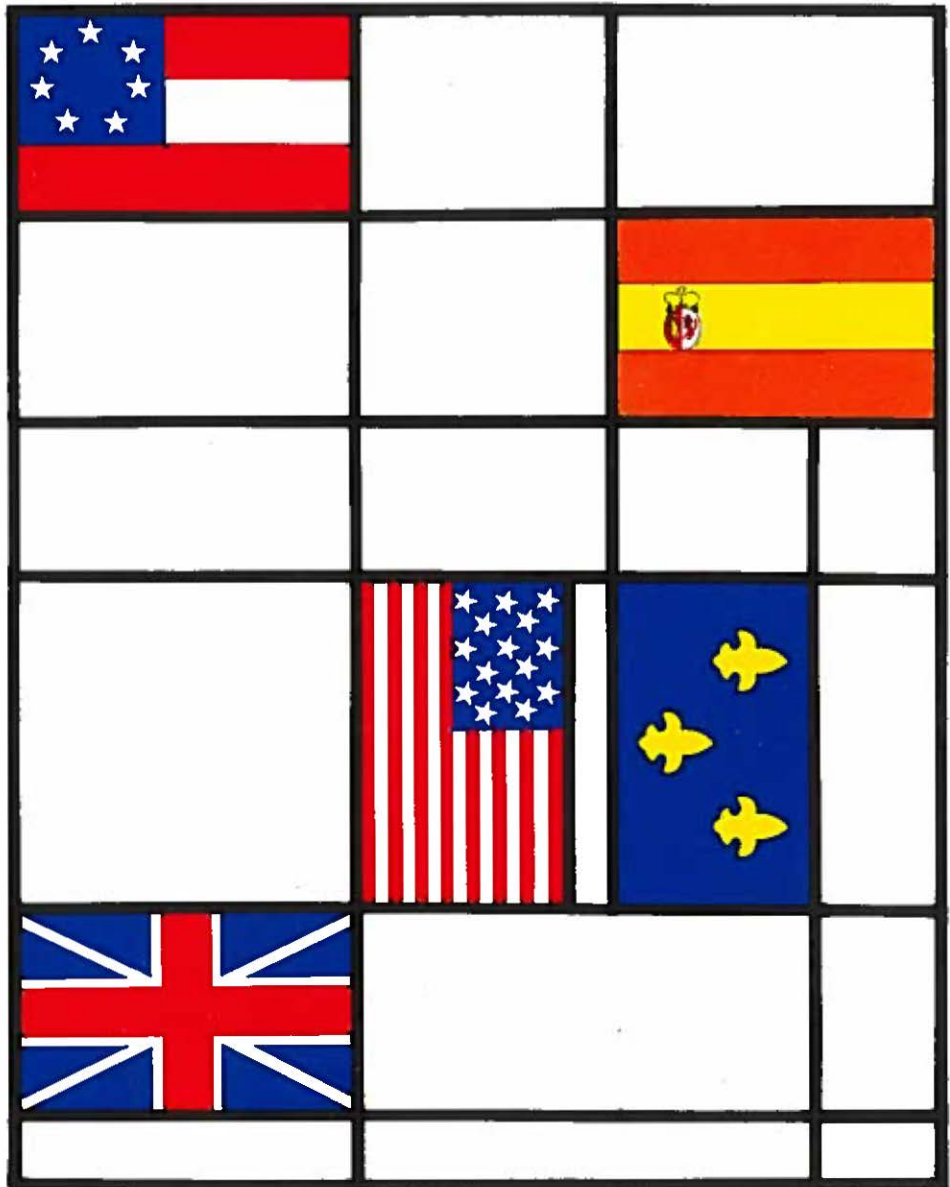


G/C Gulf Coast H/R Historical Review

Vol. 3 No. 1



G/C Gulf Coast H/R Historical Review

Vol. 3

Fall 1987

No. 1

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Dr. William Coker
University of West Florida, Pensacola

Mr. W. Dean DeBolt
University of West Florida, Pensacola

Mr. Caldwell Delaney
Museums of the City of Mobile, Mobile

Dr. James Downey
William Carey College on the Coast, Gulfport

Samuel Eichold, M.D., Mobile

Mr. Prieur J. Higginbotham
Mobile Municipal Archives, Mobile

Col. Glen Johnson
Certified Genealogist, Mobile

Most Rev. Archbishop Oscar H. Lipscomb
Archbishop of Mobile

Lloyd May, M.D., Mobile

Dr. James R. McGovern
University of West Florida, Pensacola

Dr. Tennant McWilliams
University of Alabama, Birmingham

Dr. Robert Rea
Auburn University, Auburn

Dr. Ben Shearer
Spring Hill College, Mobile

Dr. Howard Smith
Spring Hill College, Mobile

Dr. Frederick P. Whiddon
University of South Alabama, Mobile

Cover design by
Marilyn Thomason

The *Gulf Coast Historical Review* is published biannually in the Fall and Spring by the History Department of the University of South Alabama, Humanities 344, Mobile, AL 36688. The subscription price is \$10.00 a year with payment to accompany order. Inquiries about subscriptions or submission of manuscripts and other material for future issues of the *GCHR* should be sent to the Managing Editor, *GCHR*, at the address above. The *Gulf Coast Historical Review* is not responsible for statements of opinion or fact made by its contributors.

Gulf Coast Historical Review
ISSN 0892-9025

From the Editors. . . .

In this issue we are pleased to print a portion of Professor Elizabeth Barrett Gould's forthcoming book, *From Fort to Port*. This monumental study of Mobile's architectural history which will shortly be available from the University of Alabama Press will surely become a model for such work throughout the nation. We wished to reprint a representative portion of the work and at Professor Gould's suggestion we are printing her eighth chapter dealing with the great changes brought to Mobile at the end of the 19th century. Due to space limitations we have not been able to reproduce all the illustrations which accompany the text of the book and we have abbreviated the captions, but the text is unchanged. The editors believe that *From Fort to Port* is a remarkable work which no student of the Gulf Coast will want to miss.

Having said all that we certainly do not wish to appear to denigrate the work of our other fine scholars, Professors Rea, Hewitt and Coker. In fact all three are academic historians and demonstrate just how diverse and interesting the work of such people can be. Dr. Rea's informed view of British Pensacola makes us see the trials and tribulations of a frontier settlement in truly human terms. His article also reminds us that our region's history has always been influenced by events remote from the area. Professor Hewitt vividly and critically examines the tactics of the Civil War battle of Port Hudson on the Mississippi River. His conclusions about the conduct and outcome of the engagement go beyond the usual "Bugles and Battles" version of military history. Last, but not least, Professor Coker uncovers a fascinating tale about how Andrew Jackson learned of the British intention to attack New Orleans in the War of 1812. If you like detective stories this one's for you.

Our visit to a historic site takes us to Fort Morgan at the mouth of Mobile Bay, and there is a letter to the editor about banking and speculation in 19th century Escambia County, Florida and Baldwin County, Alabama. As usual we have fine reviews of recently published books, and we conclude with two interesting eighteenth century documents on our region's history.

We hope you like our fifth issue and without further ado, here it is.

EDITORIAL STAFF

George H. Daniels, Executive Editor

Michael V. Thomason, Managing Editor

Elisa Baldwin and A. Taber Green, Associate Editors

Samuel L. Webb, Book Review Editor

Joseph E. Brent and Kathy Jones, Editorial Assistants

Loretta J. Pounds and Deborah K. Pool, Administrative Assistants

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Articles:		Page
<i>From Fort to Port, An Architectural History of Mobile, 1711-1918; The High Victorian Period, 1880-1900</i>	Elizabeth B. Gould	5
Urban Problems and Responses in British Pensacola	Robert R. Rea	43
Incompetence, Disorganization, and Lack of Determination: The Federal Assault on Port Hudson, May 27, 1863	Lawrence L. Hewitt	63
How General Andrew Jackson Learned of the British Plans <i>Before</i> the Battle of New Orleans	William S. Coker	85
Features:		
A Visit to Fort Morgan, Mobile's Guardian on the Gulf	Joseph E. Brent	97
Letter to the Editor: The Elusive British-American Trust Company	Jerry R. Yares	103
Book Reviews:		
Jason Berry, Jonathan Foose, and Tad Jones, <i>Up From the Cradle of Jazz: New Orleans Music Since World War II</i>	Joaquin M. Holloway, Jr.	105
John B. Boles and Evelyn Thomas Nolen (eds.), <i>Interpreting Southern History: Historiographical Essays in Honor of Sanford W. Higginbotham</i>	Peyton McCrary	106
Virginia Van der Veer Hamilton, <i>Lister Hill: Statesman from the South</i>	Samuel L. Webb	108
Reginald Horsman, <i>Josiah Nott of Mobile: Southerner, Physician, and Racial Theorist</i>	Michael O'Brien	110
From the Archives:		
Letters from England	Jeremy Black	112



1. *The Fourth County Court House (1889), Government Street at Royal Street, now destroyed.*
Historic Mobile Preservation Society

***From Fort to Port: An Architectural History
of Mobile, Alabama, 1711-1918;
The High Victorian Period, 1880-1900***

Elizabeth Barrett Gould

The twenty years between 1880 and 1900 made a profound change in the development of Mobile. From a strictly southern Gulf Coast port it grew into a commercial center of some importance nationally. It ceased to be a predominantly cotton-exporting center and became a center for trade of broader scope that included fruit, coffee, and especially lumber. Yellow pine, cypress, and white oak became not only commercial commodities but also an integral parts of the local construction in which the older painted interior woodwork was replaced by hand-rubbed natural finishes.

The last decades of the century were free from the major setbacks that had plagued the city in the previous years. Fires were limited in scale, the largest being one in 1886 that destroyed eight warehouses in the block between St. Anthony, Commerce, St. Louis, and St. Michael. When a fire occasionally destroyed an individual store, it was replaced immediately by a new one of Victorian design. The hurricane of October 2, 1893, which produced a water level eight feet eight inches above mean tide, did not greatly damage the town, though winds of seventy-five miles an hour drove the water as far as Royal Street, inundating Water and Commerce streets. Even the 1897 yellow fever epidemic was not as devastating as previous outbursts. ¹

With the economy recovering, improvements in community services were undertaken. The old horse-drawn trolleys were replaced in 1893 by electric cars. Gas lighting was replaced by electric fixtures when the Mobile Lighting Company and the Progress Light and Motor Company were established in the 1880s. ² An increased number of architects trained in the Victorian tradition were altering the Mobile streetscapes. Yet in spite of these obvious changes, much of the old Mobile that always appealed to visitors to the city remained.

A Kansan wrote in his 1892 home paper that he was much interested in the local market with its oyster shuckers and had greatly enjoyed a drive along the Bay Shore Old Shell Road, which resembled "a long wavy ribbon of white, now visible, again hidden from sight by the stately magnolias or cypress." He made no comment on the fine Greek Revival buildings along Government Street, either Barton Academy or the Government Street Presbyterian Church. He reserved his observations for the old dilapidated Guard House and for the cast iron galleries of the

larger homes. As late as 1893, a traveler from Detroit saw in Mobile a kind of "Arcadian retreat" and wrote in the *Mobile Weekly Register* that the architecture reminded him of a European city, that many of the gable-roofed buildings were identical with those of Normandy.³ He was especially delighted with the "verandas on the second floor of the stores that provided shade for the passer-by." Thus the new Mobile was interlocked with the old even as the architectural history of the city changed.

Civic Buildings

Once again a fire triggered the construction of a major civic building, this time the fourth County Court House. On January 20, 1888, the 1872 Neoclassical-style Court House designed by W.O. Pond was destroyed by fire. Seven fire companies of the city responded to the 9:00 A.M. call, the Hook and Ladder Number Three and the Salvage Corps, the Creole Number One, Merchants Number Four, Neptune Number Two, Torrent Number Five, Mechanics Number Seven, and the Washington Number Eight. Apart from problems with the equipment, the fire's location between the second-story ceiling and the roof made it difficult for the men to control the flames, and all but parts of the first story were lost. The *Mobile Daily Register* reported, "The flames had spread over the entire ceiling of the second floor and the new ceiling of oiled yellow pine recently put in furnished fuel for the fire." Before long the roof collapsed, and the parapet with its sandstone figure of Justice crashed to the "mud of Government Street smashing into a thousand pieces."⁴

Fast work on the part of the county officials saved the records from the first floor, but the law library on the second story was largely destroyed. Again the county had to seek temporary quarters, this time in the old hotel that can be seen to the rear of figure 1. The insurance companies settled immediately, and plans were quickly formulated for a new building. Several designs were submitted, including one by James F. Hutchisson, son of the long influential James H. Hutchisson, who had died the previous August. Rudolph Benz won the vote of the council, and on March 26, 1888, a contract was signed with him. The builder, Louis Monin, received the contract for construction with his bid for \$60,763.00.⁵

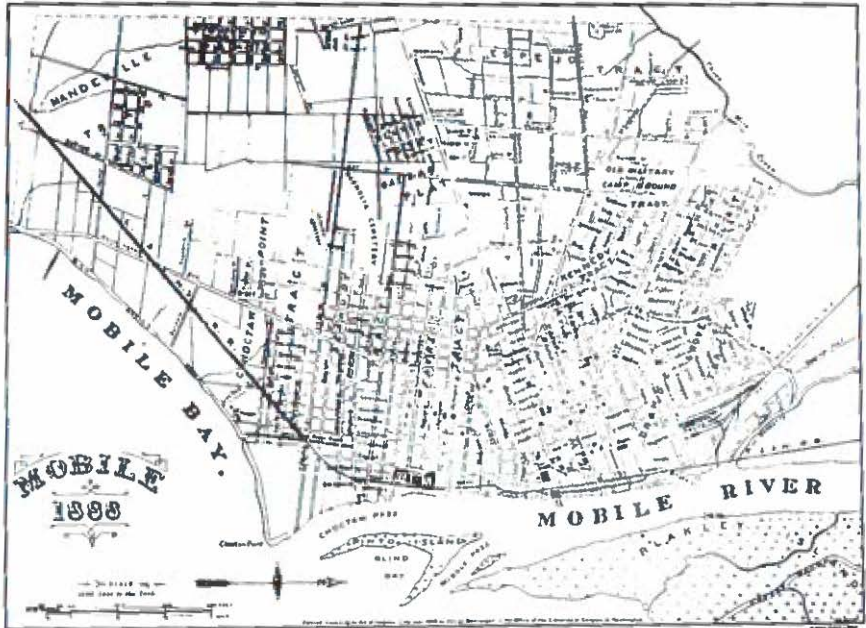
The construction proceeded rapidly, and on July 9, 1889, the building was turned over to the county council. Upon close examination the major forms of the third and fourth county court houses prove to have the same basic temple plan, but they also illustrate the change that fifteen years had brought in Mobile's taste (figure 1). Both structures use Ionic columns but in a different arrangement. Instead of the earlier prostyle elevation, with six columns extending across the whole facade, the Benz

plan calls for a portico stepping forward from the plane of the wall, with four columns rising to the gable. Replacing the central stairway with its side podia, there are end steps separated by the basement wall, forming a support for the deck. Benz retained the dentil-outlined gable but filled the pediment with relief sculpture of two eagles enframing a coat of arms of the state of Alabama. Three allegorical figures above the pediment declare the purpose of the building: Law reclining on the left with a book, Unity in the center, holding the fasces of the republic, and Wisdom on the right with an owl. ⁶

The skyline breaks with all previous Mobile traditions. Three corner towers and one large central tower are all of complex Victorian design, belonging to the French Second Empire (1852-1870). The high, top-heavy roof configuration suggests descent from the design of Francois Mansart or from the 1852-1857 wing of the Louvre. The smaller corner towers reach 94 feet into the air, and the central one, 186 feet high, will dominate the skyline for the next quarter century.

The side elevations retain more of the earlier design features of the Pond building. The roundheaded windows are the same in the 1888 elevation. The exterior shutters on the first story and the interior ones on the second story repeat the 1872 details. Even some of the interior structural arches were reinforced and readapted. ⁷ But the decor as described in the local newspaper of the time illustrated the change from the Classical to the Victorian mode. Richer colors were used. The floor of the lobby was tiled with red, cream, and gray marble. The wainscoting was paneled in alternate designs of grooved and plain surfaces, both of yellow pine with a rubbed oil finish. Art glass filled the windows of the staircase landing, and the circuit court room was paneled in yellow pine accented by the brass of the fixtures. Within a short time the old hotel which had served the courts during the construction of the new building had been torn down, and an addition had been made on the south end of the Benz building. This is the Court House remembered by older Mobilians and so often made the subject of photographs. The building survived the 1906 hurricane with damage and the loss of statues, but it continued to be a part of the lower Government Street scene until 1958, when the present Cooper van Antwerp Court House was constructed.

The city did not undertake as large a building program as the county, but it did authorize some construction. In 1886, when the aldermanic form of government was reestablished, Richard Bower, the new mayor, embarked on projects needed for the general improvement of the community. The results of this initiative can be seen in the 1888 Matzenger map, in which new streets led out to platted suburban areas. Communities



2. *The Matzenger Map of Mobile, 1888.*

The Library of Congress

were developed along Davis Avenue, with the blocks established out as far as Rylands on the north (figure 2). On the west the city boundary extended to beyond Monterey, with connecting streets between the main arteries of Dauphin, Spring Hill, and Old Shell. On the south, developments stretched to the Mandeville Tract. Most of the streets were left with a dirt surface, but some were topped with shell, and a few important ones in the inner city were paved with cypress blocks driven into the roadbed.⁸ Cobblestones were reserved for the streets between Royal and Water, where heavy commercial traffic was carried on near the waterfront.

The major building program undertaken by the city was the construction of the new Jail and Police Station (figure 3). The picturesque old Guard House (figure 4) was no longer adequate for its task. Though the new building was heralded enthusiastically, the loss of the old was mourned. On September 1, 1895, the local press reported that the "antique looking building, formerly occupied by the police authorities and behind the massive walls of which so many have pined in durance vile, are no more."⁹ In its place, Rudolph Benz designed a two-story building of irregular plan, with two wings meeting at a ninety-degree angle. The mayor's office, the courtrooms, and the lockup room occupied the larger wing facing on St. Emanuel with 63 feet of frontage and a depth of 108 feet. At right angles, facing on Conti, was the Police Department and the



3. *City Jail and Police Station (1895-96), St. Emanuel and Conti Streets, now destroyed. University of South Alabama Archives*

rooms for the patrol, which also had an attached wagon room and a stable. The wing facing Conti had a front of 36 feet and a depth of 69 feet. The two wings wrapped around the German Relief Hall on the corner. Dominating the whole mass was the 80-foot-high Victorian Romanesque tower located on the southwest corner. The contractor for the jail was the Pauly Jail Company of St. Louis, and the builders were D.B. and W.S. Hull from Dallas.¹⁰ The dark red St. Louis pressed brick made a colorful textural contrast with the rusticated stone trim used to accent the heavy Richardsonian arch over the entrance and the lintels of the first-story windows. The same rough stone formed slender string courses marking the stories and forming the arcade in the tower. The



4. *The Old Guard House and first German Relief Hall, St. Emanuel Street. The Guard House was demolished in 1895. Historic Mobile Preservation Society*



5. *The German Relief Hall (1898). In the 1980 photo the windows and doors are infilled and plastered, only the main massing and the remarkable cornice remain in their original condition. The building on the corner of Conti and St. Emanuel Streets has been purchased for restoration. Its original appearance is suggested in the artist's rendering on the left based on an early engraving and photograph.*

Marilyn Thomason drawing

Michael Thomason photo

two Benz buildings, the 1888 County Court House and the 1895-1896 City Jail, illustrate the variety of architectural types included within the broad term "Victorian."

The German Relief Hall (figure 5), designed by Benz, and the YMCA (figure 6), done by Watkins and Johnson, are representative of the buildings erected by civic organizations. They represent the different trends to be found during the last five years of the century. The German Relief Hall is a prime example of Mobile Victorian. As it stands today, the building has lost all of its characteristic detailing except the cornice and corner tower, but the present plans are to restore the elevations, following early engravings of the structure as it appeared in 1896. ¹¹ The German Relief organization was founded in 1870 and had occupied quarters on part of the site of the later building (figure 4). The organization's increased membership and the many social functions held in the various accommodations made it necessary to build a larger structure, so Rudolph Benz was employed in 1895 to design an addition that would occupy the corner facing on both St. Emanuel and Conti. His building was dedicated on October 17, 1896. The frontal planes of this large quadrilateral mass were broken by the curve of the corner tower and by wide central bays facing on both streets. Side gables rising from cornice level broke the



6. YMCA Building (1897).

Michael Thomason photo

slope of the steep hip roof, along whose ridge ran an iron cresting.¹² The curved heads of the windows were filled with stained glass, and the door transoms repeated the design, as did the infilling of the gables. On the left, in the Conti Street facade, the old configuration can still be seen, though the openings have been infilled with modern materials. The division between the first and second stories was once marked by a cast iron balcony that extended down both the north and the west facades. Three main entrances led into the building, one centered on each side of the building and one at the corner. The corner door was enframed by stone voussoirs forming the arch and marble columns on each side of the recessed entrance. The corner tower was given the most elaborate Victorian detailing. The drum with two bands of decoration supports a truncated roof projecting over heavy brackets, suggesting the medieval machicolations of a castle. An iron crest encircles the top of the tower, from the center of which a flagpole once rose.

The building may look Victorian and nineteenth century, but structurally it belongs to the twentieth. It was made of cement, not brick or stone, and the corner tower was of steel. Steel was also used for the roof framing of the twenty-four-foot-high second-story auditorium, though the traditional wood ceiling was used in the first-floor banquet hall, in which six iron columns supported the weight above. An innovative idea was also incorporated in the use of temporary partitions formed by sliding doors hung from the ceiling, thus making possible the division of the forty-five-by-seventy-foot room into smaller units as needed.

The 1897-1898 YMCA building, standing on the northeast corner of Government and Conception streets (figure 6), contrasts with Benz's German Relief Hall. The architects, Watkins and Johnson, occasionally worked in a restrained Victorian mode, but usually they followed a Neoclassical style, a tradition that had been a trademark of the James H. Hutchisson designs. The strictly rectangular massing of the YMCA building is broken only by the low gables above the central axis of both the Government Street and St. Emanuel Street facades. The bays are clearly articulated by a balance of vertical and horizontal lines, further accented by color contrasts between the brick and the white belt courses. The semicircular-headed windows of the first story above the basement suggest a Renaissance arcade.¹³ Four pilasters frame the central bays of the second story, rising from a string course that surrounds the building and marks the level of the stories. The smooth surfaces of the pilasters and walls contrast texturally with the rustication of the piers supporting the arcaded windows. The main entrance on the Conception Street side, on the left, has a canopy supported by elaborately cast scrolled brackets and a balustrade that encloses the deck. The main walls are of a buff

Roman brick, with the basement level of stone. As originally planned but not as it developed, the roof was to have been a truncated hip, with the flattened top made into a roof garden enclosed by a balustrade. The interior of the building was well planned for the various programs of the YMCA: it had study halls, lecture rooms, parlors, reception rooms, banquet halls, a gymnasium, a track, an auditorium, a restaurant, some sleeping accommodations, and even a bicycle storage area. In 1907 a new auditorium greatly increased the seating capacity for popular events.¹⁴ The building served the community until 1979, when the association felt that a new location was needed for parking space.

Religious Buildings

Both white and black congregations were active in building churches during the twenty years from 1880 to 1900. Two from the white community are the 1890 Gothic Revival Government Street Methodist Church on the southwest corner of Government and Broad streets (figure 7) and the St. Francis Street Methodist Church of 1895 (figure 8). The Gothic Revival structure on Government and Broad was enlarged and was completely altered in design by George B. Rogers in 1908. The black congregations included the State Street A.M.E. Zion (1884, 1896; figures 9 and 10), the St. Michael Street Emanuel A.M.E. Church, of which



7. *The Government Street Methodist Church (1890-), Government and Broad Streets. This Gothic Revival design in pressed brick with stone trim was soon replaced by the present Spanish Revival building.*

Historic Mobile Preservation Society



8. *St. Francis Street Methodist Church (1895-1896). The building is the last of the unadulterated Victorian churches to survive in Mobile.*

Michael Thomason photo

the facade was built in 1890-1891 by James F. Hutchisson, and the 1895 Big Zion A.M.E. Church standing on the northwest corner of Bayou and Church streets. Among those destroyed are the A.M.E. Church at the corner of Broad and Elmira (1895), and the Bethel A.M.E. on the west side of Franklin between Monroe and Eslava (1896). The Baptists were also active, building the Union Baptist at Warren and St. Anthony (1890), the new facade and tower for the St. Louis Street Baptist Church (1890), and another church on Dearborn and Palmetto. ¹⁵



9. *The A.M.E. State Street Methodist Church (1884, 1896), 502 State Street.*
Historic Mobile Preservation Society

In addition to the Methodists and the Baptists, the Catholics were occupied with erecting neighborhood churches and with finishing the Cathedral. The facade was completed in 1890 by James F. Hutchisson, following the work of his late father, James H. Hutchisson, who had been retained as architect in 1873 to construct the portico. James F. Hutchisson completed the corner towers in 1895 (figure 11). Another very important Catholic church built during this time was the Richardsonian



10. *The A.M.E. State Street Methodist Church, interior.*

Historic Mobile Preservation Society

Romanesque Chapel at the Visitation Monastery (figure 12). Apart from the church buildings, auxiliary structures were increasing in number. One such building was the Christ Church Vestry facing on St. Emanuel Street, the last design by James H. Hutchisson before his death.¹⁶

Three of these religious buildings may be regarded as representing the variations and development of ecclesiastical styles at the close of the century: the State Street A.M.E. Zion, the St. Francis Street Methodist, and the Chapel of the Sacred Heart at the Visitation Monastery. The exterior of the State Street A.M.E. Church illustrates the vernacular adaptation of the eighteenth-century churches inspired by Sir Christopher Wren, with the two-story rectangular massing and the tower with the spire over the entrance (figure 9). The interior (figure 10) of the auditorium and sanctuary has cusped trussing of Gothic Revival derivation. It is similar in style to Trinity Episcopal on Dauphin Street though the members are more slender and elaborated, with minor cusping edging the main motifs. The interior is lit by windows on three levels — the side aisle, the balcony, and a clerestory that breaks into the wall above the gallery roof. The auditorium was designed by Watkins and Johnson, according to the newspaper account, but whether it was a new building or an enlargement of the 1884 construction by James H. Hutchisson is still a question.¹⁷



11. *The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.*

The descriptions of the 1884 facade and vestibule make it appear that the Hutchisson design was retained for the front bay and the 1896 auditorium of Watkins and Johnson was attached to it. The Church not only is a good example of other similar buildings in Mobile but also symbolizes the activities of the black community.

The only nineteenth-century Victorian church surviving in its original state is the St. Francis Street Methodist Church (figure 8). It too was a design of Watkins and Johnson, though through some error a newspaper reporter credited it to Benz. The building replaced an earlier one of 1842 that had developed from a division of the "mother" Church known as the "Bee Hive." As in the State Street A.M.E., the auditorium is on the second story. The slightly projecting front and side pavilions and the rear wing forming the apse are embellished with fine nineteenth-century stained glass windows, those on the front and rear being circular, forming rose windows. The single tower is located on the facade's northeast corner and originally supported a spire that rose 148 feet above the street below.



12. *Chapel of the Sacred Heart, Visitation Convent (1894), Spring Hill Avenue. Mobile Historic Development Commission*

When the 1916 hurricane removed the upper half, the spire was left truncated, as it is at present, and a cross was placed on the top. The dark red of the Nashville brick used in construction was set in black mortar and contrasted strongly with the white of the stone trim.¹⁸

The trade journal of the *Mobile Daily Register* carries a description of the building at the time of its dedication in 1896. There have been no changes in the elevations of the building. Six stone string courses mark various levels of the doors, windows, and story divisions. The roof is partially hidden by large gables that rise over the front and side pavilions. Roundheaded windows are used throughout, either single or twinned, and in the sanctuary with a transom in the design of half a wheel. While the exterior design is controlled for a Victorian building, the description of the interior at the time of the dedication tells a truly Victorian story. The ground-level Sunday school walls were finished in a salmon pink color, graded to a light terra cotta, with a gray and gold crown molding. The color was repeated in the opal stained glass of the windows. Two oak stairways led to the second-level vestibule. The walls of the auditorium were painted to resemble paneling, with the color grading from dark at the bottom to light at the top and frames painted in a trompe-l'oeil fashion. Corinthian pilasters finished in gold articulated the bays, and a gold and amethyst arch framed the windows. The large memorial windows centering

on the sides of the auditorium measure eighteen and one-half feet high by thirteen feet wide, creating a multi-colored surface. A costly organ also finished in gold was located just below the western rose of the sanctuary, the stained glass of which showed figures of cherubs looking out from clouds. When the interior was illuminated by the great chandelier with its thirty-four gas jets and twenty-four electric lights it must have thrilled the Victorian sensibility.

The Chapel of the Sacred Heart at the Visitation Monastery is one of the few stone buildings in Mobile, stone being a rarity along the coast. The Richardsonian Romanesque building (figure 12) was designed by two New Orleans architects, B.M. Harrod and Paul Andry, who were also involved with the selection of plans for Tulane University. The supervising architect of construction was Hermann Brunns, also of New Orleans, and the contractor was M.T. Lewman and Company of Louisville, Kentucky.¹⁹ The massive walls are made of rusticated limestone and granite, richly ornamented with floral carvings in the flattened coloristic style of the Byzantine. Gargoyles peer down from the outer angles of the gable pediment and a heavy stone cross crowns the apex. The main plan is roughly a Greek cross, with the two-story west arm elongated to form an area for the cloistered sisters. This section was originally curtained off with both grilles and shutters. Provisions were also made that members of the order in the infirmary could hear the mass. The present interior decor has a quiet simplicity given vitality by the color of the stained glass windows and the lighting in the sanctuary over the altar. The windows departed from the usual subjects in that they included, together with Christ the Good Shepherd and Christ Carrying the Cross, one scene with a nun and another with a priest. The front central panel contains the figure of the Virgin and a member of the Visitation Order. The half wheel above the door is colorfully infilled with floral patterns surrounding a dove. At the time when the Chapel was constructed, a kiosk was built so that it formed a gate in the front wall marking the boundary of the Visitation Monastery property.

Educational buildings as well as churches played an important role in the increased number of constructions of the period. In 1884 a three-story building designed by Freret of New Orleans was added to the Spring Hill campus. It was located on the east line of the north yard. The second story was intended as an exhibition hall and the third as a chapel. The next year James H. Hutchisson designed a two-story refectory and a one-story brick kitchen located on the west of the quadrangle.²⁰ Embedded in the interior east wall at the south end of Moore Hall are some exposed relieving arches that may well be part of another Hutchisson building

constructed as an infirmary. The most impressive of the educational buildings was the McGill Institute, the result of the enlargement of the old Chandler House at 252 Government Street (figure 13). The facade of the original two-story house included only the three western bays and, on the left, four Tuscan Doric columns standing to their full height. The fifth column on the right and the recessed wing with the main entrance and the continuation of the colonnade were added when the building was renovated for the boys' school. Before his death in 1895, Arthur McGill and his younger brother, Felix, purchased the Chandler House and the vacant lot next door on the east so that the building could be enlarged. When the institution was established, a board of directors was selected, with Bishop O'Sullivan as president.

For more than fifty years the imposing eclectic Greek Revival building contributed to the architectural scene of Government Street, making an interesting contrast with the 1830 applications of the style as in the Barton Academy. The face, 44 feet high by 160 feet long, was crowned by an entablature that was embellished by Greek motifs, for example the triglyphs and metopes, but used without attention to the classical subtleties or harmonious proportions of the earlier revival period. The bracketed cornice, the roof parapet, and the elaborate entrance detail belong to a late Italianate influence. All these various influences are harmoniously combined in the facade. The 1896 account described the interior in detail, with the necessary



13. McGill Institute on 252 Government Street, now destroyed.

classrooms, offices, refectory, assembly hall, and sleeping accommodations on the second and third stories. The building served the school until 1952, when a new facility was erected. By 1955 the old building had been destroyed. ²¹

Commercial Buildings

Progress in commercial development from 1880 to 1900 was rapid and diversified, resulting in many architectural demands. Old warehouses were enlarged and new ones constructed. A comparison of the three Pollock Company buildings shows the stylistic evolution from early Italianate through the Victorian to the early twentieth century. Industry was also coming into Mobile, requiring an architecture not found in the area previously. Two of the most interesting of these buildings were the 1892 brewery and the large grain elevator of 1896. ²² Both were designed by A. Meritzen of Chicago. The brewery (figure 14) was an imposing Victorian building with a massive front tower topped by a crested Mansard roof and by a Byzantine-type dome that crowned the center of the mass. It was enthusiastically proclaimed to be the most progressive brewery in the United States. The late nineteenth-century method of storing and moving



14. *The Mobile Brewery (1892), now destroyed.*

large quantities of produce is illustrated in the grain elevator that once stood on the block bounded by Water, Commerce, Bloodgood, and Earle streets. In importance it can be compared with the present Alabama State Docks container facility. As pictured and described in the *Mobile Daily Register* trade journal for 1896, the 130-foot high elevator required a foundation of 600 pilings to support the load of the 250,000 bushels of grain that the building could house.

Other, less ambitious, programs were undertaken, for example the carriage factory that once stood on the south side of Theatre Street between



15. View of the south side of Dauphin Street between Royal and Water streets. On the left end of the block, a cast iron building (1860). Next to the west, the Baerman Building, the Dreaper and Burns Building (1893), the six-story Pollock and Bernheimer Store (1903), the Felrath Building, and, last on the right, the Rhodes Building. University of South Alabama Archives

Royal and St. Emanuel, the site of the modern Rousseau's Restaurant. The shop and two related houses on Royal were designed by James H. Hutchisson in 1885. ²³ A drawing of the entrance to the carriage factory appears in the First National Bank publication *Where Time Bears Witness to Sound Building*. The two-story brick building faced on Theatre Street. On the left of the facade, a wide double-leaf door, under a relieving arch, formed the entrance to the shop. A second relieving arch once provided an opening for a passageway that gave access to the rear yard. On the right, extending over the sidewalk, was a two-story gallery, with the upper deck roofed and framed by cast iron.

The Kling company that was responsible for so much of the iron-work in the city erected a new foundry in 1884, another building designed by Hutchisson. The lighter side of Mobile life was not forgotten. A \$10,000 skating rink was built in 1886 at the corner of Royal and St. Louis, which was later transformed into the Princess Theatre in 1895. In 1899 the Pollock Company combined an office, commercial facility, and theater all in one building, an idea whose time would not come for another half century. It was designed by Thomas Sully of New Orleans. ²⁴

The retail business received the most attention as storefront after storefront was renovated or rebuilt. The scene on Royal, Dauphin, and Conti streets was changed by the shift to a Victorian style. An early twentieth-century photograph of the eastern end of Dauphin on the south side shows the evolution from the Italianate cast iron storefront on the left corner to the ornate Victorian on the right (figure 15). Of this row, only one building is still standing in toto, the Daniel-Elgin cast iron store and the first three stories of the tall Pollock-Bernheimer Building mid-block. Of the six buildings in the photograph, the third from the left, the Dreaper and Burns of 1893, is an excellent example of the developing storefront (figure 16). ²⁵ In it, the Chicago art glass of the cabinet windows, the decorative lintels of the second-story fenestration, and the segmental arches of the third story are Victorian but were treated with a light touch typical of the architect George Watkins, who designed the building. The black-and-white drawing by Thomas Karwinski of the American Institute of Architects delineates the building but does not suggest the color. A newspaper account of 1893 described windows made of "fine French plate glass set in frames of highly polished quarter sawed oak, enriched with mouldings of copper. The upper part of the show windows are ornamented with wide panels of Cathedral glass studded with brilliant jewels of various colors." The layered planes of the recessed entrance and the projecting windows broke with the older Mobile storefront tradition.

The contrast in the aesthetic values is evident from a comparison of the Dreaper-Burns with the McCaw Italianate store of 1885, which



16. *The Dreaper and Burns Building (1893) at 55-57 Dauphin, now destroyed. The structure represented a transitional design between the older flat facades of the Federal and Italianate and the high Victorian broken massing of R. Benz.*
Thomas F. Karwinski, AIA

still retains its original upper story. The Lower Dauphin Street Commercial Historic District has a valuable collection of store facades covering the last half of the nineteenth century. While most of them have had the first stories altered, the upper levels retain their original configuration. The 1879 Grotz Building at 220 Dauphin and the 1891 Spira Building on the right share party walls but not style. In the last twenty years of

the century, many of the stores were being designed by popular local architects such as James F. Hutchisson, Rudolph Benz, and George Watkins. Benz did the Scheuerman Building at 203 Dauphin Street (figure 17).²⁶ He incorporated the textural contrasts of the Queen Anne style in the rusticated stone trim, the polished columns, and the smooth brick. He enriched the surfaces by carving arabesques in the half circles above the windows on the upper side and acanthus scrolls in the interstices above the windows on the upper side and acanthus scrolls in the interstices above



17. *The Scheuerman Building (1893), 203 Dauphin Street. A. Kling, ironwork. This Victorian design in Philadelphia brick has trim of Alabama stone and granite columns framing the large central semicircular-headed window.*

Michael Thomason photo

the semicircular central window. Acanthus and palmetto leaves form the brackets below the cornice. The street-level windows have been completely changed.

The rather heavy treatment of the Scheuerman Building contrasts with the flat linear design of the 1897 Masson Building at 104-106 Dauphin (figure 18). Here the rectilinear motifs and the thin shadow lines of the architectural coursing have broken away from the three-dimensional decor and deep shadows of the Victorian. The final step into the twentieth century was taken in the Spira and Pincus Building of 1899, which was constructed to replace the 1886 building that had burned (figures 19 and 22).²⁷ In the 1899 version, though it was only three stories in height, the street-oriented first story with the layered series of windows above foreshadows the commercial establishments of the twentieth century. Merely by multiplying the number of stories Mobile will bury its nineteenth-century heritage.

Four of Rudolph Benz's buildings, two from the 1880s and two from the 1890s, illustrate the Victorian movement in Mobile. In 1886 he designed the so-called English Block (figure 20) and the building that houses both the Cotton Exchange and the Chamber of Commerce, which was built with Zanesville brick set in red mortar. Both have Mansard roofs broken by dormers and pediments with decorative finials and sculpture. In the

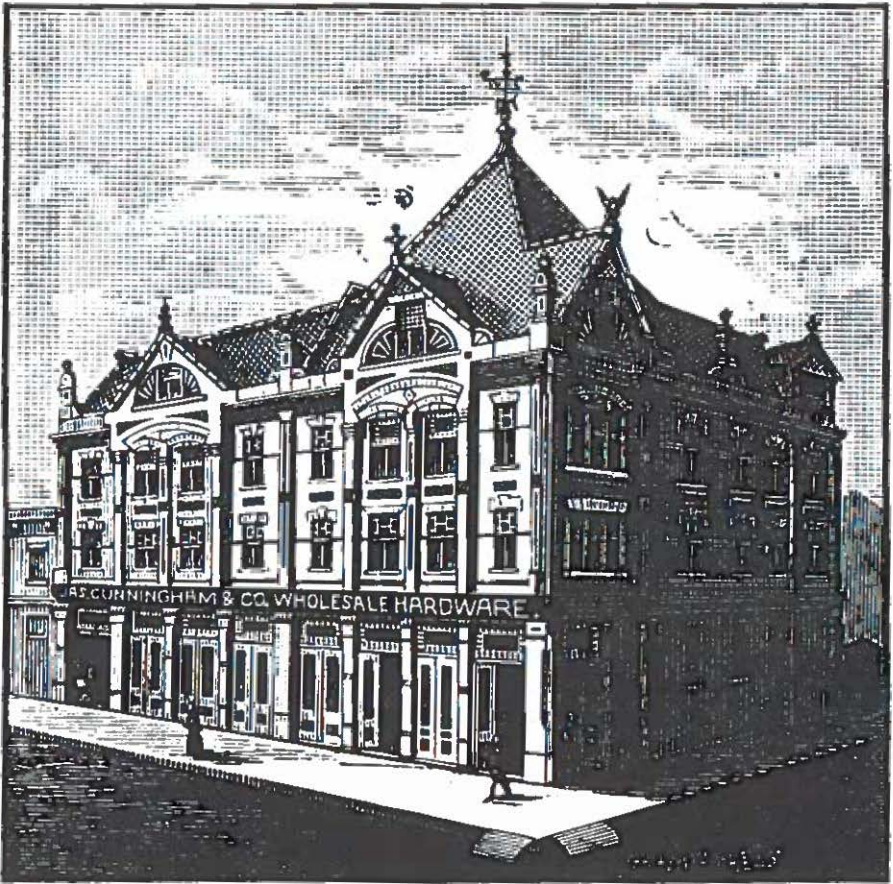


18. *The J.H. Masson Building (1897), 204-206 Dauphin Street. The second-story architectural features are original; the first story has been altered. The rectilinear patterns of the second-story decoration relate more to the new Art Moderne than to the contemporary Victorian.*



19. *The Spira and Pincus Building (1899), at 171 Dauphin Street. Bedford limestone was used to cover the exposed walls. The design was planned for use by Gayfer's Department Store and is unusual for Rudolph Benz, who typically worked in the Victorian mode.*

English Block a dragon with outstretched wings symbolizes protection, and in the Cotton Exchange the Goddess of Industry stands with her right hand holding a wreath and her left resting on an anchor, symbols of Mobile's commerce by sea and by land. Neither building has the deeply broken Victorian masses, but each retains the integrity of the plane of the wall. Each has the bays delineated by pilasters. In both, contrasting textures or colors give the windows decorative treatment. Not so with the 1890 buildings. In the Pincus Building on the corner of Dauphin



20. *The English Block* (1896), formerly on the southeast corner of Dauphin and Water Street, now destroyed. Mobile, The New South, Mrs. Carter Smith

and Royal (figure 21) and the one on the southeast corner of Dauphin and Conception (figure 22), the rectilinear mass is broken by rounded corner towers and turrets that dominate the skyline. The roof lines are subordinated in visual importance to the dormers and the conical spires. The linearity of the 1880 designs has given way to a greater use of form. In these last two buildings Mobile's commercial Victorianism reached its final state.²⁸

Residential Buildings

The 1880s were years of great activity in the construction of Victorian cottages. They appeared in all degrees of elaboration; some had only a few simple porch brackets (figure 23); others had complex decorative treatment. The newspaper reported on August 31, 1884, "The houses being



21. *The Pincus Building (1890), southeast corner of Dauphin and Royal. The building was originally occupied by the Zadek Jewelry Company. A Victorian design in brick and terra cotta, with cast iron columns and balcony.*

Historic Mobile Preservation Society

erected during the past year, are, in the main, small and comfortable cottages such as are built by the laboring men and the poorer class of people, whose limited means do not allow them a gaudy Eastlake or Queen Anne structure." In 1882, seventeen of the twenty-two building



22. *The Spira and Pincus Building (1886), formerly on 171 Dauphin Street. This building was destroyed by fire on March 30, 1886, and was replaced by the building shown in figure 19. The first story was occupied by Gayfer's Department Store, the upper stories by the Fidelia Club.*

Historic Mobile Preservation Society

permits for housing were for cottages.²⁹ A row of these small homes lining the second block of Cedar Street has been restored, and the buildings are in great demand; the inner city is coming back to life through the efforts of the Community Development Program and the work of the

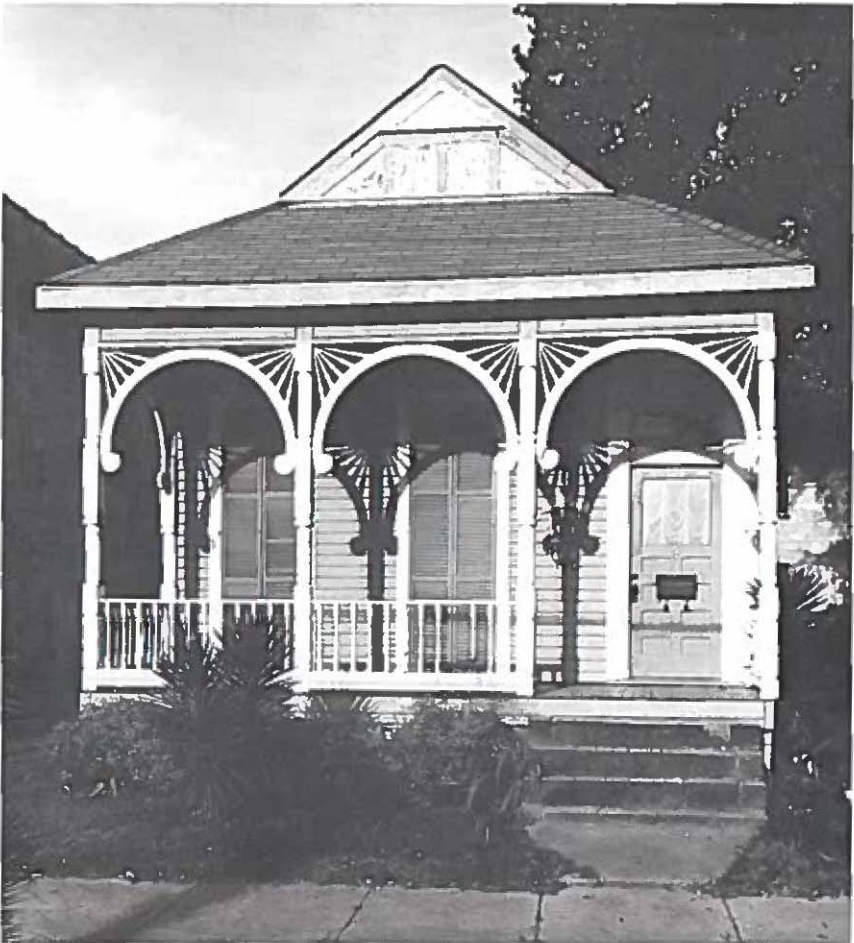


23. *The Gonzales cottage (1882), 204 Royal. This example shows a more elaborate treatment of the details, with the textural variations in the surfacing of the gable end.*



24. *View of the west side of Cedar Street between Monroe and Eslava, showing cottages ranging in date from 1887 to 1905.*

Mobile Historic Development Commission (figure 24). Unlike the shotgun structures with their single front six-over-six-light window, some cottages had two floor-length windows opening from the porch, with the lower sash a slide-by to give more circulation of air throughout the rooms (figure 23). Windowpanes are now either two over two or two over four lights, and the panes of glass are cut larger. Doors have small transoms that increase the air flow, and many cottages have an offset wing for added space. An infinite variety of columnar types and architectural detail is achieved by the clever use of the jigsaw and the lathe, and the shadows cast by the pierced work make ever-changing patterns on the walls (figure 25). These cottages may have been built by the less affluent classes, but they are not examples of poor architecture, and many were designed by the architects of the large mansions, J.F. Hutchisson and Rudolph Benz.



25. *The Mitchell House (1895), 107 Dearborn Street. Michael Thomason photo*

Standing between the extremes in size were such homes as the 1889 Scott House, now restored at 207 Cedar Street. In designing it, J. F. Hutchisson superimposed one cottage on top of another, creating a two-story dwelling. The doubling of the masses is repeated in the two-level treatment of the gable end in which the lower half is covered with fish-scale shingles, known as an imbrication, while the upper half projects over brackets. The upper half has a pierced design that includes the date of construction. The plant-sized second-story balconies on the south side, unusual in Mobile, increased safety when the floor-length windows were opened. During the house's restoration these balconies had to be rebuilt, as the originals had been destroyed. Their location was indicated in the foundation walls and in early Sanborn maps. To design them the architect used the porch balustrade and brackets as a pattern. Another example of the larger cottage is the Kilduff House (figure 26). It too is a Hutchisson design that gains space by spreading out horizontally rather than by forming a second story vertically. It is a harmonious combination of elements taken from the late Gothic Revival and the Victorian without the open spindle work found in later porch detailing.³⁰

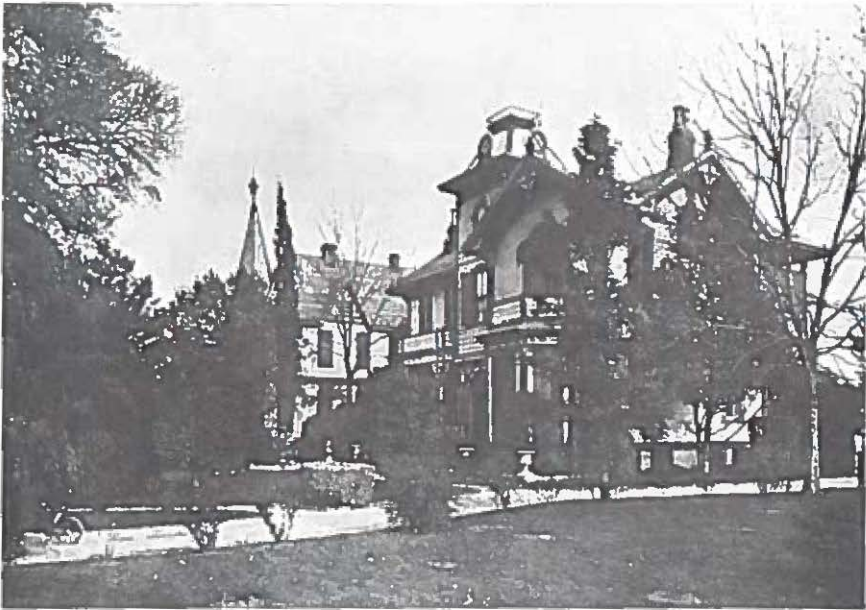
Mobile has a rich inheritance of these nineteenth-century "everyman" homes. They are not readily appreciated from a swiftly passing automobile. They belong to an age when people took the time to walk by and to



26. *The Kilduff House (1891), 200 George. The decor is sturdier and less pierced than in the Mitchell House. The elements of the Gothic Revival are emphasized.*

enjoy their varied columns and brackets. While a row of great Neoclassical style houses can be enjoyed in a quick passage, the Victorian cottages must be taken individually and invite more intimate contact.

The cottages dominated the constructions of the 1880s, but by 1890 the large high Victorian and Queen Anne homes had also appeared. From Hamilton Street to the area west of Ann, Government Street once bristled with towers, bays, porches, complex roof lines, and elaborate detailing of windows and doors. Now fewer than a half dozen remain. One of the grandest of those lost was the 1883 Dunlap home, built on the site of the burned Blue College, on the south side of Government two doors east of Ann. The *Mobile Daily Register* of September 1, 1883, described it at the time of its completion. The house was built using the best of materials throughout, with stylish detailing. The interior woodwork was rubbed curly yellow pine. The grand staircase, rising to a central landing from which the steps divided, was ornamented with a large stained glass window above which was a nine-foot oriel. Statues holding gas lamps stood on the pedestal newels. One of the unusual features was the Truill gas-making machine, built underground, that furnished the gas for the lighting. The designs of the parquetry floors used oaks of different color.



27. *M. Forcheimer House (1892), formerly on the south side of Government between Chatham and George. Here the heaviness and strength of the high Victorian style have not yet been lightened by the grace and delicacy of the Queen Anne decor.*
Historic Mobile Preservation Society

In spite of the grandiose quality of the Dunlap home, the M. Forcheimer House of 1892 best expressed the high Victorian style in Mobile (figure 27). Here the basic rectangular block of the building has been completely lost in the broken projections, the bays, porches, balconies, towers, and deeply overhanging cornices that cast heavy shadows on the walls. The building incorporates elements from the entire Victorian vocabulary, including the elaborated window heads, the shaped balusters and brackets, the gable decor, and the crested square tower, all breaks in the planes accented by contrasting color.

A house standing in a transitional position between the Victorian and the Queen Anne styles was the McCoy House of 1883 (figure 28). From the Queen Anne comes the interest in the textural variations of the surfacing more than in the deep breaks in the massing. While porches, bays, gables, and overhangs continue in the McCoy House, the weatherboarding was varied, using some horizontal siding, some imbrication, and some panels. The final step into the Queen Anne is more evident in the Festorazzi House of 1893, in which the surfaces of the walls attract as much attention as the skyline broken by the roof dormers and turrets. Again, in our imaginations we may add color: the house was yellow with copper-brown contrasting trim. The small square panes



28. *The McCoy mansion (1883), formerly on the southwest corner of Government and Washington, now the site of the present Mobile Public Library. The massing of the McCoy House is Victorian, but the varied treatment of the surfaces anticipates the Queen Anne.* *Historic Mobile Preservation Society*

above the windows were colored glass. The Government Street scene of the 1890s differed from the pristine white of the present Neoclassical facades built early in the twentieth century. And different too were the interiors; with their natural rubbed oak and cherry, the chosen materials for mantels that rose to ceiling height. In place of the classical moldings that decorated the arches between parlors, there were grilles of Moorish inspiration and latticework formed of slender spindles. Older homes such as the one-and-a-half story Hopkins place on the north side of Government, five doors west of Charles, were renovated in the new style.³¹

Of the half dozen such buildings that have survived, two must be mentioned: the Charles Shepherd home (1897), at 1552 Monterey Place (figure 29), and the Tacon-Tissington home (1901), at the northeast corner of Government and Georgia (figure 30).³² The delicacy of the spindle work on the Monterey Place house is exceptional, as are the brackets and the other surface detailing. The Tacon-Tissington House retains all of its original detailing, even to the 1901 wallpaper. The black-and-white photograph of the wallpaper (figure 31) is harsher than the actual design, with an effect that is somewhat softened by the maroon color with the gold-embossed patterns. The grand staircase rising in the corner of the front east reception room is richly paneled. On the landing is the typical stained glass window, casting dancing flecks of colored light on the dark



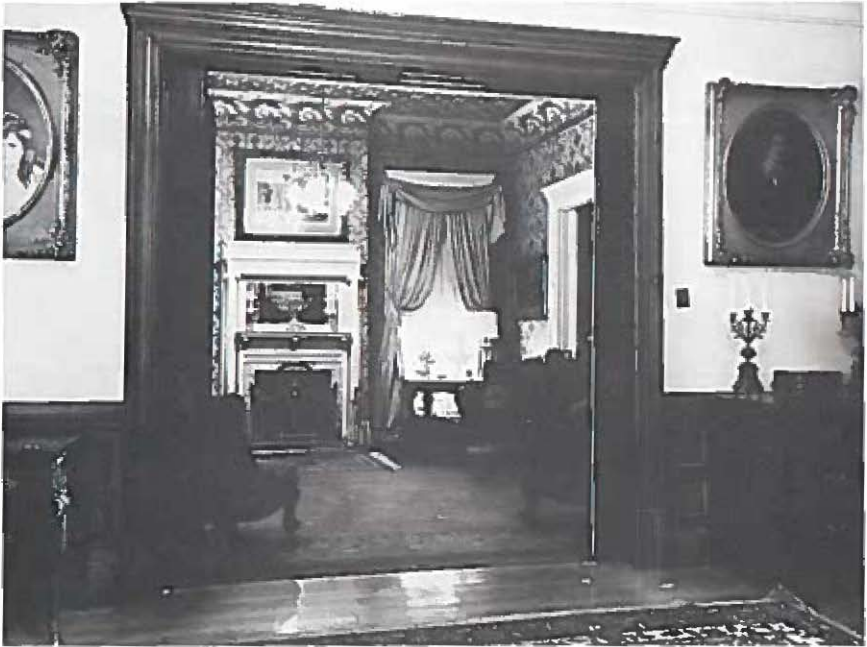
29. *The Shepherd House (1897), 1552 Monterey Place. The delicate spindles and other decorative elements characterize the Queen Anne style as it developed in Mobile.*



30. *The Tacon-Tissington House (1901), 1215 Government Street; the last of the great Victorian-Queen Anne mansions to be built along Government Street.*
Michael Thomason photo

woodwork. The reception room is wainscoted in the same dark wood, with a brown marble mantel, though the parlors have white trim (figure 33). Three other houses of the same period are well worth a visit: the Sprague House (1890), 203 Charles Street, the second Forcheimer House (1898), at 950 Government and the Abba Temple, and the old Hearin home at 1050 Government, which has strong Neoclassical detailing.

The Captain John Quill House, now destroyed (figure 32), brought the century of residential development to a fitting stylistic close. The stone front of this 1899 Richardsonian Victorian house is both an architectural



31. *The Tacon-Tissington House, from the front reception room looking toward the west front parlor.*
Michael Thomason photo



32. *The Quill House (1899), formerly at 927 Government Street, now destroyed. Both the material and the style of architecture of the Quill House were unusual for Mobile. The rusticated stone and the heavy Romanesque-inspired tower strikingly contrasted with the delicate spindle work of neighboring Queen Anne homes.*
Historic Mobile Preservation Society



33. *Tacon-Tissington House showing the grand staircase and stained glass window on the landing.*

Michael Thomason photo

statement of its time and a record of turn-of-the century prosperity. Ninety-nine years earlier, Mobile had been an unimportant French coastal settlement maintained by the Spanish. Now it was an important commercial center. A reporter in 1899 observed, "Never before in the history of Mobile has there been such activity in the line of erecting buildings. In all parts of the city there are heard the sound of the carpenter's hammer and the brick mason's trowel and everywhere the odor of pine planking pervades the air."³³

Notes

Abbreviations used in Notes

CCM	County Council Minutes, Mobile County Board of Commissioners
DB	Deed Books, Probate Court, Mobile County
HABS	Historic American Building Survey
HMPS	Historic Mobile Preservation Society
MCR	<i>The Mobile Commercial Register</i> , and <i>Mobile Daily Register</i>
MDR	were the same paper. It has been published under various names.
MHDC	Mobile Historic Development Commission
MPL(SC)	Mobile Public Library (Special Collections)

¹ *MDR*, September 9, 1886; file on hurricanes, MPL(SC): Hodding Carter and Anthony Raguzin, *Gulf Coast Country* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1951), p. 199.

² Melton McLaurin and Michael Thomason, *Mobile*, (Woodland Hills, CA, 1981) p. 93.

³ *MCR*, April 9, 1892, p. 5; *Mobile Weekly Register*, March 25, 1893 (clipping file in the collection of Mrs. Carter Smith).

⁴ In 1907 a rear addition to the County Court House was added, extending to Church Street on the south, with Benz and Sons as architects. See *MCR*, September 1, 1907. Reports on the fire, with details regarding insurance, temporary location, and new construction plans, appear in CCM, bk. 7, pp. 353-58, 371-74, 382-84, 400, 414, 482, and bk. 9, pp. 63-64, 77, 128, 176-77, 221, 224-25, 255-57. Also see *MCR*, January 21, 1888, p. 4.

⁵ CCM, bk. 7, pp. 382-84 (contract with Benz); CCM, bk. 7, p. 414 (contract with Monin for construction).

⁶ *MCR*, September 1, 1889, with photos.

⁷ CCM, bk. 9, p. 128; January 25, 1889.

⁸ *MCR*, April 3, 1889.

⁹ *MCR*, September 1, 1895.

¹⁰ DB 77/532-33; December 5, 1895.

¹¹ *MCR*, September 1, 1896, drawing on p. 11, also a description.

¹² The German Relief organization first occupied an earlier building that can be seen to the left of the entrance to the Guard House in figure 4. It has a two-story gallery with a decorative scrolled papapet above. *MDR*, August 31, 1890, describes the remodeling of the original building by Benz before the new building was undertaken.

¹³ YMCA, drawings and description in *MDR*, January 14, 1897, p. 5 [also pamphlets and the YMCA publication *HY-SHY-NY* in MPL (SC) files.]

¹⁴ *MCR*, March 17, 1907, clipping in local history files, MPL(SC); dedication of the new auditorium.

¹⁵ *MCR*, September 1, 1891, p. 5 gives a description of the Gothic Revival Church on the southwest corner of Government and Broad. It was replaced some sixteen years later by the Spanish Revival Church of George Rogers. St. Francis Street Methodist Church was designed by Watkins and Johnson, as noted in the article in *MDR*, September 1, 1896, with photos and description. In the *MDR*, September 1, 1895, the building was incorrectly ascribed to Rudolph Benz. The State Street A.M.E. Zion Church belongs to two building periods. In *MDR*, August 31, 1884, p. 10, James H. Hutchisson redesigned the facade, adding the central tower. In *MDR*, September 1, 1896, there is a description of the enlargement of the sanctuary and the renovation by Watkins and Johnson. Benz was again incorrectly credited in *MDR*, September 1, 1895. *MDR*, March 28, 1890 (St. Michael A.M.E. Church), and *MDR*, September 1, 1891; *MDR*, September 1, 1895 (A.M.E. Church on Broad and Elmira by Benz); *MCR*, September 1, 1896 (the Bethel A.M.E. Church); *MCR*, March 28, 1890 (the Union Baptist Church); *ibid.* (report of the St. Louis Street Baptist Church spire); *MCR*, September 1, 1899 (the Baptist Church on Dearborn and Palmetto).

¹⁶ *MCR*, August 13, 1890, and September 1, 1895. Account of the completion of the Cathedral facade and towers. There is still a question as to which architect actually designed the facade, but James H. Hutchisson held the contract for construction in 1873, and the structure was finished by his son after his father's death in 1887. In Oscar Lipscomb, *The Administration of John Quinlan, Second Bishop of Mobile, 1859-1883, Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*, vol. 78, nos. 1-4 (March-December 1967), p. 147, appears the statement that James Freret of New Orleans had been acting as architect but by 1873 had been relieved of his appointment; the contract was then given to Hutchisson. Edwin L. Jewell, ed., *Jewell's Crescent City* (New Orleans, 1873), p. 127, contains the statement that James Freret designed the facade. The local newspaper account seems to indicate that the final design was that of Hutchisson, *MCR*, September 1, 1887: the vestry of Christ Church cost \$9,000.

¹⁷ *MCR*, September 1, 1894; reproduction of an architectural drawing of the building as it appeared in 1894. *MCR*, August 31, 1884, and *MDR*, September 1, 1896. The first building program of 1884 was undertaken by James H. Hutchisson, the second in 1895-96 by Watkins and Johnson, who constructed the sanctuary. The Hutchisson building replaced an earlier structure that had been built in 1853-54 by Richard Redwood and Albert Quigley, according to the research of Louise Erskine.

¹⁸ *MDR*, September 1, 1896: St. Francis Street Methodist Church, drawing with a description at the time of dedication. The Church was designed by the architects Watson and Johnson but through some error was attributed to Rudolph Benz in the newspaper.

¹⁹ E.B. Gould, "An Architectural Survey," *Catholic Week*, January 28, 1983, p. 5.

²⁰ *MCR*, August 31, 1884: Spring Hill addition by Freret. The three-story addition called for an auditorium on the second level and a chapel on the third. *MCR*, September 1, 1885: Spring Hill refectory and brick kitchen built by James H. Hutchisson.

²¹ *MCR*, September 1, 1896: the McGill Institute, with photograph of the building and a description of both the exterior and the room arrangements of the interior.

²² *MCR*, September 1, 1899. The brewery had been built in 1892, but the drawing and complete description appear in the 1899 paper. The article explains the process and the machinery involved. *MCR*, September 1, 1896: the grain elevator with drawing and description. The construction was contracted to the Heidenreich Construction Company of Chicago.

²³ *MCR*, September 1, 1885: carriage factory on the site of the present Roussos Restaurant in Church Street East.

²⁴ *MCR*, August 31, 1884: the Kling Foundry; Hutchisson, architect; *MCR*, September 1, 1886: the skating rink; \$10,000; *MCR*, September 1, 1895: remodeling of the skating rink to create the Princess Theater; *MCR*, September 1, 1899: description of the new Pollock commercial and theater building with a sketch of the interior of the theater.

²⁵ *MCR*, September 1, 1897: drawing for an advertisement for the Dreaper and Burns Building; *MCR*, September 1, 1893: description and illustration.

²⁶ *MCR*, September 1, 1885: the McCaw Building, 210 Dauphin Street; *MCR*, September 1, 1891: the Spira Building; *MCR*, September 1, 1893: the Scheuerman Building, with description.

²⁷ *MCR*, September 1, 1897: the J.H. Masson Building; *MCR*, September 1, 1899: the Spira and Pincus Building, drawing and description.

²⁸ *MCR*, September 1, 1886: the English Block, drawing and description; *MCR*, September 1, 1886: the Cotton Exchange, with drawing and description; *MCR*, August 31, 1890: the Pincus Building (under restoration in 1983); *MCR*, September 1, 1896: the Spira and Pincus Building (burned 1899).

²⁹ *MCR*, September 11, 1882: list of permits granted for the year.

³⁰ *MCR*, September 1, 1889: Scott House on Jefferson, moved to Cedar in 1980; *MCR*, September 1, 1891: the Kilduff House on George Street.

³¹ *MCR*, September 1, 1891: the McCoy House, with description; *MCR*, September 1, 1883: the Festorazzi House, with description; *MCR*, September 1, 1889: the Hopkins House with alterations.

³² 552 Monterey Place: the Shepherd House (MHDC files).

³³ *MCR*, September 1, 1899: the Quill House; *MCR*, September 1, 1899, sec. 2: "Mobile's Expansion Year."

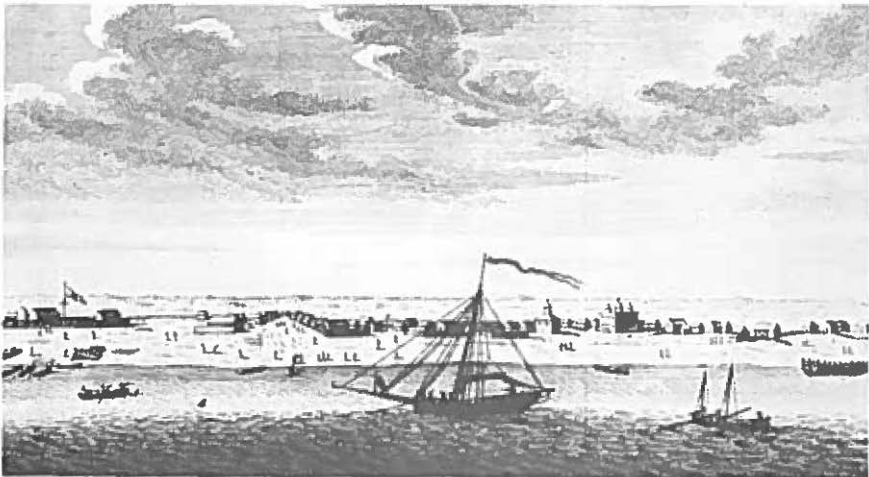
Mrs. Elizabeth Barrett Gould is an Assistant Professor Emerita in Art History at the University of South Alabama. Her new book, from which this article is taken, is forthcoming from the University of Alabama Press. Unless otherwise credited, Mrs. Gould took the photographs which appear in this article

Urban Problems and Responses in British Pensacola

Robert R. Rea

The short-lived British colony of West Florida, won by the Peace of Paris in 1763 and lost to Spain by conquest in 1781, contained two urban centers — at least by eighteenth-century colonial standards — Mobile and Pensacola. Mobile retained something of its French character and population after British occupation; Pensacola was abandoned by its Spanish inhabitants and virtually began life anew under the Union Jack. Clinton Howard might declare that "Pensacola was an old town,"¹ and colonial cities and colonial historians take delight in antiquities, but Pensacola had been located on its present site a mere half-dozen years when it was transferred to British sovereignty. In fact, British Pensacola was a new town, one in which new problems had to be met and met by the application of time-tested English techniques by men who were firmly grounded in the English system of local government.

When Lieutenant Colonel Augustin Prevost and his Royal Americans claimed Spanish "Panzacola" in the name of George III, August 6, 1763, the newly constructed fort was so dilapidated that one could step in or out between its stockade timbers at will. Within its feeble defenses stood "the only tolerable house in the place," the Governor's mansion, a two-story, frame building that was impressive only in contrast to the low, bark-covered shacks upon whose palmetto-thatched roofs one could look from the Governor's balcony. Around the fort were scattered a hundred



Spanish Pensacola, 1743

Historic Urban Plans

such huts, most without doors, windows, or chimneys. Pensacola offered a dismal prospect at the outset of the British period. ²

In October 1764, Governor George Johnstone arrived with his official family and a substantial number of British settlers. Johnstone described his seat of government as "an assemblage of poor despicable huts, to the number of one hundred & twelve," but with the new Governor came a new spirit, and the making of a new town began. ³



George Johnstone

National Maritime Museum, Greenwich



*Durnford's street plan for
Pensacola, 1766*

Public Record Office, London

Johnstone approached the problems of urban planning with gusto. The first decision was whether to build on the present site or start afresh elsewhere on the bay. With assistance from the Navy, Johnstone surveyed the shores and concluded that Pensacola should remain where it is today. Engineer Elias Durnford was ordered to draw up a town plan which he presented to the Governor and Council early in February 1765, and it was placed on display in the Surveyor General's office. Durnford's plat called for a grid of city blocks clustered around the fort. The north-south streets bore the names of the monarchs — George and Charlotte; the cross-streets honored the politicians Pitt, Bute, Mansfield, Harcourt, and

the military heroes Albemarle and Granby. The result was a town which its designer described as "regularly laid out in oblong squares.... The longest streets...are about 3/4 of a mile in length, and the cross streets...a little more than one quarter of a mile. The streets are 80, 60, or 40 feet wide. The squares for building are divided into 12 lots, each 80 feet front by 170 feet depth." ⁴ Behind the town lay garden plots whose produce would supplement the diets of many Pensacolians.

Town and garden lots were initially distributed by a complicated lottery system among several classes of citizens designated according to their presumptive ability to develop their property, for grantees were required to erect houses within three years. Appropriate reservations were made for military and naval use and for the erection of public buildings. Drawing for lots began February 8, 1765, starting with persons who had claims upon Spanish property, colonial officials, then those men who were "best qualified," followed by "the most substantial," and finally the rest of the people. ⁵

The impact of official encouragement and town planning was immediately visible. Within two weeks eight house frames had been completed and two more were being raised. In little more than a year Johnstone could boast that 113 good houses had been built. The real-estate boom had boosted the price of waterfront lots to \$300. As houses rose, property lines were marked by fences built at private expense. The Council soon ruled that when one property owner erected a fence, the owner of the adjoining property must pay half the cost. ⁶

Streets, alternately deep in mud or choking with dust according to the season, were eventually covered with wood chips and bark — a surface which made them only temporarily passable. In 1766, twenty seamen from HMS *Active*, which was watering in the harbor, were employed by the government to clean the streets and to ditch the marshes behind the town. The project cost £125 and led to hard feelings between Army, Navy, and civil authorities because the Army refused to provide quarters ashore for the jolly tars. ⁷

The fort, located squarely in the center of town, posed many problems to the community. Quarrels between civil and military personnel produced scenes ranging from ludicrous to desperate. When General Frederick Haldimand extended the fort's palisades in 1767, in order to create a more healthful environment for his sickly garrison, a familiar urban problem appeared. Pensacola businessman Alexander Moore found that several houses which he owned and used for storing merchandise, originally located some little distance from the fort, now fell within the new military lines. Lieutenant Governor Montfort Browne ordered the razing of the buildings, and Moore petitioned for compensation for the loss of property worth

£150 in rent. Other new houses also interfered with the expanded fortifications, and Haldimand insisted that they too must come down. The dispossessed owners were at least partially mollified by being granted their choice of available town lots. ⁸

Fire was a constant danger in Pensacola. A conflagration in the fort in 1771 was only brought under control by the assistance of seamen who formed a bucket brigade to bring up water from the beach. The Council soon provided for canvas fire buckets which were desperately needed in 1772 when a fire in the bakery flared up and fifteen or sixteen soldiers' huts were destroyed. A storehouse containing twenty-five pounds of powder was ignited, and the Governor's secretary, Philip Livingston, was seriously injured by the resulting explosion. Eventually the city acquired a fire-engine — perhaps a pumper, certainly manned by volunteers. ⁹

Gulf Coast hurricanes posed another threat. In 1768 Lieutenant Governor Browne reported that a recent storm had blown down a kitchen and several government buildings. General Haldimand remarked that storms destroyed so many of his soldiers' huts that they must soon be exposed to the elements. A violent autumnal storm in 1772 destroyed all but one jetty; boats were tossed ashore and houses wrecked. The greatest blow occurred October 8, 1778, when the winds rose about 9 a.m. and increased until 11 p.m. when the eye of the storm passed. The following winds raised such a swell in the bay that the waterfront was entirely swept away; the tide rose twelve feet above high water mark, destroying "all the merchants' stores, wharfs, and a considerable number of dwelling houses." The fort was denuded of seafront defenses, and at the height of the storm water backed up in the two creeks behind Pensacola so as to threaten the whole area with inundation. Miraculously no more than seven people were killed, but the town was left a shambles. The provincial Assembly which was in session adjourned for a week to allow members from Pensacola to attend to their losses and begin the painful process of reconstruction. ¹⁰

In 1779, Chaplain Philip Waldeck noted that although he sank over his shoe-tops in the sandy streets, Pensacola was indeed a "spaciously laid out" town. It contained two hundred structures of all sorts, and only three old Spanish buildings remained standing. Disaster still threatened, however. In December, General Campbell's house burned, and there was fear of the fire spreading to other dwellings. Then in February 1780, a violent noonday storm tore doors and windows off their hinges, knocked down chimneys, and destroyed houses. One family with seven children was buried in the rubble of their home, but happily all were rescued unharmed. ¹¹

While the Crown provided for the provincial government of West Florida, the town of Pensacola had to fend for itself. After the arrival of George Johnstone in 1764, the Governor and Council functioned as the civic authority, issuing proclamations, ordinances, and regulations. A general Commission of the Peace was named, including all the provincial Councilors and nine other prominent townsmen. In January 1765 the provincial legal officers appeared, Chief Justice William Clifton and Attorney General Edmund Rush Wegg. Neither pleased the Governor. Johnstone complained that Chief Justice Clifton acted on the principle that "crimes cannot be too gently dealt with," and young Wegg was simply incompetent. The Chief Justice refused to recognize the legality of the Governor's ordinances, and his soft attitude toward criminals deterred the Justices of the Peace from punishing lesser crimes. In a town that was being populated by Irish-American immigrants, "the refuse of the jails of great cities, and the overflowing scum of the Empire," a firm hand was imperative. "I think," wrote Johnstone, "we cannot be too vigilant in the restraining of crimes, or putting the law into execution against delinquents." Very shortly the Governor suspended both law officers from their positions and they returned to England to plead their cases (successfully, as it turned out).¹²

City government was at best irregular until 1769 when an Act of the General Assembly established the classic form of English local government. The freeholders and householders of Pensacola were directed to meet the first Tuesday in July 1769, and thereafter annually on Easter Tuesday, according to notice to be given three weeks in advance by the Minister or two Justices of the Peace. The Minister, freeholders, and heads of families were to constitute a vestry and select parish officers: two church wardens, two sidemen, two overseers of the poor, two way wardens, and two appraisers. The parish Clerk was to take an exact poll of the election, the vote being given to all who paid church and poor rates. The parish Clerk and Sexton might be elected by voice vote. Should an individual refuse to serve, he was subject to a £5 fine appropriated to the care of the poor, but after holding office one year, a selectman was not obligated to serve again until two years had passed.

The selectmen were authorized to levy church and poor rates not exceeding £30 a year. The liberal attitude of a frontier town was demonstrated by the provision that dissenters who formed a church and provided for their own poor should be exempted from payment of the poor rates. The law directed the way wardens were to cooperate with the Justices of the Peace and the Street Commissioners to see that streets, roads, and bridges in and about the town were kept in repair. The vestry was also empowered to require slave owners to contribute the labor of

their slaves, up to three days a year, for clearing and draining the swamps behind the town, but masters were allowed to compound for this obligation. ¹³

Although a constabulary seems to have functioned under the Provost Marshal from the beginning of civil government, none was formally established until 1771. Then an act of the Assembly directed the Justices of the Peace to meet annually and to draw by lot from the list of free white males twenty-one to fifty years of age, the number of constables necessary. Anglican and dissenting preachers and members of the General Assembly were exempted from service, as were militia officers, schoolmasters, physicians, apothecaries, lawyers, and public officials. Refusal to serve exposed a man to a fine of £5, but he might be excused by finding a substitute. No one was required to serve more than one year until everyone liable for constabulary duty had been tapped. ¹⁴ This very English system of self-government provided Pensacola with a modestly effective local administration, a conclusion supported by the disappearance of urban concerns from the extant records of the Governor and Council.

Local government as well as provincial government found public buildings and public works a thorny problem. From the outset, civil and military authorities quarreled over the occupancy of space within the fort. The Army conceded the Governor his house, but little else. Poor Johnstone could not even be sure of access to his residence without having to climb the pickets of the fort — at some risk to both pride and pants. In 1766, the Assembly besought the home government to provide £10,000 for public buildings, but the money was not forthcoming. The next year the Council agreed to rent William Aird's house for a courthouse at £100 per annum. Six months later, Aird was demanding his overdue rent. The Council found his request for payment "abusive and rude" and refused to comply until the end of the year. Nevertheless, this arrangement was continued into 1769 when the Council abruptly informed Aird that it no longer needed his house. Poor Aird, who had let his place on good faith and without a contract the second year, protested in vain. Government moved its offices into the more attractive house just vacated by General Frederick Haldimand. ¹⁵

Haldimand's house was rented in 1769 for £100 a year and a guarantee that it would be kept in repair, but when Governor Peter Chester arrived in 1770, he found that it needed painting and reroofing, for it leaked "greatly." The official Governor's House was even more "ruinous and uninhabitable." In 1773, Chester recommended that the Haldimand house be purchased for use as courthouse and church, and Haldimand agreed to sell it for £1,600 to be paid in two equal yearly payments. It took

five years, however, for the transaction to win the approval of the Colonial Office, and then the building was designated for the Governor's private use.¹⁶

Peter Chester dreamed of a proper mansion for a royal governor, and in 1770 he authorized Elias Durnford to sketch plans for a new Government House. Durnford took to his task with all the zeal of an



Elias Durnford

Museum of the City of Mobile

amateur architect and proposed an extensive open square of government buildings flanking a pretentious quasi-Palladian palace. The original estimate of cost was £2,500, and the Board of Trade agreed to spend £2,550 on the project. Chester approved the drawings and Durnford set to work, but construction moved slowly because of the shortage of skilled labor and Chester's tendency to revise the plans. Costs quickly outran Durnford's expectations, even though the Engineer had assured the Governor that the building could be completed with a surplus remaining. When Durnford was in London in 1774, he pressed the Colonial Secretary for an additional £500, and a year later Chester pleaded for an £800 supplement. Neither request was granted by a Colonial Office which faced far more important expenditures in North America. The unfinished Governor's Palace stood within the fort and served no civic purpose. It was eventually fenced, and in 1777 it was used as a warehouse for ordnance stores and timber. Finally in 1778, instructions were received from Whitehall to turn Chester's folly into barracks for reinforcements which were due to arrive shortly. ¹⁷

In a new town such as Pensacola, private business was a public concern. By two acts of the Assembly in June 1767, ¹⁸ a public market was created and all who brought foodstuffs to town were required to sell them there. Money for the construction of a Market House was raised by imposing a license fee on retail liquor sales. A Market Commission of seven men was named to supervise the erection of a suitable building. The Commission was ordered to proceed with all possible speed and to bind the contractor to complete the Market House by early August. A limit of £30 was placed upon the cost of construction, but it appears that the contractor, William Aird, collected £150. ¹⁹ The Commissioners were authorized to appoint a Clerk of the Market to act as inspector of weights and measures, and he was paid by fees on the sale of meat and peddlars' licenses.

An appropriate signal indicated the opening of the market each day, and a similar signal at the wharves announced the sale of fish and oysters. Because fresh meats spoiled quickly in the summer heat, the law provided that if meat remained unsold for one hour before 10 a.m. or half an hour after 10 a.m. the vendor might peddle it from door to door. In 1768 the Assembly found it necessary to regulate the sale of bread and flour in Pensacola. The price of a loaf of bread was fixed according to its size and the current price of flour. Quality was also controlled, any adulterated bread being subject to confiscation for the use of the poor. Bakers were required to place their mark on every loaf. A Commission for fixing the price of flour in Pensacola was required to meet and publish the current price on the first Monday of every month. Failure to abide

but the law proved ineffective. In 1770 it was necessary to increase the penalties — fines, the pillory, and whipping — particularly in the case of white lawbreakers. ²²

Disease and death were familiar to all Pensacolians. Medicine could do little to relieve their suffering, and a penurious government refused the funds they repeatedly sought in order to establish a hospital. They could, however, do something to protect themselves against epidemics. Santa Rosa Island provided the town with a suitable pest-house when smallpox struck in 1770 and when local slavers attempted to import a cargo of Africans infested with yaws. ²³

In a frontier town, law and order were in constant jeopardy. Violence involving only civilians might be dealt with by constables, JPs, and grand juries, but where the military establishment composed between a quarter and half the population, clashes between these two classes of citizens were frequent and troublesome. Governor Johnstone repeatedly complained of drunken redcoats who brutally assaulted civilians; not even gentlemen such as Captain Davenant of the *Speedwell* and government surveyor Patrick Strachan were immune to the rude attentions of inebriated soldiers. Justices of the Peace were laughed at by the military, and when the Governor tried to intervene in behalf of law and order, he became embroiled in arguments over command and authority that echoed from the gate of the fort at Pensacola to the marble chambers of Whitehall. ²⁴

Observing the unruly nature of his fellow Pensacolians and recognizing the need for a jail, Johnstone sought to utilize a house within the fort for that purpose, but the commanding officer objected. In January 1765 the Governor finally found a "hut" which would serve, but as it was far from escapeproof Johnstone still had to ask the military authorities to provide a sentinel at the door. The Provost Marshal was responsible for the jail, and a list of prisoners held by James Johnstone (the Governor's nephew) sheds some light upon both crime and punishment. Burglary and robbery accounted for the greatest number of inmates; murder was scarcely less common. (The Governor declared that by April 1766, seventeen persons had been tried for murder in Pensacola.) One man was imprisoned for whipping an Indian slave, three pirates had been taken, and one woman had been incarcerated thirty-one days for theft. William Trail, jailed on suspicion of stealing a silver watch, had been in prison thirty-five days when he died of natural causes. Another list indicates that between 1765 and 1769 the Pensacola grand jury presented to the Court of Common Pleas eight murder cases, fifteen burglary and larceny cases, and fourteen other cases. Most of the murder cases came to trial and convictions were secured, but for lack of evidence lesser charges were often dropped. ²⁵

In 1766 matters reached a state of crisis and justice was at a standstill. At the beginning of the year Johnstone complained that there were "now in the little jail of Pensacola eleven persons for capital crimes," and summoning juries was extremely troublesome as jurors had to be brought in from the surrounding countryside, and witnesses from distant parts of the province frequently refused to appear. The summoning of a General Assembly offered a means of putting colonial law on a more regular basis, and the Assembly was quick to note the need for a court house and a better prison system — one that would provide separate accommodations for debtors and felons.²⁶

The customary appeal to London for funds with which to build a jail was fruitless, and finally, in 1767, at the suggestion of Chief Justice William Leitch, the Council contracted with Alexander Moore who made available a house for use as a jail at the cost of £40 per annum. In spite of new quarters, the imprisoned debtors complained that they were kept behind locked doors except for brief periods at 8 a.m. and 12 noon, "by which they were reduced to distresses not decent to mention." There were no cooking facilities, and as there was little ventilation, the stench was unbearable. Needless to say, their prayers for relief were unanswered. Finally, in 1770, the Council accepted William Aird's proposal to build a city jail near the northeast corner of the fort, and at their clamorous insistence, the gentlemen debtors were provided with cells apart from the lower classes. The new prison would cost Pensacola £50 a year for the next ten years, and in 1781 the Governor found it necessary to spend an additional £249.16.10 on repairs.²⁷

Security was a problem, for visitors were able to walk up to the windows of the jail and smuggle weapons as well as food to the inmates until the government was persuaded to fence the building so that no more than oral communication with prisoners was possible. Those kept in the common jail were more severely treated than were the debtors; two murderers locked up in 1773 were kept in irons.²⁸

Lesser malefactors received the usual corporal punishments. Pensacola boasted a pillory, stocks, and a whipping post. Executions were, of course, notable public occasions. In 1779 Pastor Philip Waldeck observed the execution of a Pennsylvania Loyalist soldier who had stabbed a corporal. Sentenced to be hanged, he was driven to the gallows in a cart, made the traditional speech, was blindfolded, a rope was attached to the gallows and the cart was driven forward, leaving him dangling. The chaplain noted that the hangman (always a white man) received a fee of \$30.²⁹

Colonial Pensacola was not always a sleepy little town. In 1769 the Assembly had to pass legislation forbidding the galloping of horses or the running of cattle through the streets and outlawing the firing of musket:

and small arms. As late as 1772 Governor Chester found it necessary to issue a proclamation against "the evil custom of firing muskets and fusees in the streets."³⁰ But perhaps there was never quite so lively an occasion as St. Patrick's Day, 1766. For that holiday the town's Irish inhabitants, undoubtedly the lower sort of folk, requested of that good Scot Governor George Johnstone that he supply them with gunpowder to enliven their celebration. Johnstone refused, rightly anticipating that it would be a "mad unruly occasion," although he assured the Irish, "I regard St. Patrick with the same affection as St. Andrew." The persistent sons of Erin found Storekeeper Arthur Neil more cooperative, and Lieutenant Colonel Walsh, no friend of the Governor, cheerfully provided the Irishmen with the garrison's cannon which were set up directly under Johnstone's windows. St. Patrick's Day was celebrated by the discharge of "the whole artillery of the Garrison" right under the Governor's gallery!³¹

One of the first regulations issued by the newly constituted council in 1764 restricted to three the number of taverns in Pensacola. When the first General Assembly met in 1766, it passed a Licensing Act which provided that Pensacola might have eight retail liquor licensees, but no one might continue to hold a license without annual approval by the justices at Quarter Sessions. Gambling was forbidden in public houses, and tapsters were directed to restrict the credit extended to settlers to £5 — and that to sailors to 5 shillings.³²

A second act recognized that "Drunkenness and debauchery ... tend very much to enervate the constitutions of such unhappy persons as are addicted to those vices, and when added to the extremities of heat and cold peculiar to this climate destroy many subjects that would otherwise be useful to the society in general and their own families in particular." In as much as "promoting industry and good order among tradesmen and laborers ought to be one of the first institutions in an infant colony," the act forbade workmen appearing drunk on the job and penalized the delinquent laborer one shilling for each hour he was absent from his post. The same act set the work-day at nine hours, required the completion of contract jobs, and provided penalties for non-payment of wages by employers — all matters only vaguely related to drunkenness.³³

This legislation apparently failed to reform the habits British Pensacolians adequately, so an act of 1771 extended licensing to keepers of billiard tables, skittle grounds, and other gaming places.³⁴ Gambling and liquor licenses were set at £5 in the town of Pensacola, but only half that amount outside the town. Publicans were required to post bonds of £20, and at least one lady tavern keeper discovered that renewal was no means automatic.

As Negro slaves formed a significant part of the labor force in West Florida and were worked both in town and on neighboring plantations, regulation of their activity in Pensacola was necessary. The law required that they hold tickets of permission if they moved in or out of town. No slave was allowed to be out at night without his owner's written permission, and then meetings of more than six slaves were forbidden after 9 p.m. If a slave attacked a white man he was automatically subject to the death penalty. When executed (as occasionally happened), his owner was compensated according to the slave's value. Tavern keepers were forbidden to sell any alcoholic beverage to slaves or to allow them to gamble.³⁵ Justices of the Peace were charged to break up any gathering of slaves which might "disturb the peace," and in Pensacola the chief problem seems to have been the congregating of slaves on Sundays and holidays; then the drums came out and festivities began which were more appropriate to an African village than to a British town.

Whatever the personal faith of Pensacolians — or the lack of it — the official religion of a British royal colony was that of the Church of England. The Bishop of London had formal oversight of the colonial church, and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel took an interest in its welfare. As with the Church in England, however, much depended upon the zeal of individual priests and the interest of local authorities. With the establishment of the colony's Civil List, provision was made to pay a minister £100 a year and a schoolteacher £25. In the spring of 1764, the S.P.G. recommended the appointment of the Rev. William Dawson as minister to Pensacola and allowed his church £38.14.4 for "furniture." Dawson promptly began to draw his salary and planned to embark for Pensacola from Dundee in August, but illness in his family delayed his departure, the sailing season passed, and in May 1765 he was still at Dundee.³⁶ His efforts to collect a six-months advance on his salary were frustrated, however, by the colonial agent's refusal to honor his demands.

Governor Johnstone was quite properly concerned for the welfare of Pensacola's "six hundred souls without a pastor." By February 1765 he had appointed the Rev. Thomas Wilkinson, deputy chaplain of the 35th Regiment, to minister to the spiritual needs of the civilians and allot him half the regular priest's salary.³⁷

Dawson eventually arrived, but he promptly petitioned the Governor to be allowed to withdraw to South Carolina, pleading the impossibility of maintaining his family on his small salary. Johnstone granted Dawson's request on the condition (apparently unfulfilled) that the clergyman find a proper curate to fill his place.³⁸ When the General Assembly met the end of the year, it too recognized the sad condition of Pensacola

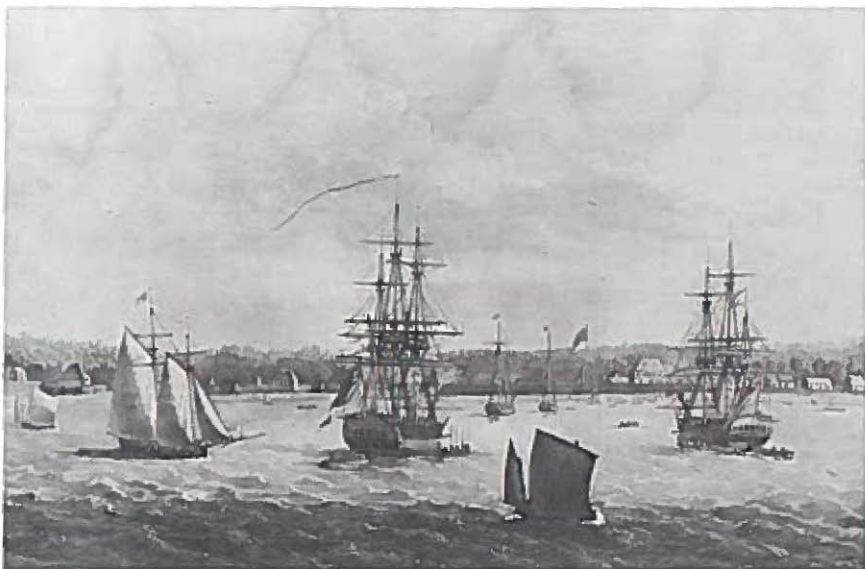
religious life and submitted a plea to the crown for £1,500 with which to erect churches in both Pensacola and Mobile.³⁹ Religious services were continued by Chaplain Wilkinson until his death (probably in 1767), but subsequently there appeared a "great decay of religion among his Majesty's subjects," although Lieutenant Governor Browne appointed Matthew McHenry, a native of Pennsylvania, as temporary pastor at an annual salary of £50.⁴⁰

Finally, in February 1768, the Colonial Secretary announced the appointment of a successor to Dawson, and by July Pensacola had its minister, the Rev. Nathaniel Cotton, a truly devoted and hardworking cleric. Cotton promptly mobilized his parishioners to petition the Board of Trade for money to erect a church and provide their priest with a residence. Eighty-four prominent Pensacolians declared their readiness to help raise the necessary funds and expressed their embarrassment that the only church in the colony was the Roman Catholic church at Mobile. Cotton further pressed his case with the Bishop of London, the S.P.G., and the American Secretary, pointing out his need for Bibles, Common Prayer books, and other useful religious tracts. It fell particularly hard on him to have to rent his own house, and he asked for £30 a year to cover that expense until a church could be built and the glebe lands provide for his support. For the church itself he asked £1,500.⁴¹

No help was available. Two years later the overworked Cotton reported that he was destitute of communion table cloths and napkins. He needed a supply of fine Prayer Books for the honorable members of the Council and some ordinary ones for the lesser folk. Glebe lands had been granted by the Governor and Council, but he could not yet afford to build a house and still needed a rent supplement.⁴²

Nathaniel Cotton was unimpressed by his colleague, the Pensacola schoolteacher John Firby, otherwise reputed to be "a serious, religious man, & well qualified to teach reading English, writing, arithmetic, merchants' accounts, surveying land." The schoolmaster supported himself by serving as a public writer or scribe, and in 1773 he secured appointment as provincial naval officer. As he lived on a plantation three miles west of town, it seems unlikely that Firby devoted much time or attention to pedagogy. Cotton suggested that the next time the American Secretary sent out a schoolmaster, he should be a gentlemen in holy orders so that he might assist the overworked rector.⁴³

A means of supporting the minister at Pensacola was finally found by providing him with joint appointment as garrison chaplain with an extra £100 annual salary. Cotton did not long enjoy this blessing, however. He died July 3, 1771, of dropsy and complications. Governor Peter Chester



British Pensacola, 1765

Historic Pensacola Preservation Board

observed that a replacement was "much wanted," although a volunteer was available in the Mobile minister, William Gordon, who begged the American Secretary for the Pensacola appointment as soon as he heard of Cotton's death. Gordon had been a Navy chaplain before 1763, had served at Mobile since May 1768, and believed that he enjoyed Chester's support for the living at Pensacola; in fact the Governor advised that he should not be transferred. Gordon was a man of good character, declared Chester, but he was an unpopular preacher.⁴⁴

The faithful gathered for religious services in whatever quarters they could find. The old Governor's House was used for several years, but by 1770 it was "in great danger of tumbling down." Chester remarked that he was "almost afraid of venturing to attend Divine service" there, and in 1773 he reminded the New Colonial Secretary Lord Dartmouth that Pensacola had been without a clergyman for two years and was in sore need of a "Pious Pastor." Dartmouth, a Wesleyan sympathizer who took religion seriously, secured the appointment of a Mr. Chapman as minister to Pensacola and in August 1773 advised Chester that the new priest was on his way across the Atlantic. Unfortunately, the Secretary was misinformed. Chapman refused the appointment, leaving the Governor still hoping for "a good and moral man." As had been his practice since Cotton's death, William Gordon came over from Mobile as often as he could to officiate at services, and he sufficiently softened Chester's opposition that the Governor requested he be granted £25 a year from the funds

allotted to the Pensacola ministry — a request which Dartmouth cheerfully granted. ⁴⁵

Efforts to secure government funds to build a church were uniformly unsuccessful. When Elias Durnford visited England in 1774, he asked for £1,500 and emphasized the inability of the community to provide for itself. The money was not to be found in London, however, and finally, during the winter session of the General Court of Pleas at Pensacola in 1777, it was ordered that \$1,200 (£280) should be set aside from fines for the construction of a church on ground just north of the fort. This step was taken with the support of "the principal inhabitants," but Governor Chester was unwilling to spend the money without official approval. Lord George Germain welcomed any sign of self-help from a loyal colony and promptly dispatched Treasury authorization for the use of these funds. ⁴⁶

The pulpit, meanwhile, remained vacant. In 1777 Chester heard that David Gillies had been recommended to the Bishop of London as minister for Pensacola, and he hastened to warn the American Secretary that Gillies was "a man of an immoral character, not ordained in the Church of England, and by no means qualified." Germain replied that proper clerics were not easy to find, for residency in Pensacola must exclude "all ideas of preferment" at home. He would, at least, make certain that Gillies was not appointed, and in 1778 he succeeded in getting War Office



East and West Florida, c. 1763

Museum of the City of Mobile

agreement that an incumbent might serve as both minister and chaplain to the garrison, drawing both salaries.⁴⁷

Surprisingly, the war provided Pensacola with spiritual relief. It appeared in the person of Philip Waldeck, chaplain of the 3rd Waldeck Regiment which arrived in January 1779. The good German ministered chiefly to the troops, but he was happy to baptize an eight-year-old child, for he observed that "any concept of religion here on the part of the inhabitants is very limited. They have a tendency to become savage while living among the savages." A second newcomer and the last official minister to Pensacola was James Brown, a schoolmaster in Savannah at the beginning of the American Revolution, who returned to England in 1777, sacrificing considerable goods and property for his loyalty. Apparently determined to return to America, he sought the good offices of William Knox, Undersecretary of State for the Colonies, and gained appointment to the Pensacola ministry in 1778, although he did not take holy orders until 1779. He embarked for West Florida about Christmas 1779 and reached Pensacola April 6, 1780, obviously an unhappy time to arrive. Brown served both the civil and military population until the town fell to the Spaniards in 1781. He then returned to England and, along with the hapless Rev. Gordon and schoolmaster Firby, was recommended by the Board of Trade for half-pay until he could be otherwise provided for.⁴⁸

In retrospect, the urban problems of British Pensacola were those of any new town on the Anglo-American frontier. In part, the responses of British Pensacola were peculiarly English — as in the establishment of a vestry system of local government — and in part peculiarly American — as evidenced by a greater toleration of religious dissent than in England — and in part perhaps uniquely Pensacolian, as seen in the tender treatment of insolvent debtors who were released from jail if their creditors refused to pay for their keep. Unhappily, both progress and promise came to nought — and for that we have to thank the American Revolution.

Notes

¹ Clinton N. Howard, "Colonial Pensacola: the British Period," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XIX (Oct. 1940): 110.

²Clinton N. Howard, "The Military Occupation of British West Florida, 1763," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XVII (Jan. 1939): 183ff.; Robert R. Rea, "Pensacola under the British (1763-1781)," in *Colonial Pensacola*, ed. James R. McGovern (Pensacola, 1974), 57-58.

- ³ Colonial Office 5/574: 233, Public Record Office, Kew, England. Hereafter cited at C.O. See also Robin F. A. Fabel, *Bombast and Broadships: the Lives of George Johnstone* (University, AL, 1987).
- ⁴ C.O. 5/595: 431; C.O. 5/625, Council minutes for January 30, February 3 and 5, 1765.
- ⁵ C.O. 5/625, Council minutes for February 7, 1765.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, Council minutes for May 20, 1765; C.O. 5/574: 243, 959.
- ⁷ C.O. 5/574: 454.
- ⁸ C.O. 5/592: 65; C.O. 5/584: 440.
- ⁹ Howard, "Colonial Pensacola," 381; Haldimand to Gage, February 21, 1772, Haldimand Papers, Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa.
- ¹⁰ C.O. 5/575: 335; C.O. 5/595: 23; Haldimand to Tayler, September 15, 1767, Haldimand to Gage, September 9, 1772: Haldimand Papers; Bernard Romans, *A Concise Natural History of East and West Florida* (1775; reprint, Gainesville, 1962), 4-5.
- ¹¹ Marion Dexter Learned, ed., *Philipp Waldeck's Diary of the American Revolution* (Philadelphia, 1907), 119.
- ¹² C.O. 5/574: 233, 719, 750.
- ¹³ Robert R. Rea and Milo B. Howard, Jr., eds., *The Minutes, Journals, and Acts of the General Assembly of British West Florida* (University, AL, 1979), 361-63.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 387-89.
- ¹⁵ C.O. 5/575: 231; C.O. 5/632.
- ¹⁶ C.O. 5/588: 39; C.O. 5/579: 349, 353; C.O. 5/594: 257.
- ¹⁷ C.O. 5/577: 449; C.O. 5/580: 13; C.O. 5/588: 53, 67; C.O. 5/592: 85, 201; C.O. 5/594: 257, 275; C.O. 5/595: 289.
- ¹⁸ *Acts of the General Assembly*, 341-42, 350-51.
- ¹⁹ C.O. 5/577: 73.
- ²⁰ *Acts of the General Assembly*, 356-57.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, 339.
- ²² *Ibid.*, 383.
- ²³ Charles Strachan to Alexander Wyllie, June 10, 1767: Letterbook of Charles Strachan, Edinburgh; Howard, "Colonial Pensacola," 268.
- ²⁴ C.O. 5/574: 244, 246, 789.
- ²⁵ C.O. 5/574: 719, 771; C.O. 5/577: 183; C.O. 5/625.
- ²⁶ C.O. 5/575: 217; C.O. 5/583: 13.
- ²⁷ C.O. 5/585: 186; C.O. 5/596: 15; C.O. 632: 208.

- ²⁸ C.O. 5/590: 245.
- ²⁹ *Waldeck Diary*, 130-31.
- ³⁰ *Acts of the General Assembly*, 363.
- ³¹ C.O. 5/584: 83.
- ³² C.O. 5/625; *Acts of the General Assembly*, 319-20.
- ³³ *Acts of the General Assembly*, 320-21.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.* 389-91.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.* 330-36, 342-47.
- ³⁶ C.O. 5/574: 71, 175, 213, 424.
- ³⁷ C.O. 5/574: 431.
- ³⁸ C.O. 5/575: 49; C.O. 5/583: 85. Dawson died at Charleston in January 1767, leaving a widow and children who sought Johnstone's support (C.O. 5/584: 355).
- ³⁹ C.O. 5/575: 231.
- ⁴⁰ C.O. 5/575: 327; C.O. 585: 81.
- ⁴¹ C.O. 5/585: 15; C.O. 5/586: 41, 65.
- ⁴² C.O. 5/587: 365.
- ⁴³ C.O. 5/574: 87, 175, 179, 183; C.O. 5/587: 365; Audit Office 13/99: 154.
- ⁴⁴ C.O. 5/580: 105; C.O. 5/588: 305, 439; C.O. 5/590: 163; C.O. 5/578: 243.
- ⁴⁵ C.O. 5/588: 39; C.O. 5/590: 167, 227; C.O. 5/591: 161, 215.
- ⁴⁶ C.O. 5/591: 7, 57; C.O. 5/594: 267, 287.
- ⁴⁷ C.O. 5/593: 261, 277; C.O. 594: 699.
- ⁴⁸ *Waldeck Diary*, 135; C.O. 5/600: 291; Audit Office 13/82, 109.

Dr. Robert Rea, Professor of History at Auburn University, is the author of numerous articles and books on Gulf Coast history. He has served on the *Gulf Coast Historical Review's* editorial advisory board since the journal's inception.

Incompetence, Disorganization, and Lack of Determination: The Federal Assault on Port Hudson, May 27, 1863

Lawrence L. Hewitt

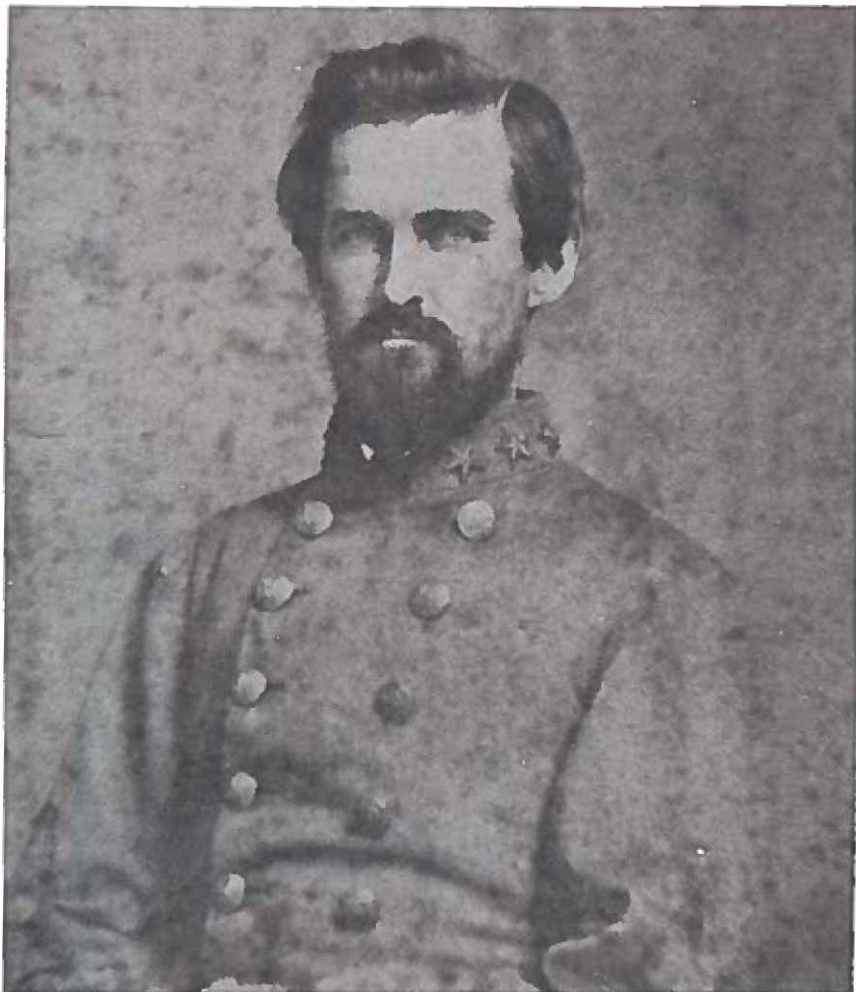
By the spring of 1863, Union forces were on the verge of seizing control of the entire Mississippi River. Only two bastions remained in Confederate hands: Vicksburg and Port Hudson. While Ulysses S. Grant hammered away at the former, Nathaniel P. Banks moved to assault the latter. By the evening of May 22, Banks' army had encircled Port Hudson and Union naval vessels had taken up positions above and below the town. Banks slowly tightened the noose until, on the evening of the twenty-sixth, he ordered an all-out assault the following morning. Confidence abounded because everyone in the Union army knew "they outnumbered the Confederates rather more than two to one."¹

It was early on May 27 when Colonel Isaiah George Washington Steedman, commander of the Confederate left wing, completed what preparations he could make to meet the impending Union onslaught. Although he had practiced medicine in Alabama before the war, Steedman had graduated from the South Carolina Military Academy in 1856. Before



Map of Louisiana (detail)

Battles and Leaders of
the Civil War, III, 442

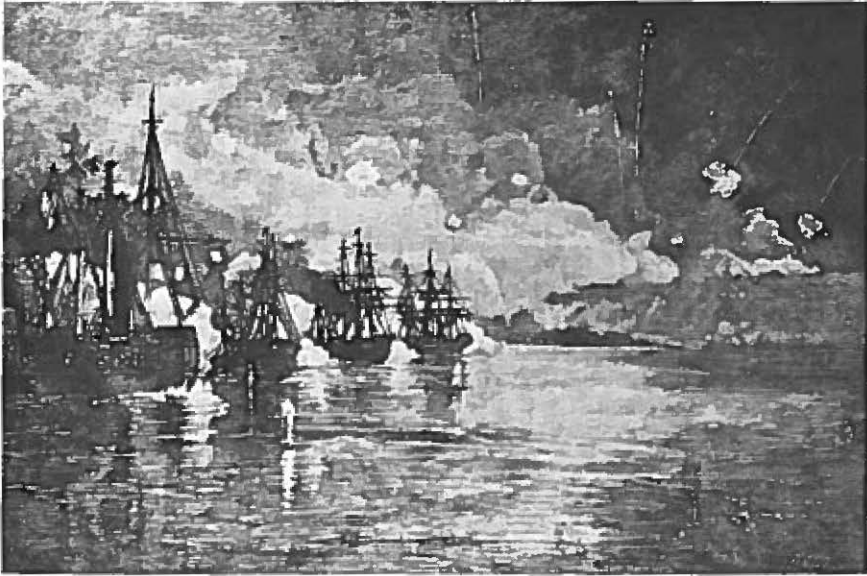


Colonel Isaiah George Washington Steedman

*Archives and History,
Baton Rouge*

nightfall, West Point's finest would test the martial talents of this twenty-eight-year-old physician turned soldier. ²

Steedman began the day by sending four companies of the 1st Alabama to strengthen Lieutenant Colonel M.B. Locke's ad hoc command occupying the woods almost a mile north of a granary. But this reinforcement failed to match the detachments that had returned to construct fortifications, and Locke had only some five hundred infantrymen and no artillery with which to buy the Confederates additional time to organize their defenses. Steedman's main concern was acquiring additional cannon to sweep the ravines which provided the easiest access to his line of defense. Captain James Madison Sparkman moved two 12-pound Blakleys to Commissary



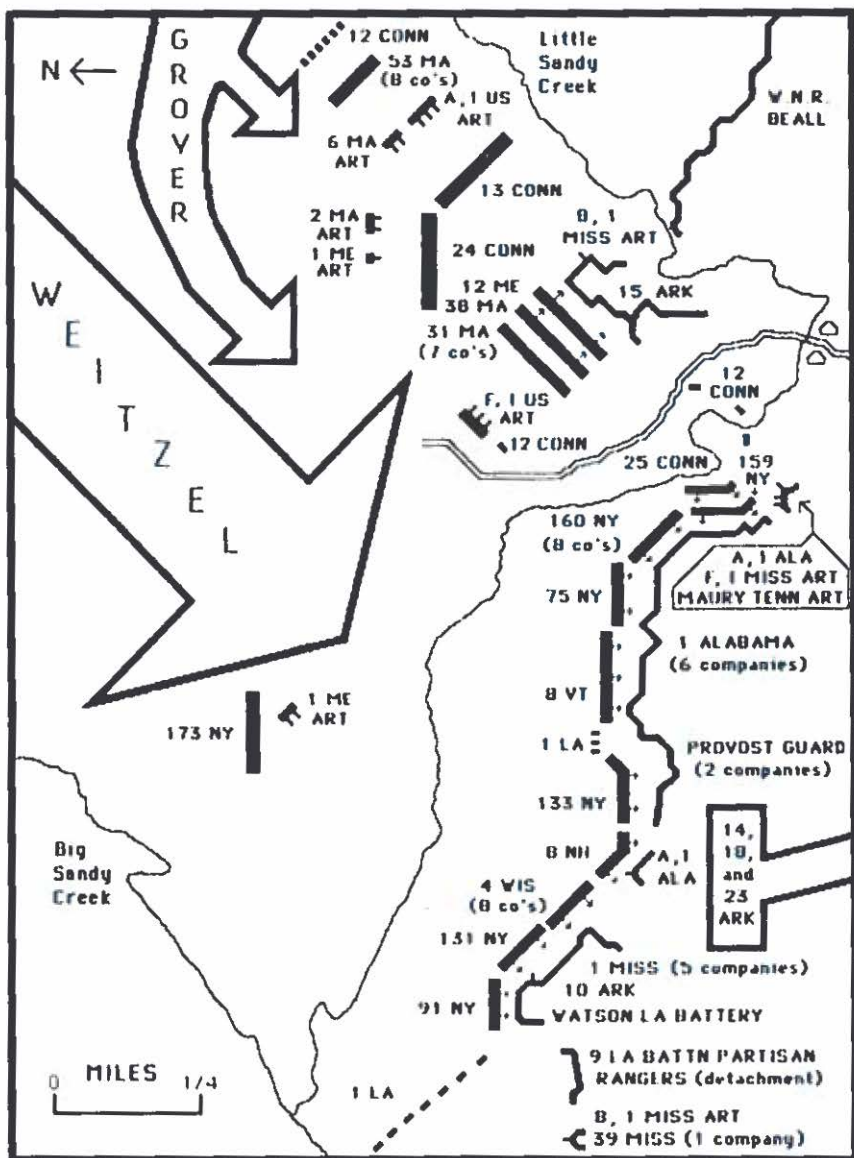
*Naval bombardment at Port Hudson
March 13, 1863*

Battles and Leaders, III, 594

Hill and deployed at the edge of the ravine, where only some bushes lent protection. The Tennesseans also quickly fashioned an abatis of beech and magnolia trees and limbs.³

The Union mortar vessels shelled the garrison throughout the night, and the battle proper opened about 5:30 A.M. Federal land batteries commenced a fierce, one-hour bombardment of the Confederate center and right, as an ominous silence prevailed on Steedman's front. The upper and lower fleets approached the fortress and began firing around 7 A.M., but ceased an hour later for fear of injuring their comrades ashore. Their brief participation proved ineffective.⁴

Union Brigadier General Godfrey Weitzel, commanding the right wing, formed his men in a column of brigades. Brigadier General William Dwight's division headed the advance, Colonel Jacob Van Zandt's three regiments leading off, supported by Colonel Stephen Thomas' four. Brigadier General Halbert E. Paine's division followed, Colonel Hawkes Fearing, Jr.'s four regiments in front and Colonel Oliver P. Gooding's three in the rear. Twelve hundred Confederate infantrymen faced this overwhelming force; fourteen Federal regiments which encompassed at least six thousand soldiers, ranging from the 8th Vermont, about nine hundred strong, to the 298 members of the 8th New Hampshire. Even so, the column moved forward considerably reduced. Absent from the field were two of Dwight's regiments and four of Paine's. The 53rd Massachusetts, 160th New York,



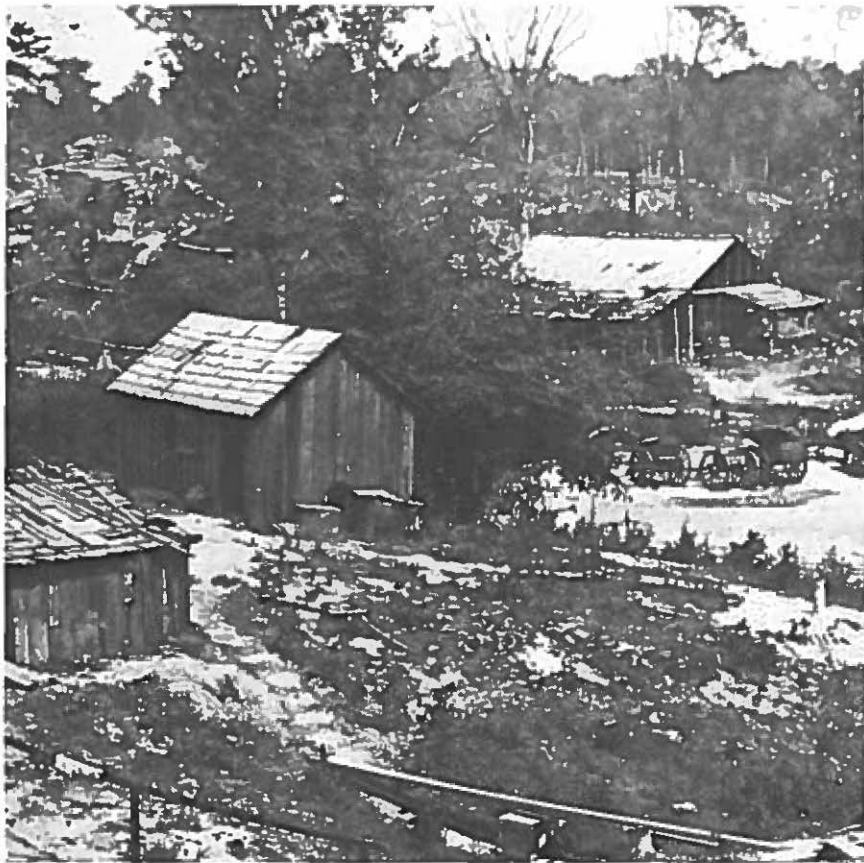
Map of the Union assault on the morning of May 27, 1863

and 4th Wisconsin each entered the battle with two companies detached; the 31st Massachusetts had three absent.⁵

Weitzel began his advance about 6 A.M. During the next hour, the fight raged with great severity while Van Zandt pushed the Confederates back through the forest and ravines. Although heavily outnumbered, Locke held his ground until the enemy threatened both his flanks, at which

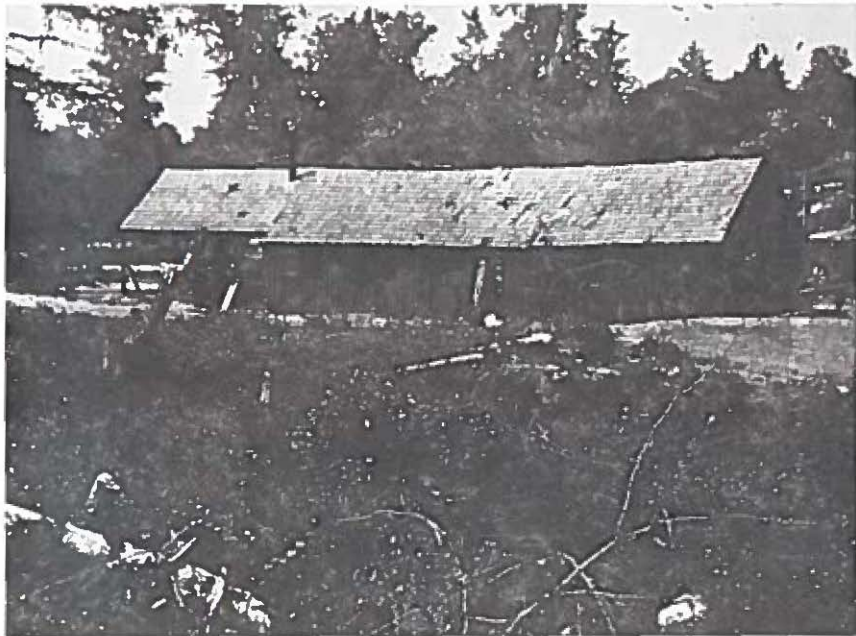
point he withdrew to the fortifications. Both sides lost frightfully for what amounted to a skirmish. Locke had nearly two hundred men killed, wounded or missing, including one colonel captured — forty percent of his command. ⁶

But the Union column had become disarrayed. The farther south the Federals advanced, the more they drifted to the west, trying to keep their right flank anchored on Big Sandy Creek, which meandered southwesterly. Steep ravines, many over thirty feet in depth, and dense woods broke battle lines. To press the attack, Thomas' troops passed through the gaps of Van Zandt's exhausted and widely dispersed men. By the time the Federals gained the crest north of Little Sandy Creek any sense of organization above the regimental level had vanished. ⁷ Scores of blue-clad infantrymen, confused and separated from their officers, advanced no further.



*Confederate Ordnance buildings
behind Fort Desperate*

*U.S. Army Military History
Institute, Carlisle Barracks,
Pennsylvania (USMHI)*



Confederate grist mill

USMHI

At the edge of the woods lining the crest the Federals came to a halt, finally in sight of their objective. Before them lay the valley of Little Sandy Creek, broken by small hillocks and numerous ravines, in places dense with pines and magnolias, in others interlaced with branches of felled trees — a formidable abatis. Sharpshooters sniped away from the protective cover of the gullies and trees. Beyond the basin the opposite crest was crowned with the yellow dirt of unfinished earthworks, behind which the Federals could see the garrison's tents, shanties, and warehouses, and the church and dwellings of the village. The only unobstructed route through the creek bottom was a wagon path leading straight into the blazing guns of the battery atop Commissary Hill. ⁸

First to respond to the challenge, Lieutenant Colonel Willoughby Babcock drew his sword and dashed ahead of the 75th New York shouting, "Come On!" A corporal leapt forward, replying, "Here goes the Colonel, boys, we won't leave the Colonel! Charge!" Their crossing over the rugged, obstructed valley soon dispersed the 75th into squads. The regiments that followed met with a similar fate, and something resembling an unorganized mob struggled toward the breastworks, ⁹ their number growing ever smaller as the less steadfast members dropped out to the safety of some inviting crevasse. Fear was not the only factor influencing their actions. The nature of the terrain they had traversed, coupled with the heat and the humidity, undoubtedly exhausted many Yankees.

The Confederates stood in wait, Steedman stationing himself at the battery upon Commissary Hill. Through a telescope he watched his men withdraw and the enemy move to positions along the heights north of the creek. Seeing this Steedman warned the gunners of the 15th Arkansas who had just arrived beyond the creek. Lieutenant Jesse B. Edrington joined in the bombardment with two 12-pound howitzers stationed in the advanced lunette. The gunners soon found the range and their shells exploded amid the advancing enemy. Their accurate fire caused much confusion, and Steedman watched the Yankees "mowed down in whole ranks, their lines...soon broken, yet undismayed they rushed down the hill...." Using felled trees and ravines for cover, some of the Federals approached within easy range of the rifle pits. ¹⁰

Pioneers followed the advancing blue-clad infantry to open roads through the woods for the artillery. The cannon soon rolled up, and the men unlimbered their pieces along the crest. The Confederate gunners swiftly directed their fire at the guns of five enemy batteries. The Southerners



*Edrington's 12-pounder howitzer,
destroyed May 27, 1863*

had nailed white crosses to trees on the opposite ridge to mark the range. They zeroed in on a section of the 1st Maine Battery when it wheeled into position, leaving one soldier dead and twelve wounded along side thirteen dead horses. Premature discharge of another Confederate cannon hurled a rammer toward Battery F, 1st United States Artillery. Just before it reached the battery it struck a tree. Richocheting off, the whirling staff killed five or six Federals. But it was Company A of that regiment that suffered the most. The Confederates quickly dismounted two of its guns, killed two men and fifteen horses and wounded a lieutenant and eleven men. ¹¹

Yet the deadly precision of the Confederate gunners succeeded only in diverting Federal artillery fire from the retreating gray-clad infantry. Captain Edmund C. Bainbridge's U.S. regulars unlimbered the six guns of Battery A next to the 6th Massachusetts' four cannon at the edge of the woods, four hundred yards from the lunette manned by the 15th Arkansas. Together, the two batteries quickly silenced Edrington's guns. A shell struck the wheel of one cannon; the explosion killed the lieutenant, wounded two of his men, and disabled the piece. The colonel of the 15th, Benjamin W. Johnson, withdrew the remaining gun to a secure place, where its cannoneers double loaded it with canister to cover Johnson's vulnerable left flank and rear. ¹²

Yankee gunners managed to knock out almost every gun on Commissary Hill. Captain Sparkman jumped atop the breastwork to see



Battery A, 1st United States Artillery

National Archive.

if he had correctly cut the fuse to explode the shell directly over the enemy's battery. When he did so, a shell fragment killed him by driving his powder flask into his groin. Another shell cut one soldier in two, tore the leg off another, and stunned several more. Artillery projectiles also riddled the large granary just to the right of the battery. ¹³

Three companies of the 12th Connecticut worked their way forward toward Commissary Hill. Dispersed among the fallen trees and firing as sharpshooters, they soon compelled the gunners to lie behind the parapet. The guns silenced, some of the Federals seized a ditch from which they poured an enfilading fire into the battery. Though Confederate efforts to oust the Yankees proved costly and futile, the latter could advance no farther. ¹⁴

The assaulting force hit Major Samuel L. Knox's six companies of the 1st Alabama and two companies of provost guards hardest. The Alabamians stood five feet apart and carried outdated flintlock muskets. With an effective range of forty yards, the men loaded their guns with one ball and three buckshot, a deadly round at close range. They held their fire until the enemy came within forty yards, when the parapet blazed with a volley of musketry. The suddenness of the destruction caused the Federals to hesitate. The more courageous participants rallied quickly, however, and came on with a yell. ¹⁵

Rebel officers now instructed their men to load and fire individually while the Yankees struggled over brush and fired on the run. One Alabamian thought his comrades shot so rapidly that their muskets popped "as fast as canes when the fire is in a cane-brake." ¹⁶ Fence rails in the breastworks manned by the provost guard battalion caught fire. To prevent a possible breach, the Alabamians assisted their comrades in tearing out the burning rails under enemy fire. ¹⁷

A few of the Federals almost reached the parapet but had to withdraw because of the withering fire. The Confederates fired at their backs until the Yankees were out of range. Two Alabamians especially demoralized the Federals. John C. Cantey, one of two crack shots in the regiment armed with a long-range rifle, dropped the gallant blue-clad color bearer of the 75th New York at the outset of the advance. And at the height of the assault Captain Richard Williams jumped atop the parapet and emptied his pistol into the charging column. His men had to drag him down from his perilous perch. The Federals who had actually inflicted the most damage were three companies of the 1st (U.S.) Louisiana who lined the ridge in front of the Alabamians before the assault began. Keeping up a deadly fire upon the breastworks, these men are credited with killing far more Confederates than their comrades in the advancing column — a clear indication of the limited number of New Yorkers who participated

in the final charge. Out of seven hundred, the 75th New York lost only eighty-six men the entire day. ¹⁸

Almost in concert with Thomas' attack, the 91st and 131st New York of Van Zandt's brigade struck Bennett's lunette, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Locke. Bullets and canister spewed forth from the breastworks with telling effect; the 131st New York lost about sixty killed and wounded during the assault. While waving his sword, Union Sergeant Major William H. Aldis, Jr., took a minie ball in his right forearm. With his left hand and teeth he managed to tie a dirty handkerchief about the flesh wound while keeping pace with the advance. Confederate officers acted in a similar vein. A ricocheting bullet struck Locke in the neck, but bandaging it with his handkerchief, he stood his post. ¹⁹

The oblique turn of Dwight's brigades and the ensuing extension of the line, coupled with the fragmentation of regiments struggling through the valley, uncovered Paine's front. To fill the gap, Paine ordered Fearing's men forward. At first light, with the paper resting on the pommel of his saddle, Lieutenant Colonel Oliver W. Lull wrote Colonel Sidney A. Bean: "The Eighth New Hampshire greets the Fourth Wisconsin, and will march with you into Port Hudson to-day or die." Lull then dismounted and gave his personal possessions to a friend. He positioned himself twelve paces ahead of the colors, waved his sword, and ordered, "Eighth New Hampshire, forward, smartly and steadily, and follow me." It proved to be his last command. One of the first to fall, he took a minie ball in his thigh. As he was carried to the rear, he called out, "Don't let the regiment break; we can whip them." He died about six that evening. ²⁰

Fearing's brigade struck the breastworks at the "Bull Pen," where before the siege the Confederates had slaughtered their cattle. Foreseeing the possibility of an assault at this point, Steedman had requested reinforcements. Major General Franklin Gardner, the garrison commander, sent Colonel O.P. Lyle with the 14th, 18th, and 23rd Arkansas regiments, which arrived in time to check the enemy's advance. One Union officer aptly labeled the resulting engagement a "hugh bushwhack." ²¹ Under fire from the battery at Bennett's, the 4th Wisconsin halted about three hundred yards from the breastworks to dress its line. The shot and shell tore through the trees with devastating effect. One solid shot cleared an entire file from the line. When the men moved forward, they reserved their fire while struggling over and under tree trunks and through branches, all the while under a deadly hail of missiles. By twos and threes they passed through what one officer termed "the valley of the shadow of death," ²² and a few especially determined Federals reached the final summit. One hundred yards away they saw Lyle's Arkansas forming behind an irregular line of entrenchments. Confederate fire soon forced them to withdraw below

the crest where they returned fire. But there they encountered yet another danger. Premature ignition of shells from the 1st Maine Battery caused the projectiles to explode above them, killing one man and wounding several others. Captain John M. Stanyan thought the terrain "very peculiar, looking like the skeleton of a huge fish, the backbone representing the long ridge running from the woods towards the fortifications, and the ribs the short ridges which partially protected us in the gullies." Like too many of his comrades, Stanyan had managed to find a safe refuge. But his regiment, the 8th New Hampshire, lost 124 men killed and wounded. Considering that the men were assaulting fortified defenders, the loss of forty-two percent was not exceptional — but it was double the percentage of casualties of any other regiment in that sector.²³

The Confederates' determination and the timely arrival of reinforcements cannot entirely explain their successful defense. In fact, the answer lies with the Federal organization and tactics. Piecemeal attacks contributed to the Union failure. The terrain and officer casualties led to disorganization within Federal ranks. Sheer weight of numbers, however, should have enabled the Federals to breach the fortifications but not enough Federals ever reached the Rebel breastworks. Seven regiments — thirty-seven percent of the available infantry — did not participate in the assault, and too many of the men who did dropped out seeking safety from the Confederates' deadly fire. Admittedly, some of these soldiers acted as sharpshooters. But the paucity of casualties resulted from the fact that many troops failed to participate in the final charge against the enemy's parapet. The Federals simply lacked the resolve needed to achieve victory.

Having failed to carry the fortifications along Little Sandy Creek, the Federals looked for any available assistance on either flank. On the right, the 1st and 3rd Louisiana Native Guards anchored that end of the Union line. Dwight had stationed both black regiments on the flank because he thought little of the ability of Negroes on a battlefield and he never intended to order them forward. But Dwight desperately wanted to breach the Confederate defenses. After the assault along Little Sandy Creek ground to a halt, he ordered the Native Guards forward.²⁴

The terrain made the fortifications which the black troops would assault the strongest at Port Hudson. With the Mississippi near its crest, backwater covered much of the flood plain west of the road. Just south of the creek the road paralleled the inaccessible west slope of an abrupt ridge for a quarter-mile, at which point both road and ridge intersected the bluff. Stationed along the crest of the ridge, sixty riflemen had a front, rear and enfilading field of fire on any force assaulting this sector because the attackers would have to move down the road. About three hundred men of Colonel William B. Shelby's 39th Mississippi, supported



Black soldiers at Port Hudson

National Archives

by four small cannon, manned the rifle-pits constructed along the edge of the steep bluff. ²⁵ Given the strength of the Confederate defensive positions, no soldiers could have accomplished the objective Dwight set for the Negroes.

At 10 A.M. over one thousand black troops emerged from the woods in fine order, advancing first at quick time and then double-quick toward the bluff, about six hundred yards away. The 1st Native Guards led off, followed closely by the 3rd. Both regiments formed in a long line, two ranks deep. As they rushed forward, bullets from the ridge ripped into their flank, causing confusion and disorder. Yet they pressed on toward the bluff, to a point two hundred yards from the Confederate main line. At that moment Rebel artillery opened with canister, and Shelby's troops, eager to join in the fight, commenced firing without orders. Canister and minie balls mowed down the lead ranks by the dozens. After firing one volley the black soldiers in front fell back in confusion. Their uncertainty spread to the men in the second line and both regiments withdrew to the woods. Barely fifteen minutes had passed from the time the Federals exited the woods until they returned to them. Although the Confederates had killed and wounded scores of the enemy, they themselves had not suffered a single casualty. ²⁶

To support Weitzel, Brigadier General Cuvier Grover, commanding the Union center, sent the 159th New York and 25th Connecticut on a wide detour to the west to unite with Paine's left flank. Lieutenant Colonel Charles A. Burt moved forward under the mistaken impression that a trifling number of Rebels would oppose him and that his New Yorkers alone could breach the enemy's line. The men double-quickd

down the dusty road under a murderous fire from the battery on Commissary Hill and started through the valley choked with felled trees and heavy underbrush — a combination that undoubtedly influenced several of the troops to drop out of the column. Turning west and advancing in single file, they slogged across Little Sandy, and some of the men finally reached the side of the hill they were to assault. With pounding hearts they waited a few moments for the order to charge. Then, at 10 A.M., with a terrifying yell, they rose and rushed forward, crashing through brush and bounding over the last tree only to emerge thirty yards from the breastwork, where it seemed to one Federal that "a thousand rifles were cracking our doom."²⁷ Within seconds, the Federals suffered some fifty casualties. The survivors dove for cover. The colors of the 159th lay before the parapet, the standard bearer dead at their side. Sergeant Robert Buckley of the 25th Connecticut worked his way back and brought in the colors, only to be killed when he turned to pick up his gun.²⁸

When these two regiments failed to breach the defenses, Grover decided to increase the pressure even more. He extended the fighting eastward to encompass the lunette defended by the 15th Arkansas. Most of the Arkansans had fought in the advance line earlier that morning. Although their lieutenant colonel had been badly wounded and the regiment had lost thirty men and several officers during the skirmish, many of them falling prisoner when the Federals blocked their retreat, the majority had managed to escape. Confusion reigned when the survivors entered the lunette, and Colonel Johnson hastened to meet the anticipated attack. Disregarding proper company organization, he assigned the men to new positions. Two hundred Arkansans lined the quarter-mile-long lunette, while the major and thirty men prepared to hold the rear "at all hazards."²⁹

Grover dispatched three additional regiments of his division to engage the 15th Arkansas. Marching west, they passed through the woods littered with the dead and wounded of Weitzel's command. About 10:30 A.M. these fresh reinforcements, together with Gooding's brigade, moved toward Johnson's bastion. The 12th Maine led the assault, followed by the 38th Massachusetts; the third wave, composed of the 31st Massachusetts, failed to advance. The assaulting column received covering fire from one company of the 12th Connecticut on the right, and the 13th and 24th Connecticut on the left.³⁰

The Federals advanced in a long, crescent-shaped line that covered Johnson's front and partly overlapped both flanks. Although his situation appeared hopeless, Johnson devised a plan. He forbade his men to look over the parapet until the enemy was within sixty yards, at which point the Federals let out a lusty cheer and quickened their pace. The Arkansans



Union breastwork opposite Fort Desperate

USMHI

rose with a yell and fired volleys of buck and ball cartridges with such rapidity that the Federal center broke and ran within ten minutes. But the absence of devastating volleys of canister from Confederate artillery enabled the more steadfast Federals to close both wings on the center. Onward they came, only to have their center decimated a second time

by Johnson's backwoodsmen, who carefully picked off the officers. They rallied a third time and advanced to within fifty yards of the works. Here they dropped behind stumps and logs or sought shelter in ravines. ³¹

A steady covering fire of artillery and musketry enabled about three hundred Federals, less than thirty percent of the attacking column, to move up a ravine and into the ditch surrounding the lunette. The Arkansans crouched behind the breastwork, their guns at the "ready," each determined to shoot the foremost of the stormers and then to rely upon musket butt and bayonet to hold the line. The Federals repeatedly attempted to scale the rampart, each time being bloodily repulsed. Finally a Federal officer shouted, "Are you ready?" Everyone replied in the affirmative and the officer screamed "Charge!" He scaled the parapet with only four men at his side. When their lifeless bodies rolled down into the ditch, the spectacle sapped whatever courage their comrades retained. Another officer repeated the process, but when he shouted "Charge" not a single man rose above



Fort Desperate

the parapet. The Federals crossed bayonets with the foe, and hurled sticks, dirt clods, and verbal abuse, but they soon discovered they could neither advance nor retreat. ³²

Those infantrymen that had remained in the rear now moved to support their comrades in the advance. The 53rd Massachusetts moved up to relieve the 91st New York, and the reserve companies of the 12th Connecticut rotated with those sharpshooting at the front. The 173rd New York marched to assist the 1st (U.S.) Louisiana, but that unit had the right flank securely anchored on Big Sandy, and the 173rd took position in its rear. Shortly after noon Grover relaxed his efforts because he heard nothing from the left, and Weitzel followed suit. Both men requested fresh orders and awaited their arrival or the sound of battle from the left before renewing their assault. Federal victory would have to be achieved elsewhere. ³³

Without question, desperate fighting had occurred along Little Sandy Creek, but such encounters were generally isolated, short-lived, and involved few men on either side. Seven of the nineteen Federal regiments on the field did not actively participate in the assault. With few exceptions, Union losses indicate that the remaining twelve made no serious effort to breach the Confederate defenses. Out of over eight thousand blue-clad infantrymen, fewer than seven hundred were killed or wounded. One-fourth of these casualties occurred in the 8th New Hampshire and 4th Wisconsin, the units caught in the "huge bushwhack." ³⁴

The terrain prevented any organized effort by separating most of the enlisted men from their regimental officers. Once this happened, the more faint-hearted soldiers secreted themselves at a safe depth in a ravine. With little chance of embarrassment, these men remained hidden in their sanctuaries until nightfall. Consequently, few participants pressed the attack despite allegations to the contrary. The following account of the 156th New York, coupled with its number of casualties, typifies the action of too many Federals on May 27:

In order to reach the enemy works they had to plunge through a dense forest of magnolias, choked with a thick undergrowth, brambles and wild honeysuckle, before encountering the maze of felled trees. All the time their broken ranks were subjected to a galling fire which pinned them down in ravines, woods or any shelter they could find. The protection thus gained kept their losses down, but they would always remember Port Hudson and May 27, 1863. ³⁵

The regiment's position indeed protected its members. The 156th New York did not have a single man killed or wounded that day because all ten of its companies were several miles in the rear; three were detached

to Banks' headquarters and seven guarded a large train of ammunition wagons. ³⁶ This grossly exaggerated account of the performance of the 156th New York does, however, accurately describe the behavior of several Union regiments on the morning of May 27, 1863.

Despite the terrain, and without the aid of covering fire from two regiments and over twenty cannon, three regiments should have overwhelmed the two hundred Arkansans in the lunette north of the creek. Although Johnson reported killing ninety and wounding over three hundred of the enemy in front of the 15th Arkansas, many of these Federals apparently feigned death until nightfall. The combined loss of these three regiments amounted to fewer than eighty men killed or wounded; virtually none of the casualties occurred in the 31st Massachusetts. One can only speculate about the consequences of that regiment's failure to participate in the final advance. ³⁷

Widespread Yankee shirking should not detract from those Federals who pressed the assault. The 8th New Hampshire, 131st New York, 4th Wisconsin, and the 1st and 3rd Louisiana Native Guards performed gallantly. And the sharpshooters of the 1st (U.S.) Louisiana and 12th Connecticut kept up a withering fire on the enemy. For the outnumbered Confederates, it was a hard-fought engagement. Their view of the fierceness of the battle was best expressed by the men of the 15th Arkansas, who nicknamed their lunette "Fort Desperate." ³⁸

Although most Civil War commanders favored the tactical offensive, assaults seldom proved decisive, even if successful. And such endeavors proved extremely costly against fortified defenders armed with rifled weapons. In four assaults during his defense of Atlanta, John Bell Hood lost nineteen percent of his command. Braxton Bragg suffered losses of twenty-seven percent at Murfreesboro and twenty-six percent at Chickamauga. Robert E. Lee lost thirty percent of his army at Gettysburg, twenty-one percent during the Seven Days, and nineteen percent at Second Manassas and Chancellorsville. And Ulysses S. Grant lost forty-one percent during his offensive from the Wilderness to Cold Harbor.

Piecemeal attacks by only sixty-three percent of the available infantry demonstrates incompetence equal to that displayed by George B. McClellan at Antietam. Perhaps no force could maintain its organization while advancing over terrain such as that which fronted Steedman's position. Any chance that the Federals had of achieving victory after they descended into the valley of Little Sandy Creek depended upon the individual courage and initiative displayed by the soldiers and junior officers. Their failure to breach the Confederate defenses, coupled with a loss of only eight percent of the attacking force, strongly indicates that the Federals who

entered "the valley of the shadow of death" clearly lacked the determination needed to achieve victory.³⁹

Notes

- ¹ Richard B. Irwin, *History of the Nineteenth Army Corps* (New York, 1893), 167.
- ² Edward Young McMorries, *History of the First Regiment Alabama Volunteer Infantry C.S.A.* (1904; reprint, Freeport, NY, 1970), 17-18; Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, from its Organization...to 1903 I* (Washington, 1903), 482, 1015. Weitzel graduated second in the class of 1855; Grover finished fourth in the class of 1850.)
- ³ An abatis is a defensive obstacle formed by felled trees whose sharpened branches face the enemy. "Fortification and Siege of Port Hudson — Compiled by the Association of Defenders of Port Hudson; M.J. Smith, President; James Freret, Secretary," *Southern Historical Society Papers*, XIV (1886), 319; U.S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, ser. I, XXVI, pt. I (Washington, 1880-1901), 163; hereafter cited as *O.R.*. Unless otherwise indicated, all citations are to Series I; Jill K. Garrett and Marise P. Lightfoot, *The Civil War in Maury County, Tennessee* (n.p., 1966), 51, 62.
- ⁴ U.S. Navy Department, *The War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies*, ser. I, XX (Washington, 1894-1922), 769, 795; "Fortification and Siege," 319.
- ⁵ Irwin, *Nineteenth Corps*, 169; Edward Cunningham, *The Port Hudson Campaign: 1862-1863* (Baton Rouge, 1963), 122; John M. Stanyan, *A History of the Eighth Regiment of New Hampshire Volunteers . . .* (Concord, 1892), 245; George W. Carter, "The Fourth Wisconsin Infantry at Port Hudson," *War Papers Read Before the Commandery of the State of Wisconsin, Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States*, III (Milwaukee, 1903): 227; E.B. Quiner, *The Military History of Wisconsin . . .* (Chicago, 1866), 503; Henry A. Willis, *The Fifty-third Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers: Comprising also a History of The Siege of Port Hudson* (Fitchburg, 1889), 121; Edward H. Sentell, Diary, May 27, 1863, Sentell Family Papers, New York Historical Society, New York, NY; *O.R.*, XXVI, pt. I, 530-31; Lieutenant Peter Eltinge to Father, May 30, 1863, Eltinge-Lord Family Papers, The Perkins Library, Duke University, Durham.
- ⁶ *O.R.*, XXVI, pt. I, 530; Irwin, *Nineteenth Corps*, 169-70; "Fortification and Siege," 319-20; Dabney to [Gardner], August 24, 1863, Louisiana Historical Association Collection, Manuscript Department, Special Collections Division, Tulane University Library, New Orleans. Hereafter cited as LHA Collection.
- ⁷ Irwin, *Nineteenth Corps*, 170.
- ⁸ Henry and James Hall, *Cayuga in the Field . . .* (Auburn, NY, 1873), [sect. 2], 113-14.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 114, 257, 265.

¹⁰ *Mobile Advertiser and Register*, August 9, 1863; Garrett and Lightfoot, *Maury County*, 62; "Fortification and Siege," 320; Lawrence L. Hewitt, ed., *A Place Named...Desperate!* (Baton Rouge, 1982), 1, 6.

¹¹ Irwin, *Nineteenth Corps*, 171; Stanyan, *Eighth New Hampshire*, 225-26; William E. S. Whitman and Charles H. True, *Maine in the War for the Union: A History of the Part Borne by Maine Troops in the Suppression of the American Rebellion* (Lewiston, ME, 1865), 387; Diary of Elon P. Spink, May 23, 1863 (typescript copy in author's possession); William L. Haskin, comp., *The History of the First Regiment of Artillery from Its Organization in 1821, to January 1st, 1876* (Portland, ME, 1879), 192.

¹² Garrett and Lightfoot, *Maury County*, 62; Hewitt, *Desperate!*, iv-v, 5-6.

¹³ Dabney to [Gardner], August 24, 1863, LHA Collection; Garrett and Lightfoot, *Maury County*, 62-63.

¹⁴ McMorries, *First Alabama*, 64; John William De Forest, *A Volunteer's Adventures: A Union Captain's Record of the Civil War*, ed. James H. Croushore (New Haven, 1946), 111.

¹⁵ *O.R.*, XXVI, pt. 1, 163; McMorries, *First Alabama*, 62-63.

¹⁶ Frank Moore, ed., *The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events with Documents, Narratives, Illustrative Incidents, Poetry, etc.*, VII (New York, 1861-71), 268; McMorries, *First Alabama*, 63.

¹⁷ A.J. Lewis to [Gardner], July 9, 1863, LHA Collection.

¹⁸ *Mobile Advertiser and Register*, August 9, 1863; McMorries, *First Alabama*, 33, 63; "Some incidents connected with the 1st Ala. Regiment which have never been published..." First Alabama Infantry Regiment, Military Records Division, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery; Hall and Hall, *Cayuga in the Field*, [sect. 2], 114, 118-9.

¹⁹ Irwin, *Nineteenth Corps*, 170; *O.R.*, XXVI, pt. 1, 163; Wm. H. Aldis to Wife, June 3, June 7, 1863, Wm. H. Aldis, Jr., Papers, New York Historical Society; McMorries, *First Alabama*, 63-64.

²⁰ Stanyan, *Eighth New Hampshire*, 234-237; Irwin, *Nineteenth Corps*, 170; Hall and Hall, *Cayuga in the Field*, [sect. 2], 114; *O.R.*, XXVI, pt. 1, 71.

²¹ Irwin, *Nineteenth Corps*, 170; *O.R.*, XV, 1032, XXVI, pt. 1, 530; Map of Port Hudson and its defences, drawn by Major J. de Baun (9th Louisiana Battalion Partisan Rangers), Camp Moore State Commemorative Area, State of Louisiana Office of State Parks, Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, Tangipahoa, LA; "Fortification and Siege," 320.

²² Carter, "Fourth Wisconsin," 228-29.

²³ Stanyan, *Eighth New Hampshire*, 226, 245; Carter, "Fourth Wisconsin," 229-30.

²⁴ Bell Irvin Wiley, *Southern Negroes 1861-1865* (1938; reprint, Baton Rouge, 1974), 326; Stanyan *Eighth New Hampshire*, 229.

- ²⁵ "Fortification and Siege", 321; Shelby to [Gardner], August 5, 1863, LHA Collection; Joseph T. Wilson, *The Black Phalanx* (New York, 1968), 525.
- ²⁶ George W. Williams, *A History of the Negro Troops in The War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865, preceded by A Review of the Military Services of Negroes in Ancient and Modern Times* (1888; reprint, New York, 1969), 216; Shelby to [Gardner], August 5, 1863, LHA Collection; [Howard C. Wright], *Port Hudson: Its History From An Interior Point of View As Sketched From the Diary Of An Officer* (St. Francisville, LA, 1937), 36; P.F. De Gournay, "The Siege of Port Hudson," in "Annals of the War" [Scrapbook of miscellaneous newspaper clippings, Tulane University library]; Frederick, "Diary of Porter," 313-14. One source claims that because of their limited number, Shelby's men had three rifles each when the Native Guards attacked on May 27. It is more plausible, however, that Shelby's troops found these surplus weapons on the field after the fighting ended on the twenty-seventh. Nelson reported that his men made three distinct assaults and his claim is substantiated by Gardner's report of the siege, as prepared by Dabney. Both Nelson and Dabney must have considered the attempt to wade through the backwater and the scaling of the projecting ridge as independent assaults.
- ²⁷ *The Twenty-Fifth Regiment Connecticut Volunteers in the War of the Rebellion* . . . (Rockville, 1913), 46-47; Irwin, *Nineteenth Corps*, 171; *O.R.*, XXVI, pt. 1, 530; Thomas McManus, *Twenty-fifth Regiment Battle Fields Revisited* (Hartford, 1896), 22; William F. Tiemann, comp., *The 159th Regiment Infantry, New-York State Volunteers, in the War of the Rebellion, 1862-1865* (Brooklyn, 1891), 40; McMorries, *First Alabama*, 63.
- ²⁸ Tiemann, *159th New-York*, 41; W.A. Croffut and John M. Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut During the War of 1861-65* (New York, 1868), 410.
- ²⁹ Hewitt, *Desperate!*, 1-2, 5, 11-12.
- ³⁰ Homer B. Sprague, *History of the 13th Infantry Regiment of Connecticut Volunteers, during the Great Rebellion* (Hartford, 1867), 139-40; Irwin, *Nineteenth Corps*, 172; Frank M. Flinn, *Campaigning with Banks in Louisiana, '63 and '64, and with Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley in '64 and '65* (Lynn, MA, 1887), 75; *Hampshire Gazette & Northampton Courier*, June 30, 1863; De Forest, *Volunteer's Adventures*, 113.
- ³¹ Hewitt, *Desperate!*, 6, 11-12; [Wright], *Port Hudson*, 34.
- ³² Hewitt, *Desperate!*, 12; [Wright], *Port Hudson*, 34-35.
- ³³ Willis, *Fifty-third Massachusetts*, 122; De Forest, *Volunteer's Adventures*, 111; *Memorials of William Fowler* (New York, 1875), 43; John C. Palfrey, "Port Hudson," *Papers of the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts*, vol. VIII, *The Mississippi Valley, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, 1861-1864* (Boston, 1910), 40; Irwin, *Nineteenth Corps*, 175.

³⁴ 12th Connecticut, Return, May 1863, Roll 7, Microcopy 594, Compiled Records Showing Service of Military Units in Volunteer Union Organizations, National Archives; *Twenty-Fifth Connecticut*, 47-48; Willis, *Fifty-third Massachusetts*, 121; Tiemann, *159th New-York*, 41; Hall and Hall, *Cayuga in the Field*, [sect. 2], 118-19; George W. Powers, *The Story of the Thirty Eighth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers* (Cambridge, 1866), 94-95; Stanyan, *Eighth New Hampshire*, 245; William DeLoss Love, *Wisconsin in the War of the Rebellion . . .* (Chicago, Milwaukee, and New York, 1866), 544; Lieutenant Peter Eltinge to father, May 30, 1863, Eltinge-Lord Family Papers.

³⁵ Will Plank, comp., *Banners and Bugles: A Record of Ulster County, New York and the Mid-Hudson Region in the Civil War* (Marlborough, NY, 1972), 46.

³⁶ Frederick Phisterer, comp., *New York in the War of the Rebellion, 1861 to 1865*, 3rd ed., V (Albany, 1912, 3819; Lieutenant Peter Eltinge to father, May 30, 1863).

³⁷ Hewitt, *Desperate!*, 15; Adjutant General, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Maine for the year ending December 31, 1863* (Augusta, 1864), 80, 405-32; Adjutant General, *Massachusetts Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines in the Civil War* (Norwood, MA, 1931-37), III: 397-447, IV: 1.

³⁸ Hewitt, *Desperate!*, 19.

³⁹ Grady McWhiney and Perry D. Jamieson, *Attack and Die: Civil War Military Tactics and the Southern Heritage* (University, AL, 1982), 10-11, 19-21, 69, 72.

Dr. Lawrence L. Hewitt is on the faculty of Southeastern Louisiana University in the department of history and government.



Andrew Jackson

*B. Lossing, Pictorial Field Book
of the War of 1812 (New York, 1869)*

How General Andrew Jackson Learned of the British Plans *Before* the Battle of New Orleans

William S.Coker

Historians of the War of 1812 have assumed, and rightfully so, that New Orleans was the ultimate objective of Great Britain's Gulf Coast campaign during that war. But did General Andrew Jackson have any hard evidence that this was indeed their objective? How and from whom did he obtain that information? Not until many years after the great American victory at New Orleans on January 8, 1815, did one of the participants reveal how Jackson learned of the British plans.

Traditionally a celebration honoring the American victory has been held each January 8, especially in New Orleans. However, the fortieth anniversary celebration in Tallahassee, Florida, on January 8, 1855, was particularly interesting. The featured speaker, General Richard Keith Call, at long last revealed Jackson's informant. The *Pensacola Gazette* rendered the following account of this meeting.

IMPORTANT AND INTERESTING REMINISCENCE

The celebration of the anniversary of the memorable 8th of January, 1815, at Tallahassee, Florida, was honored by the presence of the veteran General R.K. Call, known as an active whig and as one of the bravest of the gallant men in the battle of New Orleans. In the course of a very eloquent speech on the occasion referred to, he related a most interesting incident, which is quite new to us. That able paper, the *Tallahassee Floridian*, gives it as follows;

"Among the many striking incidents with which the address abounded, we mention particularly one as disclosing how the intelligence of the invasion of N. Orleans was communicated to Gen. Jackson. As briefly as we can state, and from our understanding of the narrator, he said in substance: — A large quantity of cotton at that time had accumulated in New Orleans, presenting a peculiarly inviting object to the speculator in Liverpool. The expedition was secretly fitted out in Liverpool. A mercantile house in that city was let into the secret of it. — No doubt was entertained of the success of the British army; the capture of New Orleans, the acquisition of Louisiana, and the possession of its 'booty and beauty' were considered fixed facts. This mercantile house wrote to a firm of like char. in Havana, giving an account of the expedition, assuring them of its success, and inviting them to participate in a great speculation, and one likely to place all concerned in the possession of great wealth. It so happened, in the order of Providence, that one of the members



Your Obedt Servt

R. K. Call

Richard Keith Call

*H. Doherty, Jr., Richard Keith Call, Southern Unionist
(Gainesville, 1961)*

of the Havana firm was an American by birth. He was nursed by a patriotic mother in Massachusetts. Here was a struggle with him. On the one hand, immense wealth in prospect; on the other, his duty to his country; the latter prevailed. And how was he to communicate the [intelligence across the Gulf to the far] side? ¹ British cruisers and pirates were then in possession of the Gulf of Mexico, the little fleet of the American navy was captured by the enemy, the safe arrival of a letter would be next to an impossibility. At all events he resolved to try it. His country — his country — his duty to his beloved country required him to act. He writes two letters; and without knowing who the commander of the American army in the Gulf was (for he had not then heard of Gen. Jackson,) sends one without signature, addressed to the commander, whoever he may be, at New Orleans; to the other he affixes his signature, and addresses it to a member of a mercantile house in Mobile. *Both letters* arrived at their destination. The gentleman of the Mobile house was a Scotchman by birth. He had grown up in his native land under the government which was now at war with the land of his adoption, for he had become a *naturalized citizen of the United States*. He was thus differently situated from the Massachusetts man in Havana; but he had sworn allegiance to the land of his adoption. Its soil was to be invaded, and that, too by the country of his birth, and by the people with whom he, as a merchant, was most pecuniarily allied. The prospect of great pecuniary advantage from the information he had was before him, but the land of his adoption was to be ransacked — the government to which he owed allegiance was to be dethroned in Louisiana — his fellow citizens by adoption were to be sacrificed and plundered. His duty to his adopted country prevailed. With this letter he goes to General Jackson. On his adopted country's altar he laid the communication with the information so serviceable to this happy land. From this the energies of the brave hero in command were aroused, and the sequel is known. Owing to the fact, said the orator, that the disclosure of the name of this individual might prejudice him in his business relations in England, his name has been kept a secret. But now, as he has departed this life, and gone to render an account for his fidelity to his oath and adopted country, he would disclose it. — The speaker, then, with an air of satisfaction and pride, announced the individual to be *James Innerarity*, who recently died at Mobile in 1847."

Here, then, was a disclosure which showed that the country owes its *second* independence, says a living witness of its battles, to the fidelity of an *adopted citizen*. Is it not somewhat striking, that a *Scotchman* and *Irishman's son*, (for such was Jackson) should have been singled out by Providence as instruments for accomplishing such mighty results as flowed from the battle of New Orleans? ²

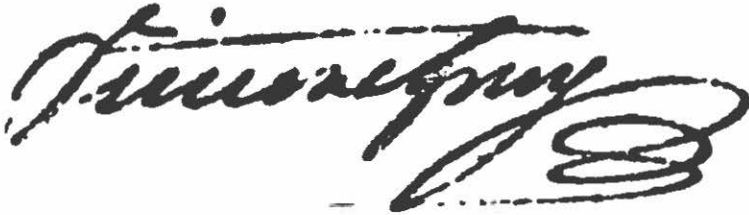
*James Innerarity to
John Forbes, July 4, 1816*

Mobile Public Library

Since James Innerarity died in 1847, why did Call wait until 1855 before making his revelation? It may have been because James' brother, John, had been endeavoring to secure compensation from the British government for company losses during the War of 1812, and was still trying to do so as late as May of 1854. However, John died two months later, July 1854.³ Therefore, January 8, 1855, would have been the first opportunity after John's death for Call to have revealed this interesting and unpublicized incident without jeopardizing John's efforts for compensation. After reading Call's remarks, it is appropriate to identify him and James Innerarity in more detail, to reveal Innerarity's informant and to provide additional information about the events involved. Although Call was only a young lieutenant at the Battle of New Orleans, he had served under Jackson during the Creek War and claimed to have participated in all of the battles except that of Horseshoe Bend.⁴ During that time he had become well-acquainted with the general. That relationship eventually blossomed into a much closer bond between the two as the years passed. Call accompanied Jackson to Pensacola in November of 1814 to chase the British from the Spanish capital of West Florida. There he may have met John Innerarity, who managed the Pensacola branch of John Forbes and Company. From Pensacola, Call went to Mobile and soon thereafter to New Orleans. While at Mobile, he met James Innerarity. Call then distinguished himself during the Battle of New Orleans. In fact, General Jackson commended him for his services at both Pensacola and New Orleans and deemed him "worthy of promotion." As a result, he soon received the rank of brevet captain.⁵

Next, who precisely was James Innerarity? A native of Brechin, Scotland, James was the nephew of William Panton of Panton, Leslie and Company. By the time of his arrival in Spanish West Florida in 1796, his uncle's company, headquartered in Pensacola, had a near monopoly of the Indian trade of the southeastern Spanish Borderlands. James soon moved to Mobile and headed the Mobile branch of the Panton

company and its successor firm, John Forbes and Company. He became a respected citizen of Mobile and, by the War of 1812, one of its most affluent residents. Although both James and John Innerarity continued to claim British citizenship, by 1813 they had also become Spanish citizens. They did so because as British subjects and merchants, they feared for their property in the event the United States should occupy Mobile and Pensacola. ⁶ Indeed, General James Wilkinson took Mobile from the Spaniards on April 15, 1813. ⁷ Exactly when James Innerarity became a United States citizen is unknown, but on March 15, 1814, the Mobile town commissioners elected him their president. ⁸ Thus by 1814, James Innerarity was a well-established and well-respected citizen of Mobile. But who was his Havana informant?



*Vincent Gray to Andrew
Jackson, February 14, 1827*

Jackson Papers, Hermitage

The person who wrote Innerarity from Havana about the British plans in 1814 was Vincent Gray. Apparently a native of Massachusetts, Gray had resided in Havana for some time and was associated with the mercantile firm of Antonio de Frias & Company. He also had some connection — probably business interests — with Barring Brothers & Company of London. Although the exact dates have not been determined, after the War of 1812 he served as vice-consul in Havana. Later, in 1829, after Jackson's election as President, Call recommended Gray for an even higher diplomatic post in Cuba. ⁹

The exact source of Gray's information in 1814 about New Orleans and prize money is unknown. Call stated in his speech that the information came from a Liverpool firm, but there were a large number of cotton brokers and firms in Liverpool in that year. ¹⁰ More pertinent for our present study is the source of his information about the British plans in August of 1814. The information came directly from brevet Lt. Col. Edward Nicolls of the British Marines, who had stopped in Havana for a few days that August enroute to the Gulf Coast. ¹¹ Based upon conversations which Nicolls had with various persons in Havana, Gray pieced together the British plans. The British made little or no effort to

keep their intentions secret. Exactly what they planned to do was almost common knowledge in Havana. In fact, the Havana papers announced the departure of Nicolls and his two ships indicating that they were headed directly for Pensacola. ¹²

During the month of August, Gray wrote at least three letters regarding the British plans for their Gulf Coast campaign. He wrote Governor W.C.C. Claiborne of Louisiana on August 8. ¹³ He also sent a letter dated August 13 to James Monroe, U.S. Secretary of State and Acting Secretary of War. Gray did not sign either of those letters, but there is no doubt that he wrote them. ¹⁴ Gray addressed his third letter to James Innerarity at Mobile, and according to Call, Gray signed that letter. Although copies of the first two letters exist, a copy of the letter to Innerarity has not been located. As a result, we do not have an exact date for it as we do for the others. ¹⁵ But from Call's remarks, this third letter must have been written about the same time that Gray wrote Claiborne and Monroe.

The letters from Gray to Claiborne and Monroe, August 8 and 13, are similar in content. Presumably then the letter to Innerarity contained much the same information. Thus a review of these letters as well as Monroe's letter to Jackson should provide us with essentially the same information which Innerarity shared with Jackson on that important occasion. First, let us begin our review with Monroe's letter, then Gray's letter of August 13, and finally Gray's letter of August 8.

Monroe's letter of September 7, 1814, advised Jackson that

the writer of the enclosed communication, without signature, [Gray's letter of August 13] is known and is entitled to credit. Your most prompt attention and vigorous [*sic*] operations will be required in the lower Country. . . .

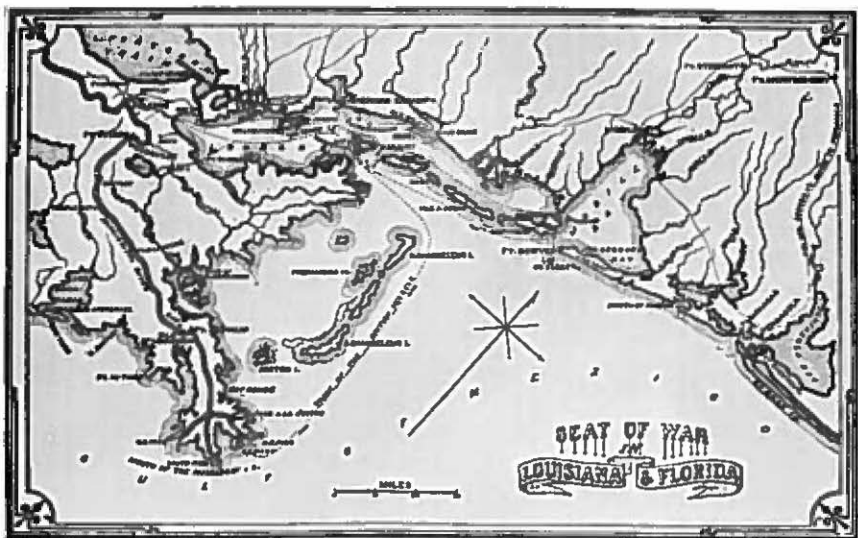
It is desirable you should repair to New Orleans as soon as your arrangements can be accomplished in the other parts of the District unless your presence is required at other points. ¹⁶

Gray's letter of August 13, 1814, warned that a British expedition commanded by Col. Edward Nicolls with two ships had left Havana on August 5 for Pensacola. The Captain General of Cuba had refused to permit Nicolls to land at Pensacola and would not provide him with any military assistance. He did so, Gray wrote, because Spain and the United States were at peace. Nevertheless, Nicolls planned to land at Pensacola anyway. Nicolls also stated that the British would protect Spanish territory, since Spain was unable to do so. ¹⁷ Further, Nicolls expected to be joined by three regiments of blacks, who would fight well in the hot Southern climate. These troops would try to induce the slaves of that area to join them. Of course, the British anticipated that the Indians

would also rush to their side. If this plan succeeded, Gray warned, "this will be one of the most frightful events which ever occurred in America — a powerful savage and negro Army, joined by the slaves of the Country, who if not met and drove into the Sea without delay will Carry fire and sword thro' that devoted Country." ¹⁸ The British also planned to send a force to East Florida to stop the trade to and from Amelia Island. ¹⁹ Finally, Gray advised, Nicolls expected a large number of "Louisianians" to join them, because Britain intended to return Louisiana to Spain. Nicolls believed that this would make the people of Louisiana happy. ²⁰

Gray's letter to Gov. Claiborne of August 8, sent via Jean Laffite of Barataria, contained much the same information, but it also touched upon some other matters as well. It provided some data on the British ships and their captains that had brought Nicolls to Havana. Gray also outlined more explicitly Nicolls' promises to the slaves and Indians who, Nicolls hoped, could be induced to fight for Britain. The slaves would be liberated from their masters and would be forever free. All lands taken from the Indians by Jackson [some 22,000,000 acres of land on August 9, 1814, in the Treaty of Fort Jackson] would be returned and guaranteed to them forever. ²¹

Further, Gray briefly explained the strategy that the British intended to employ in their Gulf Coast campaign. They would capture the mouth of the Mississippi River, the forts south of New Orleans, Mobile Point



Map of the Gulf Coast in the War of 1812

[Fort Bowyer], Mobile and Baton Rouge. Those operations would effectively isolate New Orleans, and its fall was then assured. ²²

As already stated, the letter received by James Innerarity must have been similar in content to those sent Monroe and Claiborne, and Innerarity received his letter before the other letters from Gray reached Jackson.

On August 21 and 24, John Innerarity wrote his brother James to warn him of events transpiring at Pensacola. Col. Nicolls and his flotilla with troops, artillery, a large quantity of ammunition and implements of war had arrived at Pensacola on the 23rd., and more were on the way.

Great events are in Embrio [*sic*] and will soon develope [*sic*] themselves. Instead of sending more property to you, I tremble for what you have already at stake in case of resistance. I dare say no more. All letters and messengers will now be inspected.

For heavens [*sic*] sake be cautious what you write, say not a word except upon business . . . Your situation is critical. The grand Fleet consisting [*sic*] of 14 Saile [*sic*] of the line and a grate [*sic*] number of transports arrived at Bermuda from B. bringing 25,000 of Lord Wellingtons [*sic*] army.

John closed his second letter with the wish that James' family could come to Pensacola where they would be safe. ²³

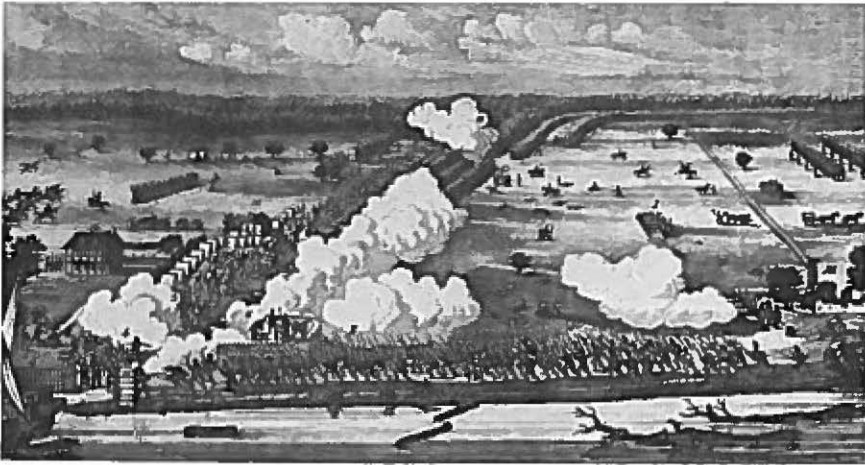
James agonized about sharing the intelligence which he had received from Gray and his brother, John. But he finally made his decision — his brother's warnings undoubtedly helped James to do so — and he met with Jackson. At the conclusion of the conference Jackson wrote that copies of two letters were handed to him at 5 PM on August 27,

and I was laid under the most solemn injunctions of secrecy that the names of the individuals should not be given on any account or the letters published for the present. The gentleman who gave them is of high respectability as well as the writer, and were shewn to me to prevent the country from conquest. He believes it will be conquered, hence the necessity of secrecy or his destruction is certain. ²⁴

Call left a much more vivid account of this meeting.

He [James Innerarity] sought a confidential interview with General Jackson, and such was his emotion, though possessed of great personal firmness, that he wept as he made the disclosure.

A mighty fleet and army is coming to invade and conquer Louisiana. More than 15,000 men are coming. Among them are two black regiments, speaking french, spanish and english. Embassadors [*sic*] of crime, sent to



The Battle of New Orleans

Pictorial Field Book....

corrupt our slaves, to fire our houses, murder and burn men, mothers and infants — as they sleep — New Orleans was famed for wealth and beauty — Cotton bags had been accumulating there for years, it offered every thing to feed and pamper the taste and passions of a licentious foe — Its fate is fixed, tis doomed, it must fall, there is no escape thus it seemed — but the unseen and mysterious hand of Providence is extended over that land to save the Lovely city from impending fate —.

But for this intelligence so fortunately and singularly given, New Orleans, would most probably have fallen without a battle, and without a renowned hero to grace its history.²⁵

Forewarned, Jackson marched to New Orleans and prepared the defenses of that city. The outcome of the great battle there is well-known, but not the role played by the merchant of Mobile. Is it too much to suggest that the Scotsman's son, James Innerarity, should be entitled to a small share of the glory for having prevented what might otherwise have been a disaster for the United States?

Notes

¹ Because of a crease in the paper, the words between the brackets were supplied by the author.

² *Pensacola Gazette*, vol. XXI, no. 49, February 24, 1855, p. 2, col. 1.

³ William S. Coker and Thomas D. Watson, *Indian Traders of the Southeastern Spanish Borderlands: Panton, Leslie & Company and John Forbes & Company, 1783-1847* (Gainesville, 1986), 329.

⁴ "Journal of R. K. Call," in the Florida Historical Society Collection, University of South Florida Library, Tampa, fol. 78.

⁵ Herbert J. Doherty, Jr., *Richard Keith Call: Southern Unionist* (Gainesville, 1961), 2-15ff.

⁶ Coker and Watson, *Indian Traders*, 18-19, 276-78, 329ff; William S. Coker, *Historical Sketches of Panton, Leslie and Company* (Pensacola, 1976), 20, 23.

⁷ Coker and Watson, *Indian Traders*, 276.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 284 n. 38.

⁹ Gray to Barring Bros. & Co., Havana, November 14, 1814; Gray to Jackson, Havana, December 30, 1826; February 14, 1827; Call to Jackson, April 28, 1829, copies in the Papers of Andrew Jackson, Hermitage, TN. The author is indebted to Harold Moser, Editor, and Sharon Macpherson, Associate Editor; and John H. Reinbold, Assistant Editor, The Papers of Andrew Jackson, for copies of the letters from that source. Those documents dated 1814 are to be published in vol. III, *The Papers of Andrew Jackson, 1814-1816*

¹⁰ On New Orleans and prize money see Colonel Sir Alexander Dickson, "Artillery Services in North America in 1814 and 1815," *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, VIII (April 1919): 83-84.

¹¹ See Gray's letters of August 8 and 13 indicating that Nicolls was the source of his information.

¹² John Innerarity to James Innerarity?, Pensacola, August 21, 1814, Jackson Papers.

¹³ For Gray's letter to Claiborne dated August 8, 1814, see Major A. Lacarriere Latour, *Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana in 1814-1815*. A facsimile reproduction of the 1816 edition with introduction by Jane Lucas de Grummond (Gainesville, 1964), 21-22; Appendix, v-vii. Professor De Grummond thought Renato Beluche may have authored the letter to Claiborne. He was one of the most literate of the Baratarians and the letter had been forwarded through Jean Laffite at Barataria, Jane Lucas de Grummond and Ronald R. Morazan, *The Baratarians and the Battle of New Orleans*. . . (Baton Rouge, 1961), 35-36.

¹⁴ Gray to Monroe, August 13, 1814; Gray to Jackson, December 30, 1826; February 14, 1827, Jackson Papers; Frank Lawrence Owsley, Jr., *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands: The Creek War and the Battle of New Orleans, 1812-1815* (Gainesville, 1981), 120-1812.

¹⁵ Owsley, *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands*, 108-09, 120-21. If you follow Professor Owsley's reasoning, you will conclude that Gray wrote only two letters and not three in August 1814.

¹⁶ Monroe to Jackson, September 7, 1814, Jackson Papers.

¹⁷ Nicolls referred here, of course, to the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, which the British argued violated provisions of the Treaty of 1800 between France and Spain. No doubt, he also had in mind the occupation of Spanish West Florida between the Mississippi and Perdido Rivers by the United States between 1810 and 1813; Robin Reilly, *The*

British at the Gates: The New Orleans Campaign in the War of 1812 (London, 1976), 180-81; Coker and Watson, *Indian Traders*, 276-77.

¹⁸ Gray to Monroe, August 13, 1814, Jackson Papers.

¹⁹ Coker and Watson, *Indian Traders*, 292-93, 350-51. The British occupation of Cumberland Island in January, 1815, created many problems for John Forbes & Co. in East Florida.

²⁰ Gray to Monroe, August 13, 1814, Jackson Papers.

²¹ For the Treaty of Fort Jackson, see Owsley, *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands*, 86-94.

²² Gray to Claiborne, Havana, August 8, 1814, in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, Appendix, v-vii. For Fort Bowyer and the British see, Coker, "The Last Battle of the War of 1812: New Orleans. No, Fort Bowyer!" *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XLIII, No. 1 (January 1981): 42-63.

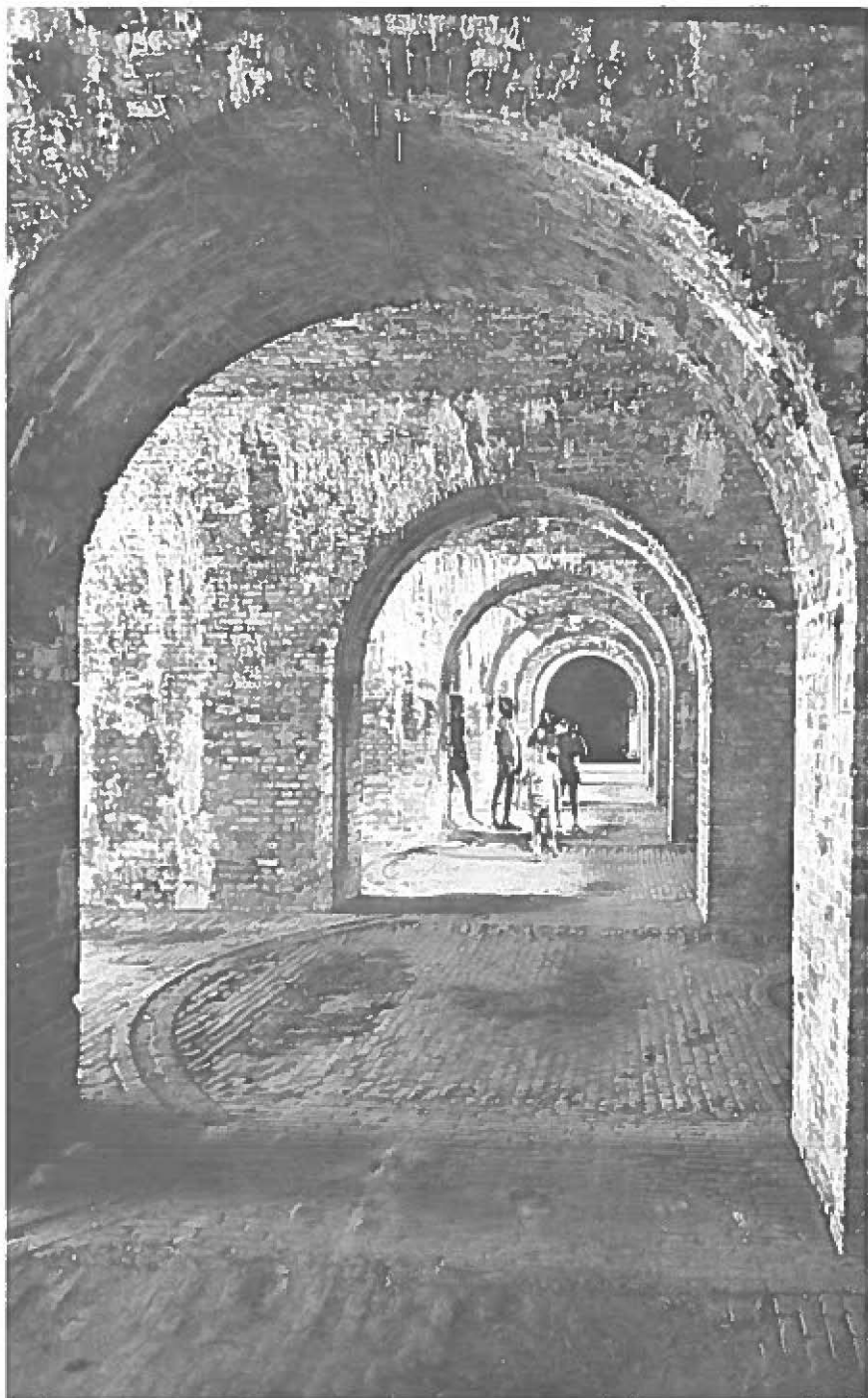
Several months later, on November 20, 1814, Gray wrote Barring Bros. & Co. of London informing them of the British occupation of Pensacola. The British flag was flying, he wrote, not only in their camp, but in the Spanish forts as well. The Governor [Mateo Gonzalez Manrique] was an old man and suffered the act to be committed without the knowledge and contrary to the orders of the Captain General, Gray observed. He also stated that Admiral Cochrane [Vice Admiral Sir Alexander Inglis Cochrane] had been in Jamaica on November 7, and planned to sail for Pensacola on the 30th. From there Cochrane intended to attack Mobile and Louisiana. Gray intimated to his London correspondents, without informing them that he had written his letters of warning, that Jackson had "a force more than sufficient to meet any which the Admiral can carry against it. [H]owever we shall soon know the result here, and you shall receive information thereof." Gray must have assumed that his warnings had produced the desired military preparedness, Gray to Barring Bros. & Co., November 20, 1814, Jackson Papers. Obviously Gray was unaware that Jackson had already forced the British from Pensacola (November 6-9), Coker and Watson, *Indian Traders*, 286-87.

²³ John Innerarity to James Innerarity?, August 21 and ca. August 24, 1814, inclosed with Jackson to John Armstrong, Mobile, August 25, 27, 1814, Jackson Papers. Since neither letter had an addressee nor signature, the editors of the Jackson Papers have concluded that both of these letters written at Pensacola were from John Innerarity to James Innerarity. I agree with their conclusion.

²⁴ Jackson to John Armstrong, August 27, 1814, Jackson Papers, with the two letters inclosed.

²⁵ "Journal of R. K. Call," folio 78. The author took the liberty of rearranging the sequence of paragraphs in this quotation from Call's "Journal." Since none of the information about New Orleans and prize money, which Call mentioned in his "Journal" and in his Tallahassee talk, was in either of John Innerarity's letters, it is obvious that James must have received that information from another source, i.e., Gray's letter.

Dr. Coker is Professor of History and Director of the Papers of Panton, Leslie and Company, University of West Florida, Pensacola. Although subsequently revised, this paper was read at the Louisiana Historical Association — Mississippi Historical Society joint meeting in New Orleans, March 13, 1987.



Tourists in Fort Morgan's casemates

Michael Thomason photo

A Visit to Fort Morgan: Mobile's Guardian on the Gulf

Joseph E. Brent

Control of Mobile Point, the site of Fort Morgan, has been a strategic necessity for the protection of Mobile Bay ever since Europeans discovered the Gulf Coast. During the colonial period the French, British and Spanish occupied the point. However, there is no record of their building a significant fortification.

During the War of 1812 the President of the United States, James Madison, realizing the importance of Mobile Point, ordered U.S. forces to seize it from the Spanish. Under the command of Colonel John Bowyer the Americans constructed a small wood and sand fort which was named Fort Bowyer. It was abandoned in July of 1814, but was re-occupied the following month and garrisoned by 160 men under the command of Major William Lawrence.

The small fort saw action in two battles during the war. The first, resulting in an American victory, took place on September 14, 1814. It was the first time during the war that an American land force had defeated English troops. The second engagement, which occurred in February 1815, proved disastrous for the Americans. Although Ft. Bowyer had been reinforced, its 400 man garrison was no match for a British force of some 3,000 troops and 38 warships. After a three day siege the fort surrendered.



A guided tour pauses at a powder magazine.

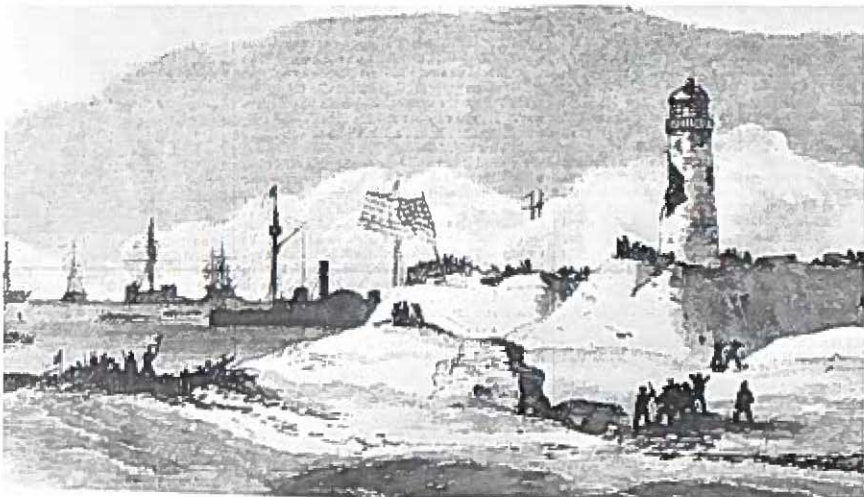
Joseph Brent photo

Thus, the fall of Fort Bowyer was the last battle of the War of 1812, not the Battle of New Orleans. Ironically, both were fought after the treaty ending the war had been signed in Europe.

After the War of 1812 the national government fully realized the importance of Mobile Point and built a permanent fort. Fort Morgan, begun in 1819, was to be a part of the Third System Defense. The Third System was an elaborate plan developed by a Federal government board headed by the French engineer Simon Bernard. Its mission was to develop a large coordinated coastal defense network for the young nation.

Finally completed in 1833, Fort Morgan is a pentagonal, star-shaped brick fort. It was designed to repulse attacks from either the land or sea. During the Antebellum years the U.S. army garrisoned the fort and its defenses were periodically upgraded. Among the people stationed there in the pre-war years was William Tecumseh Sherman. He wrote glowing reports of life at the fort and in Mobile. In early 1861 the fledgling Republic of Alabama seized the fort and it subsequently became a Confederate stronghold. Although built to defend the United States from foreign aggression, Fort Morgan's greatest service was rendered to the Confederacy during the Civil War.

On August 5, 1864 Admiral David G. Farragut had finally assembled a powerful fleet of fourteen wooden ships and four iron-clad monitors in the waters off the coast of Mobile Point. The purpose of this fleet was to run the guns of Fort Morgan and get into the bay, thus closing the port of Mobile to Confederate blockade runners. In the first minutes of the battle as the fleet was steaming past the guns of the fort, the monitor



*Ft. Morgan after the surrender on
August 23, 1864.*

*Harper's Weekly
September 24, 1864*



Cannon atop the rampart of the fort.

USA Archives

Tecumseh hit one of the Confederate mines or "torpedoes" and sank almost instantly. Confusion in the Union fleet halted its progress allowing the Confederate gunners to rake the ships with deadly accurate fire at close range. Realizing that something had to be done Farragut uttered his now famous command: "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!" Once past the fort the Union vessels dispatched the small, but stubborn Confederate fleet led by the iron-clad ram *Tennessee*.

With Mobile Bay sealed off, the Federal forces concentrated on Fort Morgan. Union troops landed at Navy Cove, about three miles east of the fort. As they moved forward, the soldiers dug trenches to protect their movements. The Federal navy assisted in the operation by shelling



Battery Duportail c. 1935

USA Archives

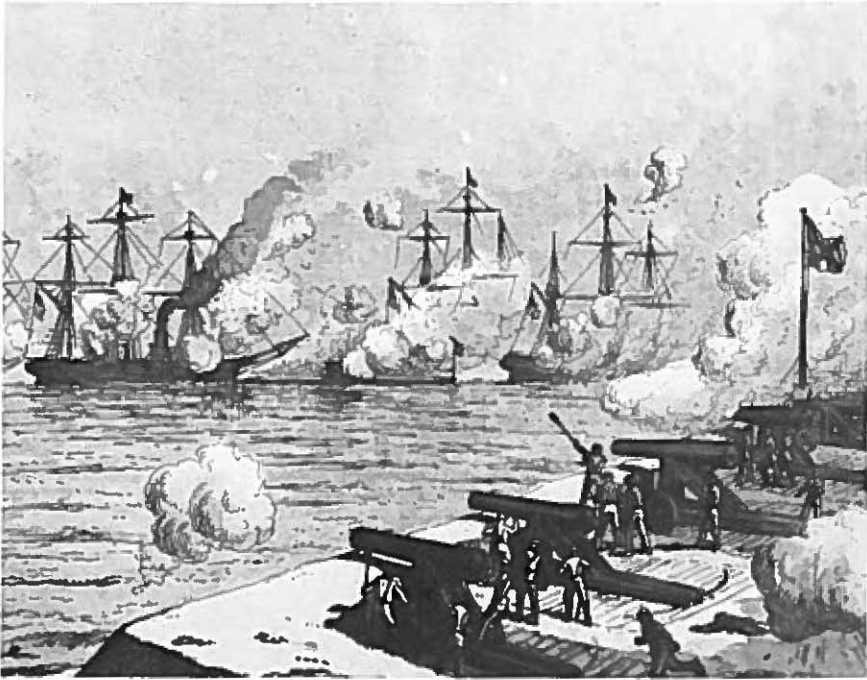


Aerial view of Fort Morgan, 1929 Alabama Department of Archives and History

the fort at regular intervals. This action kept the Confederate gunners occupied while the Union army crept ever nearer. On August 22, Farragut's warships and the Union land forces unleashed a simultaneous artillery barrage that pummelled the Confederate stronghold with over 3,000 cannon balls. The next day with all but two of its guns out of action the fort surrendered.

In the years after the war the U.S. Army continued to garrison the fort. The Civil War had proven that brick forts were obsolete, so in the 1870s and 1880s the fort was modified slightly. In the 1890s major improvements at the fort were finally implemented. The new coastal defense plan, known as the Endicott System, relied on modern weapons in dispersed, camouflaged emplacements rather than the traditional multi-gun fortress. Five new batteries were installed in and around Fort Morgan. Two were built to the east of the fort, one replaced the old citadel, and two more were just northwest of the original walls. Construction of these gun emplacements began in 1895 and was completed around 1910. The Endicott modifications are an important part of the present Fort Morgan.

Actively manned until 1918, the fort was turned over to the state after World War I. In the 1930s a WPA crew built the road that runs from Mobile Point to Gulf Shores, but after Pearl Harbor the military once again took over the fort. Following the Second World War, Fort Morgan became a state park and has remained so ever since.

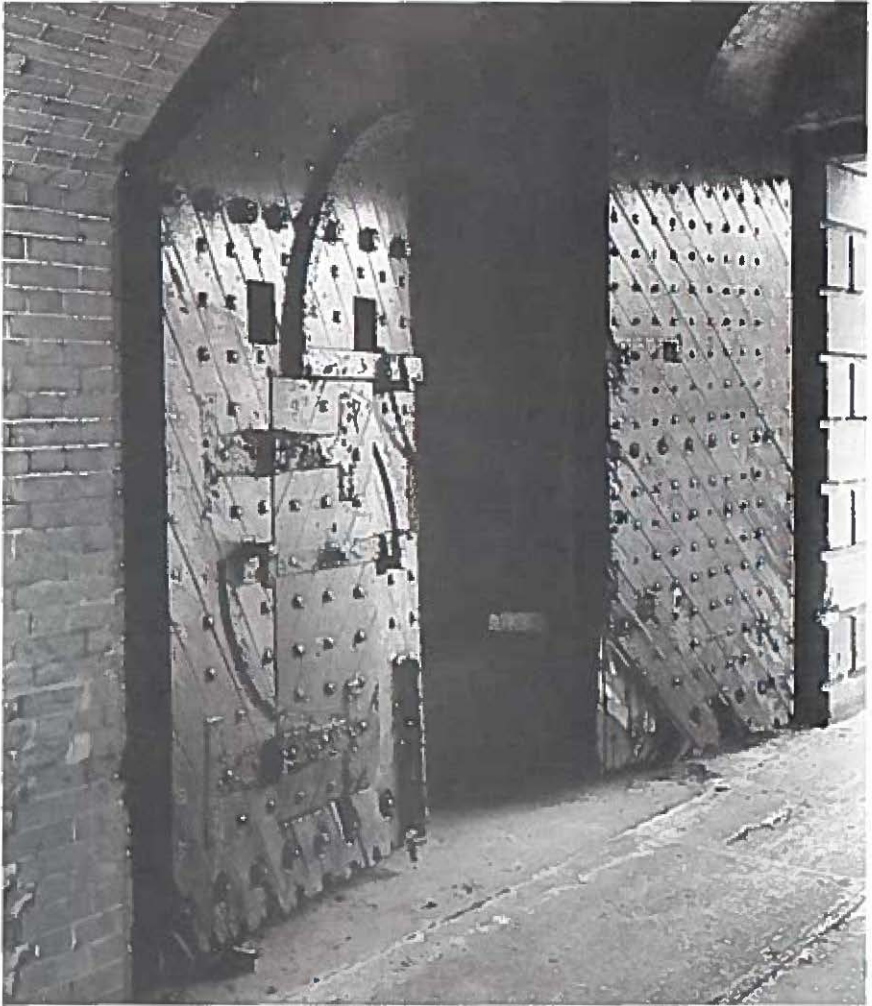


*Federal fleet passing Fort Morgan,
August 5, 1864*

*Museum of the City
of Mobile*

There is something for everyone at the park. Besides the historic fortress, the gulf and bay beaches offer swimming and fishing. A ferry provides regular service throughout the day from Fort Morgan to Dauphin Island. Fort Morgan is a 22 mile car ride from Gulf Shores via Alabama state highway 180. The restored commandant's quarters now house a restaurant which is adjacent to the fort. The grounds include a fishing pier, a shaded picnic area and restroom facilities, but there is no provision for overnight camping. The fort's museum, which offers fascinating glimpses of its history is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's. The fort itself is open every day from 8 a.m. until dark. There are guided tours in the summer (Memorial Day through Labor Day). Admission is \$2.00 for adults and \$1.00 for children (6-18); group rates are available. There is a large Civil War reenactment held on the first weekend of August. For additional information about the fort call (205) 540-7125.

Fort Morgan is a monument to America's past. It is also a beautiful and quiet place where one can reflect upon history and enjoy the beauty of nature.



Sallyport doors, main entrance

Michael Thomason photo

Suggestions for Further Reading

Coker, William S. "The Last Battle of the War of 1812: New Orleans. No Fort Bowyer!" *Alabama Historical Quarterly*. XLIII (Spring 1981), 42-63.

Lewis, Emanuel Raymond. *Seacoast Fortifications of the United States: An Introductory History*. Presidio, CA, 1979.

Rich, Doris. *Fort Morgan and the Battle of Mobile Bay*. Foley, AL, 1986.

Smith, Sidney Adair, ed. *Mobile: 1861-1865; Notes and Bibliography*. Chicago, IL, 1964.

Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of Rebellion. Series I, Vol. 21. Washington, D.C., 1892-1922.

Mr. Brent is a graduate student in history at the University of South Alabama.

Letter to the Editor: The Elusive British-American Trust Company

We are printing the following letter, addressed to Dr. George H. Daniels, in hopes that some of our readers may be able to shed light on the mystery its author describes. Any who can do so are invited to correspond directly with Professor Yares.

Over the past few years, I've been researching the business and financial history of a group of railroads which were operated in Escambia County, Florida and Baldwin County, Alabama by Henry and Elwood McLaughlin between 1892 and 1925. The primary shipper on the McLaughlins' lines was the Southern States Land & Timber Company, British-owned between 1889 and 1895.

Early in 1892, the Pensacola Daily News carried ads for the newly-opened "British-American Trust Company," with offices in London, New York, Mobile, and Pensacola, promoted by one Francis H. Clergue. By mid-1892, McLaughlin's railroads had opened checking accounts with the bank.

According to newspaper accounts, the bank hired W.H. Stickney as Pensacola branch manager, who moved from Maine with his wife and daughter. In late 1892, Stickney reportedly ordered new furniture for the banking office. Suddenly, in early 1893, the bank "withdrew" and transferred depositors' balances to the newly-organized Citizens' National Bank. *Craighead's Mobile* [pp. 175-6] identifies Clergue also as owner of the Alabama National Bank of Mobile, and indicates that he liquidated both Mobile banks in 1894.

I got curious about the Brit-Am Trust, mainly because of the possibility of a Southern States connection. Brit-Am's trustees, listed in an early newspaper ad, lived in London, northeast US, Mobile, and Pensacola. But when I compared the trustee list with the SSL&T stockholder list, there were no hits — no apparent linkage.

There is no mention of Brit-Am in any of the resources I have checked at the UWF Library or the Pensacola Historical Museum, other than in the aforementioned "Craighead's". Nothing about Brit-Am in the Florida Secretary of State or Comptroller reports or in any of the resources I examined in the Florida Archives, Florida Historical Library, or P.K. Yonge Historical Library.

Do you or any of your readers have any knowledge of or information on the British-American Trust Company? Any comments or suggestions will be deeply appreciated. Please write, or call me at UWF (904-474-2735) or my home (904/477-9810), a machine will answer if I'm not there.

Professor Jerry Yares
Associate Professor
Finance and Accounting
University of West Florida

9660 Coachman Court
Pensacola, FL 32514

Book Reviews

Jason Berry, Jonathan Foose, and Tad Jones. *Up From the Cradle of Jazz: New Orleans Music Since World War II*. Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1986, pp. 285. Cloth, \$35.00; paper, \$15.95.

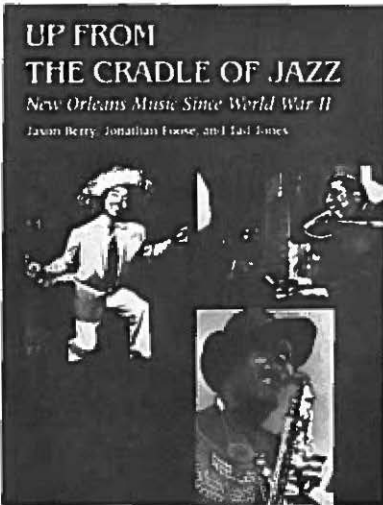
The birthplace of American classical music (jazz) was New Orleans and, even though this volume begins after World War II, it is the perfect place to start any historical review of this subject. Now, the question may persist, is this book really about jazz? There is a great emphasis upon rhythm and blues, and the interconnection between the two forms is

necessary to a study of jazz. *Up From the Cradle of Jazz* offers an interesting presentation of a rich cultural heritage with an excellent assortment of photographs that focus on the musicians and the varied lifestyles of New Orleans.

Many people listen to music and analyze it without giving true credit to those individuals who paid their "dues" during the four decades following World War II. Among those prominently mentioned here are Huey "Piano" Smith, Richard "Little Richard" Penniman and Earl Turbinton. These people were the

innovators whose musical styles have been imitated in recent years. Almost every reader with a nodding acquaintance with popular music will recognize familiar names and faces or recall the musical selections that are mentioned.

There are four distinct sections and nineteen chapters dealing with the many influences upon New Orleans music. The section dealing with the "Caribbean Connection" should be especially interesting to Gulf Coast residents because of its discussion of Mardi Gras. In addition, there is an outstanding bibliography which lists not only books and pamphlets, but articles and monographs, films, trade periodicals and other reference materials. There is also an extensive discography and several pages of



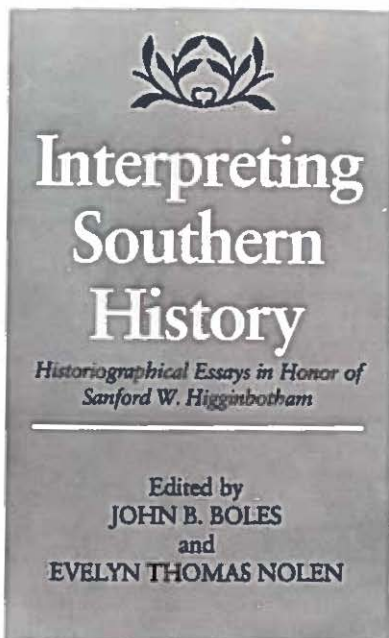
credits for lyrics and illustrations. Anyone interested in serious scholarship dealing with New Orleans or American popular music should use this excellently written, well researched book.

Joaquin M. Holloway, Jr.

University of South Alabama

John B. Boles and Evelyn Thomas Nolen (eds.). *Interpreting Southern History: Historiographical Essays in Honor of Sanford W. Higginbotham*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987, pp. 624. Cloth, \$45.00; paper, \$19.95.

A proper understanding of local history requires a sound grasp of the larger setting in which the locality exists. Thus to understand the history of communities along the Gulf Coast, or of the states to which they belong, familiarity with modern scholarship on the history of the South is essential. The book under review provides an invaluable reference tool for every serious student of Gulf Coast history.



In 1967 a similar "festschrift" for Professor Fletcher M. Green of the University of North Carolina surveyed historical writing about the South. This sequel reflects the changes in methodology and interpretation wrought by a new generation of Southern historians. These essayists deal far more richly with social and economic history, with the history of black Southerners and of women, and with the twentieth century, than their predecessors. Thanks to resourceful work by the editors, contributors frequently cross-reference other essays, and a comprehensive index enhances the book's usefulness.

Each specialist will have favorite essays, but all repay a careful reading.

George C. Rogers, Jr., surveys the work on the colonial and revolutionary

period. In "Planters and Plain Folk," Randolph B. Campbell provides a valuable discussion of the social structure of the antebellum South; it should be read by every professional geneologist. Drew Gilpin Faust offers a perceptive discussion of white culture and politics in the antebellum years, and Charles B. Dew ably surveys the rich body of work on slavery.

The causes of the Civil War receive little attention, except briefly in Joe Gray Taylor's survey of white Southerners during the Civil War and Reconstruction. LaWanda Cox contributes a fine essay on the black experience from emancipation to segregation. Harold D. Woodman provides a valuable introduction to the difficult "econometric" literature on the post-war South.

The twentieth century receives substantial coverage. Two essays focus on politics: Richard L. Watson, Jr., surveys the period from Populism through the New Deal, and Hugh Davis Graham covers the years since World War II. Dan T. Carter provides an able discussion of race relations both during segregation and in the upheaval of the civil rights movement. The urban history of the recent South is the focus of Charles P. Roland's contribution.

Women's history has emerged as a major specialization within the last two decades, due to the entry of large numbers of women into the profession, as Jacquelyn Dowd Hall and Anne Firor Scott demonstrate in a perceptive survey. Editor Boles sees the study of Southern religion as emerging from filiopietism only recently, and documents his claim by careful analysis of modern scholarship.

Although it is well-written, *Interpreting Southern History* is not the sort of book a non-academic can expect to read cover-to-cover, hanging on every word. It is an ambitious, and for the most part remarkably successful, effort to summarize the last two decades of historical scholarship dealing with the southeastern United States. Sometimes the contributors assume a familiarity with Southern history that goes beyond that of the general reader. Yet as a guide to what one should read on any important interpretive issue in the field, this is the place to turn. Every school board in the region could profitably require teachers of state history to master these essays (in preference to their often out-dated "lesson plans.")

Virginia Van der Veer Hamilton, *Lister Hill: Statesman from the South*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1987, pp. 351. \$24.95.

Lister Hill was a unique political figure, his life filled with irony. He rose to power at a time when Southern politicians were expected to be white Anglo-Saxon Protestants, but his mother's people, from Pensacola and Mobile, were Jewish-Catholic. He hid that fact for most of his life. Born and reared in the Alabama Black Belt, the most conservative area of the state, son of a wealthy and socially prominent father, he became the leader of the liberal wing of the state democratic party and constantly fought with wealthy Black Belters. In the U.S. Senate, surrounded by



conservative southerners like Richard Russell of Georgia and James Eastland of Mississippi, Hill refused to be cast in their mold and moved far to their left. He was a consistent opponent of civil rights for black Americans, but when he retired from politics, one liberal colleague placed him among the top five senators in American history for "service" to the people. He was last elected to the U.S. Senate in 1962, in part because blacks, whose voting rights he had opposed, insisted on sending him back for another term.

Virginia Van der Veer Hamilton, Professor Emerita of history at the University of Alabama in Birmingham, examines the case of Lister Hill and offers compelling evidence of his "service" to Alabamians. Hill spent forty-five years in the Congress, fifteen in the house and thirty in the Senate. Hamilton concentrates on the senate years (1938-1968.) During his long tenure Hill accumulated a mountain of personal papers and letters that served Hamilton as the basis of her work. It is, she says, "a monumental written record, one that (unlike Justice Black) he never attempted to edit, purge or partially destroy." Despite her efforts at fairness and strict attention to primary sources, Hamilton is awed by Hill's achievements and heavily influenced by his New Deal liberalism. Nevertheless, she points out his weaknesses, both public and private.

Hill was infamous as a cruel taskmaster who drove his staff mercilessly, often playing one off against another. Publicly gracious and courtly, he

was privately aloof and difficult to know. Only hard work seemed to please him, says Hamilton, who quotes one of his staffers as saying that "passing laws" was Hill's "heaven on earth." When the civil rights movement gained momentum he broke off his longtime friendship with Justice Hugo Black, who had become a pariah in Alabama as a result of his pro-integration decisions.

Hill made concessions to racism throughout his career, opposing anti-lynching legislation, anti-poll tax laws, fair employment acts and the civil rights bills of the 1950s and 1960s. Hamilton records the ugly racial rhetoric to which he resorted in order to counter the claims of his opponents that he was not strong enough in opposition to civil rights. It was a charge to which he was regularly forced to respond.

In his campaigns, says Hamilton, Hill was opposed by the agribusiness and industrial establishment, which viewed him as a dangerous liberal. The Farm Bureau, Alabama Power Company and lumber interests could not abide his friendly relationship with organized labor, his efforts in behalf of farm tenants or his support of public electric power. They opposed him on economic grounds, but their candidates raised the race issue in an effort to split Hill from his main constituency, the "plain" whites. They argued that minimum wage laws and low income housing, strongly supported by Hill, would lead to a fundamental alteration of race relations in the South. They were right. Hill opposed civil rights laws, he later said, so that he might stay in office. His opponents would have opposed economic measures that benefitted blacks and poor whites.

Hill, along with John Sparkman, was a leader in trying to hold the state loyal to the Democratic Party in the face of pro-civil rights moves by the National Democrats. Hamilton makes it clear that powerful economic forces, as concerned about high wages as they were about integration, used civil rights as a pretext to lead "Dixiecrats" or "states righters" in revolt against the national party. It was, says Hamilton, part of the "ongoing struggle between the forces of big business and large agricultural organizations versus organized labor and small entrepreneurs."

Hamilton contends that Hill had ambitions for even higher office and sometimes dreamed of the presidency. His early Senate years were so promising that his dream was not so incredible. Hill served as Democratic Whip of the Senate during the last five years of Roosevelt's administration and was picked to nominate FDR at the 1940 Democratic Convention. His speech, broadcast over nationwide radio, was, says Hamilton, a disaster. Hill sounded like a stereotypical rural Southern demagogue and the press poked fun at his style. Only civil rights, however, killed his national

ambitions. As that issue moved to the forefront Hill retreated from national party leadership, even resigning his post as Senate Whip. He was crushed in 1952 when the party passed over him and nominated his Alabama colleague, John Sparkman, for Vice-President.

Although Hamilton places great emphasis on the politics of the Senate, her finest contribution is an excellent discussion of the internal politics of Alabama from the Depression to the Sixties. Two men, both operating behind the scenes as organizers and advisors to the Hill "machine," emerge from historical obscurity. Roy Nolen of Montgomery and Marc Ray "Foots" Clement of Tuscaloosa led the Hill campaigns. Hamilton uncovered a lengthy and candid correspondence between Hill and Nolen that enriches her work. Nolen urged Hill onward in support of the "cause," a shorthand statement for Hill's effort to eliminate poverty, ignorance and disease in Alabama.

Hill was primarily identified with three major legislative acts. One, the Tennessee Valley Authority, was not his creation alone, but he played a key role in its adoption and became the primary sponsor of legislation aiding TVA. The Hill-Burton Hospital Construction Act led to the construction of medical facilities nationwide and brought medical care to millions of people trapped in isolated rural areas. The National Defense Education Act, which Hill conceived along with Alabama Congressman Carl Elliot, created loans and grants that allowed millions more to gain a college education. These were only the most famous of hundreds of acts by the creative Hill. Hamilton has placed him in proper historical perspective, as a giant of the Roosevelt-Truman era and perhaps the most influential political figure in Alabama history.

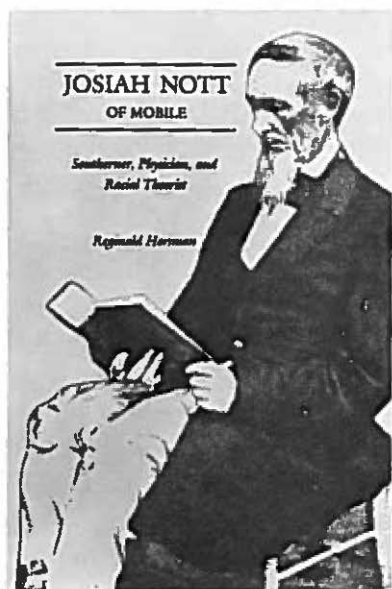
Samuel L. Webb

University of South Alabama

Reginald Horsman. *Josiah Nott of Mobile: Southerner, Physician, and Racial Theorist*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987, pp. 348. \$35.00.

Reginald Horsman has made a more than useful contribution to antebellum intellectual history, by way of a companion piece to his earlier *Race and Manifest Destiny*. Josiah Nott was one of the Old South's more angular and interesting intellectuals: a South Carolinian transplanted to Alabama, a member of a heterodox family, a student of Thomas Cooper, a physician trained in Philadelphia and Paris, an anticlerical, an agnostic,

a cool medical intelligence, a scientific racist of indefatigable energy and international reputation. Horsman's narrative is brisk and sensible, as always, and he manages what to the undiscerning might seem contradictions with careful detachment, understanding that racism was the science of the nineteenth century and helping to make clear with what ease a man of eighteenth-century perspectives shifted from environmentalist to organicist science.



Horsman is illuminating on the medical and scientific side of Nott's life, and efficient in summarizing Nott's views on slavery and society. If the book has a fault, it is that he is a touch uneven in explicating Nott's context. He is fairly good on the intellectual culture of Columbia and South Carolina College. He is good too, with less abundant sources, on Nott's place in Mobile society. But he slights Alabama's intellectual life, whose tone of levity (as with Alexander Beaufort Meek and William Russell Smith) fortuitously endorsed the skepticism that Nott learned in Columbia. And he sometimes gets lost (as who does not) in the thicket of South Carolinian

kinship. James Louis Pettigru has become Pettigru, an understandable slip, considering that the wit and lawyer had 'Huguenoted' his name from Pettigrew. But insistent references to Mary 'Chestnut' and the 'Chestnut' family are less forgivable. Here and there, duty requires me to notice, spellings in quotations have been modernized without warning. But it is an achievement to have managed a full biography on Josiah Nott at all, for the manuscript sources are thin, scattered, and unsatisfactory. So even a narrative is a mark of, not only archival diligence, but also a gift of clarity.

Michael O'Brien

Miami University of Ohio

From the Archives. . . .

Instead of a selection from a regional archive, we are publishing the following items which were sent to us by Professor Jeremy Black, University of Durham, England, a widely-published British historian who specializes in 18th century diplomatic and newspaper history. The newspapers cited are in the Bodleian Library in Oxford, and as far as we know, neither of the articles has been reprinted. The first explains a matter that has long puzzled many South Alabamians — why Mobile was founded on the “wrong” side of the bay. The second may help readers to understand some of the bitterness that Benjamin Franklin was feeling when he proposed to send a rattlesnake to England in exchange for every felon sent to the colonies from Britain. Some introductory matter and the identification and expansion of the first selection has been provided by Robert R. Rea and we are grateful for his expert assistance.

Editors

Alabama in 1766

An interesting, hitherto unnoticed account of the country round Mobile in 1766 can be found in the *St. James's Chronicle*; or, the *British Evening Post* a major tri-weekly paper, in its issue of July 24, 1766 (number 841). As was usual in that period it was printed without identification of its source, a practice which, in this case, disguised a piece of semi-official propaganda in behalf of the new colony of West Florida. The original letter, written by Thomas Miller to John Ellis, may be found among the Ellis manuscripts in the Library of the Linnean Society, London. Ellis was King's Agent for West Florida and a naturalist of international renown — hence the botanical emphasis and Miller's proposal to send him a specimen “for your inspection.” Thomas Miller is less well known. In 1766 he was granted 1,000 acres “about 40 miles above Tensaw;” the next year he was in London seeking Ellis's help in securing another 20,000 acres. At that time he was working fourteen negroes on what he claimed to be “the first rice plantation attempted by a natural born subject” (i.e. an Anglo-American) in West Florida (Miller to Ellis, April 16, 1767; Ellis MSS). Thomas was one of several Millers prominent in colonial affairs; he came from a New York merchant's family and had commercial shipping interests as well as agricultural aspirations. The origins of his relationship with Ellis have not been traced. Newspapers rarely devoted so much space to geographical descriptions of America; this account was undoubtedly printed at the request of the royal agent who supplied the text of Miller's letter and hoped to encourage interest in the colony. The letter is printed as it appeared in the *St. James's Chronicle*, but with deleted portions of the original inserted in brackets and minor compositor's errors silently corrected.

Vol. XVII.

[345]

N^o 1296.

The London Chronicle:

O R,

UNIVERSAL EVENING POST.

Museum of the City of Mobile

Extract of a Letter dated Mobile, Feb. 21, 1766

[Some years are past since I did myself the pleasure to write to you, and my misfortunes to my affairs in New York has at length thrown me into his Majesty's Province of West Florida for which you are Agent. I resume my former acquaintance with you as I probably may gratify you in some of your favorite Researches after Nature, but you must point out to me what you would be informed of. In this I shall confine myself to some acct. of the Country which will not be copious as my experience does not exceed nine months nor are my travels in the province extensive.]

The Air and Climate of this Country is pretty: much the same, from its Latitude, with South Carolina and Georgia, consequently its Productions similar; the Country in general is a Pine barren, but much exceeds any I ever [before] saw for the Largeness and Clearness of its Pitch Pine; most Trees will admit of three twelve foot cuts for Deals, which, when manufactured into Square-edged, will measure from ten to fourteen Inches over. There are also Swamps that produce great Quantities of white, red, black, and live Oak and those very large. The Cypress, and red and white Ceder are found in them in considerable Quantities, as is the Tree, called by the French Copalm, but I have great Reason to believe it is the Tolu [Telue] Tree, and do intend, the ensuing Spring, to extract some of the Balsam, and send it to you for your Inspection. The Magnole of three kinds are very common, and have a fine Effect, many of them bloom twice in a Season; and Trees of other kinds, whose [their] Names nor Qualities I do not know.

Those Swamps appear to me to be good Lands, capable of producing either Rice, Hemp, Flax, Indigo, or Cotton; indeed, Indigo and Cotton I have seen succeed in them very well. The whole Face of the Country is covered with Grass of so good a kind, that Cattle fat to good Beef on it: Any Quantity may

be raised, and I do conceive Mules may be bred with success. The Woods abound with Deer, Turkies, Quails, Rabbits, etc. as do the Ponds and Waters with all kinds of Aquaticks: And, in the Course of my Travels, I never saw a Place so full of fine Fish as this Bay of Mobile is: Its Waters cause Petrification: I have taken out of it petrified live Oak, of a large Size [but it appears to have that effect on no other kind of wood which I always observed was bored to pieces by the worm but have not discovered the least trace of their destruction on the live oak].

I have found some of the Indian Traders intelligent, who assured me this River extends many hundred Miles, navigable for Vessels of six foot Draught, and Waters a very rich and fine Country. This Place, from the very Nature of its Situation, must be unhealthy; it stands rather in a Swamp, than otherwise, and fronted by a great Body of Marsh; the Water that is drank is of a bad Quality. After seeing the other Side of the Bay, I was amazed how the French came to fix on this Side of the Settlement, and confessed my Astonishment to some of the French People; who informed me, it was necessary, as the English had too great an Influence with the Creek Indians, whose Country the other Side of the Bay is: It is high, unincumbered with Marsh, easy of Access to shipping, the Water pure and good, quite healthy, and altogether a much better Country than this Side.

On the Whole, I think the Province would invite Foreigners, and make an Acquisition of Subjects to his Majesty, and be useful to the Mother-Country, when Prudence, that amiable Exile, is admitted into it; but till that happy Event, its Prospects are dreary. I have been told the Indians have but an indifferent Idea of the Dignity of — [our government]. They are shrewd Observers; and it is a Proverb with them, That Passion is a Folly.

[Assure yourself I shall be happy to hear from you & execute your Commands. Mr. John Willett at Messrs. Truman Reeve & Willett I dare say will forward your letter to me. Believe me with real esteem

Dr Sr Your Most hble Servt
Thos Miller]

A Proposal for Peopling America

The Seven Years' War ended with a public debate concerning the value of conquests to Britain. There was a specific argument regarding the desirability of retaining such colonies as Canada, Louisiana, and the Sugar Islands (Martinique and Guadeloupe), and more theoretic discussion of the value of colonies in general. An important issue in the debate was that concerning the peopling of the colonies, for some writers suggested that emigration threatened the demographic stability of Britain — a subject recently dealt with by Bernard Bailyn's *Voyagers to the West*. An interesting contribution to this debate is the letter from D.D. to the editor printed in *The London Chronicle*, for April 29, 1762. Should its principal thesis seem outrageous, consider that in 1767 it was most seriously proposed that reformed prostitutes be sent over to help populate East Florida, and four unfortunate young ladies were actually dispatched to St. Augustine on a trial basis (Bailyn, pp. 463-64). This letter is printed in its entirety, without alteration.

Much has been lately written and printed, by way of advice to our Ministers, what part of our numerous conquests to give up, and what to retain, when a peace comes to be made. For my part, I pretend not to know whether Canada, or the Sugar Islands, will be most advantageous to Great Britain; nor whether it will be adviseable to go on conquering Porto Rico, Hispaniola, Cuba, Cape Florida, Louisiana, etc. as Philo Britannicus and others seem to think so easy; these are matters that ought, and must be left to those whose abilities and employments enable them to judge with greater discernment than others; our proper sphere being to believe, and rest assured that the real interest of our Country will be taken care of, at such a happy period, as far as the then situation of affairs will permit.

But though I cannot determine which is the best to keep, I may venture to assert, that none of them will be of any service to us unless they are peopled. It is not extent of territory, but a number of inhabitants, that brings riches to the mother country. We may go on conquering till we are in Alexander's case; but if the people in the vanquished countries do not continue there, the conquest is not worth the powder expended upon it. Wild beasts and trees will not take off our manufactures, nor can they make any returns from thence. It is but too evident that the British dominions are not in a condition to send out colonies, wanting, as it does, at least one third of inhabitants more. But

thin as it is of people, there are many that might be spared who, so far from furnishing anything towards the publick stock of industry, are a dead weight upon it, and help only to spread vice and debauchery in the nation. I have heard it said, that the French government has frequently swept the streets of Paris of their lewd women, shipt them off to Canada, and married them to the Indians.

This has created a connexion between the two nations, and may be a principal reason why they have lived together in greater friendship than ever was known between the English and the natives in their neighbourhood. London is, I believe, as prolific in that class as Paris, or any other city in the universe, and their present wretched condition is much more miserable than being wife to an Indian. The sessions papers are full of poor creatures sent to jail for petty offences, where they contract worse habits than they carried thither. If summary justice was done upon such, and instead of the pillory, or a cart's-tail flogging, they were transported, not as criminals, but as unfortunate persons, they might become of some use to the Publick. The twenty disorderly women, taken up t'other day, and committed to Bridewell, were, if found, and not too old, proper persons to bear them company; and, as suitable associates, all such strollers as have no legal habitation. In short, prodigious numbers of these sort of people might be picked up here, where they are nuisance to this, but may be of some utility to another community, in a country so thinly peopled as North America. Many women of unblemished characters, have lately shipt themselves off for the East Indies, merely to get husbands; and I send away such as are infamous upon the same errand.

The sources here hinted at will furnish a considerable body of both sexes, but indeed not at all adequate to the occasion; and I cannot conceive any method to supply our want of people but a general naturalization, not only of Protestants, but of every other religion, except Papists, and of them too, if a temper could be found out to make them good subjects. One would imagine that no time could be more proper for such a law than the present, when the distresses in Germany must induce many to seek out a more peaceable habitation.