



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

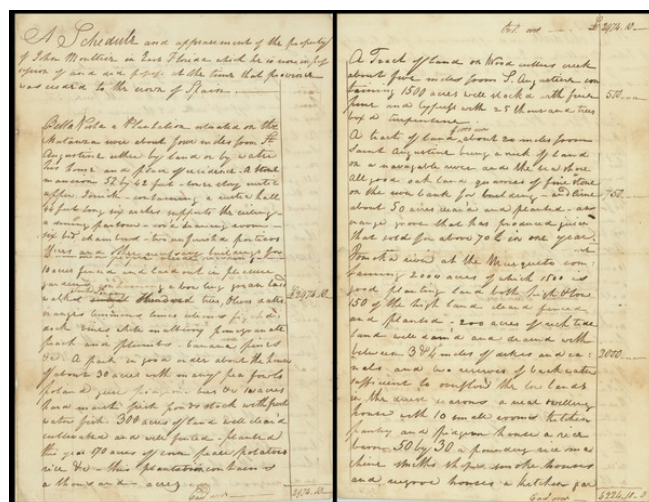
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(Colonial East Florida / St. Augustine to Cape Canaveral area) -- [Land Holdings of John Moultrie, Deputy Governor of East Florida] A Schedule and apprasement [sic] of the property of John Moultrie in East Florida which he is now in possession of and did possess at the time that province was ceded to the crown of Spain

Stock#: 86619
Map Maker: Moultrie
Date: 1784 circa
Place: [St. Augustine, Florida?]
Color: Pen & Ink
Condition: VG
Size: 18.5 x 14.5 inches
Price: \$ 17,500.00



Description:

East Florida Land Holdings of John Moultrie, 1784 - Including a Description of One of the First Great Estates in Florida

Erstwhile Deputy Governor Vacates the Province as British Transfer East Florida Back to Spain

A very early manuscript document relating to East Florida, dating from the time when the British were transferring possession of the province back to Spain in 1784. The document comprises an appraisal of the East Florida plantations and land holdings of a prominent early figure in the province before the American Revolution, John Moultrie. Judging from the present document Moultrie owned a sizeable chunk of the coastal swamp land south of St. Augustine: thousands of acres planted with all manner of fruits and crops, a well-appointed mansion house, dozens of buildings and houses, the whole valued here at £9432.

Governor Tonyn issued a proclamation on May 6, 1784 ordering British inhabitants to make arrangements to embark on vessels set aside for the purpose from St. Augustine. However, many British residents of East Florida tarried in hopes of finding purchasers for their houses and land. The lack of Spanish purchasers depressed the value of real estate, at times down to a quarter of its value. Moultrie's vast land holdings in East Florida resulting in his eventual claim of losses made to the East Florida Claims Commission in London. Since few records of the Commission survive due to poor storage conditions (the records were transferred to the Treasury cellar in 1847 and mostly rendered useless due to sewer water



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damage) the present document is likely Moultrie's own retained copy or draft of the appraisal. He made claims to the East Florida Claims Office for losses of £9,432, clearly detailed in the present document. One source states he was awarded only 4,479 pounds.

Of particular interest in this document is the detailed description of Moultrie's Bella Vista plantation home, a luxurious stone mansion and grounds valued herein at £2974. With buildings enough to house a hundred people, complete with pleasure gardens, thousands of trees, olives, dates, lemons and oranges, a bowling green, the spread must have been a sight to behold.

The text of the document is transcribed below.

A Schedule and apprasement of the property of John Moultrie in East Florida which he is now in possession of and did possess at the time that the province was ceded to the crown of Spain __

Bella Vista a Plantation situated on the Matawza river about four miles from St. Augustine either by land or by water his home and a place of residence. A stone mansion 52 x 42 feet - lower story rustic, upper ? - containing a rustic hall 44 feet long six arches supports the ceiling - a dining parlour - cov'd drawing room - six bed chambers - two unfurnished porticos ... and other necessary buildings for a hundred people besides kitchen garden 10 acres fenced and laid out in pleasure gardens containing a bowling green, laid walks, planted with many thousand trees, olives, dates, oranges, lemmons, limes... stock vines, white mulberry pomegranate, peach and plumbs - banana pines &c. A park in good order about the house of about 30 acres with many pea fowls, poland geese, pigeons, bees & c. 100 acres land... fish ponds stock[ed] with fresh water fish, 300 acres of land will clear'd cultivated and well fenced - planted this year 170 acres of corn peas potatoes rice &c - this plantation contains a thousand acres. £2974.10

A Tract of land on Wood Cutters Creek about five miles from S. Augustine containing 1500 acres well stock'd with fruits, pine and cypress with 25 thousand trees, box'd turpentine. 500.

A Tract of land of 1000 acres about 20 miles from Saint Augustine being a neck of land on a nable river and the sea shore. All good oak land quarries of fine stone on the river bank for building - and lime about 50 acres clear'd and planted - an orange grove that had produced juices that sold for above 70£ in one year. 750.

Tomoka river at the Musquito containing 2000 acres of which 1500 is good planting land both high



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& low 150 of the high land clear'd fenced and planted - 200 acres of rich tide land well dam'd and drained with between 3 & 4 miles of dikes and canals and two reserves of backwater sufficient to overflow the lowlands in the driest seasons, a neat dwelling house with 10 small rooms kitchen pantry and pidgeon house a rice barn 50 by 30 a pounding rice machine ? shops smoke houses and negroe houses, a kitchen garden. 2000

A Track of land two miles north of the above [described land] on the Mosquito River containing 1500 acres one half at least good high land - high swamp rich feeding marshes with large natural reserves of water to flow low land, an orange grove. A track of land one mile North of the above [described land] on the same river of 2500 acres of which 1000 acres are rich high and low land and fine marsh for rice or pasture, the remainder fine land and large cypress ponds making certain natural reserves of water sufficient to over flow the low lands. 650.

A track of land containing 1000 acres of land opposite to the above lying between the Musquito River & the Sea forming a neck of land about 400 acres good rich high land and fresh marsh. 230.

A track containing 200 acres opposite to Mount Oswald on the Musquito River all good hammock land. 100.

A track containing 1000 acres on the neck of land the hole over between the Mosquito and Indian Rivers about 400 acres good hammock land - the remainder scrub palmetos. 230.

A track containing 1000 acres on the New River about 500 acres of which is good high swamp and hard marsh - the remainder fine. 275.

A track about 10 miles from S. Augstine on the twelve mile swamp all good land high and low swamp stock'd with the finest Cedar and Cypress containing 1610 acres. 805.

An Island in the Tomoka River containing 24 acres of low swamp. 15

A town lot on the bay of Saint Augustine near near Fort Land Mark & three houses thereon. 300

----- £9402,00

One flat built entirely of red cedar burthen about fifty barrels now lying at Rosetta plantation at the



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Musquito. 30

£9432,00

John Moultrie

John Moultrie (1729 – 1798) is best known for his time as the Deputy Governor of East Florida immediately prior to the American Revolution.

Born in Charleston, South Carolina, he received a medical degree from the University of Edinburgh in 1749, before returning to South Carolina. He served as a major under James Grant during the Cherokee Wars. He became a highly regarded planter from the Carolinas, known for producing some of the best indigo in the colony. In 1767, Moultrie brought many experienced enslaved people to East Florida for the growing of indigo and rice as well as corn, beans and potatoes on his plantation, Bella Vista.

Moultrie served as acting governor of the province after Governor James Grant returned to England in 1771 due to illness. In 1774, Patrick Tonyn took over the position of Governor.

Moultrie disliked land speculators who used land grants merely to gain quick profits. He was sorry “to see so good a part of the colony run out in large tracts for grantees at home who likely do not mean to cultivate them, and have not left room for other settlers, for many miles on the rivers.” His “Moultrie” plantation was called Bella Vista. He also owned a large tract at what today would be Washington Oaks.

His plantation in the Tomoka Basin was named “Rosetta”. Moultrie settled a plantation of 2,000 acres in the Tomoka Basin in 1770. With 180 employees, he cultivated 1,784 of the acres, with a two-story house with ten rooms.

The two plantations were Bella Vista on the Matanzas River, some four miles from St. Augustine, where Moultrie had a stone mansion and pleasure gardens, and Rozetta Plantation, located on the Tomoka River, comprising 2000 acres.

After finally achieving a life of real plenty, ease and elegance, in a province that had recently shown an astonishing productivity in agriculture, lumber, and naval stores, Moultrie was about to be turned adrift... Moultrie was disturbed about the fate of his Negroes, especially a number of faithful



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servants brought up for several generations in his family... In July 1784, he sailed to England, leaving behind three brothers, Thomas, Alexander, and William, all patriot soldiers - Raab.

After the Revolutionary War, Moultrie returned to England, where he lived out his life at Ashton Hall, apparently dependent on an annuity of 500 pounds. He had lived seventeen years in East Florida.

Moultrie had four brothers:

- James Moultrie became the Chief Justice of East Florida.
- William Moultrie (1730-1805) Patriot General of the Continental Army, for whom Fort Moultrie, South Carolina was named.
- Thomas was a Captain in the American Revolution in the 2nd South Carolina Regiment who was killed in the Battle of Charleston.
- Alexander (half-brother) became the first Attorney General in South Carolina and was held captive in St. Augustine while his half-brother John was Lieut. Governor

The John Moultrie papers are held by the University of Miami, Special Collections.

Detailed Condition:

Folio. Folded sheet of laid paper. [4] pages of manuscript text. Some separation at fold creases. Slight dust soiling to lower half of final page. Overall very clean.