



AN EXTRACT FROM THE ACCOUNT OF EAST FLORIDA; Published by Dr. Stork, who resided a considerable time in Augustine, the metropolis of that province. LONDON: PRINTED IN THE YEAR MDCCLXVI (1765)
Page 1-17---Dr. Stork's narrative

East Florida is a peninsula, and lies between the 25th and 31st degree of north latitude, and contains about 12,000,000 acres. The author observes, that Egypt, Arabia Felix, Persia, India, China, and Japan, all lie in the same latitude, and are the most remarkable countries in all Africa, and the eastern world, for their fertility and riches and in his description of the province, mentions the river St. John's as the principal river of this province in point of utility and beauty, and not inferior to any in North America.

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The white people work in the fields in the heat of the day without prejudice to their health. Gentlemen frequently ride out for pleasure in the middle of the day, and governor Grant is regularly on horseback every day from eleven to three o'clock in the afternoon. **Page 5**

The author mentions an herb that great advantage might be derived from, it resembles entirely our samphire in England, and is called barilla or kaly, it is the same of which in Spain the pearl ashes are made, in the manner as the kelp in Scotland; the sea coast, marshes, and low lands overflowed at high tides, are covered with it here in Florida. The author mentions the deer as an animal most worthy of notice, as the skins are at present the only article of exportation. The buffalo is found in the savannahs or natural meadows, the peculiarity of which is, that instead of hair it is covered with frizzled wool. The bear is not a fierce, but a useful animal; it feeds upon grapes, chestnuts, acorns, etc. **Page 7**

The racoon is a species of the bear, but smaller, and is esteemed very delicate eating. The horned cattle are as big as in England, in the inland parts. Hares are very plenty, but not bigger than an English rabbit. The horses are of the Spanish breed, of great spirit, but little strength; but the Indians, by mixing the Spanish breed with the Carolina, have excellent horses both for service and beauty. **Page 8**

The rivers of the southern part of North America abound greatly with fish, but Florida more than any other: those mostly made use of are the bass, mullet, different sorts of rays and flat fish, cat fish, sea-trout, and black fish; several sorts of crabs, prawns, and shrimps of an extraordinary size. The oysters are so plentiful here, that nothing is more common, than at low water to see whole rocks of them. There are three sorts of sea turtle common in East Florida; the logger-head, hawks bill, and green turtle: there are likewise two sorts of land turtle, one of them is amphibious, and the other not so, is called a terrapin. East Florida has fewer insects than any other province in America; during my stay here, I saw but two black snakes. Mr. Rolle, who for 12 months lived constantly in the woods, has seen but one rattlesnake; its having so few venomous creatures, is owing to the hunting parties of the Creek Indians, who are dispersed through the whole province, and continually set the grass on fire for convenience of hunting, by which means, not only the insects but their eggs also are destroyed. Alligators are here in great numbers, but never attack men either in the water or upon land; all the mischief they do, is carrying off young pigs from the plantations near the rivers. There is a large yellow spider, bigger than a pigeon's egg, its web a true yellow silk, so strong as to catch small birds, upon which it feeds: the bite of this spider is attended with a swelling of the part and great pain, but no danger of life. **Pages 8 & 9**

The large bounties granted by parliament, and the considerable premiums by the society for the encouragement of arts, manufactures, and commerce, will induce some of the new settlers to cultivate hemp. **Page 11**

In coming down the river, within a few miles from Mr. Rolle's, we pitched upon an island, where we landed and examined it; it may contain about 14 or 1500 acres; a ridge of high lands, runs across, on which is a continued grove of orange trees, live oak, wild cherries, and magnolia; on each side of this ridge is a fine body of rich low lands as any in the world. Near this island is a tract of very good land, separated from it by a creek of about 40 yards wide, and deep enough for any ship. Great plenty of fresh water fish is here in the river, and abundance of ducks and wild turkeys upon the island. I shall return to East Florida next November, and carry negroes with me, as the governor will not grant us our land till the negroes are arrived in the province. **Pages 14 & 15**

The Surveyor General of East Florida. Dated St. Augustine, May 1, 1765.

In consequence of your desire, I acquaint you that by order of the Lords of Trade, and virtue of my appointment as surveyor general of the southern district of North America, I have made an exact survey of the land and sea coast from St. Augustine towards the Cape of Florida, as far as latitude 26. 40. You may inform those who chuse to become inhabitants of East Florida at this favourable juncture of its beginning, that the first comers will have great advantage in the choice of their land. There is variety of soil in East Florida; the high lands, some very rich, with a clay foundation, some less, with a sandy bottom, and some quite sandy. The first and second produce oranges, Sweet and Sour, lemons, oak, ash, red bay spice tree, papaw tree and pine; the third sort of soil produces the cabbage tree, and arboreous grape vine, the plum tree and opuntia, on which the cochineal worm is nourished. The low lands are partly cypress and tupelo swamp, partly fresh water marsh, without any tree except cedar; on the foot of the high lands, partly salt water marsh, full of the barilla and the mangrove tree: there is an inland

navigation mostly through the whole province, by which the produce may* be conveyed to the Capes, or to St. Mary's river to the northward. **Pages 16 & 17**

DENYS ROLLE NARRATIVE

In order to settle this province, his Majesty's Governor issued a Proclamation to all persons, that they may, on application to him in council at St. Augustine, obtain grants of lands in the said province of East Florida, in the following quantities, and " on the following terms : that 100 acres " of land will be granted to every person, being master or mistress of a family, for him or herself; and 50 acres for every white and black man, woman, or child, of which such persons family shall consist, at the actual time of making the grants and in case any person applying as aforesaid, shall be desirous of taking up a larger quantity of land than the family " right entitles such person to, upon shewing a probability of cultivation, an additional number of acres, not exceeding 2000 may be obtained upon paying the receiver of the quit-rents the sum of five shillings sterling, for every 50 acres of the such additional grant, on the day of the date of the said grant. That the quit-rents of the land granted in this province, be one halfpenny per acre, payable to his Majesty on the feast of St. Michael which shall happen two years after the date of the grant: that in all grants of land to be made, regard will be had to the profitable and the unprofitable acres, so that each grantee may have a proportionable number of one sort or the other: as likewise that the breadth of each tract of land be one third of the length of such tract, and that the length of each tract do not extend along the banks of any river, but the main Land, that thereby the said grantees may have each a convenient (share of what accommodation the said river may afford either for navigation or otherwise. That all persons, on fulfilling the terms of the first grant, may have a further grant of the like quantity of lands on the same terms as aforesaid that for every 50 acres of plantable land, each grantee shall be obliged within three years after the date of the grant, to clear and work three acres at least, on that part of the tract which they shall think most convenient and advantageous, or else to drain or clear three acres of swampy or unproductive ground, or drain three acres of marsh, if any such be within his or her grant. That for every fifty acres of land, accounted barren, every Grantee shall be obliged to put on his or her land, within three years after the date of the grant, three neat cattle, which number every person shall be obliged to continue on their land until three acres (unreadable) That if any person shall take up a tract of land, wherein there shall be no part fit for present cultivation without manuring and improving the same, every such grantee " shall be obliged, within three years from the date of the grant, to erect on some part " of the land, one good dwelling-house, at least 20 feet in length, and 16 in breadth; and also to put on the land, the number of three neat cattle for every 50 acres. That if any person who shall take up any stony or rocky grounds, not fit for culture or pasture, shall within three years after the passing the grant, begin to employ thereon, and continue to work for three years then next ensuing, in digging any stone quarry or other mine, one good hand for every 100 acres, it shall be accounted a sufficient cultivation : that every " three acres which shall be cleared and worked as aforesaid; and every three acres which shall be drained as aforesaid, shall be accounted a sufficient clearing, planting, cultivation, and improvement, to keep forever from forfeiture 50 acres of land in any part contained within the same grant; and the grantee shall be at liberty to withdraw the stock, or forbear working in any quarry or mine, in proportion to such cultivation and improvement as shall be made on the plantable " lands, or upon the swamps or unproductive " grounds, or marshes, which shall be included in the same grant. That when and patent any land, shall have cleared, planted, or cultivated, and improved the said land, or any part of it, according to the directions and Conditions above-mentioned, such patentee may make proof of such

feating, planting, and cultivation or “ improvements, in any court of record in the said province, or in the court of the country district or precinct where such “ lands shall be, and have such proofs certified to the register and office, and those entered with the record of the said patent, a copy of which shall be admitted on any trial, to prove the feating and planting such lands.” **Pages 19-22**

That the grantee do settle the lands with protestant white inhabitants, within ten years from the date of the grant, in proportion of one person for every 100 acres. That if one third of the land is not settled with white protestant inhabitants in the above-mentioned proportion, within three years from the date of the grant, the whole to be forfeited to his majesty, his heirs or successors. That such part of the whole tract as is not settled with white protestant inhabitants at the expiration of ten years from the date of the grant, to revert to his majesty, his heirs or successors. **Page 23**

The first great objection is the heat of the climate. This is less than the West Indies, but if more, by the situation, being more southern than Carolina or Georgia, yet for the aforementioned reasons, and by experience, being in the former province in two different summers, can declare the heat to be more sufferable. White people myself inured to labour, though not born to it, being one, who could work the whole days for eight months in the year; in the four summer months, two or three hours in the morning and the same in the evening, may be suffered by whites, and the culture of the ground, for the respective crops will require no more in the open sunshine: for if the weeds are followed by the hoe during the cooler months, the crop surmounts them before the weather is increased much in heat, and the planter need only view the crop, keeping the weeds down and ripening fast to perfection. **Page 26**

The second inconvenience must arise from an opportunity seized on, and an inclination given way to, in drinking much strong liquor or rum unmixed, as plenty and cheapness permits; and in quenching the thirst: naturally inclined to a cool draught by liquor, either water or other sort of a different degree of temperature with the blood, somewhat moved by the heat alone in summer, but if excited by labour, must nearly boil. This then is a voluntary inconvenience, to be remedied by a mixture always of seven-eighths of water to one of rum, a proportion, though derided at first by the incautious, yet acquiesced and approved by all after long experiment. **Page 28**

To establish and render more perfect this happy settlement, I would wish every settler to let these be his guiding maxims in his own breast, That liberty be to all people to worship the divine Being according to their truth and persuasion, so as it tend to the honour where 'tis all due, not to the detriment of civil society, which is not to be inferred by any sect, or from any religion: that Sunday be observed strictly according to the established church, to which all preeminence must be given: That Indians and Negroes are to be esteemed in all respects human, capable of inheriting an happy eternity, and to be by all means, the former by the means of civility, humanity, and invitation to the attending divine service, drawn to christianity; the latter, if it is necessary that they be introduced, (but they are at farthest designed to be but a far minor part of this settlement are to be prohibited the use of Sunday in railing provision for themselves as is the custom in many, I may call heathen colonies, and obliged by their mailers to attend divine service on that day, who are to permit some other part of the week to be applied for that work, as they tender their own advancement and thriving in life by the work of those hours. That marriage be esteemed honourable, and not only a civil but religious compact; that though not to be deferred by the civil magistrate at any time, yet never to be omitted by the clergyman of the church of England, if present, or confirmed by him when the first opportunity offers. That all children be sent to be educated at a proper age, at the school intended to be established. That no one offer to set up a publick house of

entertainment, except such established by the proprietor, for the free use of travellers unprovided with lodging, or absolute necessary refreshment. That every species of good order be recommended, and that no person whatsoever induce Indians to make too free use of any strong liquor; but that every rule laid down to regulate the commerce and conduct be observed with that people who permit us to settle on their profitable lands.

I have chartered a ship, and am now going over with about fifty more settlers to visit my plantation, to give the necessary directions for its progress. And any persons who may be hereafter inclined to settle upon this promising land, may hear of frequent opportunities of going thither at the great sea ports nearest to their abode, such as London, Bristol, Liverpool where ships will be freighted to St. John's River, on which my plantation is situated, or to St. Augustine, which is about thirty-five miles from it.

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Tuesday,

Sept, 1, 1766.

DENYS ROLLE.

F I N I S.