

INTRODUCTION: THE ANGLO-SPANISH RIVALRY AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE COLONIAL SOUTH-EAST

In 1565 the Spanish established a colony in Florida at St Augustine to protect their more valuable colonies in the Caribbean and South America from any potential European rivals.¹ After the destruction of a French outpost, Florida served the Spanish primarily as a military buffer between the Spanish Americas and other European colonies to the north. In addition, it acted as an important defensive bastion protecting the treasure fleets bearing the riches of the Americas to Spain. Because the Spanish population in Florida remained small, the extension of Spanish influence in the region was accomplished primarily through a chain of Franciscan missions. At their height, these missions encompassed tens of thousands of Indian converts and extended from the coastal islands of modern Georgia to the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. From its beginnings in 1565 through the first decades of the seventeenth century, the Spanish stubbornly maintained their presence in the south-east and Spanish missionaries, soldiers and traders ranging across Florida from St Augustine exercised enormous influence among the natives.

During the first decade of the seventeenth century England repeatedly began to defy Spain's claim to the region. The Spanish in St Augustine took careful note of the English efforts at Roanoke in the 1580s and the 1607 establishment of the colony at Jamestown. During the course of the seventeenth century, officials in Florida warned of a growing English presence in the areas to the north of St Augustine and the English openly sought to confront and possibly supplant the Spanish. When seen in retrospect, therefore, the founding of Charleston in 1670 seems to be the obvious end to Spanish dominance in the region. After all, traditional historical views of early modern Europe at this time stress the decline of Spanish power in the seventeenth century in favour of growing English and French influence. Spain might see a brief resurgence and restructuring after the succession to the throne of Philip V but its power would never again equal its golden age of the sixteenth century.²

Regardless of its power on the world stage, the influence of the Spanish in south-east America did not suddenly end. For a period of almost fifty years after the founding of Charleston, the issue of which European power, if any, would gain primacy in the contest for control remained in doubt as Florida and Carolina settled into a bitter struggle with one another for power in the region.³ Despite their efforts and desires to destroy Charleston and the threat it represented, Spain was never able to bring the necessary force to bear against Carolina in repeated attempts to annihilate the colony. On the other hand, the Carolinians never successfully conquered St Augustine, notwithstanding a persistent and slowly successful campaign of raids and invasions aimed at countering Spanish influence. Throughout the period, each side additionally had to deal with a native population that was numerically far superior to either, thus limiting and often guiding their plans and actions. Given the extreme efforts, expenditures and political as well as military manoeuvrings of the rival colonies, it is clear that the contest between Spanish Florida and English Carolina represents a critical factor in the development of the south-east, at least until the mid-1720s.

This is not to say that this rivalry was the only factor. Numerous issues played a part in the complex story of this region. Whether it was trade relationships, geopolitical considerations, the interplay of cultural and religious themes, local native interests or internal colonial ambitions, the number and scope of the motivations of the players defy simple efforts to examine them as a whole. Despite the other issues, however, the Anglo-Spanish rivalry was always there, whether in the background or at the fore, and therefore can be considered separately, in more detail and on its own merits. This contest took place against the background of the vast complexity of the area, the variety of cultures, the various economic and political motivations playing out on all sides, and the changing diplomatic and imperial concerns in Europe.

Indeed, at various times during this period, the rivalry itself left behind the Eurocentric concerns of empire and took on a much more narrow focus. At the local level, government officials, Indian traders, Franciscan missionaries, the various Indian tribes, runaway slaves and all others living in this borderland area contended in a variety of ways with the Anglo-Spanish rivalry. Only with the resolution of this threat could Carolina and thus the English, or British by that point, emerge as the dominant colonial power in the south-east. Of course, by the time the colonists in Charleston were finally successful in their long-term struggle against Florida, they found themselves locked in a new regional contest against a growing French presence which would replace an old rivalry with a new one and only be resolved after a massive, worldwide conflict that, in 1763, would reshape the imperial landscape in North America forever.

This study, therefore, tells the story of the contest between Spanish Florida and English Carolina during the period in which that rivalry was at its height in

influencing events in the region. Throughout the narrative, great effort is made to highlight the local perspectives of the colonists wherever possible. At times this is easier said than done. The primary sources used as the basis of this study come largely from the government records of both Charleston and St Augustine. They are augmented wherever possible with the personal writings of the colonists involved. These personal writings tend to be found more from the English side than the Spanish simply due to the vagaries of the historical record. This is an obvious limitation in discovering the personal stories of the historical actors, especially those of the Spanish officials. Fortunately, Spanish colonial administrative attention, both secular and clerical, involved itself in the day-to-day affairs of all levels of society to a much greater degree than did English colonial governance. Spanish records often provide a limited but valuable glimpse into the social implications of policy decisions. Wherever possible, therefore, every effort has been made to include these local social effects when applicable to the larger story of the Anglo-Spanish rivalry.

The motivation for this book came from reading traditional accounts of the history of the Carolinas. From the perspective of many Anglocentric histories of the region, the story of the Anglo-Spanish rivalry is one that has often been downplayed or bypassed in favour of the larger competition for empire between England/Britain and France during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Assuredly, my work is not an effort to overturn the larger importance of this global Anglo-French imperial contest or to minimize the continued role of Spanish Florida in influencing events in Georgia through the end of the Seven Years War. It attempts, rather, to inject a regional perspective back into that larger story and to concentrate its focus on this single rivalry at the time in which it played its most consequential role. While France was certainly the pre-eminent threat of concern in the halls of government in England or to local colonists in the areas north of Virginia, to southern colonists, especially those in Charleston and its local environs, the presence of St Augustine and the influence of the Spanish among the Indian populations of the south-east took precedence. To residents of Florida, the challenge posed by the English represented a palpable threat to their very existence.

The trend towards diminishing the importance of this early period of English-Spanish interaction in the colonial south-east is evident in much of the historiography of early Carolina. Historians of English Carolina, perhaps unsurprisingly, typically consider the subject almost exclusively from the English viewpoint. Spanish and Indian perspectives, including the threat of Florida itself, are dealt with almost as an aside, though this trend has begun to change in major publications in the last decade. Early historians of English Carolina and the early south-east as a whole were heavily influenced by the wonderful writing of Verner W. Crane. Crane's *The Southern Frontier, 1670–1732*, published in

1928, provided the first comprehensive look at the early history of this region. His work would provide a launching point for later efforts such as Robert M. Weir's *Colonial South Carolina: A History* (1983) and more focused studies such as Peter Wood's *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (1974). In each, the Anglo-Spanish rivalry plays a small role in shaping the story and even then as an aside rather than as a driving influence. Spanish voices are rarely mentioned and Spanish perspectives on larger events are lacking almost entirely.⁴

More recent works have incrementally begun to incorporate more of Spanish Florida into their narratives but never with the prominence the rivalry deserves. Alan Gallay succeeds in showing the importance of the Indian trade to the English in Carolina in his *Indian Slave Trade: The Rise of the English Empire in the American South, 1670–1717* (2002). Louis H. Roper in his *Conceiving Carolina: Proprietors, Planters, and Plots, 1662–1729* (2004), Steven J. Oatis in *A Colonial Complex: South Carolina's Frontiers in the Era of the Yamasee War, 1680–1730* (2004) and William L. Ramsey in *The Yamasee War: A Study of Culture, Economy, and Conflict in the Colonial South* (2008) provide wonderful accounts of the politics and personalities of early Carolina, with Oatis and Ramsey each adding important insights into English reactions to the Indian uprising. But in all of these works, as in earlier monographs, the Spanish and their effects on the story are a secondary consideration and many of the key interactions between the colonies remain absent. The largest goal of my work is to allow both sides, English and Spanish, to be heard equally and thereby to demonstrate how and why each was influenced by the other.⁵

When history has been done from the perspective of Spanish Florida, Carolina assumes a larger role, if only for the destruction caused by the English and their Indian allies during the period in question. Indeed, most historians of Spanish Florida have long sought to highlight the importance of Florida as an outpost of empire and its role in shaping the colonial south-east. But while the majority would accept the importance of the interaction of Carolina and Florida as a given, none has used this rivalry as the driving focus of the story. The historiography of Spanish Florida, while broader than that of English Carolina, still echoes its Carolina counterpart in the tendency to see the story from only one side, this from the Spanish perspective. In the earliest works, Florida's role as outpost of empire was the central focus. This is best seen in the seminal 1921 publication, *The Spanish Borderlands: A Chronicle of Old Florida and the Southwest*. In this book, Herbert Eugene Bolton set the tone for borderlands history and the history of Florida overall by emphasizing the civilizing influence of the Spanish North American colonies on a Turnerian frontier.⁶

From the Bolton beginnings, Florida historians in the 1960s and 1970s began to move from the general to the specific. Various scholars analysed Flori-

da's history in everything from biographical accounts of early explorers, in-depth analyses of government and religious institutions to early explorations of the effects of imperial contests on the region. Eugene Lyon's work on Pedro Menéndez de Aviles and early Santa Elena provided glorious details of the early years of Florida history. Michael Gannon's 1965 book, *The Cross in the Sand*, and John Jay TePaske's 1964 *The Governorship of Spanish Florida, 1700–1763* provided influential examinations of the roles of the Church and the governors respectively while Robert Gold's 1969 *Borderland Empires in Transition* investigated the transfer of Florida to the British in 1763 after the Seven Years War. Notably, Gold highlighted the importance of imperial rivalries though in a much later period and without the emphasis on the local perspective attempted here.⁷

The analysis of more specific aspects of Florida history leaped forward after 1990 as a new generation of historians sought to flesh out the picture of Florida society in directions only hinted at previously. In many ways, these works have pushed our understanding of Spanish Florida to a point where historians of Carolina are only now beginning to catch up. Amy Turner Bushnell greatly expanded the knowledge of the economic interrelationship between colony and empire in *Situado and Sabana: Spain's Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida* (1994). Jane Landers, in *Black Society in Spanish Florida* (1999), greatly expanded the awareness of free blacks and slaves in Spanish Florida, while Daniel Murphree, in *Constructing Floridians: Natives and Europeans in the Colonial Floridas, 1513–1783* (2006) investigated changing conceptualizations of race and ethnicity by the Spanish, British and Native Americans in the region. In addition to these more focused analyses, both Paul Hoffman and Michael Gannon, in 2002 and 2003 respectively, sought to provide more general histories of Florida to separate and highlight Florida history from the larger studies of North American Spanish borderlands that had come before.⁸

Despite the inherent quality and scholarship evident in all of these works, both old and new, none of them attempts to tell the full story recounted here. While greatly expanding the detailed knowledge of the Spanish and of Florida as a whole, these earlier studies fail to illustrate the story from both English and Spanish perspectives at the same time. While the English do play their role in each of the aforementioned studies, it is always as outsider rather than as vital participant, with the obvious exception of Murphree's outstanding work on the later British occupation of Florida in which they are the primary participant.

A subsidiary historiography of the region to which this study will allude is that of the growing number of works that highlight the vital contributions of the native peoples in the south-east. Beginning with Charles Hudson's seminal book, *The Southeastern Indians* (1976), and growing more detailed and focused in subsequent decades, the very number of monographs addressing the histories of the various native peoples of this region makes any attempt at a comprehensive

listing here difficult at best, but a significant few may be noted. The important roles of Indian missions in Spanish Florida have been covered in the outstanding writings of archaeologists and historians such as Jerald Milanich, John Hann, John Worth and Bonnie McEwan, to name just a few. Stephen Oatis's previously mentioned book, *A Colonial Complex*, seeks to highlight the Yamasee Indians and their effect on Carolina, as does William Ramsey's recent work, *The Yamasee War*. Both do admirable jobs studying the motivations and perspectives of the natives involved in that struggle. Notable historians such as Kathryn E. Holland Braund in *Deerskins and Duffels: Creek Indian Trade with Anglo-America, 1685–1815* (1993), Robbie F. Etheridge in *Creek Country: The Creek Indians and their World* (2003), Steven C. Hahn in *The Invention of the Creek Nation, 1670–1763* (2004) and Julie A. Sweet in *Negotiating for Georgia: British–Creek Relations in the Trustee Period, 1733–1752* (2005) provide detailed and remarkable studies of the Creek Indians. Grace S. Woodward in *The Cherokees* (1963) and Thomas M. Hatley in *The Dividing Paths: Cherokees and South Carolinians through the Era of Revolution* (1993) did the same for the Cherokee though studies on the early years of the Cherokee have lagged behind their Creek counterparts with most of the attention on this tribe focusing on the years after the American Revolution.⁹

All of these works on Indians in the south-east cover many of the events and stories of the region's history from the individual perspectives of the varied tribes involved and do so in such exquisite detail that little could be added through the prism of the Anglo-Spanish rivalry. It is important to note, therefore, that this study does not seek to recount these events from an ethno-historic viewpoint. While it does attempt to acknowledge the importance of the various Indian peoples involved, it would be impossible within the constraints of space and time to capture each individual tribe's motivations, concerns or perspectives. As such, the focus on the Anglo-Spanish rivalry itself takes precedence over a lengthy and, perhaps, distracting investigation of the natives themselves. Rather, the task of telling the stories from the natives' perspectives is left to the scholars who have already done it so well.

Through all of this lengthy discourse on the varied historiographies touched on here, one thing remains clear. What none of these scholars has attempted is to tell the story of the colonial south-east with a focus on the rivalry between Spanish Florida and English Carolina through the 1720s. In actuality, only one major work has ever attempted to highlight the importance of the Anglo-Spanish rivalry in general and then during the entire course of North American history rather than the regional study provided here. J. Leitch Wright, in his 1971 *Anglo-Spanish Rivalry in North America*, is the only author to attempt a comprehensive study of the interaction between Spain and England from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries. The expansive nature of the subject and period, how-

ever, hindered his ability to go beyond the broadest generalizations. Moreover, he failed to see the detailed consequences and motivations behind the rivalry for individual colonies and regions. Whereas Wright's portrayal painted a broad portrait of the story, this effort fills in the details.¹⁰

The opportunity to tell that story is provided by the historiographical trends from the scholars of both colonies. The sheer number of recent major studies on the region, regardless of the focus, demonstrates the need for a fuller understanding of this region as well as the opportunity for adding a new interpretive framework to the mix, that of the Anglo-Spanish rivalry, while ensuring as balanced a treatment as possible given the limitations of the historical record. From the standpoint of Carolina, I consider the importance of the real threat posed by the proximity of Spanish Florida. From Florida's perspective, I show the ever-present influence and destruction directed by Carolinian officials and traders intent on removing the potential threat to the south. Finally, from the perspective of the largest group in the region, the Indians, I provide a general analysis of how the competition between the two European colonies affected the overall lives of the Indian population while not losing sight of the primary focus, the interactions of the Spanish and English from their respective colonies. The book reanalyses the events and developments of the Anglo-Spanish rivalry in the south-east and brings all of the various events into a single, comprehensive volume. It demonstrates the ever-present influence of the contest between English and Spanish on the course of Carolinian, Floridian and Indian history, from the founding of Charleston through the aftermath of the Yamassee War in the 1720s. It is, at once, a work of synthesis of many stories told, in part, in many places and a new approach to the history of the region. No longer should Carolina, Florida or the Indians be considered as singular entities, but rather as individual parts woven together in a much larger historical tapestry.

One other important note should be made regarding the use of the word 'borderland' or 'frontier' throughout the work. A large historiography of its own has emerged dealing with the issue of borderlands and frontiers and the semantical differences between these terms. Rather than become entwined in the larger debate, I will stipulate that the meaning of either term in the context of this study refers to the region as one in which neither Spanish nor English nor any individual Indian group fully controls the geographic area. Thus these terms, in the context in which I use them, denote what Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron termed a 'meeting place of people in which geographic and cultural borders were not clearly defined'.¹¹ To this categorization, I might add political and economic borders to address more fully the Anglo-Spanish rivalry that is this study's focus.

To tell the story through an overarching narrative, the book as a whole and each chapter in particular are largely organized chronologically. The first chapter

sets the stage for the introduction of the Anglo-Spanish rivalry to the south-east. It describes the development of the competition in its European beginnings, then traces the role played by that enmity in the beginnings of Spanish Florida as well as the founding of Virginia and the early exploration of Carolina. This chapter argues that, despite the fading of the Anglo-Spanish rivalry in terms of European diplomacy by the early seventeenth century, the rivalry was critical to the events of the early south-east and hints at the more heated confrontation between the two sides as the English pushed their colonies southward by 1670.

The second chapter begins to look at the early interaction between Florida and Carolina, starting with the founding of Charleston in 1670 and continuing through the destruction of the Spanish missions of Guale in the mid-1680s. The chapter identifies the fundamental nature of the Anglo-Spanish rivalry in each colony and shows how that competition, played out largely in the dual quests for Indian alliances, began to shape both the internal and external developments of St Augustine and Charleston. It describes the critical nature of the Spanish missions to the colony of Florida, and how the English sought to weaken Spanish power by striking at those missions. The chapter also describes the early efforts of individuals in Charleston to solidify Indian alliances with tribes such as the Westos and turn those against their rival.

The third chapter describes the decade of the 1690s when diplomatic pressures in Europe forced a period of relative peace between Carolina and Florida. This period is shown to be the 'calm before the storm'. As officials in St Augustine and Charleston each sought to establish links with the other to foster amity, the pressure of competition for Indian alliances, the growing weakness of the Spanish empire and the corresponding inability of Spain to provide adequately for the defence of its outpost in Florida were setting the stage for the cataclysmic events of the early 1700s. The chapter seeks not only to illustrate the larger developments in both colonies, but to provide a more personal picture of the interaction between the Spanish and English during the period through the stories of individuals caught up in the contest between the two rivals.

The fourth chapter provides an overview of attacks by the English against the Spanish colony in Florida in the early 1700s. With the restraints of the previous three decades removed by the War of Spanish Succession in 1701, the colonists in Charleston led by James Moore were able to launch several large-scale attacks against St Augustine and the mission province of Apalachee. Using both militia and large numbers of Yamasee and Creek warriors, the English devastated the town of St Augustine and virtually destroyed the Indian missions of Apalachee. Thousands of mission Indians were either killed, captured and sold into slavery or forced to resettle to regions controlled by the English. The chapter details the end of Spanish power in the south-east.

The last chapter describes the events just after the destruction of Apalachee, as the Creeks and the Yamassees, acting with the encouragement and support of the English, succeeded in destroying all but a handful of the Spanish missions. By the end of the 1710s, Spanish Florida could boast only a few hundred remaining allied Indians. The success of the English, however, led to the increasing abuse of the Indians by English traders and, subsequently, the revolt of the Yamasee Indians and several other tribes against Carolina in 1715. This chapter argues that the war and the resulting waves of refugee Yamassees, Savannahs and other Indians into Florida as they fled English retaliation provided the Spanish a last chance to reclaim their position in the south-east. It shows that the Spanish made serious efforts to win back Indian allies, but that these initiatives were largely unsuccessful because of the weakness of the Spanish empire as a whole. This chapter demonstrates that the Yamasee War had larger implications for the colonial south-east. It set back English efforts to control the region exclusively and set the stage for Indians throughout the region to play off the English, the Spanish and the new European arrivals, the French, against one another for the next several decades, resisting all efforts to be dominated by any one power.

Throughout the narrative, I use the Anglo-Spanish rivalry as the central organizing theme for all of the events described. While other factors and perspectives obviously played their respective roles, the rivalry is the focus of this study. When those other factors enter the events discussed, they are excluded or generalized in order to concentrate on the rivalry itself. The details of the trade in Indian slaves, the slow emergence of plantation agriculture and slavery, the political machinations occurring within each colony and larger imperial concerns of both the English and Spanish have all been given less attention here than the larger competition between these two colonies. The rivalry between Carolina and Florida affected every inhabitant of the colonial south-east. The purpose of this work is to understand better the role that rivalry played in that story.