

Phone 8-1866

~~Rutherford~~

Miss Fannie Holt  
3112 Riverside Drive  
Jacksonville 5, Florida

March 5, 1948

My dear Dr. Yonge:—

Florida Under Five Flags is  
Charming in appearance and  
delightfully written. I am very grate-  
ful to you and Dr. Patriek for it.

Ambrose Hull while not an  
ancestor married two of my great  
grandmother's sisters, the eldest and  
the youngest of the beautiful and  
talented Hull sisters of Wallingford  
Connecticut, Hannah (?) and Steels.  
My great-grandmother Ruth married  
The Rev. Seth Hart, D.D., who was  
rector of St. George's Church, Hamp-

Stead, Long Island, N.Y. from 1800  
 to 1829. The Rectory became the  
 headquarters for relatives and  
 friends awaiting ships, and the  
 refuge of the bereaved. Most of the  
 early Florida papers I have are  
 the letters written <sup>to</sup> my great-grand-  
 mother. The elder sister was married  
 about 1790 and died about 1805.  
 Her youngest sister who was an  
 inveterate traveller was with her  
 at the time. She came north.  
 Capt. Hull followed her and they  
 were married from the Rectory  
 in Hempstead in 1806. She sur-  
 vived her husband but died in  
 the 1820s and her three little  
 daughters with their colored nurse  
 came to live at the Rectory in

Hempstead. The three executives tried to administer the great properties of Ambrose Hull consisting of the Spanish grant of New Smyrna and Orange Park, but as they were at a distance the lands were lost to the daughters, principally from settlement by squatters, in the long run. As I have quantities of letters from other members of the families until the present day including those of my grandparents and their children who settled in Florida immediately after the war between the states, there are many side lights on larger events and trends. My uncle Edmund

Hell Hart was a great pioneer in assembling and trying out plants from all over the world at Federal Point, and my father Edwin Dwight Hubbard, also of Federal Point, contributed to the advancement of orange culture.

- These papers and letters are at my grandfather's home, "Hearthside", Poughkeepsie, which I have inherited as being among the descendants the one best fitted to make use of the family treasures. I am anxious to see these materials preserved as public records as well as family treasures. And I shall be glad to show them to people who will come there by appointment, giving me time to get out the things needed.

Cordially yours,  
Edith L. Hubbard



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Settlers from Connecticut in Spanish Florida: Letters of Ambrose Hull and Stella Hall  
1804-1806

Author(s): Ambrose Hull, Stella Hall and Robert E. Rutherford

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# SETTLERS FROM CONNECTICUT IN SPANISH FLORIDA

LETTERS OF AMBROSE HULL AND STELLA HALL 1804-1806\*

*Edited by* ROBERT E. RUTHERFORD

## Introduction

Florida was the northern bastion of Spain's New World empire from an early period; and, except for brief British possession (1763-1783), the land was hers for almost three hundred years. The era following 1783, when Great Britain returned Florida to Spain, until 1821, when Florida became United States territory, is known as the second Spanish period of Florida history.

Spain met the threats to her Caribbean empire in Florida with two general programs. The first attempts by the other colonizing nations to found settlements were discouraged by the system of missions and presidios she established in the frontier areas. This program, however, ended with the Seven Years War, 1756-1763, when Florida became a British province. When Spain regained control of Florida after the American Revolution, she adopted new measures to stem the new threat to her position in the Caribbean — a threat born of the westward development of the young and ambitious United States.

One of these defensive measures which Spain adopted to maintain her hold on Florida during this period was an attempt to attract settlers into her territories. This measure, it was hoped, would make loyal Spanish subjects of the settlers, thus forming a living buffer against any territorial expansion of the

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\*The following letters are in the possession of Miss Edith L. Hubbard of Poughkeepsie, New York. The editor of the letters, the *Florida Historical Quarterly*, and Professor R. W. Patrick to whom they were lent, express grateful acknowledgment to Miss Hubbard of the family of the writers, for allowing their transcription and publication; and also for many other letters and diaries of the same family, all relating to Florida during the Reconstruction period, a selection of which will appear in future issues of the *Quarterly*. Transcriptions of all are in the P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida.

United States across the boundaries of the Spanish provinces of Florida and Louisiana.

The call for immigrants passed through two phases. The first phase opened Florida and the Mississippi Valley to settlement indirectly. The instrument for this policy was a royal order issued in 1782 which liberalized the commercial privileges enjoyed by the Spanish subjects living in these areas. Non-Spanish Catholics were allowed to immigrate to Florida and Louisiana on condition that they take an oath of loyalty to the Spanish crown.<sup>1</sup> The commercial privileges notwithstanding, the program was not effective. French, Germans, as well as Spaniards, were encouraged, but the immigrants proved unsatisfactory in quantity as well as in quality. At the same time, Anglo-Americans were settling the western lands along the Ohio River and some were spilling into the Spanish provinces without invitation.<sup>2</sup>

To meet this threat Spain issued two royal orders, the first on December 1, 1788, and the second on October 29, 1790. The order of 1788 opened the Florida and Louisiana provinces to non-Catholic immigrants. Even though American Protestants could settle in these regions, they had to take an oath of allegiance to the Spanish crown. The settler could retain his own faith, but only the Catholic religion could be practiced openly and publicly.<sup>3</sup> The royal order of 1790 established the stipulations and qualifications under which the Spanish officials would issue land to the new settlers.<sup>4</sup> The assumptions under which the Spanish government issued these cédulas were not without some foundation. Many of the western settlers were dissatisfied with their own government, and several groups en-

1. A. P. Whitaker, *Documents Relating to the Commercial Policy of Spain in the Floridas*. DeLand, Florida, 1931, pp. 30-39.
2. Bernardo del Campo to Conde de Floridablanca. London, November 16, 1783. AHN: Est. Leg. Ap. 1.
3. Louis de las Casas to [Juan Nepomuceno de] Quesada, October 29, 1790. East Florida Papers, Library of Congress. box 410, vol. 1.
4. 18th Cong. 1st. sess. H.Rep. 158. May 18, 1824. p. 23.

tertaind the possibility of establishing independent states under Spain's protection and with commercial agreements with the Spanish government.<sup>5</sup>

*Ambrose Hull and His Letters*

Ambrose Hull was one of the settlers who came to Florida during the second Spanish period. He arrived in St. Augustine from Wallingford, Connecticut, early in 1801;<sup>6</sup> and after he had been granted the right to settle two thousand, six hundred acres of land in the territory called "Mosquitos" in the New Smyrna area,<sup>7</sup> he returned to Connecticut for his wife, Abigail.<sup>8</sup> Stella Hall, youngest sister of Abigail, returned to Florida with the Hulls. They soon settled on their land with many laborers, as well as artisans equipped with all the necessary supplies. Unfortunately their work was interrupted by an Indian attack in which Hull suffered a loss amounting to \$3,000. When he began preparing for a new start, a number of settlers from the Bahama Islands asked permission to join him in settling his land for their mutual protection against the Indians. Hull agreed and they began the new combined settlement in September 1803, and continued until the Bahama settlers left in 1809.<sup>9</sup>

The following letters tell the story of Ambrose and Abigail Hull and Stella Hall from the time they began building their settlement to the latter part of 1806. They were written to the Reverend Seth Hart, rector of St. George's Church in Hempstead, Long Island, New York,<sup>10</sup> and Ruth, his wife and another sister of Abigail and Stella. The rectory became the headquar-

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5. The separatist feeling in Kentucky at this time is a striking example of this spirit.
  6. Letter, Edith L. Hubbard, a member of the Hall-Hart family, to Julien C. Yonge, March 5, 1948.
  7. The original royal title granted to Ambrose Hull on January 15, 1801 is in the St. Johns County Court House, St. Augustine, Florida.
  8. Petition by Ambrose Hull September 11, 1811, for final title to the land granted January 15, 1801, *ibid.*
  9. *Idem.*
  10. Hubbard to Yonge, *ante.*



ters of relatives and friends awaiting ships and exchanging news. Late in 1806 Ambrose took his wife north to Hempstead where she died shortly after their arrival, but before the year 1806 ended Ambrose and Stella were married in the rectory in Hempstead and had departed for their home in Florida.<sup>11</sup>

The second part of these letters, to be included in the next issue of this *Quarterly*, begins after the Hulls return to Florida in 1806 and continues until the settlement of the Hull estate after the death of both Ambrose and Stella.

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*Stella Hall to Ruth Hart.*

New Smyrna 6<sup>th</sup> June . . 1804

My Dear Sister

I hasten to acknowledge the *rect* of yours by Mr. Fairburn<sup>12</sup>, their is a Countryman of ours going immediately to Charleston, and from thence to N. York – I am sorry the letter you receiv'd by the above mention'd Gentleman has caused you so many apprehensions – I wrote it soon after we landed at Smyrna and confess that from the fatigues of a long Journey, the fear of the Indians, and the uncultivated state of the country I was somewhat in the melancholly mood – and actually began to listen to the suggestions of that green eyed monster Ennui —

I am now happy to tell you that its peaceble times in *Petunxes* [?] *Wigwam*, – the murmers of the Indians have been silenced by the late distribution of their annual presents – which having been too long withheld had created much uneasiness among them – and the tribe of Siminoles who under the conduct of the notorious Bowles<sup>13</sup> formerly committed so many depredations on this settlement have since gone over to the

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11. *Ibid.*

12. Mr. Fairburn, a sea captain, often carried letters for the Hulls to and from Hempstead and New Smyrna.

13. William Augustus Bowles was a notorious adventurer who attempted to organize an Indian republic from the Lower Creeks. He, of course, would be the chief.

Creek Nation who are very numerous and apparently very friendly – Their leader Bowles has been apprehended and is now confined in the Moro Castle at Havanna – so that we have not an Indian within a hundred mile of us – and the Snakes their counterparts have either follow'd them, or have been routed and burnt together with the brush and rubbish – for they never interrupt my frequent rambles in the woods – which at this season abound with a variety of the most beautiful flowers, and flow'ring trees, with aromatic shrubs, that fill the air with a delicious fragrance —

As for the sand flies and mosquitos they still maintain their ground, in despite of Catholicks, Jews or Protestants – and are indeed the most formidable Enemies we have to contend with – They begin the war song (generally) about sunset, when if there's no wind (which luckily for us is not often the case) we may be pretty sure of a warm engagement – but in such desperate cases we have recourse to fumigation – and altho' smoke is not altogether agreeable to our optic nerves – yet it tends to check the still more offensive apperation of the Enemy – thus every bane has in some shape or other its antidote –

Our place is call'd Mount Olive – which from its height and the number of trees of that name describes the title – here we can make our own oil, wine, sugar and cotton – raise our own Coffe, corn, rice, ginger &, - with every kind of Vegetable – and all tropical fruits –

The country is in general very flat - which is not on that account so pleasant to me who am fond of Hills & Dales –

My favorite spot is a little arbour compos'd of a number of young orange trees, intersected with myrtle and thickly interwoven with luxuriant grape vines – the resort of a great number of beautiful Birds who entertain us with their wild enchanting melody – This rural spot is pleasantly situated on a bank of

the little river Hillsborough<sup>14</sup> — which winds with many a crook among a cluster of Mangrove Islands — and not only affords us plenty of excellent fish, but is also a very charming addition to our prospect — Here I spend many solitary hours in reading or “chewing the quid of sweet and bitter fancy” — Here reverted memory brings to my view the ocean of the past — and with it a torrent of melancholly reflections — here I listen by moonlight to the hoarse and distant murmers of the vast Atlantic — and it reminds me of the Friends that are far from Smyrna — without even the hope or possibility of seing them shortly — But this is only moistening ones eye lids to no purpose — and I quit the subject — —

Sister Hannah it seems wont send us the scrape of a pen — I should write her notwithstanding would time permit — This now must answer for both — for goodman Read<sup>15</sup> is waiting — and I reluctantly bid you Adieu — Libby<sup>16</sup> is well and sends her love to the Brother and Sisterhood —

I am as usual

Your affectionate Sister

STELLA HALL

The letters I wrote previous to leaving Augustine you tell me have not yet come to hand — I am not much surprised for (N.B.) I sent them to Charleston by a spaniard, who had too many names to carry — to wit. Don Manuel, Antonio, Fernando, Dominic, de Martinella — of Castile of Old Spain. — subject to his most Catholick Majesty — Adios, or God be with you — —

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14. The Hillsborough River referred to in these letters is now the Halifax River.

15. Mr. Read also carried letters north for the Hulls.

16. “Libby” refers to Abigail Hull.

*Ambrose Hull to Rev. Seth Hart*

New Smyrna April [22, 1805]

Brother Hart

I have not received a line nor heard a word from you nor any of our northern friends since October last — tho' I have repeatedly written you & them — The reason of this long silence — I do not know — but this I know — that we are really desirous to hear from you — at least that you are in comfortable health — We have nothing particularly now to communicate — I write to remind you, that I still feel an interest in your Wellfare — and to induce you to give us the pleasure of hearing from you — My employment in itself, is to me a pleasant one — and would be altogether so were the seasons more favorable — they have been unusually hot & dry thus far for this Climate — tho' the temperature of the air is perfectly healthy and agreeable — not a cloud to be seen for weeks — Abby has enjoyed better health for several Months past than I ever knew her to enjoy — and was never so well pleased and contented in any situation that we have been placed since we were married — She says there are only two things wanting to satisfy her mind as to this worlds good — that is more favorable seasons for crops to ensure the common comforts of life — and the near neighbourhood society of her Sister Ruthy, yourself & family and she even goes further — and says, that in case this Province should be ceded to U. State's as seems yet to be pretty strongly expected — and we should establish our claim to the property we now possess, under that government and make one good crop — that she shall offer her sister Ruthy one half of her possessions in fee simple on condition of her immediately becoming an actual resident, of course her nearest neighbour — And I have the pleasure to add — that it would be one of the highest felicitates of my life, to have the opportunity to place my signature to a bequest of the description aforementioned.

I have the solid satisfaction however, of informing you — that this dear blessed child, after struggling so many years with sickness & general debility — together with a consequent habitual complaint — which seemed of itself must induce her ruin — has long since recovered from it and I believe is perfectly established in her wanted energy of body & mind — Joining with her in fervent orisons for the health & happiness of yourself & family —

I am your sincere friend & brother

A. HULL

St. Marys  
April 22, [1805]  
Reverend Seth Hart  
Hempstead  
Long Island  
State New York

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*Ambrose Hull to Rev. Seth Hart*

New Smyrna June 12<sup>th</sup> 1805

Brother Hart

I had the happiness of receiving your very facetious letter of the 9<sup>th</sup> April a few days since; as I am at all times happy to hear from my brother Hart — and my Soul was highly refreshed, *in the multitude of my sorrows*, with the unusual flashings of wit & humour, with which it abounded — And I am still more happy to find, that you still retain your wanted brotherly concern for us, from the number of letters, you mention to have written me, tho I have not had the pleasure of receiving but a small portion of them. . . . We had just arived safe at this place — which it seems our amiable Sister has announced to you, in her usual stile of Bombast & Hyperbole — Our situation, as formed not only by nature, but no inconsiderable portion of art & expanse, is esteemed by genteel

travellers one of the handsomest in America – and instead of being *surrounded by an uncultivated wilderness, filled with savage monsters, venomous serpents, and unnumberable swarms of blood-thirsty mosquitos and sand flies* – as affecting the *Fine* strung nerves of your amiable and truly veritable informant – We are encompassed on three sides, with cultivated fields, and on the fourth, fronting a beautiful arm of the sea eastward, interspersed with Small Islands for about two miles, which we overlook and our prospect is bounded by a broad horizon closing on the great Atlantic – And the population of mostly genteel families, including their slaves, within the compass of four miles of us – is between five & Six hundred – beside a continuation of Settlements from this place to St. Augustine, –and about twenty miles to the Southward, – which are almost daily increasing – As to *Savage Monsters*, I know not the meaning of it – not even an Indian has step'd into our door since we came here – No new settlements in America, unless infested with *venomous serpents* – and as for *swarms of blood-thirsty Mosquitos*, I have neither seen, nor heard the sound of this Season – a few still Morning and Evenings, the Sand flies or Nats – have been a little troublesome – but very like~~y~~ our Mosquitoes may be as trouble here as they are on Long Island, when the Showery Season commences – but as yet, they are an evil in the imagination only – As to our accommodations here, they are as yet, but indifference, – – I have however, a number of Masons now employed, – in building a small airy stone house of two stories, with necessary out houses of the same material, which will probably be completed in the course of next Month – My Crop of Cotton &c; promises tollerably – tho' the Season has been rather unfavorable thro want of rain – and my land is so situated, that I was under the necessity of Commencing on the poorest – and my gang of hands for this Season is rather small, having

but ten in the field – tho I have a prospect of shortly adding to their number – Abby joins my love and goodwill for her Sisters yourself and your little brood – while I am as usual your friends & brother – — A. HULL

Rev. Seth Hart  
Hempstead  
Long Island  
State of New York

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*A. W. Hull to Ruth Hart*

New Smyrna June 27<sup>t</sup> 1805

My Dear Sister

I might muster up a variety of apologies for my long silence – but shall make but one – and that is my ever insurmountable aversions to letter writing – I am sorry to say it – but no poor dog ever entered his neck in a halter with more reluctance than I take a pen in hand to write – nor did ever a poor dog receive his liberty and a piece of meat with more pleasure than I a letter from a friend – and especially from you – that pleasure has long been denied me – for what reason I am unable to divine – unless you consider me out of the world – (which it seems Stella has intimated) and have no more concern for my temporal welfare – but you might like a good Catholic put up a prayer now & then for my poor soul in purgatory – I am however better pleased with my situation and far more happy than I ever was in any other – the Climate is charming – there can be none finer in the world except Italy which I am told is perfectly similar – What few families there are at present in this settlement are well bred genteel people – North of us is a Mr Kerr & lady – Mr Ormand & lady – Mr Munro & lady – Mr McHardy & lady – all from Nasau N- Providence<sup>17</sup> – they have handsome

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17. These are the settlers from the Bahamas mentioned in the Introduction.

Plantations with near a 100 negroes each – South a few roods is a Capt Ladd & lady from Portmuth N- Hampshire, further southward tho' but a short walk is a Mr Dumant Capt Martin – Mr Bretts Madison &c Our House is situated upon a delightful hill surrounded with Olives – (from which I have named the place Olive Mount) – and lined with Groves & avenues of Sour Oranges trees on which wave the golden fruit throughout the year – a few paces in front of the house which is East runs a river call'd Hillsborough intersected with a number of Mangrove Islands & fill'd with a variety of excelent fish, the shores are lined with Oysters & the creeks with clams of the best quality, the soft & hard shell'd Crab the latter as large as Lobsters are delicious – the oysters are larger & better than blue points – green turtle – deer & wild fowl are very plenty – so much for eatables – we have four the best wells of water I ever tasted – Our house is built with hewn stone two stories – In the main body of the house are two large rooms one above the other – three double doors & six windows in each – at each end there is a wing – turret or tower – in each two handsome bed rooms with three windows The roofs are flat & terrass'd on which I spend some hours every fair day in walking & reading – and from which we have a charming prospect of the bar & Ocean – North & south of the Island rivers & plantations – the latter are all in sight & join except a margin of wood divides the fields – Back we have a most enchanting view of the long extended forrests of Pines Palms Live Oaks Hicories and an innumerable variety of flowering trees and shrubs – among which are the odoriferous flowering trees by botanists call'd Magnolia Grandeflora – in other words the Laurel – whose high heads towering above the rest seem to be looking into future times – The walks thro' the woods from one plantation to another are absolutely fascinating – they are lined with hedges of sweet Myrtle with the



greatest variety of the most beautiful flowers — from which the air is constantly perfumed — the hyacinth the Indian creeper the morning glory with a variety of others which you nurse in your gardens grow wild here & cover the trees — But I have taken a [illegible] from the top of the house into the woods — to which I'll return and finish my long letter for I am heartily tired of it & sure you must be — I cannot however stop yet — for when I begin a letter I never know where to end — I think I have said enough of the place & house but I must tell you the Scotch here call it a Castle — when it is painted & the Piazza round it up I think it may be calld elegant for this country —

I have not been to St Augustine since we removed here which was a year last March but hear they are in high spirits in consequence of a Privateer from there bringing in three rich English Prizes a ship of 400 tons a Brig & Sloop laden with rum wine Peruvian barks flowers rice corn pork beef &c &c I shall make them a visit this week — & as this is the season for dancing there — expect to be honored with some warm balls — Stella is well & receivd a letter yesterday from Nancy dated Jan 3 by which she seems in good spirits — & very pressing for her to go to St Martins in consequence of which she has concluded to go on to Charlstown — from thence take passage for the West Indies — I shall not seal my letter untill I arive in Augustine — I might frequently send you oranges if there were any vessls going to the northward in the season of them — —

St Augustine July 9<sup>th</sup>

Mr Hull, Stella & myself have been here more than a week — we are now waiting for a wind — She to sail for Charlstown on her way to St. Martins We to return to our place of bannishment among devouring insects & poisonous reptiles which Nancy mentions in her letter with so much horror &

which I have not yet found — I beg you to write & tell me all & every thing that concerns you your family & other connections I am extremely anxious to hear from my dear sister Hannah & child — my love to them — Mr Hart & your dear little boys who I suppose by this time are men — tell them to write me & I will promise at least to answer their letters — I have had some dependence upon Stellas writing for me as she has had nothing else to do but shall now take it upon myself — & hope you will not have so much reason to complain of the silence of your affectionate sister

A W — HULL

Reverend Seth Hart —  
Hempstead Long Island  
State New York

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*Elihu Atwater to Rev. Seth Hart*

St Marys June 13<sup>th</sup> 1806

Dear Sir —

Yours of 3<sup>d</sup> May last came to hand by this days Mail, and I am very happy it is in my power to afford you some satisfaction in respect to Miss Hall — I can in some degree remove your anxiety or uneasiness by informing you that Miss Stella did according to the best of my recollection, go from Smyrna to St Augustine from whence she intended going on to Charleston or some other port in the States in order to get to her sisters but she afterwards altered her mind and returned to Smyrna at which place she remained when I last heard from her, and I can further say that I think Mr Hull gave me the information when he was here sometime in Febr<sup>y</sup> or March last, and that he had left her and Mrs Hull in good health, — Mr Hull had then just returned from Charleston & had been absent for sometime and very anxious to return home. . . . Since writing the above I have seen Capt Ladd, who is a

near Neighbour of Mr Hull's, and tells me he left Smyrna about 4 weeks since, that M<sup>ss</sup> S. was there then and she and the family all well and that they had good prospects of a crop the reasons why Miss Stella did not pursue the voyage as contemplated was there Capt Ladd had expected to go, with his wife to Charleston but when the vessel was ready Mr Ladd was taken ill and could not go, & there being no other female on board Miss S. gave it out, and he thinks she will not go at all. . . .

I have no news in mind at present to communicate and as it is now almost dark and our mail goes out this Evening — I will close with only observing that I have not the Honor of being post master —

I am Sir with much Esteem

Your friend & Humble Sevt —

ELIHU ATWATER

Revd S. Hart

PS. My Best respects to M<sup>rs</sup> Hart and other friends

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*Ambrose Hull to Rev. Seth Hart*

New Smyrna August 6<sup>th</sup> 1806

Brother Hart

I received last week your letter of the 3<sup>d</sup> May and Abby received one from Ruthy at same time, fraught with horrors on acct of Stella — and I must acknowledge, not without reason — She is still here — as you have undoubtedly been informed by E. Atwater of St. Marys — When I wrote you from Charleston last Winter — Whether I mentioned her name or not — I supposed she had frequently written Ruthy after she concluded to return here from Augustine last August and after her return as she had frequent opportunity — Indeed I understood her that she had written Ruthy before she returned here from Augustine in August last — but to my utter aston-

ishment — When I returned from Charleston in March, I was told she had not written her at all — her motives for this neglect, are to me — inscrutable — I leave her to assign them — An opportunity offered a few weeks ago — by which I informed you that she was still here — and also mentioned — that within the year past — She had had two offers of marriage both very advantageous — and far beyond anything she had any right to expect — both of which she had seen fit to trifle with & reject — to the utter astonishment of every body that felt any interest in her welfare — Both the gentlemen were planters from N. Providence and are now established in this neighbourhood One of them is a man about five & thirty a very decent man and an excellent planter — he has several plantations on the Bahama Islands and a very excellent one here pleasantly situated and has rising of 100 Negroes beside other personals — his property at a moderate calculation is worth at least \$50000 — The other is a young gentleman of a genteel education — received in England — and a most amiable character — with a property worth at least \$20000 — What emotions were experienced by Abby & myself — by such levity in a Sister in her circumstances — I shall not aim at describing — Still she discovers no inclination to leave this Province — nor ever has — It is true — there are very few young ladies in the Province except Spaniards & Minorcans — but she has let slip the most favorable opportunities — and instead of a competent or genteel indeed an elegant establishment — she has seemed the enviable character of an accomplished Coquet — and further this deponent saith not. We were very very glad to hear from you & yours — that you were in health &c; but sorry to read your expressions of despondency We have experienced little else but misfortunes & disappointments since we came this way — Still we do not give up the idea of yet enjoying many of the good things of this life — in the

Society of some of our old friends, & in this – neighbourhood – especially, should there be a change of government in any good time. . . . by directing your letters to St. Marys to the care of E. Atwater – they will most generally come to hand in the course of a few months – Abby joins me in love to Ruthy & the little folks – while I remain as usual your Sincere friend & brother – – –

A. HULL

Reverend Seth Hart  
Hempstead  
Long Island  
State of New York

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*Stella Hall to Ruth Hart*

New Smyrna 8 Aug<sup>t</sup> 1806

*Dear Sister Ruthy*

Your letter to Abby we rec'd a few days ago, inclos'd in one from Br Hart – the subject of which was my intended journey to S Martins and the distress and anxiety which my suppos'd misfortunes or Death had occasion'd you all – I was indeed very much astonish'd to find you had not heard from, nor of me in such a length of time – and truly grev'd that I had caus'd you so much uneasiness – I shou'd not have attempted going to St M[artins] had it not been for a letter which I recd from Nancy a few days previous to my departure for St Augustine dated Jan<sup>y</sup> 1805 in which I determin'd to embark, I was however disappointed in obtaining a passage, the Capt for reasons best known to himself alterd his course and want on to the Havannah – no other opportunity offerd I wrote you in Sept that I had given up the idea of going to St M and concluded to return back to New Smyrna – I found there was so little communication between the Port of Charleston and that Island it wou'd be extremely difficult to

procure a passage from thence — it was moreover runing a very great risque to venture out at a time when all American Vessels were liable to capture or insult from not only French and English but even Spaniards,<sup>18</sup> the idea of falling into the hands of some infernal pirate was of all others the most horrid — I therefore determin'd as the only prudent step I cou'd take to seek once more the quiet retreat from which I had first started, whenc I have remaind in Status-quo ever since — you have undoubtedly been apprized (before this) of my safety and place of abode as I understand by a letter from Elihu Atwater that he had given you information to that effect —

I have no means of forwarding a letter to St M. I therefore request you will remember me in yours, and assure our dear Brother and Sister of my unalterable affection. . . . Abby sends her love to you and has promised to write the next opportunity —

Your affectionate Sister,  
STELLA HALL

PS. the general expectation here is that this Provinces of east and west Florida will be shortly given up to the United States it is an event ardently wish'd by more than two thirds of the inhabitants —

I'm afraid you'll not be able to read this dreadful scrawl — I hope in future to be furnish'd with better materials

*(This series of letters from Spanish East Florida will be continued in the next issue of this QUARTERLY.)*

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18. During this time, 1806, American ships were subject to seizure by the British who were impressing American seamen. The French privateers and their allies, the Spanish, also sailed the Florida coast at this time preying upon American ships.



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Settlers from Connecticut in Spanish Florida: Letters of Ambrose Hull and Stella Hall Hull 1808-1816

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## SETTLERS FROM CONNECTICUT IN SPANISH FLORIDA

LETTERS OF AMBROSE HULL AND STELLA HALL HULL 1808--1816

*Edited by* ROBERT E. RUTHERFORD

### Part II

Ambrose Hull was one of the Protestant Americans who answered Spain's call of 1788 for immigrants to settle and develop the Florida lands. Hull obtained a grant of 2,600 acres in the New Smyrna area early in 1801 and began building his settlement, as narrated in Part I in the last issue of this *Quarterly*. Unfortunately, his first attempt was cut short by an Indian raid in which he suffered damages amounting to several thousand dollars. Nevertheless, Ambrose and his wife, Abigail, with her sister, Stella Hall, soon began rebuilding. The letters previously published relate the story of their early years in Florida, or until 1806. In that year, on a trip to Hempstead, New York, Abigail passed away. Stella, who accompanied Abigail and Ambrose to Florida in 1801 and then returned with them to Hempstead in 1806, married Ambrose before the year ended.

The following letters relate the story of Ambrose and Stella after their return to Florida late in 1806, and continue until 1816. These were years of both happiness and misfortune. After the so-called Patriot War in 1812, the Hulls left their plantation near New Smyrna and made their home at St. Marys, Georgia. However, even though they lived in the United States, their lives centered about the Florida scene, so they may still be considered as a part of the Spanish-Florida story. While living in St. Marys, the Hulls often longed for their old Florida plantation, and so, on December 10, 1820, Ambrose purchased three hundred acres on the west side of the St. Johns River, and later on March 7, 1821, he obtained two hundred additional acres in the same area.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Petition by William Gibson, executor of the last will of Ambrose Hull. *Spanish Land Grants in Florida*. Historical Records Survey, WPA, (5 vols., Tallahassee, 1941). Vol. III, *Confirmed Claims*, 295-296.



*Stella Hall Hull to Ruth Hart*

New Smyrna May 25<sup>th</sup> 1808 ---

Dear Sister Ruthy—

. . . I am very impatient to hear once again from your quarter of the World — and am much surprized and not a little hurt that I have not had the satisfaction as yet, of a single line from our Sister Hannah or Brother Edmund — I have written repeatedly to them as well as yourself since we arriv'd in Florida — and really think I have some reason to complain of the neglect of Friends that are so near and dear to me — and who cannot but be sensible how much it is in their power to contribute to my happiness in this particular, and that it cannot fail to afford me inexpressible pleasure to hear frequently of their Health and Prosperity —

I am very desirous to hear from Edmund, and to know how he has disposed of himself as he did not appear altogether determin'd when he left Hemp. — what course to persue — I wrote him sometime in Jan<sup>ry</sup> and endeavor'd to persuade him to make us a visit — as it must now be very dull in the United States, I think he had better try his Fortune this way — at any rate he may come and see us without any great sacrifice of time or money — and he will then be enabled to judge for himself what can be done — I wou'd not be understood that the times are very bright and lively with us — but we are jogging on in a sober quiet manner, and trust that with the smiles of a good Providence our persevering Industry we shall be able in a few years to acquire an Estate sufficient to support us through life (not in splendour) but in ease and independence — it is a great point gain'd when we can bend our desires to our circumstances when we are so far contented with our condition that we can enjoy all the good, and pass lightly over the evil that happens to fall in our way — Yet how many miserable beings there are who seemingly in the possession of every Earthly blessing — are not

capable, - are not wise enough to enjoy any thing, but go on growling to the end of the chapter — but enough —

I must now inform you that I send this letter by William Hull who is going on to Connect<sup>t</sup> with his Br. Abiather by way of N. York if a passage can be obtain'd to that place if not via. Charleston — Mr Hull is writing by this conveyance to Mr Hart — he joins me in love to you and all our Brothers and Nephews and Sister Hannah —

Yours Affectionately

STELLA HULL

PS. I wish you to desire Br Edmund, or Cousin William or some one of your household, to examine at Waits Lottery Office in Maiden Lane, the fate of a Ticket which I hold in St. Marys College Lottery Baltimore — the number 7028. you see I'm still dabler in a game of hazard - it is well enough now and then to try Fortunes caprice, she may by chance throw something in ones way — you will write me soon, I have a right to expect so at least

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*Stella Hall Hull to Ruth Hart*

New Smyrna Apr 3<sup>d</sup> 1809

Dear Sister Ruthy,

I imbrace the opportunity that now offers of writing you a few lines by Br Edmund — who is on the Wing for your place of residence — I am extremely sorry that it is not in our power to detain him longer with us — but he seems determind on trying his fortune in the Western part of your State . . . .

I was very glad to hear that your prospects were so favourable, and I really hope that in order to enjoy the benefits thereof you are more attentive to your health than you use'd to be — as for our prospects they are not quite as incouraging as I cou'd wish, but bad as they are we are not yet on the forlorn *hope* — Fortune has long frown'd upon us and she still knits her brows

— but so long as we are permitted by the blessing of Heaven to enjoy health and provide comfortable for our dear little Babe we shall not repine —

You have undoubtedly heard before now of our family addition — but to discribe the endearing quallities, the pretty looks and playfullness of my little Mary — a Mother cou'd not do her justice on a whole sheet of paper, I must therefore refer you to Brother Edmund for particulars as I believe he thinks her if not one of the handsomest, at least one of the best children in the world, she is about eight months old and in the midst of teething, but with very little difficulty — Mr Hull appears to be as fond of her as a reasonable Father shou'd be of such a child —

I shou'd be much pleas'd to make you a visit this season cou'd we do so with propriety, but it seems to be absolutely necessary for us to continue here this season whatever we may think proper to do the next if it shou'd please God to prolong our lives . . . remember me affectionately to your *good Husband* and *dear Children* - and believe me -

Yours Unalterably,  
STELLA HULL

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*Stella Hall Hull to Ruth Hart*

St. Augustine May 19<sup>th</sup> 1810

Dear Sister Ruthy

I have delay'd writing you for a length of time — as we were expecting every week to come to Augustine - to which place we have at length removed, and where we calculate to spend the Season — our Plantation at Smyrna goes on as usual, Mr Hull has hir'd an Overseer to superintend the place in his absence - we made a good crop the last season - which has long since been prepar'd for Market - but have not been able to dispose of it as yet — In the present perplex'd state of things here it is impossible to make any new arrangements in the way of business —

we can only wait and see what will be the final issue of the great Patriotic struggle — and the consequent disposition of these Provinces, we shall then be able to judge what course to pursue — we do not calculate to remain here after this season, unless a favourable change takes place — now all is doubt and uncertainty there are various conjectures concerning our political destiny - some are of opinion that we shall come under the influence of the English Government - others say the Mexican - and some are sanguine in the opinion that we shall at last breathe the air of Freedom, under the protecting wings of the American Eagle —

It appears from some late accounts that the Island of St Martins is in the hands of the British — which has open'd a communication with the Island of New Providence — as we have considerable intercourse with the latter, I think it strange that we hear nothing from Nancy — I know not what to think of Hempstead — it is almost two years since I have recei'd a line from that quarter . . . . you seem however inclin'd to observe a profound silence, whatever your reasons may be for so doing, I cannot conceive they are altogether justifiable on christian ground I'm sure they are not — I have felt extremely hurt I assure you - but I forbear to complain — I hope you are all well —

Mr Hull desires to be affectionately remember'd to you and yours—

Your Sister, STELLA HULL —

NB. BrEd inform'd me that Mr Hart had exchang'd my low prize Ticket in the Baltimore Lottery which I sent on to him for Ticket No 12024 in the B. River Lottery which was drawn the last season - the event of which I have not yet heard

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*Ambrose Hull to Seth Hart*

St Augustine 18<sup>th</sup> Feby 1812—

Brother Hart -

Your favor of the 13<sup>th</sup> ult of brotherly enquiries & communications was received last evening, and perused with many pleas-

urable sensations - And to show you that I am equally well disposed to a renewal of brotherly correspondence - I embrace this early opportunity of conveying a line even towards you —

It is true, there has been a lengthy lapse of time since we have been favored with a line from you or your family, or any one of that connection Altho' I have written you occasionally, as had Stella her two eldest sisters — invariably unanswered —

For the last twelve Months, I have not written you, to my recollection

Time & distance were begining to erase former impressions, - and later scenes & connections are succeeding to those which have passed away——

It will always be a source of sincere satisfaction to me, brother Hart, to hear of you, as well as from you, & especially of the prosperity of yourself & family, - in which I can truly say, I have ever felt an unfeigned interest —And it gives me real pleasure to be informed that your prospects are brightening, and that you have, already, so ample a competency so well assured — and also, that your sons (God bless & preserve them) bid so fair to become usefull & ornamental to themselves & family — not forgetting the dear little after crop to enliven your tender & pleasurable sollicitudes ——

As to my own little family, aside of the past, no man can be more fortunate or happy in an most ammiable wife, and most excellent Mother of two fine little daughters — Mary Street, and Carolina Augustina Antonia Arredondo - the oldest is considerably advanced in her fourth year, and the youngest in her second- And altho' initiated members of the Catholic and truly Apostolic Church, - I hope our good protestant Sisters, will consider them no less entitled to their charitable good wishes—<sup>2</sup>

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2. Even though Ambrose Hull was a Protestant and was permitted a "liberty of conscience," according to the instructions for the administration and distributions of lands, dated September 9, 1797, the toleration of the settler's religious faith on the part of the Spanish officials was not to extend beyond the first generation: *American State Papers*, 16th Cong., 1st Sess., H. Doc. 114.

I experienced some considerable losses of property & other difficulties for a time after I returned from the Northward, as you have been informed - but my affairs have since taken a more favorable turn -

I have shipd, upwards of one hundred Bales of Cotton within a few weeks past, a considerable production of which, had been long on hand, & altho the markets are still moderate, it will probably nett me a handsome amt, payable quarterly - And have lately obtained titles in fee simple, from this government, to an estate in lands, which, in the event of the political change, so long contemplated, will probably be a competent security, at least, for the common necessities of my little family -<sup>3</sup>

We anticipate, at times, the satisfaction of again visiting our northern friends, - but the difficulties which present themselves, on such, particularly as it respects our little brood with necessary attendants, unless we could have a direct conveyance from this to N.York, which seldom occurs, - that we continue to postpone it - and as to removing much further northward, at my time of life, after having been so long accustomed to a milder climate, is an idea that I have not latterly indulged.

You have no doubt considered yourself more particularly neglected by me, on the sum of my pecuniary obligations to you and I confess, with apparent reason - tho' I have been more perplexed in the subject than I ever was, on any other of the kind - It has not been for the length of time past, because it was difficult or inconvenient for me to show that amt, or that my accustomed views or impressions on the subject of punctuality had forsaken me - but the utter impossibility of conveying that sum to you, for want of opportunity & a suitable medium - I returned last week from St. Marys & Amelia Island, at both of which places I received considerable sums of money - and during

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3. Ambrose Hull must have known that according to international law, if his land titles were properly recorded, when the change of flags occurred there would be no question concerning his ability to retain his lands.

my stay there which was nearly three weeks, I tried my utmost to procure Bank notes to the acct of your dun, to enclose on to you - & could not obtain them - The circulating Medium both here and there, is almost solely Spanish gold, in which there is a considerable loss in remitting further North, - in consequence of which, every description of Bank paper is greedily snatched up for the purchase of remittances - Some expedient, however, shall be shortly concerted & executed to the effort of discharging this long, & unintentionally protracted obligation - Your sister Stella desires to be very affectionately remembered to her Sister Ruthy & yourself- - While I am, as ever, your Sincerely, affectionate brother - -

AMBROSE HULL

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*Ambrose Hull to Seth Hart*

St. Marys 25<sup>th</sup> June 1814 .

Brother Hart

Your letter of the 26<sup>th</sup> Feby. of friendly and brotherly enquiries & communications, came duly to hand, & was a source of mingled pleasure & regrets - I should have replied without delay had not Stella been in daily expectation of being confined - the result of which I was anxious to know, & which she has since communicated to her Sister Nancy - & other circumstances, have led me to delay writting till this time - in short some recent expectations of being able to communicate a more favorable turn in my affairs, has been the cause - but the iron hand of fate, still holds her inexorable grasp - The last letters we received from you, were the two of which you desire information, under date of July 1812 - and which we found in Oct<sup>r</sup> following, when we came to St Marys - These letters were not answered, - not for want of goodwill & the best dispositions toward you & yours - but from an unwillingness to pain you with a new detail of disaster & misfortune - I had resolved to write no more, unless I

could, at least, for once, find something desirable to communicate —

[Patriot War]

The last letter I wrote you, was in Feby 1812 at St Augustine just after my return from Amelia Island, - where I had ship<sup>d</sup> for Charleston upwards of 100 Bales of Cotton, which we had saved from a wreck to the southward of my place, including my crop of the season before - I had at the same time & place hired out my Negroes for the ensuing year at great wages, in quarterly payments - & was then progressing with the government for titles to my original grant of 3000 acres of land - all which, seemed to presage a favorable issue to the incessant & indiscrible difficulties, perplexities & misfortunes which I had been subjected to from the time I first came to this Country - And on the very day in which I had secured my land titles an express arived announcing that the U. S. Troops has taken possession of Amelia Island & that a considerable force, joind by the people in the Northern part of the Province were in rapid march to take possession of St Augustine - I confess, to me the information was not unwelcome, (leaving the propriety of the measure to the governments to adjust) neither was it to the actual Spanish inhabitants - business there, had been long at a stand — and those in the employ of government had long been suffering for large balances due them and no prospect of obtaining them — The town, & province might have been taken possession of without the loss of a single life, as nothing more than a show of resistance was contemplated — Tranquility could have been immediately restored & preserved, — & every man left free & undisturbed in his pursuits — Instead of which, a detachment of U. S. Troops encamped before Augustine, together with a large party of Patriots, as they ridiculously stiled themselves, idled away eight long months, without a single attempt upon the town — and then sneaked off, like a parcel of Poltroons and Vagabonds — during this period,



both ludicrous & distressing - we were cooped up in St Augustine, with the misserable inhabitants - I then obtained permission to come on to St Marys with my family, to look after my Negroes &c; - I found them, it is true - but there wages, which amounted to nearly \$2000 - I could not obtain a cent of - My Cotton Consigner in Charleston - after paying a balance due for my Negroes, & some others which I had directed - tho' still with a balance in his hands of \$1000 - which I had reserved for a number of very necessary purposes, among others, to pay your unfortunately procrastinated balance thought proper to stop payment - & which sum, I have not yet received - The disturbances and disorganization still continuing in E. Florida - I obtained permission from that government, to remain on this side - I rented a plantation here the last season, & was progressing with a very promising crop till the 16<sup>th</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup>., when the whole was swept by the most terrible hurracane that was ever known here - I then hired out a part of my Negroes, & rented another plantation for the present season, where we now reside, & are employing the remainder -

This, brother Hart, is a faint outline of my progress in the west[?] since I wrote you last - and a summary of the reasons for my long silence -

. . . should life & health be continued, - my intentions are either to return with my family to St Augustine, or remove them to the neighbourhood of Augusta in this State, - according to the aspect of the times & my own affairs -

. . . I enclose you \$50 - which with the \$50 - you received thro' Edmund, you will please endorse on my note - I will endeavour to send you another \$50 - within a more conscionable [time] Your Sister Stella joins me in most affectionate remembrances to her Sisters, yourself & all the little folk - Our little ones are incessantly asking me, when I will carry them to the *Norra'd* to see their Uncles & Aunts & little cousins - would to God, I could give them a favorable answer - Let me hear from you often - &

believe me as I am, most sincerely your affectionate brother —

AMBROSE HULL

Rev. Seth Hart  
Hempstead  
Long Island  
State New York

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*Ambrose Hull to Seth Hart*

St Marys 17<sup>th</sup> June 1815

Brother Hart

Time, altho' it drags heavily - still glides swiftly - I did not think, when I wrote you last - & received your answer - that another year would so nearly elapse - before there would be another interchange of communication between us - I have been long since worn out, with the almost eternal subject of misfortune, in its seemingly endless variety of shape - And presumed, that my friends must have been also - For this, & no other reason, - since I, for some years past, written them only at long intervals — It would be truly a source of pleasure to me, to write frequently could I have any thing ordinarily pleasing to communicate or could we even regain our former tranquil ground of medium competence & security - I have had an almost perpetual struggle since I came to this southern quarter - not only with the elements - but brutal man, even to preserve life, independent of the ordinary means of subsistence — Murder & robbery has become so rife in this neighborhood that we feel little security, especially at night - A very worthy young man was murderd and robbed by 6 Spaniards, a few hundred yards from my field, about a fort night since & a neighbours house attempted by two others, a few nights after — Since my evil genius led me hither - a corner of the world, where the traces of a divine superintendance, are hardly discernible - I confess, I have had much cause of thankfulness for the preservation of life, particularly - And could I be permitted to realize my property,

& there by render that Justice so long due, & which I so ardently desire to every description of human beings, who have even a benificent claim upon me — I should be quite satisfied about the things of this world - This, as yet, not being the case - & being also a point, beyond my controul, is a source of unavoidable & unceasing disquiet - agravated, not unfrequently, with fair, but illusive prospects — It is true, we possess our ordinary means of subsistence - deducting our accustomed drawbacks - some out of which, under the head of losses, & other disappointments, I have from time to time furnished you - we are not able as yet, to command but very little beyond it — I would not complain even of this — were there no pressing demands upon me — Beside those of high pecuniary obligation - I am under others, that, morally & beneficently, are equally binding — . . . . In consequence of hiring out the principal part of our Negroes last year at high wages, & business being tollerably brisk - we calculated upon a considerable balance over current expenses, & that payments would be promptly made - This no doubt would have been the case, had it not been for the predatory visit at St Marys, about the time wages became due — Altho' every person there, suffered more or less, I am convinced, those indebted to me, might have paid their several balances long before this - Their losses have been made an apology for delay - had we even as yet, prevented doing what we intended — Stella had set her heart so much upon doing something for her more unfortunate Sister and is so much hurt, with the momentary disappointment - that she can not even bring herself to write - till she can do something better —

Fair words, are said to be cheap - & promises predicated upon solemn obligations are but too often lightly regarded - & misfortune may have led mine to be so esteemed - [torn] I trust, a favorable change will prove, that the misfortune was the only cause — I feel [torn] I had no inconsider-

able cause of complaint against you, for neglect of writing - you dwell in the scene of our fathers, brothers, & old acquaintances - & could hardly touch a subject, but would be more or less interesting - & I have no other connection, with whom to correspond, except my Sister - My dwelling is in a strange land - & to you a land of strangers - & about which, you can feel little interest, except so far as it may concern my little family - I beg you will therefore, write me frequently. . . . Stella joins me in much love & goodwill to Br Hart her two Sisters - & our three little brilliants send dutifull respects to their uncle and Aunts, & love to their little cousins -

Yr affectionate br - A HULL

Reverend Seth Hart  
Hempstead  
Long Island  
State N. Yourk

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*Stella Hall Hull to Ruth Hart*

St Mary's May 25<sup>th</sup> 1816

Dear Sister Ruthy

Your letter of Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> was received late in March - & nothing short of severe indisposition cou'd have prevented my acknowledging earlier, your kind & sisterly communication - I have been frequently subject, since the birth of my second Daughter, to very severe turns of rheumatic & nervous affections - which have, at times, reduced me to the verge of life - I have now a grateful interval of relief - tho' weak & debilitated -

. . . . I have three daughters - Mary, Caroline, & Cornelia - who in general are remarkably healthy children - & cou'd we be so fortunate as to see the Stars and Stripes waving upon the Fortress of St. Augustine - we shou'd have a reasonable assurance of duly providing for them -

We still remain at this place, as a healthy comfortable situation

- altho' the greater part of our Negroes are this year employd on the Florida side of St. Marys river - & we shou'd have return'd to that Province this season — had their affairs been even tollerably regulated - our situation after all the variety of wayward fortune we have heretofore experienced - has now become truly tantalizing - the price of cotton, for the first time since Mr Hull undertook planting has become ample, & bids fair to continue for years - we are under the necessity of planting poor land & paying an exorbitant rent - instead of planting our own ground, which is of the first quality - & availing ourselves of the new kind of culture - that of Sugar cane - which from the experiments made, might enable us in one year to redeem all our past misadventures — how long this state of things is to continue, time will determine - & perseverance may obtain its just reward . . . .

Your truly Affectionate Sister

STELLA HULL

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*Summary*

Ambrose Hull died in November, 1821,<sup>4</sup> at the age of fifty-seven,<sup>5</sup> while visiting in New York. Shortly thereafter, in June of 1823, Stella Hull passed away on her plantation on the St. Johns River.<sup>6</sup>

Ambrose, Abigail, and Stella Hull typify, in many ways, the early settlers who dared venture to a new frontier. Leaving the comforts of their established life behind them, they accepted the challenge of an unknown land. Ambrose Hull gave up the relative ease and security he enjoyed among his friends as a Protestant Episcopal minister to become a cane and cotton planter in a foreign land. Harassed by Indians, rampaging "Patriots," a

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4. Petition by William Gibson, *Spanish Land Grants in Florida*, Vol. III, *Confirmed Claims*, 291.

5. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, *Confirmed Claims: A-B-C*, 241.

6. John Rodman to Daniel Boardman, St. Augustine, July 8, 1823, P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida.

hurricane, and marauding Spaniards, he nevertheless carved from the Florida wilderness, an extensive and successful plantation and built a spacious stone house for his family. These letters to their friends and relatives tend to show that, in spite of their misfortunes, they did not give up hope nor did they become too much discouraged, but were often thankful for the blessings which came to them.

Spain made a wise decision when Ambrose Hull and other Americans were invited into the Floridas, as their Yankee ingenuity and industry made a beginning towards developing the land and populating the area. However, to expect that these Anglo-Americans would become loyal Spanish subjects, to the extent that they would sacrifice their lands, or even their lives, to defend a border against another flag, especially that of the land of their birth, was not to know the American settler. The settlers who came to Florida did not become ardent Spanish patriots when they declared their loyalty, nor were they flag-waving Americans. Ambrose Hull was interested only in a way of life for which he searched from Connecticut to Florida. The particular flag he saluted made little difference. He preferred that the Stars and Stripes fly over the fort at St. Augustine, but he remained aloof from the radical "Patriots." As a result his home was destroyed by those who could not wait for the United States to take over Florida peaceably. Most of the early American settlers who left the United States to settle in the Floridas came in search of a way of life, be the flag what it may.

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APPENDIX

Memorial of Benjamin A. Putnam, Adm. of Estate of Ambrose Hull, deceased.<sup>7</sup>

7. St. Johns County Court House, Office of Circuit Court (vault) "Spanish Papers."  
Ambrose Hull in the year 1812 was subjected to and sustained of his own property, goods, chattels, and estate in East Florida the losses, injuries and damages herein set forth, to wit:

45 acres of Sea-Island Cotton planting and growing, equal to 5625 lbs. or 16 bales containing each 351# at 60¢ per w	\$3330.00 [sic: \$3357.00]
20 do. of common, equal to 200 Bush <sup>s</sup> at \$2.	400.00
2 acres of Sweet Potatoes, equal to 500 Bush <sup>s</sup> at 25	125.00
Garden Vegetables equal to say	50.00
4 Horses at \$50.00 each	200.00
Stock of provisions on hand left by said Hull in his flight, consisting of corn, potatoes flour, etc.	250.00
40 Bales of Short Staple Cotton on hand, 14000 w at 31 cents per w	4340.00
4 Hogsheads of Jamaica Rum, say 120 gals. each at \$1.25 per gal. rum	600.00
Large Stone dwelling house nearly destroyed, damage at a reasonable calculation	2000.00
Negro houses destroyed, reasonable amount of damage	500.00
Quantity of valuable furniture left in house, lost or destroyed	700.00
	\$12534.00 [sic: \$12540.00]

All of which damage and injuries to the said Ambrose Hull was occasioned by the Troops of the United States protecting, supporting and encouraging those Lawless Marauders who called themselves Patriots at that time traversing the country and committing every species of havoc and devastation to the property of peaceable Spanish subjects, in the said year 1812.

Your Memorialist further shows that no part of said Losses, Damages, and Injuries were sustained by Ambrose Hull previous to the entrance into East Florida of the Troops of the United States or their agents in the year 1812. Ambrose Hull was an actual subject of the Spanish Government, and residing on his plantation at New Smyrna in East Florida with his family where he was attacked by persons styled Patriots associated with and protected by the Troops of the United States in the year 1812, and compelled to fly with his family and such of his property as he could save, and take refuge in the City of St. Augustine.

That as hereinbefore stated his very valuable Dwelling House was nearly destroyed, the furniture entirely, and outhouses, Negro Houses, crops, provisions on hand, horses, etc. all destroyed, taken and carried away.

Said Hull, by these causes, was entirely broken up and ruined, being so reduced as to be unable to repair his damages . . .

Approved 26 June 1834. All which is respectfully submitted by your Memorialist. Dated at St. Augustine 11th., September 1834.

BENJ. A. PUTNAM

Admstr, etc. of Ambrose Hull, Dec'd

To Hon. R. R. Reid, Judge of Superior Court for the Eastern District of Florida.