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CAPTAIN FLORENCE O'SULLIVAN AND THE ORIGINS OF CAROLINA

PATRICK MELVIN *

Edgar Allen Poe begins one of his most popular tales, *The Gold Bug*, with a description of Sullivan's Island in Charleston harbour. The island took its name from Florence O'Sullivan, an Irish soldier of fortune, who was one of the first planters in Carolina, having sailed with the original colonizing expedition in 1670. The peculiar interest of O'Sullivan's career is that, although it can only be pieced together from a few scraps of source material, it brings us into close contact with the problems and the personalities of a colonial settlement. It reminds us that, despite the tyranny of ideas and the appeal of generalizations, history—and especially colonial and frontier history—is made by individuals. In a more developed society some of the accusations brought against O'Sullivan would have caused a scandal. In colonial Carolina however, where the struggle against the obstacles to survival was unceasing, martial ability was all that mattered.

The materials for O'Sullivan's career are very scanty. Nothing is known about his early life. The first reference to him in historical sources reveals that he fought against the French in the West Indies. He was appointed surveyor general of Carolina and deputy to one of the lords proprietors. He sailed in the *Carolina* in the expedition of 1670 and, on the way, advertised the Carolina scheme at Bermuda. He at once became a prominent figure in the infant colony and was appointed to the council and assembly. In his work as surveyor however he aroused the antagonism of some of his fellow planters. He had the peculiar distinction of having his faults and vices reported to John Locke in language of startling ferocity. Locke had been appointed secretary to the lords proprietors and was a close friend of Shaftesbury the leading proprietor. To the accusation of professional incompetence and personal unpopularity O'Sullivan's accusers added the more sensational charge of unnatural sexual offences. This attack from some of his fellow planters was puzzling. But even more puzzling was the fact that O'Sullivan survived it. Although he was replaced as surveyor he succeeded in retaining his prominent position in the colony and he was commissioned as one of the officers in charge of the defence arrangements against the Spaniards and Indians.

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Virtually all that is known about O'Sullivan's career in Carolina is contained in the Shaftesbury Papers relating to Anthony Ashley Cooper, first Earl of Shaftesbury, the leading spirit behind the foundation of Carolina.¹ We get a glimpse of O'Sullivan's earlier career in the West Indies from his petition of April 1668 in the colonial state papers.² From this we learn that O'Sullivan and Captain John Staplehill were commissioned by Lord Willoughby, the royal governor, to raise a company of infantry in Barbados for the expedition against the French in St. Christopher. That island had been jointly settled by French and English since 1625 but the French had recently attacked and expelled their neighbors and expeditions were organized in 1665-6 to regain the English part of the island.³ According to the petition, O'Sullivan and Staplehill seized two French ships near Guadaloupe (a French possession), but their own vessels, the *Batchelor* and *Coventry*, were forced ashore by storms.⁴ They fought for eleven days against the governor of Guadaloupe but were finally forced to surrender due to lack of supplies. They were held for a year on the island and then sent to France and fined 260 livres. After some delay the English Treasury thought fit to pay the required sum "as royal bounty for services in the Caribee Island."⁵ This experience in the West Indies was considered an obvious qualification for O'Sullivan's participation in the settlement of Carolina where the conflict with the Spaniards and French was likely to continue.⁶

We next hear of O'Sullivan in Kinsale, County Cork, where he was trying to procure servants for the intended plantation. The eight Caro-

¹ For those of the Shaftesbury Papers which relate to the settlement of Carolina see Langdon Cheves (ed.), *The Shaftesbury Papers and other records relating to Carolina and the first settlement on Ashley River prior to the year 1676*, Collections of the South Carolina Historical Society, V (Richmond, Va., 1896) hereafter cited as *Shaftes.Papers*; H.R. Foxbourne, *The Life of John Locke* (1876), 1:287. For a modern notice of O'Sullivan see P. O'Maidin, 'An Irishman's Diary', in *Eire—Ireland*, VII, No. 4 (1972).

² *Calendar of state papers, Colonial: America and West Indies 1661-1668* (hereafter cited as *CSPAWI 1661-1668*), p. 563.

³ C.S.S. Higham, *The Development of the Leeward Islands under the Restoration 1660-1688* (Cambridge, 1921), pp. 45-7; others involved in these expeditions were Captains Hill, Reynolds, Isles and Lanyon. *CSPAWI 1661-1668*, pp. 356, 403, 412, 428-29, 492.

⁴ The *Coventry* was a fifth-rate of 100 men. *P.R.O. Adm. 2/1725*, f158; V.T. Harlow, *A History of Barbados 1625-1685*, p. 166.

⁵ *Cal. Treas. Bks. 1667-1668*, pp. 579, 605.

⁶ V.W. Crane, *The Southern Frontier 1670-1732* (Michigan, 1929), p. 11. Many of the Carolina planters had been compelled or induced to leave Barbados by changes in the economy and they brought their hostility to Spain with them.

lina proprietors, headed by Shaftesbury, had been granted charters in 1663 and 1665 giving them the territory "northward to the modern North Carolina-Virginia border and southward into Florida almost to Cape Canaveral."⁷ The northern part of Carolina, known then as Albemarle Province and after 1691 as North Carolina, had already been partly settled by Virginians.⁸

On 27 July, 1669, Joseph West, a member of a Buckinghamshire Quaker family,⁹ was appointed governor of Carolina and commander-in-chief of the expedition until it arrived at Barbados.¹⁰ West was ordered to sail with his fleet to Ireland and, at Kinsale, procure "twenty or twenty-five servants for our proper account" and then sail direct to Barbados.¹¹ When he reached Kinsale, West was to contact Robert Southwell and Thomas Gookin "for the procuring of his servants, and also use the assistance of Captain O'Soolivan".¹² Ashley had already written to Southwell requesting him to furnish servants for Carolina. In his reply Southwell lamented that:

though he has explained to some and advised with others how to raise servants, hitherto he could not obtain any, for the thing at present seems new and foreign to them, and they have been so terrified with the ill practice of sending them to the Caribbee islands, where they were sold as slaves, that as yet they will hardly give credence to any other usage. Withall they are loth to leave the smoke of their own cabins if they can but beg near them.¹³

⁷ W.S. Powell, *The Proprietors of Carolina* (Raleigh, 1963), p. 4.

⁸ C.M. Andrews, *The Colonial Period of American History*, iii, 247; W.S. Powell, *Ye Countie of Albemarle in Carolina: a Collection of Documents 1664-1675* (Raleigh, 1938), introduction.

⁹ B.J. Osborn 'Governor Joseph West', *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* (1934), p. 202; H.A.M. Smith, 'Joseph West: Landgrave and Governor', *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine* (hereafter cited as *SCHM*), 19 (1918), 189.

¹⁰ E. McCrady, *The History of South Carolina under the Proprietary Government 1670-1719* (N.Y., 1897), p. 115. Sir John Yeamans, a royalist colonel who had emigrated to Barbados and had made unsuccessful attempts to settle Carolina, already held the title of governor. *Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹¹ St. J.R. Childs, 'The Naval Career of Joseph West,' *SCHM*, 71 (1970), 110. For the financial aspects of the expedition see W.F. Craven, *The Colonies in Transition 1660-1713* (N.Y., 1968), p. 98; M.E. Sirmans, *Colonial South Carolina: A Political History 1663-1763* (Chapel Hill, 1966), p. 6.

¹² *Shaftes.Papers*, pp.124-5.

¹³ *CSPAWI 1669-1674*, p. 19. For early Irish emigration to the West Indies see C. and R. Bridenbaugh, *No Peace Beyond the Line: The English in the Caribbean 1624-1690* (O.U.P., 1972) and the authorities therein cited.

Southwell observed that the chief hindrance was the many buildings, repairs and contrivances that were in all the towns "since the settlement of the '49' interest, which has made work for all that will serve, and again it is harvest time when they may earn or steal a sheaf". He was confident however that people could be persuaded to go and he believed they would trust him as he had never been involved in the West India trade. But West was not hopeful of getting servants in Ireland. "I clearly find your honour's expectations will not be any ways answered here in getting of servants," he wrote to Ashley from Kinsale on 10 September 1669:

and we have lost a brave wind by coming here for we, by the assistance of the sovereign here and other gentlemen, have used all endeavours but all to no other end or purpose than loss of time and expense of moneys, for I am not assured of a man that will go from hence.¹⁴

To make matters worse, some of those signed on for the voyage were running away.¹⁵ They must have procured servants elsewhere as one of the planters wrote to Ashley later complaining of a lack of servants' clothes.¹⁶

O'Sullivan's fortunes looked good as the expedition prepared to sail for Barbados. He was appointed deputy to one of the proprietors, Sir Peter Colleton.¹⁷ He was also appointed surveyor general of Carolina. "Our trusty and well beloved Florence O'Sullivan of Saint Margaret, Westminster,¹⁸ Gent." was how the lords proprietors referred to him in his commission. They were well assured of his "wisdom prudence and integrity". O'Sullivan was in fact the second surveyor general in Carolina. The first, de la Prairie, had been appointed in 1663.¹⁹ His efforts to send some of his country men to swell the colonial labor force must

¹⁴ The sovereign was Robert Southwell, head of the corporation. *Shaftes.Papers*, p. 154.

¹⁵ E.g., William Bowman, Craven's deputy. *Ibid.*, p. 136.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 183. A law was later made which stipulated that £13 be given for each male servant delivered to the colony, "Irish only excepted." D.J. McCord, *The Statutes at large of South Carolina* (Columbia, 1841), II, 154.

¹⁷ Sir Peter inherited his father's share in Carolina at his death in 1666. He was also a member of the Royal African Company and he had interests in Barbados. Powell, *Proprietors of Carolina*, p. 58.

¹⁸ This was an area where government officials resided. However there is no mention of O'Sullivan in the parish records which are in the Westminster Public Library in Buckingham Palace Road. H.F. Westlake, *St. Margaret's Westminster* (1914).

¹⁹ *Shaftes.Papers*, p. 380.

be seen in the context of the prevailing ideas and beliefs of this pre-nationalist period, one of which was that Negroes were chattels, not persons.²⁰ O'Sullivan's name is first in the list of masters aboard the *Carolina* which together with the *Albemarle* and *Port Royal*, formed the expedition. The *Carolina* had ninety-three people on board. Henry Brayne was captain and there were sixteen masters including O'Sullivan.²¹ Each master had a number of servants, including kin, dependants and employees. O'Sullivan's servants are listed as Ralph Marshall, James Montgomery, Richard Alexander, Stephen Wheelwright, Thomas Kinge, Elizabeth Dimmocke, and Elizabeth Matthews.

The expedition was delayed by storms at Kinsale until 11 September 1669, and reached Barbados in October. They sailed again on 2 November but were scattered by storms soon afterwards. *The Port Royal*, beating back and forth in the Bahama channel, was wrecked near Abaco, "all being lost," O'Sullivan told Ashley, "but the master and two or three more . . ." ²² The *Albemarle* was wrecked off Barbados on 2 November and a sloop called *The Three Brothers* was hired in her place.²³ The *Carolina*, whose captain was an experienced seaman like O'Sullivan, reached Bermuda with great difficulty before 8 February 1670.²⁴ We know of the horrors of the voyage from the prayer of Affra Harleston who was a passenger on the *Carolina*. She was the daughter of an Essex gentleman who had settled in Ireland. On the voyage she prayed that "God will preserve me as he hath in many great dangers when I saw his wonders in the deep and was by him delivered."²⁵

The *Carolina* was forced into a harbour in Bermuda where O'Sullivan became acquainted with John Dorrell and Hugh Wentworth, merchants and plantation promoters. Adopting the role of a publicity man, O'Sullivan spoke enthusiastically about the Carolina scheme. He also prompted Dorrell and Wentworth to petition Ashley to secure a charter for the island of New Providence (which they had recently planted)

²⁰ D. Ogg, *England in the Reigns of James II and William III*, p. 21. The practice of kidnapping for profit was carried on by magistrates, aldermen and courtiers. M. Dobb, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism* (1946), p. 208.

²¹ *Shaftes.Papers*, p. 134.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 277-9, 189-90, 247.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 61, 160, 278.

²⁵ By generous gifts of land this "first lady of South Carolina" endowed the first Protestant church in the colony. Her nephew John Harleston arrived there from Dublin around 1700 and became a person of importance there. St. J.R. Childs, 'The First South Carolinians', *SCHM*, 71 (1970), 108; J.D. Jervey, 'The Harlestons', *Ibid.*, 3 (1902), 154.

and the rest of the Bahamas. Their argument was that Bermuda was "over peopled and the natives thereof much straitened for want of land . . ." ²⁶ A more interesting and relevant argument which Dorrell and Wentworth put before Ashley, and which O'Sullivan may well have suggested, was the importance of preventing New Providence from becoming a stronghold for Spanish attacks on Carolina.

If the Spaniard, [they warned,] become your enemy at Carolina he will come through the Gulf with his ships and harbour them at New Providence and stay there for a south east wind . . . and in three days time will be in the River of Port Royal on the back of your people . . . ²⁷

Ashley saw the military sense in this argument and procured a charter for the Bahamas for himself and five of the Carolina proprietors. ²⁸

The Carolina expedition sailed from Bermuda on 26 February 1670 and arrived at Carolina around 17 March. The *Carolina*, with O'Sullivan still on board, was sent to Virginia for provisions in May and returned on 22 August. O'Sullivan wrote to Ashley on 9 September 1670. He remarked that he had "writ a particular account of all things. . . by the *Carolina* by the way of Virginie . . ." and then went on to describe the natural goodness of the new colony. ²⁹ The country:

abounds in all things, as good oak, ash, deer, turkeys, partridges, rabbits, turtle and fish. The land produceth anything that is put into it for we have tried it with corn, cotton, and tobacco and other provisions, which proves very well, the lateness of the season considered. ³⁰

From the beginning O'Sullivan had a prominent place in the infant colony. The proprietor's deputies, of whom he was one, were mostly men of rank and ability. Some of them, like Captains Robert Donne and Thomas Gray and Colonel John Godfrey had distinguished civil and

²⁶ L.F. Brown, *The First Earl of Shaftesbury* (N.Y. 1933), p. 165; R. Dunn, "The English Sugar Islands, and the Founding of South Carolina," *SCHM*, 72 (1971), 82.

²⁷ *Shaftes.Papers*, p. 161.

²⁸ A.P. Thornton, *West India Policy under the Restoration* (O.U.P. 1956), p. 98; H.C. Wilkinson, *The Adventures of Bermuda* (O.U.P. 1958), p. 337.

²⁹ O'Sullivan's letter is printed in *Shaftes.Papers*, p. 188; *CSPAWI 1669-1674*, p. 88; *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, I, 206.

³⁰ Ashley advised his kinsman Andrew Percival, who was secretary of the Province from 1680 until 1685, to try to make Irish potatoes grow "and to have a sufficient stock of them to supply your necessity if your other provisions should faile they serveing in Ireland both boyled, roasted and baked on such occasions." *Shaftes.Papers*, pp. 440, 442; *CSPAWI 1669-1674*, p. 585.

military careers in the colony. Ashley referred to the deputies as "our representatives and invested them with all our power." A minimum of three deputies was necessary to confirm acts of the assembly.³¹ O'Sullivan was also a member of the Council and his name is mentioned prominently in the Council journals.³²

In his commission as surveyor general O'Sullivan was instructed to divide the land into squares of 12,000 acres. According to the *Fundamental Constitutions*, which were drawn up by Locke and Ashley and carried to Carolina by West, there was to be two ranks of nobility, to be known as landgraves and cassiques, the former to get 48,000 acres and the latter 24,000 acres.³³ In his letter to Ashley O'Sullivan suggested that the land should be laid out to the people:

as it lies, that the bad and good may go together; by that means the people will not inhabit at a distance and it will prove more beneficial to your honour.³⁴

O'Sullivan, as a soldier, was more concerned with the need for defence than with the irrelevant stipulations of an archaic feudal system. He probably thought little of Ashley's constitution and may well have said as much. Henry Brayne also complained that they were forced "to follow the rules of those that are so ignorant . . ." and that they lacked "good men of reason fit for a commonwealth."³⁵ It was however over the question of his salary that the first complaints are heard against O'Sullivan. He wrote to Ashley:

I humbly desire your Lordship to order the Governor and Council what I shall have for my salary, for they refer it wholly to your honour; for according to their proposal I am not able to live; the country is troublesome to survey. Ten pounds is little enough for [surveying] a thousand [acres] which is all I desire.³⁶

³¹ *Shaftes.Papers*, pp. 337, 397.

³² CSPAWI 1669-1674, pp. 169, 180, 182; M.J. O'Brien, 'The Irish in Charleston, South Carolina', *Journal of the American Irish Historical Society* (1926), p. 135.

³³ Sirmans, p. 11; M. Harris, *Origin of the Land Tenure System in the United States* (Iowa, 1953), pp. 133-6. *The Fundamental Constitutions* are printed in *Shaftes.Papers*, pp. 93-117 and in Parker, *North Carolina Charters and Constitutions* (Raleigh, 1963).

³⁴ *Shaftes.Papers*, pp. 121, 189.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 214. Brayne thought that even those few in the council who were intelligent (West, Bull, Scrivener, Dunn and Walton) knew nothing of planting. For comment on the *Fundamental Constitutions* see K.H.D. Haley, *The First Earl of Shaftesbury* (O.U.P., 1968), p. 247.

³⁶ *Shaftes.Papers*, p. 190.

This brought criticism from Stephen Bull who was later surveyor general himself and the founder of one of the most famous of South Carolina families. Bull wrote to Ashley in September 1670, that all the planters complained of O'Sullivan's "unjust practices, being a very dissentious troublesome man . . ." He claimed that O'Sullivan's fees were "almost treble the rates of other settlements." Bull then went on to accuse O'Sullivan of poor work:

We find in our small town lots very strange and gross errors which would much shame most people, but he is of another nature, ashamed of nothing, using private watches to overreach people and is a very troublesome person and is daily complained of for ill actings.³⁷

The complaint of Captain Henry Brayne was even stronger. He said that:

O'Swilowoun doth by his absurd language abuse the Governor, Council and Country and by his rash and base dealings . . . hath caused everyone in the country almost to be his enemy . . .

Some dispute may have grown between Brayne and O'Sullivan on the voyage. John Locke noted in his *Carolina Memoranda* that Brayne was looking for power and resented the control of the Council.³⁸ O'Sullivan told Ashley that Brayne:

denied to carry me pipe staves to Barbados unless he might have half for his own part, which is a great grievance to us and much disheartens the people . . .

Brayne however repeated Bull's complaint about O'Sullivan's surveying and claimed that "hardly any person was satisfied as to their small lots. I know not when they will be laid out unless . . . we may have a better surveyor."

O'Sullivan may have become involved in one of the faction struggles which accompany every human enterprise. Ashley realised the danger of this when he wrote:

I know how hard it is for jealousy to be removed and factions united, when once begun, though amongst men thought otherwise discreet and worthy.³⁹

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 195. "The trouble Captain Sullivan hath put this colony into by his ignorance, whose ill fate is to profess much and to perform nothing", Dalton wrote to Ashley. *CSPAWI 1669-1674*, p. 320.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 248.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 401.

Many of the planters readily admitted the existence of factions. West admitted to Ashley that they "have always had some differences in the colony." Thomas Colleton observed that the people were "in divisions amongst themselves through the pride and insolence of some and ignorance of others."⁴⁰ Brayne told the proprietors that the council members were "in opposition one to the other." O'Sullivan himself admitted to Ashley that there were disputes and advised him to send out "an able counsellor to end controversies amongst us and put us in the right way of the management of your colony . . ." The following entry in Locke's *Carolina Memoranda* gives us an important clue as to O'Sullivan's position:

Sir John Yeamans, Owen, Gray, Matthews and O'Sullivan are the contrary party to the Governor West.

The two parties hinted at by Locke came to be known as the proprietary and the popular party. The proprietary party had close links with the English Court, the Church of England, and Barbados. The popular party became the party of the Dissenters (after 1700) and turned to slave-trading in retaliation to the proprietor's monopoly of the peltry trade. Locke however was referring to the Barbadian, Church of England, "Goose creek men" who, first organized under their leader Yeamans, opposed proprietary interference and became the dominant group in the colony.⁴¹ Although the proprietors forbade slave-trading and wished the colonists to confine their activities to trade and planting, nevertheless the slave-trade survived "as an important instrument in Carolinian expansion."⁴² O'Sullivan kept his position in the colony because of his ties with the dominant proprietary party or, more accurately, with the "Goose creek men", and also because his military experience was indispensable in a vulnerable frontier society. If we take a closer look at the men in Locke's note we will see this general pattern more clearly. The royalist and Barbadian elements in Yeamans' background have already been noted. His clash with West over the governorship was one of the main causes of strife between the two parties at this stage. William Owen, who was a relation of Ashley's secretary, Robert Blaney, became deputy to Sir Peter Colleton in 1671.⁴³ He thought that West should never have been made governor and referred to him scornfully as a storekeeper. His religious standpoint can be seen from his remark that

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 350; Sirmans, pp. 27-29; D.D. Wallace, *The History of South Carolina* (N.Y., 1934), I, 79, 92.

⁴² Crane, p. 140.

⁴³ *Shaftes.Papers*, pp. 196, 296.

an ideal governor should be a religious moderate but "turning his face to the liturgy of the Church of England."⁴⁴ Thomas Gray had been chief agent to Yeamans in Barbados.⁴⁵ Maurice Matthews, in turn deputy to Ashley and surveyor general, was described as "an ingenious gentleman and agent for Sir Peter Colleton's Carolina affairs."⁴⁶ Matthews however was too adventurous to be bound by the rules of the proprietors and, although he went with Owen and Gray on trading missions to the Indians for the proprietors, he became involved in slave-trading with West and James Moore⁴⁷ of the popular party. In fact Matthews with Moore became the leader of the anti-proprietary "Goose creek men." Because of this he was dismissed from all his offices despite the fact that he had powerful friends in England.⁴⁸ Matthews worked closely with O'Sullivan and both were employed by Sir Peter Colleton. There was, as already noted, royalist and Barbadian links in O'Sullivan's early career. He was also a member of the Church of England. "Pray send us a minister qualified according to the Church of England," he wrote to Ashley from Carolina.⁴⁹ He most likely had influential friends in England, like Matthews and many of the others. These considerations help to explain his position in the colony in spite of his unpopularity.

However, at this stage of the O'Sullivan odyssey, we must return to the fierce statements in Locke's *Carolina Memoranda*.

Dissentious, troublesome; bound to the peace and good behaviour; exactor of unreasonable fees; no able surveyor; knavish . . . disliked; unfit; ignorant in surveying; of no understanding . . . Ill natured buggerer of children . . . , a very ill man.

Locke indicates that he got some of his information about O'Sullivan from Thomas Colleton, Henry Brayne and Maurice Matthews. After further complaints from Joseph West, Joseph Dalton and the Council, O'Sullivan was replaced as surveyor by John Culpeper, although he was allowed to receive one quarter of the fees. Culpeper was hired as deputy to O'Sullivan at first but he was appointed surveyor general in De-

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 302, 304.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 332.

⁴⁷ Moore became governor of Carolina in 1700. According to M.J. O'Brien he was a grandson of Rory O'More the Irish chieftain. M.J. O'Brien, *A Hidden Phase of American History: Ireland's Part in America's Struggle for Liberty* (N.Y. 1919), pp. 247, 360.

⁴⁸ *Shaftes.Papers*, p. 332; Sirmans, p. 41.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

cember 1671. He most likely knew O'Sullivan as he is described as "late of St. Margaret's Westminster".⁵⁰ O'Sullivan still retained his deputyship and in April 1672 he was still a member of the colonial assembly.⁵¹

Although O'Sullivan was replaced as surveyor general he was prominent in the defence of the colony. From the moment they arrived in Carolina the planters faced the constant danger of attack by the Spaniards of Florida and the hostile Indians. The two Carolina charters "manifestly prejudiced a great area which was Spanish by right of discovery, exploration and . . . continuous occupation."⁵² The colonists relied simply upon the fact of possession. "We are here settled in the very chaps of the Spaniards" wrote Joseph Dalton to Ashley in 1670. In these dangerous conditions, in which the colonists were forced to become "more like soldiers in a garrison than planters", the military and naval experience of a veteran like O'Sullivan was so valuable that other criticism, however severe, was forgotten. The original site of Charles Town was not where the later city was built (on the spike of land between the Ashley and Cooper rivers) but was on the opposite side of Ashley river.⁵³ This was believed to be a better defensive position for a weak colony than Oyster Point which, by 1680, had become the seat of the new Charles Town. O'Sullivan was contented with the military advantage of the site. "We build our town," he wrote to Ashley:

upon a point of land called Albemarle Point seated upon the river that leads in from the sea, called by us Ashley river, where we are afortifying ourselves. I have made several discoveries into the country and find it very good and many pleasant rivers. I cannot give a better character of it than it deserves.⁵⁴

The planters determined to survive by developing alliances with Indian tribes; by constructing defence positions; and by raising a militia. The first part of the plan had some success, due mainly to the pioneer work of explorers like Coxe and Woodward. The second part was hampered by a scarcity of men and equipment. "We cannot yet make in the colony

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 182, 224, 248, 286; A.S. Salley (ed.) *Journal of the Grand Council of South Carolina 1671-80* (Hist. Comm. of S. C., 1907), p. 5.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 337, 340, 390; Salley, *Journal of the Grand Council*, p. 30.

⁵² Crane, p. 9.

⁵³ H.A.M. Smith, 'Charleston—The Original Plan and the Earliest Settlers', *SCHM*, 9 (1908), 13.

⁵⁴ *Shaftes.Papers*, pp. 188-9; H.A.M. Smith, 'Old Charles Town', *SCHM*, 16 (1915), 2.

150 men that are fit to bear arms," West told Ashley in March 1671. "We have with much ado", the Carolina council informed the proprietors:

our people being weak by reason of scarcity of provisions, pallisadoed about 9 acres of land, being a point whereon we first set down for our better security, and mounted seven great guns, all the other carriages having been lost with the ship *Port Royal*.⁵⁵

In 1674 O'Sullivan was placed in charge of a signal cannon on the island later known as Sullivan's Island and in later years lookouts were stationed there to signal the approach of hostile ships.⁵⁶

At a council meeting in June 1672 further defence measures were taken. Two large guns were mounted at New Town. A public alarm would be given by firing two guns at Charles Town and, upon this alarm, all who were able to carry arms were to group themselves in the following manner. The families of Maurice Matthews, Stephen Bull, Nicholas Carteret and Henry Brayne, all living in Ickerby Plantation, were to go to Jefford's Plantation and remain there under the command of Maurice Matthews and Captain Florence O'Sullivan, his assistant, "and further be directed according to such rules and instructions as from time to time shall be transmitted from the grand council to Maurice Matthews." Others were to go to Captain John Godfrey's plantation and defend that area.⁵⁷ All the other inhabitants of Charles Town were to remain there, and all the planters of Oyster Point were to go to the plantation there in the possession of Hugh Carteret. All the inhabitants around New Town were to repair to New Town. At a further council meeting in July 1672 it was decreed that the planters should be forthwith organized into six companies, besides the governor's life-guard, and that commissions be given to Lieut.-Col. John Godfrey, Major Thomas Gray, Captain Maurice Matthews, Captain John Robinson, Captain Richard Conant, Captain Florence O'Sullivan and Captain Robert Donne,

and such other inferior officers as the said named officers shall approve of to take the charge of the several companies and that the said com-

⁵⁵ *Shaftes.Papers*, pp. 283, 297; D. Cole, 'A Brief Outline of the South Carolina Colonial Militia System', *Proc. S.C. Hist. Assoc.* (1955), pp. 14-15.

⁵⁶ Salley, *Journal of the Grand Council*, p. 68; E.M. Riley, 'Historic Fort Moultrie in Charleston harbour', *SCHM*, 51 (1950), 63; *Channing's History of the United States*, III, 227.

⁵⁷ Salley, *Journal of the Grand Council*, p. 36. For notes on these three plantations see *Shaftes.Papers*, p. 396; R.J. Rivers, *Historical Sketches of South Carolina*, p. 380.

panies may be so listed as may be most helpful for them speedily to repair to their colours upon any alarm or other occasion.⁵⁸

The population was thus divided into militia squads, each with a specific rallying point, for better security. These preparations gave the planters some measure of security against the Spaniards, who regarded the colony "as a flagrant intrusion to be driven from Spanish soil". John Locke believed they were so well fortified as "not to fear the Spaniards". Another planter wrote:

The noise of our great guns did strike such a terror upon the Indians that the Spaniards could not persuade them to come upon us.⁵⁹

Some of the early historians of South Carolina tell the story that during a civil disturbance in 1673 led by Culpeper, O'Sullivan's successor as surveyor general, O'Sullivan deserted his island post because of lack of provisions and joined the discontented party in the town.⁶⁰ He was brought before the grand council "for uttering of divers seditious words", and was compelled to give security for his good behaviour. A few months earlier he had been accused of "continual and contemptuous misdemeanours" and of having spoken against William Owen who had replaced him as deputy to Sir Peter Colleton.⁶¹ Owen, described as "well educated and clever, but of a restless and captious spirit" opposed the first South Carolina council and claimed that an assembly should be called to confirm the governor's orders for regulating the sabbath. His own so called "4 July" parliament was a fiasco. The council considered that the antics of Owen and of his accomplice, Dr. William Scrivener, encouraged "seditions and mutinies among the people and consequently the ruin of the settlement". Scrivener died shortly afterwards and Owen, although barred temporarily from office, was allowed to continue his career as one of the colony's leading planters.⁶² Like-

⁵⁸ Salley, *Journal of the Grand Council*, p. 39. Godfrey was active "in every civil enterprise and warlike action of the colony". Conant was from New York. Rivers, p. 382; *Shaftes.Papers*, pp. 229, 390-1, 407.

⁵⁹ Crane, p. 9; *Shaftes.Papers*, pp. 203, 250, 263; Sirmans, p. 20.

⁶⁰ B.R. Corroll, *Historical Collections of South Carolina* (N.Y., 1836), 1, 61; Rivers, p. 112; McCrady, p. 169. O'Sullivan however, according to the sources, did not take command in the island until 1674. For the many later references to Sullivan's Island see S.B. Weeks, *Index to the Colonial and State Records of North Carolina* (Raleigh, 1914), IV, 167.

⁶¹ Salley, *Journal of the Grand Council*, pp. 52-3, 56; *Shaftes.Papers*, pp. 419, 422.

⁶² *Shaftes.Papers*, pp. 176, 196, 291; Andrews, III, 229; Crane, p. 13.

wise in O'Sullivan's case, his misconduct and uttering of "seditious words" was no hindrance to his position in the colony. He was an officer of militia during the years 1672-6 and commissioner of public accounts in 1682-3.⁶³ A total of 2,400 acres near Ashley River had been confirmed to him by July 1680. Even his first grant of 1900 acres was very large in comparison with the grants of his fellow planters. For instance Owen's grant was 1320 acres.⁶⁴ O'Sullivan's grants must be an indication of his position and status, and McCrady classed him as one of the leaders of the colony along with Bull, West, Marshall and Dalton.⁶⁵

O'Sullivan's first grant of 1900 acres was described as:

the proportion allowed to him by the Lords Proprietors, concessions for himself and twelve servants, namely Elizabeth Dimock, Richard Alexander, Stephen Wheelwright, John Dale, John Mare, George White, William Bevin, Bryan Fitzpatrick, Daniel Sullivan, John Scott, Aaron Allouren and Teige Shugeron arriving in the first fleet. . . .⁶⁶

One of these deserves further notice. Bryan Fitzpatrick, "a noted villain", was suspected of deserting to the Spaniards, and Henry Woodward and James Needham were sent to apprehend him. Fitzpatrick's actions must have caused apprehension if people such as these were sent to find him. Woodward, explorer and interpreter, "first English settler in South Carolina and pioneer of English expansion in the lower South", rendered invaluable service to the proprietors in Indian diplomacy.⁶⁷ Needham was another explorer who was killed soon afterwards by Indians.⁶⁸

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

⁶⁴ P.R.O. CO5/398 f3; A.S. Salley (ed.) *Warrants for Lands in South Carolina 1672-1679* (Hist. Comm. of S. C., 1910), pp. 37, 56, 104.

⁶⁵ McCrady, p. 318. O'Sullivan devised his lands to his daughter Katherine who later sold them to John Barksdale. *Shaftes.Papers*, p. 131.

⁶⁶ For other Irish in Carolina see O'Brien, *Hidden Phase of American History*, p. 351; Salley, *Warrants for lands 1672-1679, 1680-1692, 1692-1711*, passim.

⁶⁷ *Dictionary of American Biography*. Affra Harleston had trouble from one of her servants, Philip O'Neill, on the voyage. She complained about him to the council "for threatening to upset the boat wherein she was . . . and giving the provisions allowed him and his fellow servants to the dogs and threatening to run away to the Indians and divers other gross abuses and destructive practices. . . ." O'Neill received twenty lashes for his misconduct. Irish servants however were not alone in giving trouble and West observed that Barbadian servants "will do little but whilst the bottle is at their nose." *Shaftes.Papers*, pp. 299, 394; Salley, *Journal of the Grand Council*, p. 45.

⁶⁸ He was described as a "heroic Englishman . . . which had ventured where never any Englishman trod." *CSPAWI 1669-1674*, p. 605.

O'Sullivan was hardly the kind of man who makes history, but the story of his career gives an interesting picture of the struggles of a colonial settlement.⁶⁹ His seafaring and soldiering background in the West Indies gave him the necessary qualities for a venture which could be threatened by natural and human obstacles. His acquaintance with the Willoughbys and Colletons was his greatest guarantee of a career in Carolina. It is unlikely that Sir Peter Colleton, whose family were "among the leading Restoration imperialists", would have given responsibility to O'Sullivan for his Carolina business if he had not had confidence in his ability.⁷⁰ The patriotic General Edward McCrady, whose ancestors were Irish, had a poor opinion of the characters who first settled South Carolina. He was musing here on the career of Sir John Yeamans, who, together with Thomas Gray, was believed to have been involved in the killing of an Indian by Bryan Fitzpatrick. Yeamans was an unscrupulous character and he had previously been accused in Barbados of conspiring against a man's life "for no other reason but that he had a mind to the gentleman's wife."⁷¹ McCrady wrote that the glimpses one got from the records, of the first settlers on the Ashley:

do not inspire us with great regard for their characters generally . . . They were adventurers whom one cause or another—domestic or political—had induced to seek in the New World fortunes they could not achieve in the Old.⁷²

It would seem a suitable epitaph for O'Sullivan.

⁶⁹ O'Sullivan was not as prominent or as able a character as John Barnwell, who left Dublin for South Carolina around 1701 and had a varied and distinguished career in the colony. P. Melvin, 'John Barnwell and Colonial South Carolina', in *The Irish Sword* (The Journal of the Military History Society of Ireland), Summer 1973.

⁷⁰ E.E. Rich, *The History of the Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870* (Hudson's Bay Record Society 1958), 1, 29.

⁷¹ CSPAWI 1669-1674, p. 279; *Shaftes.Papers*, pp. 351, 388; *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, 1:177.

⁷² McCrady, p. 173; W.H. Stephenson, *The South Lives in History: Southern Historians and their Legacy* (1955), p. 16. A modern writer describes them as "a sophisticated civilized people, transporting a complex society across the seas." Agnes Leland Baldwin, *First Settlers of South Carolina, 1670-1680* (Columbia, 1969), p. iii.

THE SCHIRMER DIARY

(Continued from July, 1975)

The Schirmer Diary is a series of manuscript volumes kept by Jacob Frederic Schirmer, Charleston merchant (1803-1880). He began his journal in 1826, and it continues to provide a local record for 54 years.

The Historical Society retains these volumes. Publication began in the July 1966 (vol. 67) issue, which has a brief biography of the scribe.

The entires for each month first list the Sundays, noting the weather and the ministers who conducted the services in St. John's Lutheran Church, of which Schirmer was a prominent member. In editing the material, many repetitious and inconsequential notations have been dropped, superscripts have been brought down, and punctuation has been modified.

1846	<i>Marriages:</i>			
Jan.	6	J. C. Degafarely	Jane S. Purse	Dr. Bachman
	8	Robt. H. Lucas	Emma Julia Lucas	Dr. Hanckle
	15	Peter Woodward	Charlotte E. Franklin	Wd. Smith
	20	Geo. J. Croft	Ann E. Simmons	Dr. Gadsden at St. Phillips
	20	Michl. O'Brian	Cath. Burke	O'Neill
	27	Henry L. Westendorff	Susan A. Hill	Derrick
	22	Wilmot G. Desaussure	Martha Gourdin	Dehon
	29	Neman Thomson	Elizb. Hood	Forrest
	29	J. D. Warren	Henrietta A. Warren	Dr. Hanckle
	27	Andrew Gray	Isabella Turnbull	Mr. Smyth
	12	<i>R. C. Smith:</i> rumor says has made a dreadful crash, lugging in a large number of factors for rice and cotton, recently bought, to something like 70 th. dollars. It is said his liabilities are about 200 th.		
	14	<i>Menagerie.</i> Took all the children—on Reynold's lot.		
	17	<i>Mr. Matthey</i> in the early part of this week and went over to Had-drill's Point with his gun and has been sniping ever since—from circumstances it was supposed he was partially deranged. On the 31st his body was found on an Oyster Bank near the village.		
	24	<i>Rice</i> very dull renting stores all about to put it in. All in anxious expectation of British news.		
	24	<i>Mr. Gordon</i> rumor says has disappeared and gone to Texas. He was a bookkeeper in the Bank of Charleston.		
	24	<i>Mr. McLaren</i> has bought Napiers old mill and going to establish a Rice Mill—it is said Jas. Robb is concerned.		