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## GEORGETOWN, SOUTH CAROLINA: RACIAL ANXIETIES AND MILITANT BEHAVIOR, 1802

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Many historians have concluded that slave rebellions in Santo Domingo and the United States during the 1790's stimulated racial fears which had extensive political consequences.<sup>1</sup> It is not always possible, however, for the historian to demonstrate empirically how racial fears affected the social behavior of a particular community. The following document, based on a copy of the orderly book of the Twenty-Fifth Regiment, Sixth Brigade of the South Carolina Militia, describes how the area known as Georgetown district responded to the fear of racial disturbances in 1802.<sup>2</sup> It reveals that this community in the southern tidewater during the first decade of the nineteenth century was plagued with complex social anxieties.

The year 1802 was one of widespread racial fear in the United States, particularly in Virginia and North Carolina.<sup>3</sup> While no slave conspiracy existed in Georgetown, panic among whites reached explosive proportions and occasioned a frantic mobilization of the militia. The event which immediately preceded the call to arms was a general alarm that the French intended to land blacks in the state. The warning originated from New York City where a French squadron had entered the harbor with black captives taken in the recent fighting in Santo Domingo.<sup>4</sup> John Drayton, the Governor of South Carolina, after hearing

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<sup>1</sup> Ulrich B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery* (Gloucester, Mass., 1959 ed.), 131. Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill, 1968), 375-402. Arthur Zilversmit, *The First Emancipation: The Abolition of Slavery in the North* (Chicago, 1967), 186, 189-90, 202.

<sup>2</sup> "Statement from Gov. Drayton S. Carolina, relative to the landing of French Negroes, &c," [1802]. Daniel Parker Collection, Box 6, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Daniel Parker (1782-1848) was Adjutant and Inspector General 1810-1845. Governor Drayton sent this document directly to President Jefferson with a cover letter: John Drayton to Thomas Jefferson, Charleston, Oct. 20, 1802, also in the Parker Collection.

<sup>3</sup> Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts* (New York, 1963 ed.), 228-39.

<sup>4</sup> Mayor of New York [Edward Livingston] to Sec. of War. [Henry Dearborn], Sept. 1, 1802 (Copied by Daniel Brent and forwarded to James Madison), Madison Papers, microfilm Library of Congress. Livingston claimed that many of the blacks escaped into the city.

The scout boat and its crew, consisting of Captain William Ferguson and ten "southern scouts," were loaned to the new colony of Georgia in January 1733. James Oglethorpe, the colony's leader, worked the South Carolina scouts hard and utilized them effectively. They built and garrisoned a fort probably located on Green Island, south of Skidaway Island, Georgia, from which they patrolled the Inland Passage. They were Oglethorpe's escort during the first half of 1736 while he supervised the establishment of Frederica on St. Simons Island, Darien near abandoned Fort King George, and outposts as far south as the St. Johns River on the Spaniards' doorstep.<sup>20</sup>

During 1737, amidst a quarrel between the two British colonies concerning jurisdiction over the bountiful Indian trade, South Carolina determined that military support of Georgia was no longer warranted and ordered the scout boat and its crew discharged from her employ retroactive to September 1736. The Georgians immediately enlisted the crew and assumed ownership of the boat, which they named the *Carolina*. Although South Carolina maintained two scout boats at Port Royal from 1737 to 1764, Georgia's scout boats, patrolling between the Savannah and the St. Johns Rivers during the same period, became the principal defenders of the Inland Passage.<sup>21</sup>

Scouts provided a vital service to the South Carolina and Georgia frontier settlers. They were a constant source of danger to Indian war parties, and they gave the settlers confidence through their presence. Although they were crude and often irresponsible, scouts were usually skillful boatmen, and they performed well under good leadership such as that provided by John Barnwell and James Oglethorpe. Boats still ply the Inland Passage along the same creeks and rivers which once carried the boats and absorbed the blood of the South Carolina scouts.

<sup>20</sup> Sarah B. Temple and Kenneth Coleman, *Georgia Journeys* (Athens, 1961), p. 49; T. F. Lotter, *A Map of the County of Savannah*, 1740; Moore, *loc. cit.*, pp. 91, 104, 106-152.

<sup>21</sup> Easterby, ed., *SCCHJ*, Dec 15, 1736, p. 156, Jan 18, Mar 5, 1737, pp. 176, 179-181, 321, 411; Roy Smith, *South Carolina as a Royal Province, 1719-1776* (New York, 1903), pp. 187, 188; *CRG*, II, 235, III, 145, V, 298, 299, 451, X, 700, 731, XIV, 11, XXIX, 435, XXXV, 237, 258, 435-437, 465, 466, 556, XXXVI, 372, 373.

of the event, organized a coastal patrol and ordered his militia commanders to prepare a network of lookouts.<sup>5</sup>

Georgetown's reaction to this news was compounded by pronounced social instability within the community. The roots of social disorganization were deep and encouraged the ruling elite to preserve social order by responding quickly, and yet unnecessarily, with the entire extent of its military capacity.

In 1802 Georgetown's economy was in a transitional stage of development. The importance of the indigo culture and merchant had been declining since the Revolution and the cultivation of rice was expanding. At the same time, however, the price of rice was in a temporary decline,<sup>6</sup> and the recent completion of the Santee Canal threatened to direct the commerce of Georgetown's natural hinterland to the city of Charleston. By 1840 Georgetown county would go on to be the most important rice producing area in the United States, but in 1802 her economic future was not assured.<sup>7</sup>

The area was also in the process of political transition which the elite resisted. The state legislature had voted for Thomas Jefferson's party in the election of 1800 and later tried to destroy Federalist power in the tidewater by gerrymandering election districts, but Georgetown continued to send Benjamin Huger, a Federalist, to Congress.<sup>8</sup> Ideologically the Federalists believed that the Republican party would destroy the social structure of South Carolina by disrupting the institution of slavery. Party politics fostered political factionalism among whites which, in turn, encouraged aggressiveness among blacks. Republicanism would surely cause a racial holocaust.<sup>9</sup> In Georgetown, it was understood that no one questioned the institution of slavery.<sup>10</sup> Between 1800 and 1810

<sup>5</sup> John Drayton to Thomas Jefferson, Sept. 12, 1802, Thomas Jefferson Papers, microfilm, Library of Congress.

<sup>6</sup> William W. Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War: The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina, 1816-1836* (New York, 1965), Appendix A, 361.

<sup>7</sup> George C. Rogers, Jr., *The History of Georgetown County, South Carolina* (Columbia, S. C., 1970), 165-66, 324.

<sup>8</sup> George C. Rogers, Jr., *Evolution of a Federalist: William Loughton Smith of Charleston, 1758-1812* (Columbia, S. C., 1962), 351, 354, 363. Lisle A. Rose, *Prologue to Democracy: The Federalists in the South, 1789-1800* (Lexington, Ky., 1968), 303.

<sup>9</sup> [James Simons], *A Rallying Point for all True Friends to their Country* (Charles Town, 1800), 13-16. James Simons to Oliver Wolcott, Jr., Charleston, Oct. 15, 1800; Henry Wm. De Saussure to Oliver Wolcott Jr., Charleston So Carolina, Dec. 28th 1801; same to same, Morris Town, New Jersey, 17 July, 1802. Oliver Wolcott Jr., Papers XV, XVI, Connecticut Historical Society.

<sup>10</sup> *Georgetown Gazette*, Sept. 11, 1799, as quoted in Rogers, Jr., *Georgetown County*, 184.

slaves formed nearly ninety per cent of the county's population.<sup>11</sup> This racial imbalance, as far as the whites were concerned, necessitated careful control of the blacks.

It was this milieu that shaped the response of whites in 1802 when a rumor began to spread through the county that the French had landed blacks on the coast of All Saints Parish.<sup>12</sup> The rumor originated from Ensign Peter Nicholson, a commander of the slave patrol, who lived on the coast of the Long Bay northeast of the city of Georgetown. During the week of October 3 the appearance of vessels off the coast of the Parish had momentarily frightened the whites, but the community was not disrupted until the evening of Saturday, October 9 when Nicholson found "a black french Creole" suspiciously near his house. Traditionally Saturday evening was a time when slaves were allowed to visit wives on neighboring plantations, but they had to have a pass.<sup>13</sup> The black creole could not give a satisfactory account of himself and Nicholson concluded that he was part of a landing party which intended to destroy his house. Although it was determined quickly that no landing party existed, the racial anxieties had reached such intensity that a general mobilization could not be stopped until the scenario played itself out.

Peter Nicholson, about whom little is known, informed his superior, Captain Joshua Ward, a rice-planter whose father had been a colonel in the Revolution.<sup>14</sup> His note expressed the fear that more blacks were in the vicinity and that the militia should be "prepared for the worst." There was, however, no explicit statement in Nicholson's letter that the French had actually landed. Captain Ward, in order to determine the exact character of the situation ordered Percival Pawley, one of his sergeants, to take a small group of men to the Long Bay to confirm the report. Sergeant Pawley, a Federalist whose father had been a captain in the militia during the 1790's,<sup>15</sup> carried with him a note which explained his orders. They did not say that the French had landed; they merely instructed him to investigate Nicholson's report and to instruct Sergeant John Brown, another man in Ward's command, to do the same thing. Although it was highly probable that Sergeant Pawley distorted his

<sup>11</sup> Robert Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina, Including a View of its Natural Civil and Military History, General and Particular* (Charleston, 1828), 567. Rogers, *Georgetown County*, 343.

<sup>12</sup> There is no known newspaper record of the event.

<sup>13</sup> Howell M. Henry, *Police Control of the Slave in South Carolina* (Emory, Va., 1914), 29-30.

<sup>14</sup> Emily B. Reynolds and Joan Reynolds Faunt, eds., *Biographical Directory of the Senate of South Carolina, 1776-1964* (Columbia, S. C., 1964), 327.

<sup>15</sup> Rogers, Jr., *Georgetown County*, 174, 266, 17.

orders, the written record suggests that Sergeant Brown was the first to transform the alarm into an explicit written statement that "those people of colour are now landing at the long Bay." Brown claimed later that he merely wrote what Sergeant Pawley had told him, but it is obvious that any one of these men could have been responsible for drawing the same conclusion. Their culture conditioned them to be extremely sensitive about slaves and to expect the worst at the slightest provocation.

Sergeant Brown forwarded his personal note to Dr. Joseph Blyth and Captain Paul Michau, both prominent men in the Parish. Joseph Blyth had served as a doctor in the Revolution. During the 1790's he married into the prominent Joseph Allston family. Between 1798 and 1802 he had represented All Saints Parish in the South Carolina Senate as a Federalist.<sup>16</sup> Paul Michau's social origins went back to a French Huguenot family that settled in South Carolina before 1700. Like Dr. Blyth, he represented All Saints Parish in the state Senate during the 1790's.<sup>17</sup> Captain Michau was sufficiently convinced of the authenticity of Brown's note that he hand-carried it to his superior, Brigadier General Peter Horry, who commanded the Sixth Brigade of the South Carolina Militia which had been organized under the national Militia Law of 1792.<sup>18</sup>

General Horry symbolized the height of Georgetown society. He had been a state legislator during the 1780's and 90's. During the Revolution he had served with Francis Marion in the resistance to the British invasion of the state. In 1798 he had helped with the military preparations and fortifications of the city of Georgetown against the possibility of a French invasion. When he died in 1815 he owned three plantations on Winyah Bay.<sup>19</sup>

As the historian follows the course of the rumor from the unknown Ensign Nicholson to Brigadier General Horry he also discovers the cultural character of the social structure in the district. Georgetown had a social structure based on deference which in times of racial disorder

<sup>16</sup> Reynolds and Faunt, eds., *Biographical Directory*, 182. Rogers, Jr., *Georgetown County*, 221.

<sup>17</sup> Reynolds and Faunt, eds., *Biographical Directory*, 272. Mabel L. Webber, "Abstracts from an Old Account Book of Georgetown District," *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, XXVI, No. 3 (July, 1925), 152.

<sup>18</sup> Jean Martin Flynn, "South Carolina's Compliance with the Militia Act of 1792," *ibid.*, LXIX, No. 1 (Jan., 1968), 26-43.

<sup>19</sup> Reynolds and Faunt, eds., *Biographical Directory*, 239-40. Rogers, Jr., *Georgetown County*, 127-28, 183. A. S. Salley, ed., "Journal of General Peter Horry," *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, XXXVIII, No. 2 (Apr., 1937), 49-53.

assumed the characteristics of a military command. Militia officers were not only superior in the military sense of the word, but they were also members of the natural aristocracy in the district.

Captain Michau's decision to take the information to General Horry was not based on an explicit order from a fellow officer; it was based on his evaluation of Brown as a reliable person and his fears of social disorder which characterized the mind of the ruling elite. From the evidence in the orderly book it appears that by the time Michau reached Horry's house, Captain Ward had already determined that the alarm was false. There was, however, no way that General Horry could have known in the city of Georgetown what was happening in All Saints Parish when he received Brown's note on Sunday afternoon October 10.

General Horry's response to the alarm was more cautious. He assumed that the unsupported word of a sergeant was not sufficient because he believed that some lower-class whites might intentionally or inadvertently use the threat of slave disturbance to undermine the social order of the community. Before he agreed to muster the militia he insisted on having two explicit character references on Sergeant Brown. Captain Michau and Major Smith convinced the General that Brown was not a drunkard or a "loose insignificant worthless fellow." Only after Captain Michau's reassurance that Brown's note was the truth, a conclusion based on inadequate knowledge, did General Horry sound the alarm for the entire Georgetown district.

First, he notified Major Nesmith<sup>20</sup> to march his battalion immediately to the coast in order to engage the enemy and delay their advance. Captain Michau also returned to the Parish with a company of infantry. Then the General ordered Colonel John McRee to march his regiment north to Conwayborough and await further instructions.<sup>21</sup> Finally, to insure the safety of the city of Georgetown, General Horry commanded the alarm men to function as a slave patrol and suppress "any riot or disturbance of any kind."

Early Monday morning, October 11, the General, with a small party of dragoons and other officers left the city for the Pee Dee River, crossed over, probably through Gordon's Thoroughfare, to the Waccamaw River and arrived in All Saints Parish by evening. Once in All Saints Parish, the General's party met Benjamin Allston, Sr. who informed them that

<sup>20</sup> I have been unable to identify Major Nesmith.

<sup>21</sup> John McRee was a planter and Revolutionary War veteran who represented Liberty and Kingston in the South Carolina Senate (1798-1800). Reynolds and Faunt, eds. *Biographical Directory*, 271



no blacks had landed or rebelled.<sup>22</sup> General Horry retired to the Allston plantation for the evening where he began to investigate the origins of the alarm.

At first Horry was inclined to blame Captain Ward, who complained that he was not responsible for the false alarm and that he was surprised that the entire brigade had been mobilized. Until he had additional information, however, the General placed Captain Ward under arrest and ordered Sergeant Brown to the Allston plantation. Brown arrived the next morning and in the presence of the General admitted that he had no authority from Captain Ward to assert that "those people of colour are now landing at the long Bay." At this point, Brown tried to avoid direct responsibility for the episode by claiming that the warning of the invasion came from Sergeant Pawley. He admitted that he should have stated the exact source of his information in his letter to Captain Michau and Dr. Blyth. While it can not be denied that somewhere in the transfer of Captain Ward's orders Pawley or Brown began the rumor that resulted in the mobilization of the militia, General Horry did not think to question the crucial role played by Captain Michau, who with careful and thoughtful deliberation, could have confined the alarm to Saturday night in All Saints Parish by checking Brown's information before taking it to the General.

As a condition of removing the charges from Captain Ward, General Horry insisted upon a full public investigation of the alarm in order to absolve Captain Ward and reveal the true social origins of the disturbance. It is unlikely that any public investigation, for which there is no known record, produced additional information. The black who started the whole chain of events was turned over to the General and his fate is unknown.

The event, previously unexamined, was not an isolated occurrence in the history of ante-bellum Georgetown. Four years earlier in 1798 the area had experienced similar tensions. In 1808 the whites mobilized the militia once again.<sup>23</sup> When a real slave conspiracy was uncovered in 1829 the community blamed it on the activity of the northern abolition movement.<sup>24</sup> If the description of the social behavior and social structure in the following document is accurate, however, it is impossible to see how the culture of Georgetown could survive in a world that changed as

<sup>22</sup> Benjamin Allston Sr. (1765-1847) was the son of Josias Allston of Turkey Hill. During the last years of his life his wealth permitted him to spend the summer months at Greenville away from the rice-swamps. Rogers, Jr., *Georgetown County*, 520, 315-16.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 205.

<sup>24</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 62-63.

quickly as the United States did during the first half of the nineteenth century. The fears of cultural destruction became such an important characteristic of their society by 1800 that sooner or later their own behavior would fulfill their own anxieties. William Freehling has suggested in his study of nullification in South Carolina that a "society reveals its deepest anxieties when it responds hysterically to a harmless attack."<sup>25</sup> The hysteria in Georgetown during 1802 revealed the racial fears and social militancy of the ruling elite long before the Nullification Crisis of the 1830's or the Secession Crisis of the 1850's. The facade of stability imposed through the military organization of society could not remove the anxieties of cultural destruction that existed in the community. Georgetown, if the Federalists were right, was already isolated in a world that would not preserve its culture.

"Statement from Govn. Drayton S. Carolina, relative to the landing of French Negroes, &c"

State of South Carolina

[1802]

I Daniel Huger Private Secretary to his Excellency—John Drayton, Governor and Commander in Chief in and over the State aforesaid, do Certify that the annexed papers are true copies of copies taken from the orderly book of the twenty fifth Regiment of the sixth Brigade.

In testimony where of I have hereunto set my hand, and have caused the Executive Seal to be affixed at the City of Charleston, in the State aforesaid this twentieth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight-hundred and two, and in the twenty seventh year of American Independence.

[Signed and Sealed]

Daniel Huger

Memorandum. Sunday 10th. October P.M. Capt. Michau of the Winyaw light Infantry Company called on Brigadier Gen. Horry at his house in Brown town, & told him, that he was just come over from Waccamaw & that the people of colour was landing on the long Bay, at & near Ensign Nicholson's house: a party of them at the Ensign's house were aroused by him, in order that he might give the necessary alarm in time; & presented to the Brigr. the following paper. viz "Doctor Blyth, those people of colour are now landing at the long Bay: you are hereby summoned to meet at the Chapel at 12 oClock this day, I will thank you to send this to Mr. Michau—

Octr. 10th

Dr. Blyth & Michau."

Signed

John Brown Sergt.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

The Brigadier put immediately the following questions to Capt. Michau—Pray who is this Sergt. Brown? do you know him? Answer yes, I do know him very well; he is a Sergt. in Capt. Ward's company—Pray what sort of a man is he? can his information be depended on? Perhaps he may be a drunken fellow? or he may be a loose insignificant worthless fellow? whose word could not be regarded—Answer. I have known him a long while, he is a very good character, & not such a one as you mention—Question, Had he no letter from his Capt. for me? Answer. No—The paper delivered you is a summons to Dr. Blythe & myself—The Brigr. then said he wished Sergt. Brown had a voucher for what he asserted from an officer. Question. you say you know Sergt. Brown very well; & that he is a man of truth. Do you sincerely believe that what he asserts on this paper is the truth? Answer. I do really believe it to be the truth—then Captn., collect your Company as speedily as possible: & I will, soon see you, & give further orders. Answer, it shall be done, as soon as possible—The Brigr. went immediately to Major Smith, & shewed him Sergt. Brown's summon [sic] above; saying, pray do you know Sergt. Brown? Answer. I do know him—Question. is he of good character? Answer. yes—I believe he is I have always understood so—Quest. Then you think this information of his true? Yes—I have no reason to believe otherwise—These two officers as just named agreeing to Sergt. Brown's good character; & believing his information to be true, determined the Brigr. to proceed in the business of this alarm; he accordingly sent off an express to Major Nesmith, to march as many men of his Battalion as he could speedily collect to the long Bay; at or near Ensign Nicholson's house: & to oppose with force of arms, as before ordered, to do. he sent an order to Capt. Teill [?] of Black Mingo to hire, & forward immediately, an express with an order to Col. McRee, to march such parts of his Regmt. as he could speedily collect, to Cox's ferry; near Conwayborough; & there wait for further orders. The light Infantry Company Capt. Michau embarked in boats for Waccamaw in about two hours after the alarm given. Capts. Murray's and Hubbard's companies likewise paraded this afternoon, got ready; & embarked in boats early the next morning. The Brigr. directed Major Smith to provide for the safety of the town by leaving all the alarm men as patrol; & under an officer or two of discretion & as he might choose on[e] & with an order under his hand to the officer for strict performance of patrol duty; & at no time to suffer any riot or disturbance of any kind—These Companies had orders to put themselves under command of the eldest officer, they might meet with at or near the general place of rendezvous; & to obey his orders. Next morning the Brigr. having forwarded as just mentioned, & in Company with Col. Huggins—Major Smith & Withers, & about 8 dragoons under his command proceeded to the Major's plantation on Pee Dee & while the flats were getting ready fed their horses & refreshed themselves with dinner quickly prepared; after they went through the thoroughfare, & landed at Miss Butler's Plantation on Waccamaw about dark; & proceeded for Capt. Ward's plantation—Col. Huggins with two dragoons proceeded forwards to gain information—Soon

however, the Brigr. & his party was met by Mr. Benj. Allston Senr. who informed him, that the alarm given was a false one; & related some particulars. & invited the Brigr. & his party to lodge at his house, not far distant; they accepted his offer, & at supper Capt. Ward arrived told the Brigr. he had sent forward Sergt. Brown with letters to him, setting forth the reasons of the false alarm; & that it was not owing to any fault of his. The Brigr. said by information he thought otherwise—That it had given a general alarm throughout his Brigade. had occasioned his directions to march forward; & himself—to be where he then was. That the fault was somewhere—It was of great consequence, & a strict scrutiny & investigation should take place; & the offender punished according to law. That it was shameful, to sport with the feelings of so many men now on their march; & to occasion distress to their families—Capt. Ward continuing with warmth to dispute with the Brigr. he ordered him under arrest: & said he would next morning go to Sergt. Brown where he lived, & know what induced his asserting under his hand a falshood of such serious nature. It was then told the Gen., that Sergt Brown lived not far distant; & if he would write him a note, he should be sent for early next morning. Sergt. Brown arrived at Mr. Allston's while the company was at breakfast; & immediately after, the Brigr. desired Capt. Ward & Sergt. Brown, to walk out a little distance with him; in order to [have] a conversation together: they complied—The Brigr. asked Sergt. Brown what could induce him to assert under his hand, a falsity of such serious nature? & whether the hand writing & signature then in the Brigadier's hand was his? he answered it was. that he was very sorry for what had happened: saw his error: acknowledgd he had no authority from his Capt. for what he asserted: that he was very wrong not to say his information was from his brother, Sergt. Percival Pawley: who actually told him of the landing &c: & that he had also told two others, the same thing, which evidence he could procure shortly—The Brigr. told him he might depend on suffering whatever was directed by law; & as well Pawley, & all others concerned in propagating such false alarm. Ward's letters to the Brigr. with Nicholson's to Ward, & Ward's summons to Sergt. Pawley, being by Sergt. Brown delivered to the Brigr.; he perused them, & then told Capt. Ward he was now better satisfied with his conduct than what formerly appeared by report against him; & if he chose would take off his arrest; provided he would ask himself for a Court of Enquiry, on his conduct; which he thought was in his favor so to do: as it would appear he was conscious of his innocence, & propriety of conduct. That the public was injured by such false alarm; & had an undoubted right to a full investigation of its causes; & that it was the Brigadier's duty to bring forwards such, & he was determined so to do. Capt. Ward wrote the following—

Sir

“Finding a false alarm has been given you; & least I should suffer as an officer, in the opinion of my fellow citizens; as being the cause thereof; I am constrained in justice to my feelings, to request you to order a Court of enquiry

on my conduct; that I may suffer if found to merit it; or honorably acquitted if found innocent.—

with esteem sir yr. most obt. sert.  
I have the honor to be

To Brigr. Genl.  
Peter Horry

J Ward Octr. 12th. 1802

About 12 oClock Genl. Horry left Mr. Allston's house; but before doing so, he wrote a letter to Col. Conway, & a certificate under his hand, directed to Col. McRee, his officers & men; who might see the same, & left these to the care of Capt. Ward, who promised to use his best endeavours to forward them as quick as possible. The Brigr. crossed by boat from Mr. Huger's plantation; & about 2 oClock was at his home in Brown town.

Copy of Capt. Ward's summons to Mr. P. Pawley

Sir,

"Summons the men as low down as Prospect hill; & then give this to J. Brown & he will summons the men down to the point: to meet me at the road turning off on the beach at Mr. Westons—Bay plantation; immediately if possible, the men not to delay one moment, & to be armed & accoutred, & ready to act on the defense."

J. Ward, Magnolia, 12 oClock  
at night

9th Octr. 1802

To Mr. P. Pawley

Copy of Ensign Nicholson's letter—

Long Bay past 9 oClock at night 9th  
Oct 1802

Dr. Sir.

"Having recd. your letter a few days past enjoining on the Captains of Patroles a strict look out on the sea coast; I have accordingly complied therewith; & having no cause apprehended no danger; but not an hour since I took a black french Creole, who can not give any account of himself; & from the general report of danger from that quarter, I fear has come up to my house, to see what reception he will meet with; while his companions are lying in ambush. He is dressed with a sailor's jacket, & his undercloths are now wet. As I think my own immediate safety requires it, I shall keep guard this night; fearing his Companions if any may attempt a rescue—I hasten the bearer Flasco, to Lieut. Green's with this, as well as one to him on the same subject: so that no delay may take place & that as much as possible we may be prepared for the worst. I hope this will not alarm Mrs. Ward; I have requested

Lieut. Green to use such precaution, as may be necessary to prevent it; & am with best wishes"

Your's truly

Capt. Joshua Ward  
Public Service

Peter Nicholson  
J. W. Flasco express

All Saints Parish, Octr. 11th. 1802

Dr. sir.

Having received your letter ordering me to hold my Company in readiness to march at a moments warning; & to keep a watchful eye on the sea board; apprehending the landing of french negroes from on board frigate—I have conformed thereto; & altho we were made uneasy: for a few days, by the appearance of some vessels off; we lately apprehended no danger; they having disappeared; but on the night of the 9th inst. about 12. oClock I recd. the inclosed letter from Ensign Nicholson of my Company: & who commanded the upper patrole: in consequence of which I issued the inclosed summons to my Sergt. Mr. P. Pawley: who proceeded with a small party to Long Bay (from whence the alarm originated); intending if the case required it, to give you and my other superior officers the earliest notice: but on my arrival at the Long Bay & after making diligent search, I deemed it unnecessary: & was much surprised this morning to find this affair had reached Georgetown; & that a considerable part of your Brigade have, & are about to march to Long Bay. This circumstance I assure you has given me great uneasiness; least it should be supposed, that I have given what I have always been cautious to avoid, a false alarm—I have thought proper to inclose you the two documents which I beg the favor of you to safely keep; as it may tend to prove to you, & other immediately concerned, my reason for calling out my company; & the mode by which, they were summoned; & any other information on this subject you may require Mr. J. Brown one of my Sergts; and who will deliver you this letter, can satisfy you & more particularly as he was employed on the occasion—Mr. Brown will deliver you the negro taken by Mr. Nicholson, subject to your future order: whom I expect you will judge of a very suspicious character—

I remain with great  
respect yr. most obt. Sert.

Brigr. Genl.  
Peter Horry, Georgetown  
By Mr. John Brown

J. Ward Capt,  
Lower Allsaints Company  
25th Regt.

True copies as taken from the  
orderly book 25th regt.  
of the 6th Brigade W. H. Lide