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Microfilm Edition

CALENDAR OF THE

STETSON COLLECTION

1512-1783

P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History
University of Florida Libraries
Gainesville, Florida 32611

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CALENDAR OF THE
STETSON COLLECTION

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Elizabeth Alexander, Director
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STETSON COLLECTION

The Stetson Collection, composed of approximately 7,000 bundles of photostats of documents from various Spanish archives, contains information on all phases of the Spanish presence in the American southeast from 1512 to 1783. The collection emphasizes the 1565 settlement of St. Augustine and the subsequent evolution of that town's political, military, religious, and private affairs. The content of the material reflects the adaptations by the Spanish colonists and the Florida Indians to political, social, and economic changes over a period of three hundred years. The general theme, through 1783, is the inconsistent attention given by the authorities in Spain and in Cuba to the development of St. Augustine and the Florida Borderlands.

The documents--largely official correspondence, reports, petitions, and private letters--are arranged chronologically. Because the Stetson Collection does not contain complete legajos of material, the following headings best describe the collection as a whole.

ECCLESIASTICAL MATERIAL

The Spanish preoccupation with Catholicism and the conversion of native populations is reflected in the abundance of religious material located therein. These documents report the growth and the eventual collapse of the Catholic missions in Florida between 1565 and 1730. Information on religious activity during the British period, 1763-1783, is also present, but not as extensive. The following sub-headings describe these documents more fully.

Recruitment of Clergy in Spain

The collection contains information concerning the selection of clergy destined for service in Florida, biographical data and transportation and financial arrangements prior to departure for Florida.

Spanish Clergy in Florida

Information is found on the arrival of clergy in St. Augustine, generally via Havana, their maintenance and annual stipends, and assignments to doctrinas. Ecclesiastical documents written in Florida describe the organization and administration of the doctrinas, plus religious, social, and economic contacts with the immediate Indian populations.

Expansion of the Florida Missions

Throughout the collection are documents which describe the interactions between the Florida Indian peoples and Spanish officials. In addition,

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material indicating non-Spanish interest in the Florida territory, as well as subsequent foreign penetrations, is available.

Decline of the Florida Missions

The factors contributing to the decline of the missions are well documented, particularly the development of internal religious discord, loss of rapport with local Spanish secular officials, and the destructive English presence.

Source of data: visitas, ecclesiastical reports, and letters from Florida and Havana, plus documents, originating in Spain, dealing with religious activity in the Florida provinces.

MILITARY MATERIAL

A large portion of the Stetson Collection is comprised of official letters, reports, and petitions from the governor, the Real Hacienda officials, military officers, and soldiers. Because St. Augustine was largely a military outpost during the First Spanish Period, military information is plentiful. Among other topics, the documents shed light upon outpost conditions which prevailed through 1763, garrison life in St. Augustine and in the interior, supply problems, systems of defense and fortifications, and the lack of funds. Extensive documentation is available on the maintenance of troops, construction of the Castillo de San Marcos, settlement and fortification of Apalache and Pensacola, military engagements with Indians and foreign interlopers, and the gradual decline of Spanish military control over the Florida Borderlands.

Source of data: governors' letters, official reports, administrative discussions in Spain (Juntas de Guerra and the Consejo de Indias), and the governors' residencias (investigations at the conclusion of each governor's term of office).

POLITICAL INFORMATION

Although restricted politically by the Spanish imperial system, Florida residents tended to adapt to local conditions. Documents about government can be described as follows:

International Politics

The inconsistency of Spain's concern for Florida is revealed clearly in high level correspondence and discussion in the mother country. The growing interest of other European nations in the Florida Borderlands is apparent in many of these same documents, especially as noted by persons in the area. Correspondence among Spanish ambassadors, ministers, and agents in England, France, and Rome concerning colonial matters and territorial disputes is scattered throughout the collection.

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Regional Politics

Florida's role and status in the New World emerges from correspondence or reports between regional officials in Cuba, New Spain, the Carolinas, and St. Augustine. Spain's colonial legislation limited the acceptable political behavior of her subjects throughout the empire. Top administrators were Peninsulares chosen in Spain and were frequently military officers. Although political autonomy is suggested subtly in many documents, it was not in the interest of any top official to report independent actions.

Source of data: documentation originating in Spain (consultas, cedulas, and reports) and regional correspondence (reports and letters) between the governors and their superiors.

ECONOMIC MATERIAL

Economic and financial information is located throughout the collection and can be grouped under two major headings:

Basic Data

Documents concerning economic topics, such as the annual situado accounts and provisioning contracts, contain the basic economic information about the colony. In addition, reports and proposals demonstrate the efforts of the colonists to stimulate agriculture and industry by means such as cotton cultivation and the production of timber for ship construction.

Corollary Information

In many instances, additional economic data is recorded incidentally in reports, letters, and petitions.

SOCIAL DATA

Class interaction and social change are apparent in the documents of the Stetson Collection, although such information appears in a subtle fashion. The Florida Borderlands often were excluded from Spanish colonial legislation due to fluctuating attention on the part of officials in Spain and a host of local problems. Social topics are described by documents scattered throughout the preceding four categories and can be grouped as follows:

Upper class relations

In most respects, social contact between upper class Peninsulares and Creoles followed patterns characteristic of other Spanish colonies. However, St. Augustine's size and isolation did encourage social behavior and attitudes peculiar to that community. Topics of interest to researchers include extended family relations in a relatively closed society, religious discord between Creole and Peninsular clergy, and social mobility through education and militia service.

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Lower class relations

Contact between the lower classes--Indians, persons of color, and poor whites--and the upper classes followed a complicated set of guidelines due to Florida's geographic location and population. Lower class persons were found in traditional roles such as guides, laborers, servants, etc. Traditional social restrictions on lower class conduct were absent frequently in times of crisis, however. Possible research topics include forced labor, English slaving raids, lower class individuals as soldiers, and the gradual introduction of black slavery into the area. Material pertinent to Florida's Indian groups and their customs, habits, and physical culture abounds.

Source of data: official reports, letters, petitions, and visitas.

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FORMAT OF THE CALENDAR

The calendar of the Stetson Collection is composed of approximately 14,000 cards which represent nearly 7,000 bundles of photostats of documents. Each document is described on an individual three inch by five inch card which is divided into three sections. The first section of each card includes the date of the document and its location within the collection. For retrieval purposes, the bundle (bnd) designation must be used. The second section of each card includes the place of origin of the document, the author, and, if a letter, the addressee, with indication of the type of document (draft, duplicate, copy, part of an expediente, etc.) and its length. The third section is a summary in English of the document's contents, noting all topics covered and all proper names mentioned.

EXAMPLE

1566 Oct. 20 ST AGI 54-1-31 bnd 187 p. 1-7

St. Augustine, Gov. Pedro Menendez to King 6½p

Complains about delay in shipment of supplies from Cuba; problems of desertion; relations with Indians; Havana Gov. Garcia Osorno; San Mateo.

First Line Identifier

EF
PC
ST
NC
SD
Aud
Pat
Conta
Contr
Jus
Gob
Es
Cor
Est
Resi

Second and Third Line

Military Ranks

sold
tam
cabo
sgt
sublt
lt
capt
sgt-maj
adj-maj
adj
LTC or ltcol
col
gen
brig
lt gen
adm
alf

Other Military Abb

CO
com
Regt
INF
det

ABBREVIATIONS

First Line Identifiers

EF	East Florida Papers
PC	Papeles de Cuba
ST	Stetson Collection
NC	North Carolina
SD	Santo Domingo
Aud	Audiencia
Pat	Patronato
Conta	Contaduria
Contr	Contratacion
Jus	Justicia
Gob	Gobierno
Es	Escribania de Camara
Cor	Correos
Est	Estado
Resi	Residencia

Second and Third Line Identifiers

Military Ranks

sold	soldado
tam	tambor
cabo	cabo
sgt	sargento
sublt	subteniente
lt	teniente
capt	capitan
sgt-maj	sargento mayor
adj-maj	ayudante mayor
adj	ayudante
LTC or ltcol	teniente colonel
col	coronel
gen	general
brig	brigadier
lt gen.	teniente general
adm	admiral
alf	alferez

Other Military Abbreviations

CO	Commanding Officer
com.	Comandante
Regt	Regimiento
INF	Infanteria
det	destacamiento

Other Military

CNM
art
POW
bat
ing or eng

Officials

gov
C.G.
In
VR
cont
treas
aud
min
asst
sec
pres
coms
emb
esc
esct
admin
g.a.
g.m.
def
interp
subor
subdel
C.A.

Titles

mpns
Dr
prac
lic
Br.
caq
cap
fr
Marq

Other Military Abbreviations (continued)

CNM	Militia disciplinados de pardos (morenos) de la Havana (Cuban Negro Militia)
art	Artillery - Artillery soldier
POW	prisoner of war
bat	batallion
ing or eng	ingeniero

Officials

gov	governor
C.G.	capitan general
In	Intendente
VR	Virrey
cont	contador
treas	tesorero
aud	Auditor de Guerra
min	ministro
asst	Assistant
sec	secretario
pres	president
coms	comisario
embj	embajador
esc	escribano
escr	escriviente
admin	administrador
g.a.	guarda almacen
g.m.	guarda mayor
def	defensor
interp	interpretor
subor	subinspector
subdel	subdelegado
C.A.	constitutional alcalde

Titles

mpns	Monsieur
Dr	doctor/cirujano
prac	practicante
lic	licenciado
Br	Bachiller
caq	cacique
cap	capellan
fr	fray, padre, cura, capellan
Marq	Marques

inidos depardos (morenos) de.
ban Negro Militia)
illery soldier

ra

alcalde

ura, capellan

Place Names

SM de A	San Marcos de Apalachee
St Aug	San Agustin
Fla	Florida
Hav	Havana
NSp	Nueva Espana
Mex	Mexico
La	Luisiana
Ga	Georgia
N.C.	Carolina del Norte
S.C.	Carolina del Sur
Sav	Savannah
Pens	Panzacola
N.O.	Nuevo Orleans
US	Estados Unidos
Pto Principe	Puerto Principe
SJR	Rio de San Juan
SMR	Rio de Santa Maria
Fern	Fernandina
Am.I.	Amalia Island
SM de Galve	Santa Maria de Galve
Mat	Matanzas
Mosq	Mosquitos
Sp	Espana
Eng	Inglaterra
Gr Br	Gran Bretania
Fr	Françia
Port	Portugal
San Nic	San Nicolas
Miss.	Mississippi
B.V.	Buena Vista
Barr	Barrancas

Geographical Terms

prov	provincia (Provincia)
R	rio (Rio)
I	Ysla (ysla)
Bat	Bateria
Pto	Puerto

Miscellaneous

dr	draft
doc res	documento reservado
dup	duplicado
trip	triplicado
trans	translation
int	interino

Misc

R.O.
R.C.
R.D.
hac
ft.
ref
ENE, e
NQ, n
Sto, s
STO, s
NS
arrs/c
ASAP
Ayunt
Mort.

Miscellaneous (continued)

R.O.	real orden
R.C.	real cedula
R.D.	real decreto
hac	Hacienda
ft.	fort
ref	reference
ENE, ene	enclosure not enclosed
NQ, n.q.	no quote
Sto, Sta	Santo, Santa
STO, STA	SANTO, SANTA (Ships)
NS	NUESTRA SENORA (Ships)
arrs/deps	arrivals and departures
ASAP	as soon as possible
Ayunt	Ayuntamiento
Mort.	Mortgage