“Filling in the Missing Pieces:
The Extraordinary Life of Captain Francisco Menendez, Leader of the Free
Black Town of Gracia Real de Santa Theresa de Mose”

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by

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It’s an honor to be here tonight at the Florida Conference of Historians and I would like to thank my old friend, Mike Denham, for this invitation to deliver the keynote address as part of Florida Southern’s Florida Lecture Series. Many years ago now, I had the chance to deliver a talk at the Lawton M. Chiles Center for Florida History, of which I am proud to be an Advisor and it’s wonderful to be back on this unique campus, and to see old friends in the audience who also share a love of Florida history.

Ever since I was a graduate student at the University of Florida, more than twenty-five years ago now, I have been tracking the Atlantic trails of a Mandinga man known to me as Francisco Menéndez. I first encountered him through a 1738 petition to the Spanish governor of Florida in which he acted as spokesman for a group of African runaways from Carolina slavery. Menéndez called on the governor to honor Spain’s religious sanctuary policy, first established in 1693, and to free all of the Africans who had come to Florida, only to find themselves unjustly re-enslaved. Petitioning in support of Menéndez was Chief Jospe, a leader of the Yamasee War with whom Menéndez had fought for several bloody years before they were defeated and fled southward. ¹

After two decades among the Spaniards, Menéndez would become the leader of Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose, the first free black town in what is today the United States, and his story would shape my career as an historian. Thanks to
the rich archival documentation available for Africans and Indians throughout the Spanish world, I have been able to track some fascinating individuals and their engagement in the turbulent geopolitics of their day. And as Menéndez first proved to me, the actions of a few individuals can have perhaps unintended and, certainly unforeseen, imperial and trans-Atlantic consequences.  

My quest to identify Menéndez was triggered by reading Peter H. Wood’s wonderful *Black Majority* which he concludes with a band of slave rebels from Stono escaping down the King’s Highway to St. Augustine. In my search for the survivors of that slave rebellion, I encountered Menéndez, a refugee from the earlier Yamasee War of 1715, and, eventually, I came to the earliest documented group of freedom-seekers from Carolina who reached Florida in 1687. We will never know how many others may have attempted that brutal journey and failed. My early research produced a dissertation chapter and a journal article, but more importantly, it led to an archaeological investigation, a major museum exhibit, and, eventually, Mose’s designation as a National Historic Landmark. Today a museum in St. Augustine honors Menéndez and his fellow freedom-seekers. Perhaps most importantly, the story of Menéndez and his “subjects” has made its way into K–12 and university textbooks, thus altering, at least in some measure, what has tended toward an Anglocentric narrative of early American history. School children in St.
Augustine now play the roles of Mose villagers at somewhat anachronistic “Juneteenth” celebrations.5

My initial research focused on Menéndez’s life in Spanish Florida but I have since gained comparative perspective researching the experience of Africans in archives in Mexico, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Colombia and Brazil. Having eschewed a national framework I found a new scholarly home in Atlantic History which introduced me to the rich scholarship of pre–colonial Africanists and also to the new Indian history. New online research tools such as the Transatlantic Slave Voyages Database, Eighteenth Century Collections Online, and the amazing Portal to the Archives of Spain (PARES), among others, have also allowed scholars to range more widely across the Atlantic world. I am now revisiting Menéndez’s story and attempting to fill in more of his African past, his years among the Yamasee, and his final years in Cuba.

The only clue I have to Menéndez’s African origins is that he identified himself, and Spaniards also identified him as Mandinga (in African scholarship, Mandinke). I know, too, that English slavers brought him to Carolina early in the eighteenth century and that much of their early slave trade concentrated along the Gambia River. With that fragmentary evidence I began to piece together some of his African past.
Portuguese merchants introduced Catholicism, Portuguese social patterns, and European material culture to the Gambia as early as the fifteenth century, while integrating themselves into local familial and economic networks that facilitated their trade. In a pattern that would be transplanted to the Americas, they married or cohabited with local women and their children bore Portuguese names, wore crucifixes, and practiced a form of Catholicism. These Luso-Africans spoke crioulo, a blend of Portuguese and African languages, as well as a variety of local African languages. Their Portuguese-style houses reflected the wealth and status of alcaides or village leaders who acted as culture brokers between locals and Europeans. Once a year, a priest from the Cabo Verde island of Santiago traveled to the mainland to perform marriages and baptism for the polyglot Luso-Africans living there. Portuguese Jews also found a fuller measure of religious tolerance in the Atlantic Islands, and like their Catholic countrymen they became traders in Cabo Verde and along the Gambia where they established their own mixed-race families. By this time, Muslim merchants were already well-established in the Senegambia region, often living in their own villages strategically placed near existing indigenous villages. Muslim traders introduced Arabic, Islam, and Koranic education and literacy into Senegambia, along with trade. Muslim holy men known as marabouts gained status as local healers and sold amulets or gris-gris containing protective Koranic prayers. Some Muslim converts along the Gambia were noted
for their strict observance of law, while others practiced a fairly relaxed form of Islam; many drank, for instance, and in this ecumenical locale, some non-Muslims also attended Koranic schools.\(^9\)

The Mandinga, to whom Francisco Menéndez claimed connection, were the most powerful of the many African groups living along the Gambia River, and most were Muslims. They were ruled by noble lineages which acquired that status by having founded towns, as Menéndez would later do in Florida. Mandinga rulers established a series of small kingdoms along the Gambia River and collected tribute in the form of cattle, poultry, rice and other agricultural produce from their weaker Fula and Sereer neighbors.\(^10\)

In the seventeenth century English and French traders began appearing in the region, looking to purchase elephant “teeth,” beeswax, cattle hides, and slaves from Mandinga merchants. Mandinga mansas charged them land-use taxes as they had other weaker African groups, and in addition, they charged head taxes on each foreign resident and for each ship entering their ports. In 1661 the Royal Adventurers of England Trading in Africa occupied a small island in the middle of the Gambia River and in 1670 the Royal African Company won a government monopoly over the Gambian trade and built Fort James on that island. Then, in 1681, French competitors representing the Compagnie du Senegal established Albreda on the northern bank of the Gambia River, almost directly across from
Fort James. Mandinga rulers grew wealthy on tribute and trade and English and French observers reported that like the Luso-Africans, some of them also lived in European-style houses and wore elaborate mixes of African and European clothing. They also held slaves. 11

In Mandinga society, as in the Iberian world, a person might be enslaved for debt or crimes, or, in cases of dire necessity, they might sell themselves or their children and thereby be consigned to the jongo caste. It is unknown how the young man who would become Francisco Menéndez was enslaved or by whom. Although the Mandinga considered slaves as property that could be sold, or even killed by their masters, they could not be sold or killed without a public trial and they might also be allowed to work some days for their own gain. Should they remain in a household for several generations, they would be given the surname of their owner and a second name denoting their slave origins. 12 Urban slaves in the Spanish world might also be regarded as part of the extended family and were permitted to work for their own profit at their owner’s discretion and accumulate property (peculium).13

Thus, the Gambia region in which Francisco Menéndez was raised in some ways prepared him for the new worlds he would come to know. The Gambia had long been a multi-cultural and multi-lingual world where Mandinga, Fula, Wolof and Serahuli speakers bartered with Portuguese, Arabic, English, and French
speakers, each learning to accommodate the other to some degree...all in the interest of the deal. Given what English ship captains and factors described of life along the Gambia, it is entirely possible, then, that before being transported to Carolina, Menéndez would have already interacted with a variety of peoples and cultures and acquired the “linguistic dexterity, social plasticity, and cultural agility” that would serve him well in his next world.

In 1670, as English traders from the Royal African Company were settling into Fort James, across the Atlantic Barbadian planters were launching the new English colony of Carolina, in land still claimed by Spain as La Florida. Charles Town was “only 10 days journey” from St. Augustine, and the undermanned Spanish garrison was compelled to make a feeble, and unsuccessful, attempt to eject the “usurpers.” The abortive Spanish expedition was commanded by St. Augustine’s royal treasurer, don Juan Menéndez Márquez, who would later become Francisco Menéndez’s owner in St. Augustine. Thus began almost a century of conflict over the so-called “debatable lands.” The ensuing Anglo/Spanish hostilities trigged waves of migration, raids, and counter-raids all along the Atlantic coast engulfing indigenous groups and African slaves in imperial contests for control of the Southeast.

Whether encouraged by the English, or of their own volition, Yamasee Indians long allied to the Spanish soon began attacking the chain of Spanish
missions along the Georgia coast. Unable to defend their Christian charges, the Spaniards tried to relocate them southward but some revolted and fled instead to the interior and an English alliance. In the early months of 1685 several thousand Yamasee accompanied by “3 nations of the Spanish Indians that are Christians, Sapella, Soho, and Sapicbay” relocated from St. Augustine to lands they formerly held along the coast, such as the Pocotaligo, on St. Helena. Later that year, some fifty Yamasee from St. Helena raided the Christian Timucuan village of Santa Catalina de Afuica, on St. Catherine’s Island, killing eighteen people and taking twenty-five others as slaves back to Carolina. As an added insult, the former Christian converts also brought back church ornaments from the ruined Spanish missions.

Despite this instability, Carolina’s commitment to and investment in African slavery continued apace. Early settlers brought small numbers of enslaved Africans with them to begin the hard work of clearing forests and building housing and periodically imported more from Barbados and Jamaica. They also enslaved local Indians, as their compatriots in Virginia and other colonies were doing, but the demand for ever more labor proved greater than local indigenous supply. In 1674 the Lords Proprietor of Carolina ordered Andrew Percival to “begin a Trade with the Spaniards for Negroes” but this plan must not have been realized and in 1699 Captain W. Rhett imported the first known shipment of slaves from the African
coast in the ship *Providence*. Soon, Carolina planters were importing larger lots of enslaved people from Africa, primarily from the Gambia. By 1709 Governor Edward Randolph reported to the Board of Trade that there were “four negroes to one white man” in Carolina. The Trans-Atlantic Slave Voyages Database lists no voyages from Africa to the North American mainland for the years 1670–1720, but reports such as Randolph’s indicate a larger volume of Africans imported into Carolina than earlier supposed, with a significant increase in slave imports between 1709 and 1711. It is probable, then, that the Mandinga youth who became Francisco Menéndez arrived to the Carolina frontier during this period of heavy African importation.

Many of the newly imported Africans were destined for the dense pine forests and swamps of Carolina where settlers early established critical timber and naval stores industries, encouraged by British bounties on tar, pitch, rosin and turpentine. Enslaved Africans also cut and sawed timber that planters shipped to Charleston and on to other parts of the British Caribbean. As Peter H. Wood has shown, early Carolina’s “black pioneers” also became “Cattle-hunters” in the Carolina forests. All of these occupations allowed even recently imported Africans a certain amount of autonomy and mobility, as well as access to native peoples and their knowledge of the geopolitics of the region. Africans also came to know the
lay of the Carolina landscape by serving as “path-finders” and linguists for Indian traders and planters.  

Francisco Menéndez may have held any of these occupations, but he never referred to his enslaved past in his Spanish correspondence and we do not know how he came to be enslaved by other Africans or how long he waited on James Island before being herded into the hold of a slave ship. We do not know his African name or what name he was given by the Englishman who bought him in Charles Town. We know only that he entered Carolina’s multicultural frontier sometime in the early 1700s, joining other Africans and still more numerous indigenous captives to form the region’s “charter generation” of slaves. Over the next ten years or so, he came to know English chattel slavery and also previously unknown Indian cultures. Soon, Menéndez, like other Africans and Indians alike, would be swept into the ongoing Anglo/Spanish contest for control of the Atlantic Southeast.

Given their numeric weakness, both the English and the Spaniards used Indian and African surrogates to do much of their fighting on this unstable Atlantic frontier. In 1683 the governor of Spanish Florida, Juan Márquez Cabrera, followed the lead of short-handed governors across the Spanish Atlantic and created a new pardo (mulatto) and moreno (black) militia in St. Augustine. The men swore before God and the cross their willingness to serve the king, and while their pledge
may have been formulaic, it was also an effort to define their status as members of the religious and civil community, and as vassals of a monarch from whom they might expect protection or patronage in exchange for armed service.  

These black militiamen were significant for their linguistic and cultural abilities, their knowledge of the frontier, and their military skills and the Spaniards regularly included them in their raids against Carolina.  

The repeated cross-currents of raids and migrations across the Southeast acquainted many blacks and Indians alike with the routes to St. Augustine, as well as with the enmity existing between the English and Spanish colonies. It did not take long for overworked slaves of the English to attempt to reach the enemy of their oppressors.

In 1687 eight black men, two women, and a nursing child arrived at St. Augustine in a stolen canoe and requested baptism into the “True Faith.” Given the multi-cultural nature of the Gambia region, and early missionary reports of Portuguese-speaking slaves in Carolina, it is quite possible that some of the runaways reaching Florida had already been exposed to Roman Catholicism. Thus, they may have known of the protections and opportunities the Catholic Church offered, possibly even manipulating confessional politics to their own advantage in making a shared request for religious sanctuary. As required of a good Christian ruler, the Spanish governor, Diego de Quiroga, saw to the African runaways’ Catholic instruction, baptism, and marriage, and refused to return them
to Captain William Dunlop, the Carolina Indian trader who arrived from Carolina to recover them the following year.\textsuperscript{37}

The slaves’ “telegraph” quickly reported the outcome of the negotiations, and the Spaniards recorded new groups of runaways being received in St. Augustine in 1688, 1689, and 1690. Carolina’s governor, James Colleton, complained that slaves ran “dayly to your towns.” Unsure about how to handle the refugees, St. Augustine’s officials repeatedly solicited Spain for guidance and finally, on November 7, 1693, Charles II issued a royal proclamation “giving liberty to all ... the men as well as the women ... so that by their example and by my liberality others will do the same.”\textsuperscript{38} The initiative and determination of those eight enslaved men and women who risked their lives to become free thus led to a major policy revision at the Spanish court that would shape the geopolitics of the Southeast and the Caribbean for the next century, as it would the life of Francisco Menéndez.\textsuperscript{39}

Shortly after Menéndez reached Carolina, the War of Spanish Succession (1702–1713) embroiled the Atlantic Southeast in new waves of violence. Carolina’s governor, the well-known slave trader James Moore, led a combined force of about a thousand men, including Yamasee allies and armed slaves, in a series of devastating raids on the Spanish coastal mission sites. Thousands of Florida Indians were slaughtered and thousands more became slaves in Carolina or
the Caribbean. French allies joined Spain’s tri-racial forces in a counter-attack on Charles Town in 1706, but despite some initial success, this retaliatory expedition failed. During the war, Carolina officials created a militia of 950 “freemen” each of who was to present for service “one able slave armed with gun or lance.” It is tempting to wonder if Menéndez was one of those newly armed slaves who saw repeated service against St. Augustine’s black and Indian militias. In these engagements Carolina’s slaves would have witnessed armed black men in service to Spaniards and once again been reminded that Spanish Florida offered them a refuge. More would seek sanctuary in Florida as a result of the Yamasee War that erupted in 1715.

Most studies of the Yamasee War have blamed that conflict on Carolina’s Indian traders who exploited the local indigenous groups, enmeshing them in ruinous debt. The distraught Yamasee filed repeated complaints against these traders with the Carolina Commissioners of Indian Trade. They charged that John Wright, the Indian Agent posted at the paramount Yamasee village of Pocotaligo, on St. Helena Island, forced them to carry burdens, demanded that they build a house for him next to that of the council house and debauched their young girls. In another incident “Lewis King of yr Pocotalligo Town” complained against traders Cornelius MacKarty (sic) and Samuel Hilden for “stripping and beating Wiggasay and Haclantoosa, two of his people att one of their playes.” Attempts
by authorities to try to curb the worst of these abuses were largely ineffective, and
the traders lived almost as rulers in their host towns. \(^{46}\) During this same period the
Spanish governor was gifting delegations of Yamasee in St. Augustine.

In an effort to resolve long simmering hostilities, on April 14, 1715 the
Commissioners sent a delegation of traders to Pocotaligo. They included William
Bray, who had tracked some of his runaway slaves to St. Augustine earlier in the
year, Thomas Nairne, Samuel Warner, John Cochran and John Wright, against
whom the Yamasee had filed numerous complaints. The Yamasee received the
degulation of traders but on Good Friday they tortured and put them to death
before rising in a well coordinated attack against the English.\(^{47}\) Recognizing the
chance for their own liberation, Francisco Menéndez and other enslaved Africans
joined in common cause with the Yamasee against their mutual enemy, although
Caroliniens reported their slaves had been “taken.” \(^{48}\) The Yamasee and their
African allies fought several major battles at Pocotaligo and another at
Salkehatchie but eventually were driven ever southward.\(^{49}\)

For three years, the man who became Francisco Menéndez and several other
slaves who had risen against the English fought with the forces of the Yamasee
chief Jospo, all the while gaining valuable military skills and cultural, political, and
geographic knowledge. In those years Menéndez transformed himself from English
chattel into a valued Yamasee warrior. The Yamasee almost succeeded in
eradicating white settlement in Carolina, but reinforcements from Virginia and North Carolina helped turn the tide, leading the Yamasees to seek refuge among the very Spaniards they had once harried. Chief Jospo and his African allies, among who was Francisco Menéndez, escaped together to Spanish Florida where they hoped to claim the religious sanctuary promised in 1693 by Spain’s Catholic monarch.  

Menéndez’s hopes of freedom would not be fulfilled for another twenty years.

During the Yamasee War, the indigenous geopolitics of the Southeast had shifted once again. One month after the outbreak of the war, and in response to the perceived weakness of the English, Coosa’s paramount Chief Chalaquiliche, ordered his subjects to switch their allegiance to the Spaniards. He sent four lesser chiefs to St. Augustine to relay this offer and their spokesman, one Yfallaquisca, also known as Perro Bravo, laid eight chamois cords full of knots before Spanish officials. Each knot denoted a town promising to switch allegiance to the Spaniards (a total of 161 towns) and Perro Bravo asked that the cords be sent to the king of Spain, noting that towns of fewer persons were not even represented.

Spanish officials in St. Augustine settled many of their new Indian allies in villages on the periphery of St. Augustine, generally grouping them by language. Perro Bravo lived at the Yamasee village of Pocotalaca (after Pocotaligo) and somehow claimed ownership of Francisco Menéndez and three other African
“slaves” who after fighting with the Yamasee considered they had liberated themselves. One of Perro Bravo’s other slaves may have been Francisco Menéndez’s Mandinga wife, who fled with him from Carolina. Perro Bravo told Indians and Spaniards alike that if he were not paid for the slaves he would kill them, and that he had many other lands in which he could live. The threat apparently paid off, and at a meeting at the Indian village of Nombre de Dios, in the fall of 1718 the acting governor of Florida, Juan de Ayala y Escovar, purchased the endangered Africans for some corn and liquor. Thus, in approximately two decades of his youth, Menéndez had experienced enslavement by Africans, Englishmen, Yamasees and Spaniards, with only a brief period of freedom during the Yamasee War.

Spanish slavery was not what Menéndez sought, but it would be different than slavery he had experienced under any others. His was an anomalous enslavement. Although the manner of his purchase seems to have made him a Crown slave, owned by the government rather than by an individual, there is no evidence he was ever treated as such. Rather, it seems that he may have lived some time with the governor himself, since his wife took the name Ana María de Escovar.

Meanwhile, an ever growing African population and the fear that slaves might ally with Spaniards in Florida led Carolina planters to obsess about slave
rebellion. Carolinians discovered alleged slave plots in 1711 and 1714 and in 1720 the townspeople of Charles Town uncovered a major slave conspiracy in which at least some of the participants “thought to gett to Augustine.” Fourteen got as far as Savannah before being captured and executed. In 1724, ten more runaways reached St. Augustine, assisted again by English-speaking Yamasee Indians and they stated they knew that the Spanish king had offered freedom for those seeking conversion and baptism. Following the precedent first set in 1687, Florida’s governor, Antonio de Benavides, offered to purchase the runaways for two hundred pesos apiece and in 1725 he sent St. Augustine’s royal accountant, don Francisco Menéndez Márquez, to Charles Town to negotiate with their owners, who angrily rejected the offer as insufficient. The governor also inquired of Spain if sanctuary was indeed to be offered, since the runaways had appeared during a time of truce between Spain and England. As often happened, the governor received no reply, and after the English threatened to reclaim their lost slaves by force, he sold the unlucky fugitives at public auction to the leading creditors of the St. Augustine treasury. In this way don Francisco Menéndez Márquez acquired the Mandinga man who would take his name at his Catholic baptism.

The African now had a powerful patron—a royal official and a wealthy landowner— who served as his godparent and made him part of his household. Don Francisco Menéndez Márquez was sent on repeated diplomatic/and or
military missions to Carolina and it seems likely he would have taken with him the
slave who had fought his way through that terrain and who also knew so well the
Yamasee and English geopolitics. In 1725 Menéndez Márquez was sent to destroy
a fortified English settlement at Stuart’s Town and the following year Francisco
Menéndez was named Captain of St. Augustine’s black militia (perhaps in
recognition of his service?)60 Thereafter, the African captain led fought in other
military engagements against the English from whom he had fled, each of which
would have enhanced his status in the Spanish community.

In these years, Carolina slaves continued to flee to Florida. Some of the
runaways were seasoned warriors who had fought with the Yamasee against the
English, and some may have also been warriors in their homelands. They became
effective additions to the black militia and joined in subsequent Spanish raids
against their former masters. The same year Menéndez was made Captain of the
slave militia, planters near Stono “had fourteen Slaves Runaway to St. Augustine”
and the governor of Carolina complained to London that the Spaniards not only
harbored their runaways but “They have found a New way of sending our own
slaves against us, to Rob and Plunder us.”61 Carolina’s Governor Middleton
claimed that “Six of our Runaway slaves and the rest Indians” in two canoes
attacked near Pon Pon in the fall of 1727 and carried away white captives. Another
account of the same raid said that “Ten Negroes and fourteen Indians Commanded
by those of their own Colour, without any Spaniards in company with them” had been responsible and that they had also brought back to St. Augustine one black man and a mulatto boy. That same year Spanish raiders and Carolina runaways hit again at a plantation on the Edisto River and carried away another seven blacks. In fact, Governor Antonio de Benavides had offered thirty pieces of eight for every English scalp and one hundred pieces “for every live Negro” the multi-racial raiders brought back to St. Augustine.” On each of these occasions, the black raiders would have been commanded by Francisco Menéndez. By this time, Governor Benavides was so convinced of the black militia’s ability that in 1733 he proposed sending the runaways north to foment rebellion in Carolina and, once again, planned to pay them for English scalps, but the Council of the Indies rejected this design.

The repeated raids from Florida triggered an English response in 1728 when Colonel John Palmer led a retaliatory attack against St. Augustine. On that occasion the black militia led by Francisco Menéndez proved one of the city’s most effective defense forces. In recognition of that service, the Spanish Crown commended the enslaved forces for their bravery and in 1733 also issued a new decree reiterating its offer of freedom to runaways from Carolina.

Francisco Menéndez, however, remained enslaved and so persisted in his efforts to achieve the freedom promised by the Spanish king. Over the years he had
spent as a slave of important Spanish officials, he had learned a number of valuable skills for navigating Spanish culture. He had become a Christian and participated in Catholic communal rituals. He understood the idiom of extended family and the importance of hierarchy and patronage systems. Somehow he had even become literate in Spanish. He acquired a measure of honor for these social skills and most of all for his military valor. On behalf of his community, he presented several petitions to the governor and to the auxiliary bishop of Cuba, who toured Florida in 1735, but uncertain of the legalities these officials wrote Spain seeking guidance and Menéndez and his community remained enslaved.⁶⁶

Their fortunes would change in 1737 with the arrival of a new Spanish governor and the advent of renewed hostilities with the English. Once more Captain Francisco Menéndez solicited freedom for himself and others in a petition that listed thirty-one individuals unjustly enslaved, including some who had been taken to Havana, and the names of the persons who claimed ownership over them. This time Menéndez’s petition was supported by another from his old ally, the Yamasee chief, Jospo. Jospo claimed to be the chief who had led the Yamasee uprising against the British and stated that he and the other Yamasee chiefs “commonly” made “treaties” with the slaves. The use of the terms “allies” and “treaties” implies Yamasee recognition of the slaves’ autonomy and utility. Chief Jospo reported that Menéndez and three other Africans had fought bravely for him
for several years until they were ultimately defeated and headed to St. Augustine hoping to receive the Christian sanctuary promised by Spain. Jospo also testified that in St. Augustine Perro Bravo had betrayed the Africans by selling them into slavery, but he did not blame Perro Bravo, for as a heathen, he knew no better. Instead, Jospo blamed the Spaniards who bought the unlucky blacks, who in his estimation had been patient and “more than loyal.”

Florida’s newly arrived governor, Manuel de Montiano, was expecting war with England at any moment, and the combined petitions and stated alliance of Africans and Indians must have no doubt made an impression on a governor in need of their services. He wisely chose to investigate. After reviewing all relevant documentation on the issue, on March 15, 1738, Governor Montiano granted unconditional freedom to all fugitives from Carolina. The powerful men who had received the slaves in payment for loans to the cash-strapped government vehemently protested their emancipation, but Governor Montiano ruled that the men had ignored the royal determination expressed in repeated decrees and, therefore, all deals were null and void and all the enslaved were free. When the Crown reviewed the governor’s actions, it approved and ordered that not only all the blacks who had come from Carolina to date “but all those who in the future come as fugitives from the English colonies” should be given prompt and full liberty in the name of the king. Further, so that there be no further pretext for
selling them, the royal edict should be publicly posted so that no one could claim ignorance of the ruling.  

In 1738, after two decades of Spanish slavery, Francisco Menéndez was once again transformed and became a free man at last. Governor Montiano assigned the newly emancipated Spanish subjects lands two miles north of St. Augustine and recognized Menéndez as leader of the new free black town of Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose they former slaves established there. Further, in his official correspondence the governor described the almost 100 residents of the new town as Menéndez’s “subjects.” The new homesteaders, in turn, promised to be “the most cruel enemies of the English” and to spill their “last drop of blood in defense of the Great Crown of Spain and the Holy Faith.” Governor Montiano modeled the village of “new Christians” after the nearby Christian Indian villages, assigning a Franciscan father to live at the site and be responsible for the Africans’ Christian instruction. It must have been a challenge for the churchman for Africans of distinct cultural and political backgrounds made up this community, including those designated in Spanish records as Congos, Carabalíes, Minas, and Mandingas, and some men had indigenous wives. All the African men were formed into a black militia under the command of Captain Francisco Menéndez.
Although in its decrees, the Spanish Crown emphasized religious and humane considerations for freeing the slaves of the British, political and military motives were equally, if not more, important. In harboring the runaways and eventually settling them in their own town, Florida’s governors were following the Spanish policy of repoblación, populating and holding territory threatened by foreign encroachment. But if the interests of Spain and Florida were served by this policy, so too were those of the ex-slaves like Menéndez. Spain offered them a refuge within which they could live free and maintain their families. They made creative use of Spanish institutions to support their corporate identity and concomitant privileges. They adapted to Spanish values where it served them to do so and, thereby, gained autonomy. They reinforced ties within their original community through intermarriage and use of the Spanish institution of godparenthood or compadrazgo. And over time, they formed intricate new kin and friendship networks with slaves, free blacks, Indians of various nations, “new” Africans of various ethnicities, and Spaniards in St. Augustine that served to stabilize their population and strengthen connections to the Spanish community.

Over the next quarter century Menéndez and his free Mose militia defended their adopted homeland against British, pirate, and Indian attacks. During the War of Jenkins’ Ear General James Oglethorpe led a combined force of Georgians, Carolinians, and their allied Indians in a determined effort to drive the Spaniards
from Florida. The 1740 invasion was supported by a Royal Navy fleet sent from Jamaica that bombarded St. Augustine for a full month. Captain Menéndez and the Mose militia fought bravely in the defense of the Spanish city but Mose was occupied by the English. Menéndez was with the Spanish forces that eventually retook Mose, but the village was so badly damaged in the fighting that its residents moved back into St. Augustine.\textsuperscript{76}

Thereafter, Menéndez wrote several eloquent letters to the King of Spain detailing his military services and requesting a proprietary captainship. He argued that he had worked with “loyalty, zeal and love” and had “been continually at arms, and assisted in the maintenance of the bastions, without the least royal expense…to defend the Holy Evangel and sovereignty of the Crown.” And he signed with a flourish. In cover letters Governor Montiano highly recommended Menéndez to the King and supported his requests. When the monarch failed to respond, Menéndez took to the seas as a Spanish corsair, seeking, he said later, to make his way to “Old Spain” and discuss the matter with the King in person.\textsuperscript{77}

In the winter of 1740 Menéndez and others from Mose joined Don Juan de León Fandiño, who was notorious for Jenkin’s severed ear, in a month-long expedition to Cape Fear. The crew exchanged cannon and musket fire with one English privateer before capturing a schooner loaded with lumber and returning to St. Augustine.\textsuperscript{78} Such prizes were a welcome relief to the poorly supplied and
recently besieged community and Spanish corsairs gained honor as well as profit from their personal investments in privateering expeditions. They carried the honorific title of Don, which English newspaper accounts mocked, but which reflected esteem in their own culture. The following year Menendez sailed with Captain Pedro de Estrada, whose raids on ports from Vera Cruz, Mexico, to Ocracoke, North Carolina, were co-sponsored by Florida’s governor, Manuel de Montiano. Montiano helped arm and provision Estrada’s crews and may have recommended Menéndez to Captain Estrada, as he already had to the king. In April 1741, Estrada and thirty men, among them Francisco Menéndez, attacked the British at Ocracoke, "where the Albermarle River comes to the sea." On landing, the Spanish corsairs burned a warehouse full of tar, pitch, and other naval stores, and a partially built sloop. They also captured five frigates and seven sloops. After burning one of the vessels and sinking another, Estrada dispatched eight others, loaded with supplies, to St. Augustine. Of the eight, only two made it safely to St. Augustine, but one carried thirteen hundred tons of badly needed rice.

In 1741, however, Menéndez had the misfortune to be captured by the Rhode Island based corsair Revenge, captained by Benjamin Norton. When Norton interrogated his Spanish captives, one prisoner identified himself as "Signior Capitano Francisco." The captain's quartermaster wrote in the ship's
journal that Francisco was "Capt. of a Comp'y of Indians, Mollattos, and Negroes that was att the Retaking of the Fort [Mose] att St. Augus'ne formerly taken Under the Command of that worthless G-- O--pe who by his trechory suffered so many brave fellows to be mangled by those barbarians."

Under questioning, Menendez stated that he became a privateer in hopes of getting to Havana, and from there to "Old Spain," where he hoped to "get the reward of his brave actions" at Mose.\textsuperscript{81} The combination of his titles, admitted war role, and the pride he took in his "brave actions" must have infuriated his captors, who tied Francisco Menendez to a gun and ordered the ship's physician to pretend to castrate him (as Englishmen had been castrated at Mose). But while Menéndez "frankly owned" that he was captain of the company that retook Mose; he denied ordering any atrocities, which he said the Florida Indians had committed. Despite punishment, all his men substantiated Menéndez’s account. Captain Norton still not satisfied and, "to make Sure and to make him remember that he bore such a Commission," he ordered Menendez given two hundred lashes and then "pickled him and left him to the Doctor to take Care of his Sore A-se."\textsuperscript{82}

Norton and his crew may have had some sympathetic connection to the Carolinians mauled in Oglethorpe's 1740 invasion of Florida. However, the source of their violent antipathy toward Menendez and other black "barbarians"
might have originated closer to home. Only months before, a series of suspicious fires swept New York, which the terror-stricken whites attributed to a slave conspiracy known as "The Great Negro Plot." Mobs focused in particular on the menace of the “Spanish negroes,” such as "Jacob Sarly's Juan," who had been seized aboard a Spanish sloop in 1740 and who, like eighteen other of his fellow crewmen, insisted they were "free men in their own country." "Captain Sarly's Juan" had been heard to say that he would set fires and "William, Captain Lush's Spanish negro," threatened to "ruin the city" if he were not returned to his homeland. Juan and William were not referring to some African nor even some North American locale but rather to their adopted Spanish homeland. The conspirators were said to have been waiting on an expected Spanish/French attack against New York, but when it did not materialize, the slaves took action. One suspect was reported to have said, "Those Spaniards know better than York negroes. They're more used to war, but we must begin first to set the houses on fire." After a lengthy investigation and a series of trials, New York authorities burned thirteen black men at the stake and hanged seventeen others, along with four white co-conspirators, including two white women.  

As fate would have it, in the midst of the hysteria, Captain Norton had stopped in New York to recruit additional hands, and three of the crew of the Revenge were in the crowd that watched four of the convicted conspirators burn
to death at the stake, including the Spanish black, Francis. Several months later, "Jacob Sarly’s Juan" went to the gallows and was said to have "prayed in Spanish, kissed the crucifix and insisted on his innocence to the last." Francis and Juan represented to the gathered crowds three dreaded and despised elements—the internal enemy or disloyal slave, a foreign, particularly a Spanish enemy, and fervent Catholicism.

That August, the Revenge landed at New Providence, in the Bahamas, where its quartermaster vehemently argued before the Vice-Admiralty Court that Menéndez and the other blacks with him should be condemned as slaves. "Does not their Complexion and features tell all the world that they are of the blood of Negroes and suckt Slavery and Cruelty from their Infancy? Can anyone think when we to mind that barbarous Action Committed to his Majestys Brave Subjects in the Retaken of the fort att St. Augustine, Occasioned by the treachery of their vile Gen'l who sacrificed them to that Barbarous Colour, that it was done by any that had the Least drop of blood Either of Liberty or Christianity in them?" Answering his own question in the negative, he went on to describe Menéndez as "this Francisco that Cursed Seed of Cain, Curst from the foundation of the world, who has the Impudence to Come into Court and plead that he is free. Slavery is too Good for such a Savage, nay all the Cruelty invented by man ... the torments of the World to Come will not suffice." 84 The
quartermaster also identified the three mulattoes as being members of the company commanded by Francisco Méndez at the Battle of Mose, and argued that "by the old Law of Nations ... all prisoners of War, nay even their posterity are Slaves." Unfortunately, no record of Francisco Menéndez’s testimony appears in this account, if he was even allowed to give one, but his earlier petitions to Governor Montiano and to the Spanish king prove that he was equipped to plead his own case. Not surprisingly, however, the Admiralty Court ruled against him, and on August 21, 1741, after Captain Norton sold the prize cargo of corn, pork, beef, tar, pitch and oil, he "then Sett up Seignior Capt. Francisco Underthe Name of Don Blass." This was a sarcastic jab at Spain’s greatest admiral, Blas de Lezo Y Olavarrieta, who, with a vastly outnumbered force, had just defeated Admiral Edward Vernon at Cartgena de Indias after a sixty-seven day battle and preserved the Spanish empire. Menéndez was sold to the lieutenant of the Revenge, William Stone," according to the Laws of the plantation." After only three years of freedom, Menéndez was a slave once more. It is still unknown how he regained his freedom—whether by escape or by Spanish ransom—but by 1759 he was again the leader of Mose.

Shortly thereafter, shifting geopolitics would once again alter Menéndez’s life. In the course of the Seven Years’ War (1759–1763) the British captured
Havana. In the peace treaty that concluded that war the following year, Spain gladly ceded Florida to the English in order to recover the “pearl of the Antilles.” The beleaguered population of Florida—Spanish, Indian and African—was evacuated to other still Spanish locales. In that exodus Menéndez led his freed “subjects” into exile in Cuba. 88

Initially, Captain Francisco Menéndez and eight other free black families were settled at the small fishing village of Regla, across the bay from Havana. 89 All the exiled Floridanos, Spanish, Indian and African alike, received government subsidies and Captain Menéndez and his wife received double that of the other Mose residents. Menéndez and his community stayed at Regla for approximately one year before being granted new homesteads and relocating to the Matanzas frontier. In the newly created town of San Agustín de la Nueva Florida, they began their lives anew. 90

As I have written about earlier, life on the Cuban frontier proved difficult, and after at least one murder and much disaster, many of the free blacks of Mose gave up their land grants and disappeared from our view. In subsequent research, I found that other Mose militia men, like Antonio Eligio de la Puente and Tomás Chrisostomo, left their frontier homesteads and moved their families into the nearby city of Matanzas. While less developed than Havana in the eighteenth century, Matanzas did have a free black Catholic brotherhood of the Rosary and
probably enough other urban institutions that some would have stayed on and made lives for themselves there. Spanish officials in Cuba generated records on the Floridanos as long as they supported them and I continue to track them. After repaying much of the cash advance Spain gave the new homesteaders (that covered the cost of an African slave for each, tools and seed), Menéndez, also gave up his land. It seems likely that being a literate and urban individual with military and sailing experience, he would have probably returned either to Regla or Havana, where his opportunities were greater. I am tracking what became of him in my current book project. The arc of Menéndez’s fascinating life, during which he reshaped his identity and circumstances multiple times, demonstrates how enslaved persons learned about and acted on possibilities to regain lost liberty. The polyglot and literate Menéndez personified Ira Berlin’s cosmopolitan Atlantic Creole—someone with “linguistic dexterity, cultural plasticity and social agility.” There is a good likelihood that he may have already demonstrated these characteristics on the African coast. In the Americas he simply added to his repertoire.
1 Petitions of Francisco Menéndez and Chief Jospo, Memorial of the Fugitives, included in Manuel de Montiano to Philip V, Mar. 3, 1738, Santo Domingo (hereafter SD) 844, Archivo General de Indias (hereafter AGI), on microfilm reel 15, P.K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida (hereafter PKY).


7 Moore, Travels into the Inland Parts of Africa, 29.


9 Wright, The World and a Very Small Place, 83.

10 Ibid.

11 Quinn, “Niumi.”

12 The oldest patriarch of the noble clan would become the mansa or ruler of the town and below these nobles were endogamous occupational groups such as leatherworkers, ironsmiths, potters and praise-singers or griots. Ibid.


16 The Spanish flotilla of three ships and fourteen *piraguas* was undone by a storm. John E. Worth, *The Struggle for the Georgia Coast: An Eighteenth-Century Spanish Retrospective on Guale and Mocama* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 181.


20 On January 10, 1685 Lord Cardross (Henry Erskine) wrote the Lords Proprietors, “Wee thought fitt to acquaint you that yesterday some more of the nation of the Yamasees arrived at St. Helena to settle with those of their nation formerly settled there having come from about St. Augustine.” Sainsbury Transcripts, 1928–1947, vol. 2:1, cited in William Green, Chester De Pratter and Bobby Southerlin, “The Yamasee in South Carolina: Native American Adaptation and Interaction along the Carolina Frontier,” in J. W. Joseph and Martha Zierden, eds., *Another’s Country: Archaeological and Historical Perspectives on Cultural Interactions in the Southern Colonies* (Tuscaloosa: U of Alabama Press, ), 13–29; In February of 1685 the Indian trader Caleb Westbrooke reported over 1000 Yamasee accompanied by unnumbered


23 Case of the St. Christopher, 1703–1794. The Royal African Company sent Daniel Johnson on the Christopher to the Gambia to purchase slaves. Johnson left half of his shipment with his father, Daniel Johnson, Sr., in Bermuda and the other half he shipped on to Carolina. In 1709 the London customs house mentioned the Loyall Johnson, a ten per-cent vessel “to Carolina, Designed 200, Carried 180,” and sometime before August 30, 1711 Colonel William Rhett sent out another ship for Guinea. Elizabeth Donnan, Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America (Washington, D.C.; Carnegie Institution, 1931), Vol IV, 137,243, 250–251,255 and 255 f.n. The Carolina preference for slaves from the Gambia, as expressed by Charles Town trader Henry Laurens, continued into the 1770s. Landers, Atlantic Creoles, ch. 1.

24 Governor Edwards reported only 1100 families (presumably white) in the province in 1709. Calendar of State Papers, Colonial, 1699, cited in Donnan, Documents, 104.

25 A colonial census of 1719 reported the same black/white ratio with a colonial population of “9580 souls including 1360 freemen, 900 free women, sixty white servant men, sixty white servant women, 1700 slaves, 500 Indian men slaves, 600 Indian women slaves, 1200 negro children slaves and 300 Indian children slaves.” The report added that “negro men slaves [are increased in the last five years] by importation 300, negro women slaves 200 and negro children

26 Calendar of State Papers, 1708–1709, cited in Donnan, *Documents*, 255, 259, 444–454


28 Ibid., ch. 4.

29 Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, 64.

30 Roster of Black and Mulatto Militia for St. Augustine, Sept. 20, 1683, SD, AGI. None of the forty-two men and six officers of St. Augustine free black militia bore an African nation surname, although several surnames indicate other origins—Catalán, Lima, Mexican—where Spaniards held sway, meaning the men probably had lived for some time among the Spaniards. Many of them shared surnames, which may indicate possible kinship ties but might also mean that they were once owned by the same families, among which were some of the oldest in Florida such as Menéndez, de Soto, Rutiner, and de Hita. It is testimony to his need that the Spanish governor formed such a unit because both he and his predecessor complained frequently that the troops provided from New Spain in the 1670s were “sons of blacks, chinos (persons of mixed race), and mulattoes,” “only good for work as cobbler, tailors, carpenters, blacksmiths, and cattle hands,” occupations persons of African descent held throughout the Spanish Americas. Luis Arana, “Military Manpower in Florida, 1670–1703,” *El Escribano* 8, no. 2

31 Roster of Black and Mulatto Militia for St. Augustine, Sept. 20, 1683, SD 266, AGI.


35 On June 13, 1710 the Reverend Francis LeJau wrote, “There are 3 or 4 Portuguese slaves in this parish very desirous to receive the communion among us.” Later he specified that they were from Madeira. Frank J. Klingberg, *An Appraisal of the Negro in Colonial South Carolina* (Washington, D.C.: the Associated Publishers, 1941) 13–19.

36 Among the acts of charity that a good Catholic was urged to perform were to offer protection to the miserable and to shelter fugitives. Maureen Flynn, “Charitable Ritual in Late Medieval and Early Modern Spain,” *Sixteenth-Century Journal* 16 (Fall 1995): 1–30; On Catholicism in Kongo see Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Making of the Foundations of the Americas, 1585–1660* (NY: Cambridge University Press,
The Spanish governor also took advantage of their artisanal skills. The governor assigned the men to work as iron smiths and laborers on the new stone fort, the Castillo de San Marcos, and the women became domestics in the governor’s own household. He claimed to have paid all of them wages; the men earning a peso a day, the wage paid to male Indian laborers, and the women earning half as much. Royal officials to the Charles II, Mar. 3, 1699, cited in Irene Wright, “Dispatches of Spanish Officials Bearing on the Free Negro Settlement of Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose,” *Journal of Negro History* 9 (1924): 151–2.

Royal decree, Nov. 7, 1693, SD 58–1–26, SC, PKY.

Despite the royal decree of 1693, in 1697 Governor Laureano de Torres y Ayala returned six newly arrived blacks and an Indian “to avoid conflicts and ruptures between the two governments.” Joseph de Zúñiga to Charles II, Oct. 10, 1699, SD 844, microfilm reel 15, PKY.

The Yamasee Indians subsequently filed a formal complaint with the Commons House of Assembly against trader John Cochran (whom they later killed at Pocotaligo) for taking their St. Augustine plunder. Salley, *Records of the British Public Records Office* (1934), 38.

Ibid., 116–22.


45 Indian Book, I, Pt. 1, 58, cited in Ibid., 137. On April 17, 1712, the Commissioners of the Indian Trade accused Samuel Hilden of intercepting and buying slaves from the Yamasee Indians before they got to their towns. William L. McDowell, Jr., ed., *Journal of the Commissioners of the Indian Trade*, September 20, 1710-August 29, 1718 (Columbia, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, 1922), 23

46 Indian Book, I, Pt. 1, 58 cited in Milling, *Red Carolinians*, 137. Many of the complaints of the chiefs related to the traders’ abuse of their women. Trader John Fraser was convicted of misconduct at Pocotaligo and charged with having violently beaten Tomatly king, but abuses continued. Later Fraser was supposedly warned by the Yamasee warrior, Sanute, of the impending conflict, but he never informed the other traders. Hewatt on Carroll, *Historical Collections*, I, 192–194, cited in Milling, 136.


51 Testimony of the four caciques, May 28, 1715 and subsequent report by Governor Francisco de Córcoles y Martínez, Jan. 25, 1716, SD 58–1–30, AGI, SC, PKY. The four caciques were Ysiopojole, “heathen” cacique of Canapa, in Apalachicola, Yfallaquisca, (also known as Perro Bravo or Mad Dog), “heathen” War Chief of Satiquich (elsewhere spelled as Salquicha or Salaquiliche), also in Apalachicola, Alonso, Christian mico (chief) and governor of Ocute, in Tama, and Gabriel, “heathen” son of Santiago, a Christian of the Yamasee nation. The Spaniards who met with Perro Bravo included the governor, his treasurer, and the royal accountant, Captain Francisco Menéndez Márquez, who would later give our protagonist his Spanish name. See also Mark F. Boyd, “Diego Peña’s Expedition to Apalachee and Apalachicola in 1716,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 28 (July 1949): 1–27 and John H. Hann, “St. Augustine’s Fallout from the Yamasee War,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 68 (Oct. 1989): 180–200.

52 Governor Antonio de Benavides to the King, Aug. 25, 1718. Buckingham Smith Papers, Reel 1, frames 747-766 PKY.


54 Crown slaves in Cuba were primarily males assigned to public works and who lived in communal barracks. Evelyn Jennings, ;

55 List of Individuals from the Presidio of St. Augustine housed in Regla in the house of Don Gonzalo de Oquendo. Cuba 1076, f. 395, AGI.

56 The following year Carolina enacted a new and harsher slave code. Wood, *Black Majority*,
Memorial of the Fugitives, 1724, SD 844, microfilm reel 15, PKY.

For the exchange on this mission see the letters of Governors Arthur Middleton (Carolina) and Antonio de Benavides (Florida) in Documentos históricos de la Florida y la Luisiana, Siglos XVI al XVII (Madrid, 1912), 252-60.

The governor gave the proceeds to the envoy from Carolina who would have preferred to reclaim the former slaves. Other buyers included several military officers and even some religious officials. Antonio de Benavides to Philip V, Nov. 11, 1725, cited in ibid., 164-66. Carolinians charged that the Spanish governor “Makes Merchandize of all our slaves, and ships them off to Havanah for his own Profit,” and they were at least partially correct. Accord, June 27, 1730, SD 844, microfilm reel 15, PKY; Wood, Black Majority, 305. Some of the slaves sold at the 1729 auction were taken to Havana by their new owners. Nine years later Governor Manuel de Montiano would try to retrieve them. Decree of Manuel de Montiano, Mar. 3, 1738, SD 844, microfilm reel 15, PKY.


Four blacks who fled or were taken from a plantation near Port Royal in 1726 were later spotted in St. Augustine. Arthur Middleton, June 13, 1728, BPRO Trans., vol. 13, 61-67 and John Pearson, Oct. 20, 1727, BPRO Trans., vol. 19, 127-8, cited in Wood, Black Majority, 305.

Ibid.

Antonio de Benavides to Philip V, Apr. 27, 1733, SD 833, AGI.

The crown actually issued two separate edicts in 1733. The first, on Oct. 4, 1733, forbade any
future compensation to the British, reiterated the royal offer of freedom, and specifically prohibited the sale of fugitives to private citizens, no doubt in response to the auction of 1729. The second, on Oct. 29, 1733, commended the blacks for their bravery against the British in 1728 but also stipulated that they would be required to complete four years of royal service as an indenture prior to being freed. Royal decree, Oct. 4, 1733, SD 58–1–24, SC, PKY; Royal decree, Oct. 29, 1733, SD 58–1–24, SC, PKY.


67. In 1717 Perro Bravo appeared in household # 8 on the census of Pocotalaca.

68. Memorial of Chief Jorge, included in Manuel de Montiano to Philip V, Mar. 3, 1738, SD 844, microfilm reel 15, PKY. It is possible that this Jorge was father of the Yamasee youth educated in England to be a native missionary for the Society for the Gospel in Foreign Parts. The young Prince George returned with Commissary Gideon Johnston in 1715 in the midst of the Yamasee War and later wrote, “I have had noos that my Father as gone in Santaugustena and all my Friends.” A later account reporting that the father had been killed proved untrue, and another report that he had been captured, returned to Charles Town and then sold with the rest of his family as slaves was unconfirmed. Nor are there further reports about the young Prince George after Commissary Johnston’s death in 1716. Frank J. Klingberg, “The Mystery of the Lost Yamasee Prince,” South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine 63 (1962): 18–32.

69. Petition of Diego Espinosa and reply by Manuel de Montiano, May 5, 1738, SD 845, microfilm reel 16, PKY. Diego de Espinosa was a successful mulatto cattle rancher whose fortified ranch twenty miles north of St. Augustine on the Diego Plains served as an important
outpost guarding the Spanish city.

70. Philip V to Manuel de Montiano, July 15, 1741, AGI 58–1–25, SC 5943, PKY.

71. Landers, Black Society.


73. On repoblación see Documentación Indiana en Simancas (Valladolid: Ministerio de Cultura, 1990), 250-57.


76. Landers, Black Society.

77. Landers, Black Society, 35–45.

78. Manuel de Montiano to Joseph de la Quintanta, Oct. 10, 1741 Santo Domingo (hereafter SD) Archivo General de Indias (hereafter AGI); Landers, Black Society, ch.2.

79. Governor Montiano’s reports identified Dom Juan Trujillo, Don Augustin Domingo de la Cruz
and Don Joseph Sanchez Rodriguez as other corsairs sailing in and out of St. Augustine. Ibid.


81 Governor Montiano had covered two letters Menéndez wrote to the Spanish King, recounting his services and asking for a paid captaincy with the same salary as white militia captains. When the King failed to respond, Menéndez set out to petition the monarch in person. Memorial of Francisco Menéndez, Nov. 21, 1740, SD 2658, AGI and Manuel de Montiano to Philip V, Sept. 16, 1740, SD 2658, AGI.

82 “Account of the Revenge”. The English interrogated three other mulattoes found on board, whom they identified as Pedro Sancho, And'w Estavie, and Augustine (also abbreviated as Aug'ne). Augustine seems to have shared Menendez's room and presumably was closer to him, and for that the Englishmen gave him twelve lashes.


84 The quartermaster used more hyperbolic invective in describing a captured Frenchman who swore on a cross, "blest and Sanctyfied by the pointed words and hands of a wretched priest, a Spawn of the whore of Babylon, who is a Monster of Nature and a Servant to the Dev­ill;Who for a Riall will pretend to absolve them from perjury, Incest and parricide". Ibid.

85 Alfonso Meisel Ujueta, Blas de Lazo: Vida legendaria del marino Vasco (Litografia Dovel: Barranquilla, Colombia, 1982.)
Although English records describe him as “the old captain,” on the Mose census, Menéndez’s age is given as forty-five and he remains married to Ana Maria de Escovar, age thirty-nine.

Census of Joseph de León, Feb. 11, 1759, SD 2604, AGI.

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87 Ibid., 59-66.
88 Ibid., 59-66.
89 Cuba 1076, AGI.
90 List of those who arrived from Florida, Sept. 16, 1764, Cuba 1076, f. 395, AGI.
91 Berlin, Many Thousands Gone, 24.