

THE
FRENCH PROTESTANTS

OF

ABBEVILLE DISTRICT, S. C.

1761—1765.

REMARKS.

1761 An Act was passed in 1761, in South-Carolina, for encouraging foreign Protestants to settle in that Province.* The same year Mr. Titley, the King's Minister at Copenhagen, addressed a memorial to Lord Bute, containing proposals for settling foreign Protestants in the British Colonies in America, which his Lordship referred to the Lords of Trade; but it does not appear that their Lordships adopted any
1762 measures in consequence. On 28th May, 1762, an order in Council referred a petition to the Lords of Trade, of 114 poor French Protestants, who, persecuted in their native country for not conforming to the ceremonies of the Romish Church, had fled to England for refuge from their oppressors, and prayed to be allowed to settle in some of the British Colonies in America; but on the 10th June following, the Lords of Trade reported to his Majesty, that, though they might, no doubt, be useful settlers in some of His Majesty's Southern Colonies, still they could not advise the introduction and settling of the petitioners, on account of the great expense consequent on their extreme indigence, as they desire not only to be sent
1763 over to America, but even to be maintained there at the public charge. On 13th January, 1763, the Duke of Bedford, ambassador at France, writes to Secretary Lord Egremont,

* Gov. Bull's letter, 20th August, 1764—"which had so good effect as to have brought near 600 persons over, mostly within the last twelve months."

[S. P. O. B. T. Journal, 1763.]

FRIDAY, October 21, 1763.

M. Boutiton, agent for and in behalf of the French Protestants who are going to settle in America, attended, pursuant to order, and presented a memorial containing several propositions in respect to the establishment of those people in East-Florida, and the lands to be granted, and other allowances to be made to them, their Lordships having discoursed fully upon the several propositions contained in his memorial, he withdrew, and Mr. Pownall was ordered to write to the Secretary to the Lords Commissioners of Treasury, to desire he would acquaint that Board with the new proposition made in behalf of these people in respect to the place of their destination, and that this Board do not think proper to report any opinion to His Majesty until they shall receive the sentiments of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury upon it.

HILLSBOROUGH.

TUESDAY, November 1.

Read a letter from the Secretary of the Treasury to Mr. Pownall, dated November 1, in answer to his letter of October 21, concerning the settling of a body of French Protestants in East-Florida; Ordered, that the said letter do lye by for further consideration.

HILLSBOROUGH.

WEDNESDAY, November 2.

The letter from the Secretary of the Treasury to Mr. Pownall, mentioned in the minutes of yesterday, was taken into consideration, and M. Boutiton, agent for the French Protestants, mentioned in the minutes of the 21st ult., attending with the Rev. Mr. Majendie, they were called in, and their Lordships had some further conversation with them on the subject matter of the proposition of going to East-Florida.

THURSDAY, November 3.

Their Lordships had some further discourse with M. Boutiton, Rev. Mr. Majendie and Mr. Shellier, who interests himself in the affair of the French Protestants, mentioned in the minutes of yesterday, and the gentlemen being withdrawn, the draft of a representation to His Majesty upon the method of peopling the

(ENCLOSURE.)

Terms to be inserted in Mr. McNutt's contract to carry two hundred French Protestants to South-Carolina.

That the said McNutt will furnish a proper vessel, staunch and well equipt in all respects for that voyage.

That the people shall be accommodated with berths and provisions as customary in all passenger ships from this country and Ireland, that is to say :

Berths, of 6 feet by 18 inches each.

6 lb. of bread; 6 lb. of beef } per week to each person.

1 lb. of butter,

2 quarts of water per day to each person. When cheese or flour is required a deduction is to be made for it of some other article. The full use of fire all day, and their provisions good in quality.

[B. T. Journal, 1763.]

TUESDAY, November 22, 1763.

The draft of a letter to the Governor of South-Carolina, containing directions for the settlement of the French Protestants in that Province having been transcribed, was signed.

[S. P. O. B. T. S. C. Entry Book; p. 206.]

LORDS OF TRADE TO GOVERNOR BOONE, NOVEMBER 22, 1763.

To T. Boone, esq., Governor of South-Carolina :

Sir—A considerable number of Protestants, inhabitants of the Southern parts of France, having lately retired to this kingdom on account of their religion, and having expressed an inclination to settle in some of His Majesty's Colonies, His Majesty has thought it advisable that they should be established in the Province of South-Carolina, where, from their knowledge in the culture of silk and vines, it is hoped they may be particularly useful to the Colonies and to the public; and the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, having accordingly entered into an agreement with Mr. Alexander McNutt, for the passage of these people to Charles-Town, it will be your duty immediately upon their arrival, to give them every countenance, support and protection in your power.

Upon this occasion it falls within our department to consider and direct in what manner these French Protestants may be settled with the greatest convenience to themselves and advantage to the Province; and as we conceive these ends will be best answered by their being placed together in one body, the object which we are first to recommend to your attention is, the laying

out a proper township for them, either upon the river Savannah, which is the situation they seem most to covet, or if there are no vacant lands there within a reasonable distance, then upon some other convenient river, and in such a spot as they shall, upon examination, find to be most proper for the objects they have in view.

The number of these people, according to the enclosed list, is no more than 183, but as there is a great probability that if they succeed in their undertaking, others will follow and join them, we think that the Township allotted for their settlement should contain at least 20,000 acres of land, to be laid out in a square plot, one side of which to front to the River, having a particular part of it, not exceeding 800 acres, reserved in a convenient situation for the site of a Town, to consist of about 300 tenements for houses and gardens, with proper reservation for a common, and for a glebe of 300 acres for a Minister of the Established Church. As to the particular distribution of the lands within the Township, such distribution must be made to each family under the regulations, and in the proportions prescribed by your instructions as they refer either to the quantity or the conditions of cultivation; but we think it necessary to acquaint you, that as the particular situation of these people, and their indigent circumstances, appear to us to require particular encouragement, we have humbly proposed to his Majesty that they shall be exempt from the payment of any Quit Rent for the space of ten years; and that the expense of laying out and surveying the lands shall be defrayed out of his Majesty's Revenue of Quit Rents, and we are not without hopes that before the vessel sails, we shall be able to send you his Majesty's orders upon these points.

The advantages which the Province will receive from the acquisition of so large a body of useful Colonists, and the attention which has always been given by the Legislature there, to encourage its speedy settlement, leave us no room to doubt that the Council and Assembly will co-operate with you in every measure that can contribute to the comfort and convenience of these people as far as depends upon them, and that the bounties allowed by the Act passed in 1761 to each foreign Protestant that arrives in the Province, will be paid without delay, that of 20s. a head for provisions and tools to the people themselves, and that for the expense of transportation to such persons as shall be authorized to receive it in consequence of the engagements which the Treasury have entered into with Mr. McNutt, one condition of which is, that he shall receive that bounty in alleviation of the expense of the freight. The reliance we have upon your humanity and zeal for his Majesty's service makes it unnecessary to add any thing further than that we do more especially recommend this service to your attention, and to that of the Council and Assembly, as his Majesty has been pleased to

Mr. Majendie, are full of the most grateful acknowledgements of the generous treatment and protection they have received.

HILLSBOROUGH, W. ELLIOTT,
GEO. RICE, BAMBER GASCOYNE:

Whitehall, January 10, 1764.

[S. P. O. B. T. S. C. Minutes of Assembly, 1764.]

SOUTH-CAROLINA, MINUTES OF ASSEMBLY, 1764.

Proclamation appointing the General Assembly to meet on Thursday, the 19th of April, in relation to French Protestants lately arrived.

SOUTH-CAROLINA.

By His Excellency, Thomas Boone, esq., Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief in and over His Majesty's said Province, and Vice-Admiral of the same,

A PROCLAMATION.

His Majesty having been graciously pleased to take a certain number of French Protestants, actually arrived in this Province, under his particular protection, and to recommend the settling of them according to a fixed plan, to the special attention of the Governor, Council and Assembly. I do hereby, with the advice and consent of His Majesty's Honorable Council, appoint Thursday, 19th of April, instant, at 11 o'clock in the forenoon, for the meeting of the General Assembly, in order that the intentions of our gracious sovereign may effectually and with dispatch, be carried into execution.

Given under my hand, and the great seal of this, His Majesty's Province of South-Carolina, at Charles-Town, this sixteenth day of April, 1764, in the 4th year of His Majesty's reign.

THOMAS BOONE.

By His Excellency's command,
GEORGE JOHNSON, D. Secretary.
God save the King.

Members met pursuant to said proclamation, on 19th, 20th, 21st, and on Monday, April 23, Mr. Mazyek and Mr. Williamson attended the Governor, and delivered to His Excellency the message they had in charge, to which the Governor replied that the House should hear from him.

A MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR BY THE MASTER-IN-CHANCERY.

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Com. House of Assembly:

Though I have already been disappointed in my hopes that you would provide for various services which have occasionally required your aid; though you have disregarded an application of mine, made to you in consequence of the King's orders that a temporary line should be run, which orders were the effect of your own solicitations by your agent; yet it is my duty to acquaint you, that His Majesty does by his ministers, especially recommend to the Legislature of this Province, the establishing in a body a certain number of French Protestants, who are actually arrived here, well versed in the culture of silk and vines, who will in all probability, if encouraged, be followed by many more. The settling them as a distinct Colony is most likely to answer the end of introducing new commodities into this Province, as well as most conformable to His Majesty's intentions; but without your assistance it is impossible to effect it. The season is advanced, the land is to be surveyed, and they are not only without provisions but the means of purchasing them, for the ship has a claim to the bounty allowed by the Province for passage. I have a pleasure in considering the opportunity now offered you of imitating the benevolence of our gracious sovereign, who has condescended to take these unfortunate people under his particular protection.

THOMAS BOONE.

Read extract of a letter from the Right Honorable, the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations.

Motion being made that the last letter received from the agent, dated January 7, 1764, be now read to the House, the same was read accordingly, and upon another motion, it was ordered that His Excellency's message delivered this day, do lye upon the table.

And also another motion being made, it was

Resolved, That this House will (as soon as they can consistently with their former resolution,) take into consideration the Governor's message of this day, relative to the French Protestants lately arrived in this Province.

And then the House adjourned.

APRIL 25.

Ordered, That a committee be appointed of the following gentlemen, to consider and report to the House their opinion of the most effectual way of providing for and settling the French Protestants lately arrived in this province, so as best to answer the

[S. P. O. B. T. So. Ca., N. 1.]

(EXTRACT.)

Lieutenant Governor Bull to Lords of Trade.

Received Oct. 15—read Dec. 17.

CHARLES-TOWN, 20th AUGUST, 1764.

The Assembly having given £500 sterling for the settling the Colony of French Protestants, I sent them some weeks ago in two divisions, with waggons, for their tools and baggage, to begin their settlements, and the remainder, consisting mostly of women, I still keep in Town till the Colony have made some shelter for their reception, which may be in a few weeks. Some few, through disgust or quarrels, having separated, I have settled at Purrysburgh. I have taken the liberty of honoring this Township with the name of Hillsborough, and to *its little Town given that of New Bordeaux*, from whence many of them came. Upon the frequent alarms which disturbed the settlers about Long Canes, lying South from 96, I prevailed on the Assembly to cover them with a Company of Rangers, a detachment of which I have ordered to cover and assist the French Colonists on their first settling.

The Act for encouraging Protestants to be settlers here, passed in 1761, has had so good effect as to have brought near 600 persons over mostly within the last twelve months. The Act will be revived and continued; and in order to give some check to the great employment of negroes by which the safety of the Province may be endangered, the Assembly have now under consideration a bill to prevent the importation for two or three years.

WM. BULL.

[S. P. O. B. T. So. Ca. N. 22.]

(EXTRACT.)

Lieutenant Governor Bull to Lords of Trade.

Received 11th February, 1765.

CHARLES-TOWN, 21st DECEMBER, 1764.

[In allusion to German Protestants lately arrived.]

The soil is rich where the French Protestants are settled, and I shall endeavour to lead their industry to the cultivation of hemp and silk, as two branches of manufacture of the most natural concern to Great Britain, as well as beneficial to themselves.

WM. BULL.

[B. T. So. Ca., Entry Book, 1764, p. 231.]

(EXTRACT.)

Lords of Trade to Lieutenant Governor Bull.

24th DECEMBER, 1764.

We have received your letter to us of 20th August, &c. The dutiful zeal with which the Assembly have complied with his Majesty's commands, in respect to the Colony of French Protestants, cannot fail to meet with his Majesty's approbation.

[B. T. So. Ca., N. 23.]

(EXTRACT.)

Lieutenant Governor Bull to Lords of Trade.

Received 30th May, 1765.

15th MARCH, 1765.

The party of French Protestants who went up in January last, had finished their huts by the beginning of this month, as all of them would have done if it had been their good fortune to have had their baggage arrived with, or soon after them.

[N. 6.]

Petition of French Protestants, received 30th April, 1765, praying to join the Colony which went into Carolina with M. Gibert, now inspected by M. Boutiton.