NO	8	25	1766
Sloop	Ready Money	Gibson	Antigua	NO	9	1	1766
Schooner	Fanny	Hopkins	South Carolina	NO	9	1	1766
Schooner	Pedee	Cox	South Carolina	NO	9	2	1766
Sloop	Hope	Nielson	St. Thomas	NO	9	5	1766
Sloop	St. George	Judkin	Bermuda	NO	9	8	1766
Sloop	Morany	Leslie	St. Christopher	NO	9	11	1766
Schooner	Elizabeth	Cox	South Carolina	NO	9	15	1766
Schooner	Georgia Packet	Whipple	South Carolina	NO	9	18	1766
Ship	Polly & Betsey	Brewton	London	NO	9	25	1766
Sloop	John	Gilbert	Bermuda & Turks Island	NO	9	26	1766
Sloop	Mary	Romans	Isle of Pines, Cuba	NO	9	30	1766
Brig	Laleah & susannah	Warden	St. Croix	NO	10	2	1766
Ship	Friendship	Ball	London	NO	10	9	1766
Brig	Ranger	Southward	Salem	NO	10	11	1766
Schooner	Fanny	McCoy	South Carolina	NO	10	11	1766
Sloop	Industry	Porter	Tyal & Pico	NO	10	14	1766
Sloop	Fanny	Hollywood	South Carolina	NO	10	18	1766
Brig	Annabella	Blake	Madeira	NO	10	18	1766
Snow	Hannah	Crawford	Jamacia	NO	10	18	1766
Ship	Woodmanstone	Mason	Gambia	NO	10	20	1766
Ship	Active	Rogers	St. Christopher	NO	10	20	1766
Snow	Grenada	Robinson	Gambia	NO	10	20	1766
Brig	Dolphin	Crane	Bay of Honduras	NO	10	27	1766
Sloop	Nancy	Gilbert	Nevis	NO	10	29	1766

Brig	Two Friends	Parkinson	Pensacola	NO	11	3	1766
Sloop	Sarah	Bass	Boston	NO	11	7	1766
Snow	Hopkirk	Spirit	Jamaica	NO	11	8	1766
Schooner	Queenby	Wells	Antigua	NO	11	13	1766
Snow	Ann	Thomason	Tortola	NO	11	19	1766
Ship	Nancy	Jordan	London	NO	11	19	1766
Brig	Happy Recovery	Laverick	London	NO	12	2	1766
Ship	Georgia Packet	Anderson	Antigua	NO	12	3	1766
Brig	Nelly	Campbell	Barbadoes & Sunbury	NO	12	4	1766
Sloop	Betsey	Shillins	Boston & Sunbury	NO	12	4	1766
Sloop	Speedwell	Buntin	Grenadoes	NO	12	5	1766
Schooner	Success	Petty	New Providence	NO	12	5	1766
Schooner	Vulcan	Rogers	South Carolina	NO	12	6	1766
Brig	Betsey	Hosking	Bristol	NO	12	15	1766
Schooner	Ogeeche	Drummond	St. Christopher	NO	12	17	1766
Schooner	Britannia	Gorham	Boston	NO	12	20	1766
Sloop	Liberty	Braley	Rhode Island	NO	12	24	1766
Brig	Lively	Davidson	Jamaica	NO	12	24	1766
Sloop	Two Friends	Boond	Antigua	NO	12	29	1766
Schooner	Grampus	Smyth	South Carolina	NO	12	29	1766
Schooner	Industry	Cross	Boston	NO	12	29	1766
Brig	Friendship	Live	Poole	NO	12	30	1766
Sloop	Mary Ann	Smith	St. Eustatius	NO	1	2	1767
Snow	Betty	Higgin	Montserrat	NO	1	3	1767
Sloop	Sukey	Claypoole	Philadelphia	NO	1	3	1767
Schooner	Betsey	Roberts	Boston & Martinico	GG	1	4	1767
Brig	Charlotte	Alger	Jamaica	GG	1	21	1767
Brig	William	Causton	South Carolina	NO	4	6	1767
Schooner	Three Brothers	Fitch	South Carolina	NO	4	7	1767
Schooner	Three Friends	Joyner	Port Royal	NO	4	7	1767
Brig	Chance	Smith	Rhode Island	NO	4	13	1767
Schooner	Georgia Packet	Fitzsimmons	South Carolina	NO	4	29	1767

Brig	Ann	Maxted	London	NO	4	30	1767
Ship	Pitt	Ross	St. Vincent	NO	5	2	1767
Schooner	Nocturnal	Tufts	South Carolina	NO	5	4	1767
Schooner	Liverpool Packet	Phillips	New London, Connecticut	NO	5	4	1767
Sloop	Speedwell	Sooy?	Philadelphia	NO	5	5	1767
Schooner	Margaret	Blythe	South Carolina	NO	5	15	1767
Sloop	Two Friends	Aitken	Antigua	NO	5	15	1767
Brig	Sally	King	Jamaica	NO	5	16	1767
Sloop	Hope	Benson	Grand Caimans	NO	5	20	1767
Ship	Hawke	Mills	London	NO	6	1	1767
Brig	Charlotte	Alger	Savana la Mar, Jamaica	NO	6	4	1767
Snow	Eagle	Mann	Montserrat	NO	6	8	1767
Schooner	Friendship	Axson	Curacoa	NO	6	10	1767
Sloop	Industry	Phillips	South Carolina	NO	6	17	1767
Sloop	Sally	Culmer	New Providence	NO	6	19	1767
Sloop	Pretty Kitty	Conway	South Carolina	NO	6	20	1767
Schooner	Margaret	Blythe	St. Augustine	NO	6	20	1767
Schooner	Nocturnal	Tufts	South Carolina	NO	6	24	1767
Schooner	Jane	Somerville	New Providence	NO	6	29	1767
Snow	Harriot	Boyd	Antiigua	NO	6	30	1767
Brig	Polly	Boote	Antigua	NO	7	3	1767
Sloop	Speedwell	Soo?	Philadelphia	NO	7	4	1767
Brig	Nassau	Prince	St. Christopher	NO	7	4	1767
Ship	Richard & Ann	Craven	London	NO	7	6	1767
Brig	William & Renn	Clark	Barbadoes	NO	7	18	1767
Schooner	Georgia Packet	Fitzsimmons	South Carolina	NO	7	21	1767
Brig	Savage	Dickenson	South Carolina	NO	7	23	1767
Schooner	Speedwell	Weyman	South Carolina	NO	7	23	1767
Sloop	St. Vincent Planter	Bryan	St. Vincent	NO	7	23	1767
Brig	Anne Penny	Dean	Jamaica	NO	7	29	1767
Brig	Dolphin	Crane	Bay of Honduras	NO	7	31	1767

Schooner	Rachel & Mary	Waldron	South Carolina	NO	8	4	1767
Schooner	Ogeechee	Drummond	South Carolina	NO	8	15	1767
Sloop	Thresher	Waldron	Montserrat	NO	8	15	1767
Brig	Mary	Ree	Jamaica	NO	8	19	1767
Schooner	Georgia Packet	Fitzsimmons	South Carolina	NO	8	19	1767
Schooner	Savannah Packet	Splane	Philadelphia	NO, GG	8	24	1767
Schooner	Jane	Somerville	Philadelphia	NO, GG	8	25	1767
Schooner	Two Brothers	Horton	St. Christopher & St. Croix	NO	8	31	1767
Sloop	William	Stone	St. Eustatius	NO	9	6	1767
Brig	Prince George	Addison	Gambia & Sierra Leone	NO	9	14	1767
Schooner	True Britton	Batchelder	Martinico	NO	9	22	1767
Ship	Polly & Betsey	Brewton	London	NO	9	26	1767
Sloop	Ranger	Phillips	St. Eustatius	NO	10	1	1767
Sloop	Dove	Hudson	Africa	NO	10	1	1767
Sloop	Charming Kitty	Taylor	St. Vincent	NO	10	2	1767
Schooner	Endeavour	Kidd	Philadelphia	NO	10	2	1767
Sloop	Sukey	Claypole	Philadelphia	GG	10	3	1767
Schooner	Endeavour	Kidd	Philadelphia	GG	10	3	1767
Schooner	Georgia Packet	Fitzsimmons	South Carolina	GG	10	7	1767
Schooner	Georgia Packet	Fitzsimmons	South Carolina	NO	10	7	1767
Brig	Lively	Millburn	Barbados	GG	10	8	1767
Brig	Lively	Willburn	Barbadoes	NO	10	8	1767
Schooner	Jane	Morgan	South Carolina	GG	10	14	1767
Sloop	Industry	Porter	Boston & New London	GG	10	19	1767
Brig	St. Augustine Packet	Savoy	Africa & St. Augustine	GG	10	21	1767
Sloop	Betsey	Skillens	Boston	GG	10	22	1767
Brig	Peggy	Wilson	Barbados	GG	10	23	1767

Ship	Georgia Packet	Anderson	London	GG	10	27	1767
Brig	Dominica	Earle	Grenada	GG	10	27	1767
Brig	Swan	Lambert	London	GG	10	28	1767
Schooner	Broughton Island	Bachop	South Carolina	GG	10	29	1767
Sloop	Two Friends	Morris	Sunbury	GG	11	4	1767
Sloop	St. Vincent's Planter	Langford	St. Eustatia	GG	11	4	1767
Brig	Laleah & Susannah	Walden	Granada	GG	11	11	1767
Sloop	Sarah	Osburn	Boston	GG	11	13	1767
Sloop	Batchelor	Connor	South Carolina	GG	11	14	1767
Brig	Molly	White	Rhode Island	GG	11	16	1767
Sloop	Shileleng	Phaenix	Dominica	GG	11	16	1767
Schooner	Sally	Dawson	South Carolina	GG	11	16	1767
Ship	Fortune	Southward	Salem	GG	11	18	1767
Sloop	Polly	Burke	Rhode Island	GG	11	25	1767
schooner	Ogechee	Drummond	South Carolina	GG	11	27	1767
Sloop	Hannah	Motley	Dominica & Turks island	GG	11	27	1767
Sloop	Two Friends	Aitken	Antigua	GG	11	30	1767
Brig	Beggar's Bennison	Affleck	Dunbar	GG	12	4	1767
Sloop	Earl of Bute	Harvey	Boston	GG	12	7	1767
Sloop	Jenny	Cowie	Africa	GG	12	8	1767
Ship	Elizabeth & Mary	Covell	Barbados	GG	12	9	1767
Schooner	East Florida Packet	Barton	South Carolina	GG	12	9	1767
Ship	Active	Fleming	St. Kitts	GG	12	9	1767
Brig	Chance	Martin	St. Vincent's	GG	12	14	1767
Schooner	Neptune	Dodge	Montserrat	GG	12	15	1767
Sloop	Savannah	Robinson	Barbados & Saltortuga	GG	12	15	1767
Ship	Royal Exchange	Martin	Antigua	GG	12	16	1767
Sloop	Lloyd	Rogers	Montserrat	GG	12	19	1767
Schooner	Chance	Wyley	South Carolina	GG	12	19	1767

Brig	Paragon	McNamara	Philadelphia & Statia	GG	12	21	1767
Brig	Lydia	Wanton	Rhode Island	GG	12	22	1767
Schooner	Wambaw	Peacock	South Carolina	GG	12	22	1767
Brig	Mary Ann	Hughes	South Carolina	GG	12	24	1767
Brig	Greyhound	Masury	Salem	GG	1	2	1768
Brig	Folly	Taylor	Dominica	GG	1	2	1768
Schooner	Lucy	Gorham	Boston	GG	1	4	1768
Snow	Betty	Woods	Piscataqua	GG	1	4	1768
Ship	Nancy	Parker	London	GG	1	6	1768
Sloop	Dispatch	Seymour	Anguilla	GG	1	7	1768
Brig	Peggy	Bridges	Philadelphia	GG	1	11	1768
Ship	Polly & Betsey	Brewton	London	GG	1	12	1768
Brig	Augustine	James	Antigua	GG	1	12	1768
Sloop	Earl of Bute	Harvey	Martinico	GG	1	12	1768
Schooner	Bobbing Joan	Boynton	St. Croix & Saltertuga	GG	1	16	1768
Sloop	Two Friends	Forster	South Carolina	GG	1	16	1768
Brig	Polly	Chew	Connecticut & Guadeloupe	GG	1	25	1768
Schooner	Susannah	Furse	St. Augustine	GG	2	3	1768
Schooner	Johanna	Petty	New Providence	GG	2	4	1768
Billander	Ceres	Beef	Poole	GG	2	6	1768
Schooner	Two Brothers	Sherman	Martinico	GG	2	8	1768
Brig	Hibernia	Miller	Baltimore in Ireland	GG	2	10	1768
Brig	Miriam & Ann	Hazelton	Jamaica	GG	2	10	1768
Schooner	Polly	Barber	South Carolina	GG	2	11	1768
Sloop	Sally	Stiles	Dominica & St. Eustatia	GG	2	15	1768
Brig	Sally	Hyer	Rhode Island	GG	2	15	1768
Sloop	Sally	Landale	Granada	GG	2	15	1768
Schooner	Lovely Betsey	Harris	St. Kitts	GG	2	17	1768
Schooner	Polly	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	2	20	1768
Snow	Fair Quaker	Mountford	St. Vincent	GG	2	24	1768

Brig	Prince Frederick	Watt	Whitby	GG	2	26	1768
Brig	Hope	Wadland	Bristol & Grenada	GG	3	2	1768
Sloop	Hunter	May	Philadelphia	GG	3	3	1768
Brig	Harvey	Ninian	Glasgow	GG	3	5	1768
Sloop	Earl of Bute	Harvey	St. Croix	GG	3	7	1768
Schooner	Susannah	Huxtable	South Carolina	GG	3	8	1768
Brig	Africa	Hathaway	Rhode Island	GG	3	10	1768
Sloop	Sally	Reed	St. Lucie	GG	3	11	1768
Brig	William & Renn	Sutton	Barbados	GG	3	14	1768
Sloop	Charlotte	Fisk	Salem	GG	3	19	1768
Ship	Aurora	Craig	South Carolina	GG	3	21	1768
Snow	Harriot	Boyd	Antigua	GG	3	21	1768
Schooner	Polly	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	3	25	1768
Schooner	Jane	Morgan	South Carolina	GG	3	26	1768
Schooner	Ogechee	Drummond	South Carolina	GG	3	30	1768
Ship	Friendship	Fitzherbert	Grenada	GG	3	30	1768
Sloop	Thresher	Waldron	Dominica	GG	3	30	1768
Snow	Britania	Dean	Africa and Barbados	NO	3	30	1768
Brig	Lively	Hindson	Jamaica	GG	4	5	1768
Brig	Betty	Lasseure ?	Barbados	GG	4	6	1768
Sloop	William & Janet	Simonton	St. Croix	GG	4	16	1768
Schooner	Polly	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	4	19	1768
Sloop	Mercury	Huxtable	South Carolina	GG	4	20	1768
Brig	Nancy	Neters	Dublin	GG	4	20	1768
Brig	Sally	King	Jamaica		4	22	1768
Schooner	Broughton Isl Packet	Bachop	St. Augustine	GG	4	25	1768
Brig	Lovely Betty	Hastane	Jamaica	GG	5	3	1768
Schooner	Benjamin	Gray	South Carolina	GG	5	3	1768
Schooner	Nancy	Williams	South Carolina	GG	5	10	1768
Sloop	Jenny	Aitken	Martinico	GG	5	10	1768
Sloop	Betsey	Skillins	Barbados	GG	5	10	1768
Snow	Stirling	Greene	Madeira	GG	5	25	1768
Schooner	Polly	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	5	25	1768

Sloop	Industry	Tuttle	Boston	GG	5	30	1768
Sloop	Sarah	Osburn	Grenada	GG	6	7	1768
Schooner	Benjamin	Tucker	South Carolina	GG	6	8	1768
Ship	Constantine	Gullan	Angola	GG	6	9	1768
Schooner	Ogechee	Drummond	St. Augustine	GG	6	14	1768
Schooner	Union	Myers	South Carolina	GG	6	17	1768
Sloop	Anna	Stiles	St. Kitts & St. Eustatia	GG	6	17	1768
Schooner	Two Brothers	Sherman	St. Croix	GG	6	20	1768
Schooner	Polly	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	6	21	1768
Ship	Charming Sally	Rainier	London	GG	6	28	1768
Brig	Montaugue	Downe	Jamaica	GG	7	9	1768
Schooner	Jane	Morgan	Antigua	GG	7	9	1768
Sloop	Nancy	Lowry	Antigua	GG	7	12	1768
Schooner	Sally	Mills	St. Christopher's	GG	7	12	1768
Sloop	Rake's Delight	Roberts	South Carolina	GG	7	14	1768
Schooner	Savannah Packet	Williams	South Carolina	GG	7	18	1768
Sloop	Rachel	Goddard	Philadelphia	GG	7	18	1768
Schooner	Sally	Grimshaw	South Carolina	GG	7	19	1768
Schooner	Tryal	Bowles	South Carolina	GG	7	19	1768
Sloop	Speedwell	Devonshire	Philadelphia	GG	7	20	1768
Brig	Prince George	Fortune	South Carolina	GG	7	20	1768
Schooner	Benjamin	Tucker	South Carolina	GG	7	21	1768
Brig	Venus	Foster	Senegal	GG	7	21	1768
Snow	Pitt	Copithorn	Bristol	GG	7	23	1768
Schooner	True Briton	Leech	Salem	GG	7	23	1768
Brig	Swallow	Wells	Sunbury	GG	8	1	1768
Sloop	Polly	Petty	New Providence	GG	8	2	1768
Schooner	Fortune	Marr	Gambia & Barbados	GG	8	4	1768
Brig	Industry	Cuyler	Jamaica	GG	8	5	1768
Schooner	Mary Ann	Clark	South Carolina	GG	8	15	1768
Schooner	Pedee	Pickton	South Carolina	GG	8	18	1768
Schooner	Isabella	Duncan	South Carolina	GG	8	31	1768

Brig	Polly	Boote	Antigua	GG	9	3	1768
Schooner	Susannah	Alger	Jamaica	GG	9	5	1768
Sloop	Savannah	Robinson	Bermuda	GG	9	14	1768
Brig	Sally	King	Jamaica	GG	9	19	1768
Sloop	Anna	Stiles	St. Croix	GG	9	23	1768
Sloop	William	Carter		GG	9	26	1768
Brig	Harlequin	Eatton	Africa	GG	9	28	1768
Brig	Industry	Furse	Bristol	GG	9	30	1768
Schooner	Sally	Mills	South Carolina	GG	10	3	1768
Brig	Elizabeth	Matthews	Antigua	GG	10	3	1768
Brig	Gambia	Keast	Senegambia	GG	10	5	1768
Schooner	Sally	Anderson	South Carolina	GG	10	5	1768
Sloop	Betsey	Skillins	Boston	GG	10	10	1768
Ship	Georgia Packet	Anderson	London	GG	10	10	1768
Schooner	Ogechee	Drummond	St. Kitts	GG	10	11	1768
Brig	William & Renn	Sutton	Barbados	GG	10	13	1768
Sloop	Earl of Bute	Harvey	Boston	GG	10	14	1768
Snow	Peacock	Hewson	London	GG	10	17	1768
Brig	Ruby	Bragg	Barbados	GG	10	22	1768
Schooner	Mary Ann	Clark	South Carolina	GG	10	28	1768
Brig	Lord Pulteney	Brown	St. Vincent	GG	10	28	1768
Ship	Mary	Forbes	Jamaica	GG	10	31	1768
Sloop	Fanny	Sherman	Curacoa	GG	10	31	1768
Brig	Hibernia	Sullivan	Bristol & Baltimore	GG	11	1	1768
Schooner	Savannah Packet	Williams	South Carolina	GG	11	4	1768
Schooner	Friendship	Fall	Grenada	GG	11	4	1768
Schooner	Nancy	Brown	Bay of Honduras	GG	11	8	1768
Ship	Industry	Stable	Antigua	GG	11	8	1768
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	11	8	1768
Brig	Friendship	Pillow	Grenada	GG	11	11	1768
Sloop	Jane	Morgan	Antigua & St. Martin's	GG	11	14	1768
Sloop	Jenny	Aitken	St. Lucie	GG	11	15	1768
Sloop	Sally	Wright	Granada	GG	11	15	1768

Schooner	Mary Ann	Haig	South Carolina	GG	11	23	1768
Ship	Elizabeth & Mary	Covell	Barbados	GG	11	23	1768
Sloop	Polly	Bourk	Rhode Island	GG	11	25	1768
Sloop	Rainbow	Saxton	South Carolina	GG	12	3	1768
Sloop	Polly	Conway	Boston	GG	12	3	1768
Ship	Prince George	Beatty	Belfast in Ireland	GG	12	5	1768
Sloop	Charlotte	Frisk	Salem	GG	12	5	1768
Brig	Polly	Tredwell	Granada	GG	12	9	1768
Brig	Georgia Packet	Bridges	Philadelphia	GG	12	9	1768
Sloop	Polly	Young	Antigua & St. Martin's	GG	12	10	1768
Snow	Lady Catherine	Vickers	Barbados	GG	12	12	1768
Schooner	Polly	Stone	South Carolina	GG	12	12	1768
Snow	Polly	Shaw	Barbados	GG	12	12	1768
Ship	Nancy	Jordan	London	GG	12	13	1768
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	12	13	1768
Schooner	True Briton	Leech	Martinico	GG	12	13	1768
Ship	Barbados Packet	Castle	Barbados	GG	12	15	1768
Brig	Jamaica Packet	Carew	Jamaica	GG	12	16	1768
Ship	Caesar	Hume	Hull	GG	12	16	1768
Brig	Chance	Fulker	Bonavista	GG	12	16	1768
Schooner	Susannah	Nelmes	Saltortuga	GG	12	16	1768
Sloop	William & Jennet	Simonton	St. Croix	GG	12	23	1768
Sloop	Molly	Gorham	Boston	GG	12	28	1768
Brig	Sea Deliverance	Bartlett	Boston	GG	12	28	1768
Brig	Sally	Cozzins	Jamaica	GG	12	28	1768
Sloop	Nightingale	Jones	North Carolina	GG	12	30	1768
Sloop	Polly	Crawford	St. Croix	GG	12	30	1768
Snow	Ann	Higgins	Montserrat & St. Martin's	GG	1	4	1769
Schooner	Sally	Clark	Philadelphia	GG	1	5	1769

Sloop	Milton Packet	Smith	Newfoundland	GG	1	9	1769
Brig	Prince Frederick	Watt	South Carolina	GG	1	9	1769
Brig	Albion	Peacock	London	GG	1	11	1769
Brig	Industry	Cuyler	Jamaica	GG	1	14	1769
Brig	Minerva	Fortune	Dominica	GG	1	16	1769
Brig	Montague	Langford	St. Lucie & Jamaica	GG	1	16	1769
Brig	Kingston	McIntosh	Jamaica	GG	1	17	1769
Sloop	Nightingale	Engs	Rhode Island	GG	1	19	1769
Schooner	Two Brothers	Evans	Granada	GG	1	19	1769
Schooner	Gordon	Fenton	New York	GG	1	20	1769
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	1	24	1769
Brig	Cicero	Buckmaster	Rhode Island	GG	1	25	1769
Brig	Georgia Packet	Bridges	Philadelphia	GG	1	28	1769
Sloop	Paoli	McDaniel	Boston	GG	2	1	1769
Ship	Friendship	Gist	Bristol	GG	2	1	1769
Snow	Nancy	Cunningham	Granada	GG	2	10	1769
Sloop	Remember Grace	Parcivell	North Carolina	GG	2	10	1769
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	2	18	1769
Ship	Mobile Packet	McMinn	Mobile	GG	2	22	1769
Ship	Marquis of Rockingham	Clark	Granada	GG	3	1	1769
Schooner	Polly	Mansfield	Salem	GG	3	1	1769
Ship	Polly & Betsey	Brewton	London	GG	3	1	1769
Billander	Ceres	Beef	Pool	GG	3	1	1769
Brig	Christian	Gemmel	St. Croix	GG	3	1	1769
Brig	Florida	Fell	Liverpool	GG	3	2	1769
Sloop	Lark	Stiles	St. Lucie	GG	3	6	1769
Sloop	Betsey	Earle	St. Thomas	GG	3	7	1769
Snow	Sweepstakes	Cole	Poole	GG	3	9	1769
Schooner	Sally	McLoughlin	Port Royal	GG	3	11	1769
Brig	Industry	Kenney	South Carolina	GG	3	11	1769
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	3	13	1769
Brig	Polly	Tredwell	Cape St. Nichola	GG	3	13	1769

Brig	Newhaven	McEldoe	St. Lucie & Turks Island	GG	3	18	1769
Sloop	Polly	Mercer	Antigua	GG	3	18	1769
Schooner	Betsey	Haynes	St. Croix	GG	3	20	1769
Brig	Hibernia	Sullivan	Grenada	GG	3	20	1769
Sloop	Polly	Bourk	St. Eustatia	GG	3	23	1769
Snow	Governor Wright	Hall	Bristol	GG	3	29	1769
Sloop	Jane	Sinclair	Cape St. Nicholas	GG	3	29	1769
Sloop	Rising Sun	Brown	St. Vincent	GG	3	31	1769
Snow	Britania	Dean	Gambia	GG	3	31	1769
Schooner	Polly	Stone	South Carolina	GG	4	4	1769
Ship	Berwick	Moore	South Carolina	GG	4	5	1769
Sloop	Jenny	Aitken	Cape St. Nicholas	GG	4	8	1769
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	4	10	1769
Brig	Georgia Packet	Bridges	Philadelphia	GG	4	11	1769
Sloop	Polly	Outten	New Providence	GG	4	13	1769
Sloop	Nightingale	Engs	St. Kitts	GG	4	18	1769
Schooner	Sally	McLoughlin	South Carolina	GG	4	19	1769
Sloop	Thresher	Brown	Rhode Island	GG	4	19	1769
Snow	Fly	Taylor	Africa	GG	4	25	1769
Sloop	Charming Nancy	Conway	Boston	GG	4	28	1769
Sloop	Sally	Wright	St. Eustatia	GG	5	1	1769
Brig	Sally	Alger	Jamaica	GG	5	1	1769
Schooner	Gordon	Fenton	Jamaica	GG	5	1	1769
Schooner	Cannon	Smyth	South Carolina	GG	5	2	1769
Schooner	Rebecca	Laverdy	Grenada	GG	5	3	1769
Brig	Sally	Cozens	Jamaica	GG	5	6	1769
Schooner	Union	Myers	South Carolina	GG	5	8	1769
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	5	9	1769
Sloop	Rising Sun	Brown		GG	5	9	1769
Ship	Georgia Packet	Anderson	London	GG	5	17	1769
Brig	Industry	Furse	Bristol	GG	5	17	1769
Schooner	William	Steed	Grenada	GG	5	18	1769

Brig	Cicero	Buckmaster	Cape St. Nicholas	GG	5	20	1769
Schooner	Betsey	Edney	Bahama Islands	GG	5	23	1769
Schooner	Two Brothers	Sherman	St. Vincent & St. Lucie	GG	5	26	1769
Schooner	Friendship	Cooper	Grenada	GG	5	29	1769
Schooner	Fly	Cowell	St. Eustatia	GG	6	2	1769
Brig	George	Tribble	Madeira	GG	6	2	1769
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	6	6	1769
Brig	William & Renn	Sutton	Barbados	GG	6	9	1769
Schooner	Sally	Mills	St. Augustine	GG	6	9	1769
Snow	Gambia	Doyle	Gambia	GG	6	13	1769
Sloop	Sally	Nottage	Bahama Islands	GG	6	17	1769
Sloop	Elizabeth & Mary	Mathelin	Bermuda	GG	6	17	1769
Sloop	Lark	Stiles	St. Lucie	GG	6	21	1769
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	6	29	1769
Brig	Industry	Langford	Jamaica	GG	6	30	1769
Sloop	Elizabeth & Ann	Ross	Jamaica	GG	7	5	1769
Brig	Montague	Alger	Jamaica	GG	7	10	1769
Schooner	Hawke	Bell	New Providence	GG	7	10	1769
Schooner	Sally	Mills	South Carolina	GG	7	15	1769
Sloop	Phaenix	McDaniel	Boston	GG	7	25	1769
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	8	4	1769
Sloop	Mercury	Ainslie	Gambia	GG	8	7	1769
Brig	Fanny	Robertson	St. Kitts	GG	8	8	1769
Schooner	Fly	Sarly	Jamaica	GG	8	18	1769
Schooner	Betsey & Katie	Sherman	South Carolina	GG	8	24	1769
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	8	25	1769
Brig	Sally	Cozens	Jamaica	GG	8	26	1769
Sloop	Thresher	Brown	Cape Nichola	GG	9	4	1769
Sloop	Charming Nancy	Conway	St. Eustatia	GG	9	4	1769
Brig	Georgia Packet	Bridges	Philadelphia	GG	9	5	1769

Ship	Polly & Betsey	Brewton	London	GG	9	12	1769
Sloop	Catherine	Bleak	St. Nichola	GG	9	18	1769
Schooner	Charming Betsey	Young	South Carolina	GG	9	18	1769
Sloop	Elizabeth	Harvey	Boston	GG	9	20	1769
Sloop	Jane	Sullivan	Jamaica	GG	9	23	1769
Schooner	Kirk of Scotland	Colville	Jamaica	GG	9	23	1769
Brig	Chance	Fulker	Teneriffe & Isle of May	GG	9	23	1769
Sloop	Alexander & George	Kirk	Jamaica	GG	9	23	1769
Brig	Friendship	Horton	London	GG	9	23	1769
Sloop	William & Mary	Proctor	Boston	GG	9	26	1769
Sloop	Lark	Stiles	Antigua & Turks Island	GG	10	7	1769
Sloop	Jenny	Aitken	Antigua	GG	10	9	1769
Schooner	Polly	Stone	South Carolina	GG	10	9	1769
Brig	Montague	Alger	St. Nichola	GG	10	16	1769
Ship	Berwick	Moor	St. Vincent	GG	10	16	1769
Sloop	Providence	Chace	South Carolina	GG	10	18	1769
Brig	Lord Pulteney	Brown	St. Vincent	GG	10	21	1769
Brig	Georgia Packet	May	Philadelphia	GG	10	27	1769
Sloop	Neptune	Sou?	Turks Island	GG	10	28	1769
Schooner	Mary Anne	Clarke	South Carolina		10	31	1769
Schooner	Betsey & Katie	Sherman	Philadelphia		10	31	1769
Brig	Florida	Fell	Liverpool		10	31	1769
Schooner	Three Friends	Scott	Salem	GG	11	4	1769
Brig	Industry	Furse	Bristol	GG	11	4	1769
Sloop	Greyhound	Conyers	Turks Island	GG	11	7	1769
Schooner	Sally	Lyell	Perth Amboy	GG	11	13	1769
Schooner	William	Steed	St. Kitts	GG	11	25	1769
Sloop	Nightingale	Engs	Rhode Island	GG	11	25	1769
Schooner	Rebecca	Laverdy	Grenada	GG	11	25	1769

Ship	Wolfe	Kemp	London	GG	11	27	1769
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	11	27	1769
Schooner	Tryal	Gerrith	Salem	GG	11	28	1769
Ship	Hopewell	Ashe	Belfast	GG	12	2	1769
Sloop	Charlotte	Buffit	New York	GG	12	4	1769
Sloop	Three Sallys	Simon	Turks Island	GG	12	5	1769
Brig	Industry	Mercer	St. Nichola	GG	12	5	1769
Ship	Georgia Packet	Anderson	London	GG	12	6	1769
Brig	Hibernia	Scurlog	Bristol & Baltimore	GG	12	8	1769
Ship	Friendship	Marsham	Grenada	GG	12	8	1769
Schooner	Polly	Stone	South Carolina	GG	12	9	1769
Ship	Hope	Christie	Portsmouth	GG	12	11	1769
Brig	Fanny	Robertson	St. Kitts	GG	12	11	1769
Snow	Matty	Jackson	Liverpool	GG	12	15	1769
Brig	William & Renn	Sutton	Barbados	GG	12	16	1769
Schooner	Two Friends	Pulling	Boston	GG	12	18	1769
Sloop	Wanchy	Cass	South Carolina	GG	12	18	1769
Schooner	Eliza	Stephens	Antigua	GG	12	18	1769
Brig	Friendship	Wooster	Barbados	GG	12	23	1769
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	12	29	1769
Schooner	Polly	Stone	South Carolina	GG	12	29	1769
Schooner	Dolphin	Groves	Salem	GG	12	30	1769
Schooner	Dolphin	Wickham	New London	GG	1	2	1770
Schooner	Two Brothers	Goffe	St. Vincent	GG	1	3	1770
Schooner	Three Friends	Scot	Salem	GG	1	6	1770
Sloop	Polly	Gorham	Boston	GG	1	6	1770
Schooner	Live Oak	Potter	Lew London	GG	1	6	1770
Brig	Sally	Pennington	Rhode Island	GG	1	8	1770
Sloop	Charlotte	Buffit	South Carolina	GG	1	10	1770
Sloop	Little Bob	Campbell	Turks Island	GG	1	19	1770
Schooner	John & Phebe	Cardiff	St. Nichola	GG	1	24	1770
Sloop	Peggy	Parr	Grenada & Tobago	GG	1	27	1770
Schooner	Fly	Ross	Jamaica	GG	1	29	1770
Schooner	polly	Stone	South Carolina	GG	1	29	1770

Schooner	Seaford	Shulds	South Carolina	GG	1	29	1770
Sloop	Elizabeth	Harvey	Jamaica	GG	1	31	1770
Schooner	Borcas	Driver	Jamaica	GG	1	31	1770
Ship	Hilary	Batson	Jamaica	GG	2	1	1770
Sloop	Jane	Sullivan	St. Nichola	GG	2	1	1770
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	2	1	1770
Sloop	Dove	Bowditch	St. Martin's	GG	2	2	1770
Brig	Harvey	Patoun	Grenada	GG	2	2	1770
Sloop	Lark	Colvill	St. Nichola	GG	2	2	1770
Snow	Governor Wright	Hall	Corke	GG	2	3	1770
Schooner	Dolphin	Sisson	South Carolina	GG	2	7	1770
Sloop	Neptune	Southgate	St. Nichola	GG	2	10	1770
Schooner	Charming Nancy	Conway	Jamaica	GG	2	17	1770
Brig	Georgia Packet	Souder	Barbados	GG	2	17	1770
Brig	Sally	Alger	Jamaica	GG	2	19	1770
Schooner	Hawke	Outten	New Providence	GG	2	21	1770
Sloop	Three Sallys	Simon	Grenada	GG	2	26	1770
Bilander	Ceres	Beef	Pool	GG	2	27	1770
Sloop	Endeavour	Brown	St. Eustatia	GG	3	1	1770
Schooner	Aurora	Myers	St. Eustatia & South Carolina	GG	3	5	1770
Sloop	Neptune	Trevett	Rhode Island	GG	3	5	1770
Schooner	Live Oak	Porter	St. Augustine	GG	3	8	1770
Schooner	Liberty	Chruchill	South Carolina	Gg	3	17	1770
Sloop	Nightingale	Engs	St. Eustatia	GG	3	19	1770
Schooner	Polly	Stone	South Carolina	GG	3	19	1770
schooner	Joanna	Ellis	New Providence	GG	3	28	1770
Snow	Britania	Dean	Gambia	GG	3	28	1770
Sloop	Pensacola Packet	Offut	Pensacola	GG	3	29	1770
Sloop	Nancy	Dow	Pensacola	GG	3	29	1770
Sloop	Jenny	Aitken	St. Nichola	GG	3	31	1770
Brig	Georgia Packet	Souder	Philadelphia	GG	4	6	1770

Schooner	Betsey & Katie	Sherman	St. Eustatia	GG	4	6	1770
Ship	Pike	Linthorne	London	GG	4	6	1770
Brig	Susannah	Lewis	Montserrat	GG	4	6	1770
Sloop	Providence	Chace	Jamaica	GG	4	11	1770
Brig	Polly	Lang	London	GG	4	11	1770
Brig	Montague	Johnson	Jamaica	GG	4	11	1770
Brig	Polly	Lang	London	GG	4	11	1770
Sloop	Providence	Chace	Jamaica	GG	4	11	1770
Brig	Montague	Johnson	Jamaica	GG	4	11	1770
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	4	18	1770
Schooner	Duke of Lancaster	Lamb	St. Kitts	GG	4	19	1770
Ship	Sharpe	Kellie	London	GG	4	25	1770
Sloop	Betsey	Earle	Boston	GG	4	27	1770
Brig	Venture	Evans	Jamaica	GG	4	30	1770
Brig	Industry	Colville	St. Nichola	GG	5	3	1770
Ship	Mobile Packet	McMinn	Mobile	GG	5	10	1770
Brig	William & Ann	Kelly	Irvin	GG	5	11	1770
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	5	11	1770
Ship	Cavendish	Penny	Sierraleone	GG	5	12	1770
Schooner	Betsey	Vardell	South Carolina	GG	5	15	1770
Schooner	Little Bob	Preston	Philadelphia	GG	6	25	1770
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	7	4	1770
Schooner	Catherine	Jacobs	South Carolina	GG	7	5	1770
Schooner	Esther	Laverdy	Dominica	GG	7	6	1770
Schooner	Becky	Harris	Philadelphia	GG	6	10	1773
Schooner	Sally	Ogilvey	Bay of Honduras	GG	6	10	1773
Schooner	Horseshoe	Estes	South Carolina	GG	6	12	1773
Schooner	Savannah Packet	Turner	South Carolina	GG	6	12	1773
Schooner	Industry	Seal	St. Croix	GG	6	14	1773
Schooner	Two Friends	Evans	East Florida	GG	6	15	1773
Schooner	Sukey & Betsey	Durham	East Florida	GG	6	15	1773
Sloop	Judith	Manley	Turks Island	GG	12	29	1773
Sloop	Manley	Waller	Jamaica	GG	12	30	1773

Schooner	Savannah Packet	Turner	South Carolina	GG	1	4	1774
Schooner	Savannah Packet	Turner	South Carolina	GG	1	27	1774
Sloop	Beveridge	Walsh	Bay of Honduras	GG	2	3	1774
Brig	Prince of Wales	Woods	Tortola	GG	2	3	1774
Brig	Lord Dungannon	Montgomery	Antigua	GG	2	4	1774
Sloop	Polly	Henry	New York	GG	2	4	1774
Brig	Christian	Gibbon	St. Croix	GG	2	7	1774
Brig	Hope	Lang	Antigua	GG	2	7	1774
Sloop	Elizabeth	Lippitt	St. Eustatius	GG	2	7	1774
Brig	Mary	Burch	Dominica	GG	2	9	1774
Brig	Neptune	Headney	Grenada	GG	2	9	1774
Brig	Greenock	Shiels	Greenock	GG	2	10	1774
Sloop	William	G_nn	Turks Island	GG	2	10	1774
Sloop	Sally	Rogers	Nevis	GG	2	10	1774
Sloop	Seaflower	Hyer	St. Croix	GG	2	11	1774
Ship	Probity	Laws	London	GG	2	12	1774
Brig	Ann	Bromley	Antigua	GG	2	14	1774
Brig	Clark Gayton	Hathorne	Dominica	GG	2	14	1774
Sloop	William	Pray	St. Christopher	GG	2	14	1774
Brig	Susannah	Nichols	Montserrat	GG	2	14	1774
Sloop	Caesar	Cowdray	Cape Nicola	GG	2	17	1774
Brig	Fancy	Murdock	St. Kitts	GG	2	17	1774
Sloop	Mary	Sprainger	St. Christopher	GG	2	17	1774
Brig	Prosperous	Lallow	Bristol	GG	2	19	1774
Brig	Ann	Witherden	London	GG	2	21	1774
Ship	Peggy	Webb	Antigua	GG	2	22	1774
Schooner	Speedwell	Donnington	Perth Amboy	GG	2	22	1774
Sloop	York Packet	Larkin	Ne?	GG	2	23	1774
Ship	Blizzard	Dalling	?	GG	2	24	1774
Schooner	Henrietta	Bower	?	GG	2	26	1774
Ship	Waddell	Read	?	GG	2	26	1774
Brig	Friendship	Bryson	Jamaica	GG	3	3	1774
Sloop	Hope	Hammond	Turks Island	GG	3	4	1774
Brig	Unanimity	Smith	London	GG	3	10	1774

Brig	Florida	Anderson	Mob?	GG	3	11	1774
Schooner	Sunbury Packet	Dickinson	South Carolina	GG	3	11	1774
Sloop	Swallow	Engs	Dominic?	GG	3	11	1774
Brig	Frances	Outerbridge	Gren?	GG	3	16	1774
Schooner	Polly	Southward	Turks Island	GG	3	16	1774
Schooner	Rising Sun	Stilwell	Rhode Island	GG	3	16	1774
Sloop	Savannah	Coddington	Rhode Island	GG	3	19	1774
Schooner	Deborah	Mcauly	St. Christopher	GG	3	21	1774
Schooner	Anna	Stiles	St. Vincent	GG	3	22	1774
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	3	26	1774
Schooner	Savannah Packet	Turner	South Carolina	GG	3	26	1774
Brig	Chance	Colville	St. Christopher	GG	3	30	1774
Schooner	Adventure	Atkinson	Cape Nicola	GG	3	30	1774
Brig	Molly	Lancefield	St. Vincent	GG	3	30	1774
Brig	Georgia Packet	Bunner	Philadelphia	GG	4	6	1774
Schooner	Sally	Coombes	Antiguilla	GG	4	6	1774
Schooner	Sally	Coombes	Antigua	GG	4	13	1774
Sloop	Neptune	Mcauley	New York	GG	4	22	1774
Ship	Mary	Walden	London	GG	4	26	1774
Schooner	Experiment	Gray	Cur?	GG	5	2	1774
Brig	Rebecca	Rutherford	Ja?	GG	5	2	1774
Schooner	Union	Newby	South Carolina	GG	5	6	1774
Sloop	Milford	Spencer	Cape Nicola	GG	5	6	1774
Schooner	Savannah Packet	Turner	South Carolina	GG	5	6	1774
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	5	9	1774
Schooner	Lloyd	Darrel	South Carolina	GG	5	11	1774
Ship	Susannah	Clarke	London	GG	5	11	1774
Schooner	Charming Betsey	Pitts		GG	5	13	1774
Schooner	Charming Betsey	Pitts	?	GG	5	13	1774
Sloop	York Packet	Larkins	New/	GG	5	14	1774
Sloop	York Packet	Larkins	New?	GG	5	14	1774
Brig	Mary	Burch	Antigua	GG	5	16	1774

Schooner	Sunbury Packet	Dickenson	South Carolina	GG	5	20	1774
Sloop	Jane	Fulker	Gren?	GG	5	21	1774
Schooner	Little Nelly	Young	New Providence	GG	5	25	1774
Sloop	Hope & Nonsuch	Robinson	South Carolina	GG	5	25	1774
Sloop	Diamond	Tibbitts	New York	GG	5	28	1774
Schooner	Sukey & Katie	Dawson	South Carolina	GG	5	31	1774
Brig	Georgia Packet	Bunner	Philadelphia	GG	6	6	1774
Sloop	Hawke	Frazier	Cape Nicola	GG	6	6	1774
Schooner	Lively	Grayson	Africa	GG	6	7	1774
Schooner	Swallow	Elis	New Providence	GG	6	14	1774
Brig	Two Friends	Congdon	Cape Nicola	GG	6	14	1774
Brig	Greenock	Shiels	Jamaica	GG	6	15	1774
Schooner	Charming Betsey	Pitts	South Carolina	GG	6	22	1774
Sloop	Betsey	Adams	Montserrat	GG	6	24	1774
Schooner	Beggar's Benison	Dorrell	New Providence	GG	6	29	1774
Ship	Georgia Packet	Anderson	London	GG	7	2	1774
Brig	Allerton	Woods	Liverpool	GG	7	4	1774
Schooner	Racehorse	Aitkem	Made?	GG	7	4	1774
Brig	Camilla	Ross	Marchaque On The ?	GG	7	9	1774
Schooner	Catherine & Mary	Duval	South Carolina	GG	7	11	1774
Schooner	Liberty	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	7	12	1774
Schooner	Sukey & Katie	Dawson	South Carolina	GG	7	12	1774
Schooner	Betsey & Polly	Stone	South Carolina	GG	7	18	1774
Schooner	Anna	Tucker	St. Vincent	GG	7	28	1774
Schooner	Humming Bird	Thomson	New Providence	GG	7	30	1774

Schooner	William & Henry	Knight	South Carolina	GG	8	10	1774
Schooner	Three Friends	Bryan	St. Augustine	GG	8	12	1774
Schooner	Sukey & Katie	Sherman	South Carolina	GG	8	15	1774
Brig	Rebecca	Rughtford	Jamaica	GG	8	15	1774
Brig	Hindley	Cowle	St. Vincent	GG	8	17	1774
Sloop	York Packet	Larkin	Jamaica	GG	8	19	1774
Schooner	Charming Betsey	Bayne	St. Augustine	GG	8	23	1774
Snow	Industry	Furse	Bristol & St. Christopher	GG	8	23	1774
Schooner	Savannah Packet	Turner	South Carolina	GG	8	27	1774
Ship	Mary	Jones	Sierra Leone	GG	8	30	1774
Schooner	Catherine & Mary	Duvall	South Carolina	GG	9	1	1774
Schooner	Hibernia	Foskey	South Carolina	GG	9	1	1774
Schooner	Catherine & Mary	Duvall	South Carolina	GG	9	5	1774
Sloop	Dispatch	Albony	South Carolina	GG	9	5	1774
Bark	Friends	Ross	South Carolina	GG	9	7	1774
Schooner	Polly	Churchill	South Carolina	GG	9	7	1774
Sloop	Swallow	McClea	St. Augustine	GG	9	8	1774
Sloop	Sally	Wood	Philadelphia	GG	9	8	1774
Sloop	Rising Sun	Bailey	New York	GG	9	12	1774
Schooner	Sukie & Katie	Dawson	South Carolina	GG	9	19	1774
Schooner	Rake's Delight	Hauge	South Carolina	GG	9	19	1774
Schooner	Hibernia	Farrow	South Carolina	GG	9	20	1774
Schooner	Savannah Packet	Turner	South Carolina	GG	9	20	1774
Sloop	Endeavour	Brown	Jamaica	GG	9	29	1774
Sloop	Bee	Watson	Jamaica	GG	10	1	1774
Snow	Philip	Fuller	Senegal	GG	10	1	1774
Sloop	Milford	Trounce	Cape Nicola	GG	10	4	1774
Brig	Georgia Packet	Bunner	Philadelphia	GG	10	7	1774

Schooner	Savannah Packet	Turner	South Carolina	GG	10	7	1774
Schooner	Betsey	Durhan	New Providence	GG	10	17	1774
Schooner	Three Friends	Mccleuer	St. Vincent	GG	10	17	1774
Brig	Neptune	Russell	London	GG	10	18	1774
Sloop	Hunter	Turner	New Providence	GG	10	26	1774
Sloop	Hunter	Turner	cut off	GG	10	26	1774
Schooner	Savannah Packet	Turner	South Carolina	GG	10	28	1774
Sloop	Jane	Fulker	Jamaica	GG	10	31	1774
Sloop	Mary-Anne	Rinder		GG	11	2	1774
Ship	Betsey & Jenny	Thompson	Sun?	GG	11	8	1774
Ship	Inverness	Mcgillivray	Lon?	GG	11	8	1774
Ship	Inverness	Mcgillivray	London	GG	11	11	1774
Brig	Jesse	Boyd	Greenock	GG	11	12	1774
Sloop	Betsey	Stewart	South Carolina	GG	11	14	1774
Snow	Pretty Sally	Hasilen	Liverpool	GG	11	15	1774
Ship	Marlborough	Priffick	Whitby & Orkney	GG	11	17	1774
Schooner	Rake's Delight	Lagnford	South Carolina	GG	11	17	1774
Sloop	Rising Sun	Cooper	New York	GG	11	21	1774
Brig	Neptune	Dudfield	Africa	GG	11	24	1774
Schooner	Nancy	Earnshey	Rhode Island	GG	11	25	1774
Schooner	Hawke	Swain	South Carolina	GG	11	28	1774
Ship	Two Brothers	Jones	Africa	GG	11	28	1774
Schooner	Spy	Bath	South Carolina	GG	11	28	1774
Schooner	Charming Betsey	Wilson	South Carolina	GG	11	29	1774
Snow	Chance	Beowle	Africa	GG	11	30	1774
Brig	Georgia Packet	Bunner	Philadelphia	GG	11	30	1774
Ship	Arundel	Manson	London	GG	12	2	1774
Brig	Esther	Hinson	Turks Island	GG	12	2	1774
Brig	Rebecca	Rutherford	Jamiaca	GG	12	2	1774
Brig	Hindley	Cowle	St. Vincent	GG	12	5	1774

Schooner	Sukey & Katie	Dawson	South Carolina	GG	12	12	1774
Sloop	Hope	Hammond	St. Croix	GG	12	16	1774
Sloop	Juliana	Stringham	New York	GG	12	19	1774
Brig	Allerton	Woods	Liverpool	GG	12	27	1774
Schooner	Pugatt	Dobel	Antigua	GG	12	27	1774
Ship	Harriet	Wildrage	Antigua	GG	1	6	1775
Brig	Joseph	Richardson	St. Croix	GG	1	6	1775
Brig	Tom	Gray	Granada	GG	1	9	1775
Schooner	Sally	Gray	South Carolina	GG	1	10	1775
Brig	Meriam	Barnard	Hispaniola	GG	1	11	1775
Snow	Industry	Furse	St. Christopher	GG	1	13	1775
Brig	Seven Brothers	Barns	Barbados	GG	1	13	1775
Schooner	Charming Betsey	Wilson	St. Augustine	GG	1	16	1775
Schooner	Betsey	Harlow	St. Augustine	GG	1	16	1775
Sloop	Sophia	Wallace	St. Augustine	GG	1	21	1775
Ship	Grenada Packet	Bennett	Grenada	GG	1	25	1775
Sloop	Susanna	Clapp		GG	1	26	1775
Schooner	Polly	Cooper		GG	1	28	1775
Schooner	Charlestown & Savannah Packet	Turner		GG	1	31	1775
Sloop	Sophia	Wallace	St. Augustine	GG	3	16	1775
Sloop	Polly	Anderson	Jamaica	GG	3	17	1775
Ship	Georgia Planter	Inglis	Rotterdam	GG	3	21	1775
Brig	Polly	Nesbit		GG	3	27	1775
Sloop	Jane	Fulker	Jamaica	GG	4	19	1775
Schooner	Polly	Newton	New Providence	GG	4	19	1775
Brig	Neddy & Nelly	Rymer	Liverpool	GG	4	19	1775
Sloop	Susannah	Clapp	South Carolina	GG	4	19	1775
Ship	Georgia Packet	Anderson	Portsmouth	GG	4	21	1775
Sloop	Active	Dickenson	Jamaica	GG	4	21	1775

Schooner	Sukey & Katie	Higgins	Jamaica	GG	4	21	1775
Schooner	Three Weeks	M'Cluer	St. Vincent	GG	4	24	1775
Snow	Judith	Harvey	Jamaica	GG	4	24	1775
Brig	Elizabeth	White	Jamaica	GG	5	11	1775
Sloop	Sarah	Cooper	South Carolina	GG	5	12	1775
Snow	Hope	Perry	Liverpool	GG	5	23	1775
Brig	Georgia Diana	Regan	London	GG	5	30	1775
Sloop	York	Harmon	St. Christopher	GG	5	30	1775
Brig	Live Oak	Wallace	South Carolina	GG	5	31	1775
Brig	Christie	Walker	Jamaica	GG	6	1	1775
Sloop	Friendship	Weeks	Guadalupe	GG	6	7	1775
Sloop	Sally	Martin	Pensacola	GG	6	8	1775
Sloop	Betsey & Anne	Lightbourn	Bermuda	GG	6	8	1775
Schooner	Harriet	Bachop	St. Augustine	GG	6	8	1775
Brig	Samuel & Charles	Pinkerton	Barbados	GG	6	10	1775
Schooner	Industrious Peggy	Burch	St. Eustatius	GG	6	12	1775
Schooner	Polly	Hodsdon	Bermuda	GG	6	12	1775
Brig	Seven Brothers	Barns		GG	6	15	1775
Brig	Seven Brothers	Barns	Barbados	GG	6	15	1775
Sloop	Prudence	Norris	Philadelphia	GG	6	17	1775
Sloop	Britannia & Florida	McLeod	St. Augustine	GG	6	20	1775
Brig	Amity	Ash	London	GG	6	20	1775
Sloop	Kingston	Robertson	Jamaica	GG	6	21	1775
Ship	Richmond	Singleton	Barbados	GG	6	22	1775
Brig	William	Mercier	Jamaica	GG	6	28	1775
Schooner	Anna	Stiles	St. Vincent	GG	7	3	1775
Ship	Laurens	Sherlock	Liverpool	GG	7	4	1775
Brig	Georgia Packet	Bunner	Dominica	GG	7	12	1775
Ship	Philippa	Maitland	London	GG	7	12	1775

Sloop	Betsey	Stanton	North Carolina	GG (no date of entry)	7	12	1775
Brig	Neptune	Russel	London	GG	7	13	1775
Brig	Allerton	Woods	Liverpool	GG	7	14	1775
Schooner	Beggar's Benison	Dirrel	New Providence	GG	7	22	1775
Sloop	Polly	Cooper	New Haven	GG	7	24	1775
Ship	Clarissa	Bissell	Jamaica	GG	7	25	1775
Sloop	Sophia	Wallace	South Carolina	GG	7	25	1775
Sloop	Sophia	Wallace	St. Augustine	GG	7	31	1775
Sloop	Jane	Fulker	St. Eustatius	GG	8	1	1775
Schooner	Sally	Niel	St. Thomas	GG	8	3	1775
Sloop	Liverpool Packet	Clucas	Jamaica	GG	8	3	1775
Schooner	Carolina Packet	Smith	Musqueto Shore	GG	8	8	1775
Schooner	Meriam	Spencer	St. Nicholas	GG	8	8	1775
Sloop	Amelia	Moffat	New Providence	GG	8	9	1775
Schooner	Elizabeth	Caldwell	Antigua	GG	8	14	1775
Snow	Prince Tom	Mason	Gambia	GG	8	14	1775
Brig	William	Barton	St. Vincent	GG	8	16	1775
Brig	Yorick	Steel	Charles Town	GG	8	23	1775
Ship	Ross	Boyd	Jamaica	GG	8	25	1775
Brig	Martha	Green	Jamaica	GG	8	29	1775
Sloop	Content	Stammers	Honduras	GG	9	1	1775
Schooner	Sally	Gray	South Carolina	GG	9	2	1775

Appendix B: Individuals Claiming 2,500 Acres or More, 1755-1775

	Name	Sum Of Acreage
1	ANDREW, Benjamin	4,100
2	ANDREW, Joseph	2,524
3	BAILLIE, George	4,150
4	BAILLIE, Kenneth	3,050
5	BAILLIE, Robert	3,869
6	BARNARD, Edward	5,960
7	BOURQUIN (or BOURGUIN),	4,600
8	BRADDOCK, David Cutler	2,700
9	BRANDFORD, William	3,000
10	BREWTON, Miles	2,500
11	BRYAN, Jonathan	12,357
12	BULLOCH (or Bullock), James	4,550
13	BUTLER, Elisha	3,500
14	BUTLER, Elizabeth	3,880
15	BUTLER, James	3,050
16	BUTLER, Joseph	5,450
17	BUTLER, William	3,150
18	CARNEY, Arthur	2,700
19	CARR, Mark	6,100
20	CUTHBERT, James	6,100
21	DAVIS, John	3,050
22	DEVEAUX, James	4,973
23	DOUGLAS (or Douglass), Samuel	3,200
24	ELLIOTT (or Elliot), Grey	21,766
25	ELLIS, Henry	3,335
26	FENN, Zachariah	2,550
27	FORBES, John	2,500
28	FRASER, George	2,600
29	GALPHIN, George	8,193
30	GIBBONS, Joseph	5,662
31	GIBBONS, William	2,760
32	GOLDSMITH, Thomas	3,200
33	GRAHAM, James	5,400
34	GRAHAM, John	19,252
35	GRAVES, William	2,700
36	GRAYSON, John	3,000
37	HABERSHAM, James	13,061
38	HARRIS, Francis	4,350

39 HOUSTOUN (or Houston), Patrick, Sir	3,600
40 HUME, James	4,000
41 JOHNSON (or Johnston), Lewis	4,792
42 JONES, Noble	6,908
43 KNOX, William	6,640
44 LEE, Thomas	2,600
45 LYNN, Thomas (Capt.)	3,000
46 MACKAY, James	4,200
47 MACKAY, Patrick	4,902
48 MACKINTOSH (or McIntosh), George	2,850
49 MACKINTOSH (or McIntosh), Lachlan	5,700
50 MACKINTOSH (or McIntosh), William	5,550
51 MACLEAN (or McLean), John	6,020
52 MARTIN, Clement	3,030
53 MARTIN, Clement Jr.	5,300
54 MARTIN, Clement Sr.	4,500
55 MARTIN, John	3,534
56 McGILLIVRAY, Lachlan	4,700
57 MCKAY, James	5,460
58 MIDDLETON, Henry	3,000
59 MILLEDGE, John	3,339
60 MOSSMAN, James	4,500
61 Mulryne (or Mullryne or MILLRYNE), John	3,495
62 NETHERCLIFT, Thomas	4,000
63 OUTERBRIDGE, White	2,500
64 POWELL, James Edward	6,157
65 RAE, John	3,640
66 READ, James	6,450
67 REYNOLDS, John	5,110
68 ROBINSON, Pickering	2,700
69 SHEFTALL (or Sheftal), Mordecai	2,620
70 SHRUDER, Thomas	3,800
71 SIMPSON, John	4,650
72 SIMPSON, William	2,600
73 SMITH, John	8,462
74 SPALDING, James	5,700
75 STEVENS (or Stephens), John	3,101
76 STEVENS (or Stephens), Richard	2,600
77 STEWART, James	3,400
78 STUART, Patrick	3,000
79 TANNATT (or Tannett), Edmund	2,760

80 TATNALL (or Tatnell), Josiah	4,130
81 WALTON, John	3,450
82 WEST, Charles	2,691
83 WHITEFIELD, George, Rev.	3,819
84 WILLIAMS, John Francis	2,500
85 WOOD, Joseph	2,650
86 WRIGHT, Charles & Jermyn	12,150
87 WRIGHT, James	20,156
88 WYLLY, Alexander	5,224
89 YONGE, Henry	2,890
90 YOUNG, Thomas	5,004
91 ZOUBERBUHLER, Bartholomew, Rev.	3,700

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