

**PRESENTATION #1
OF A THREE PART SERIES
ON THE ETHNIC SETTLEMENT
OF SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA**

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Introduction to the Series

In the Spring of 2019 I was asked to write and dictate a three part series on the three dominant ethnic settlement patterns of Southwest Virginia. They were presented in roughly 45 minute segments, and broadcast so as to be received on cell phones by participants who were in their cars travelling to attend a conference on economic development that was to occur at U. Va - Wise. Most will be driving down the Great Valley of Virginia on I-81, similarly to what our ancestors did. They can think about these historic events as they drive past the places connected with them.

The process of 'writing' consisted primarily of pulling together material I had been composing and publishing for years. It occurred to me that the current compilation would be of general interest. Therefore, some of the earlier essays will be removed from my web site, and this more globally focused one substituted so that it can be read by the general public.

First of all let me say that I am well aware that there were people here before the settlers from the Old World arrived. We all honor our Indian heritage, which is too multifaceted to be included here. I also acknowledge our Black heritage. I appreciate that 40% of the folks who travelled down the Wilderness Road, which is roughly I-81, were Black. For those people interested in Black history I recommend Alex Haley's Roots, which I cannot equal. We will be discussing the three dominant ethnic groups from the Old World who settled this area in chronologic sequence to their arrival. In this anthology we will present the first, the Spanish Berber. Presentations of the Germans and the Scots-Irish will follow separately.

Presented first are texts of the essays, along with their bibliographies. Following these are the audio presentations dictated by the author, and whose audio engineering done by Glen 'Skip' Skinner.

**THE BERBER &
THE SPANISH ARMADA AND THE UNITED STATES**

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In 1492 Columbus discovered the New World by landing on an unknown island in the Bahamas, Cuba, and Hispaniola. In later voyages he landed on other islands of the Caribbean, the mainland of South America, and of Central America. He did not ever reach North America.⁽¹⁾ In 1513 Juan Ponce de Leon explored Florida, and Hernando Cortes discovered and colonized Mexico in 1519.⁽²⁾ From 1539 to 1542 Hernando de Sota explored much of what is now the Southeastern United States of America in the name of Spain.⁽³⁾

Spain and Portugal had both once been a province of the Carthaginian Empire, which Rome later acquired when it defeated Carthage. The Romans called it Hispania^(4.) In 711 the Muslim Berbers of Northwest Africa, who also had been part of the Carthaginian Empire, conquered Hispania, also now called the Iberian Peninsula⁽⁵⁾. Due to a mountain range that separated Portugal from Spain, and to the isolation that resulted, the two languages began to emerge, and a sense of separate identities developed. Starting in the 9th Century Portugal became independent of Spain, but continued stronger ties with the Berbers of Africa⁽⁶⁾. After the discovery of the New World, Spain and Portugal became competitors in the race to exploit it. Trying to avoid outright conflict, they sought mediation by Pope Alexander VI, who was a Spaniard. The Pope set up a north-south line dividing the New World between the Spanish and the Portuguese known as 'The Line of Demarcation' in 1492. He gave the lion's share to Spain, and Portugal objected, so with the Treaty of Tordesillas of 1494 the line was shifted westward a little. This alienated France, which was also a Catholic country. England was pushed further along the path of separating its church from the Vatican. As a practical result, Portugal got what is now Brazil, and Spain got everything else. Not surprisingly, neither England nor France honored the Line of Demarcation⁽⁷⁾. In 1534 Jacques Cartier discovered Canada for France.⁽⁸⁾

With the stage therefore set, Spain began to assert its control over much of what is now the Southeastern United States of America. We need to go back to 1492 and pick up another chain of events that ran parallel to those outlined above, and which converged with the process of discovery and settlement. Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand of Spain had long been at war with the Muslim south of the country, and had defeated them the same year that they had commissioned Columbus to embark on his voyage of discovery. The victorious Spanish Christians rounded up all the Moorish men, and all the Moorish women over childbearing age, and took them out to sea and tossed them over board. Women of childbearing age, and children were given the option of either converting to Christianity, or of taking a one way voyage at sea. Most chose to convert. The term applied to them was 'Conversio' or 'Morisco'. The same process was applied to the Spanish Jews, who were called 'Sephadric'. This created a massive excess of women in Spain. At this

point, it was discovered that many of the Conversios were secretly practicing their old religion in their homes. The Christian Spanish rulers perceived that they had two problems, which were a need for colonists for their New World conquests, and a need to get the Conversios out of the country.

At this point, Spain had temporarily acquired Portugal through a dynastic marriage. Portugal had maintained ties with the Berbers of Northwest Africa to a greater extent than had Spain. A disproportionate number of the Conversios were Portuguese. The Spanish Christian rulers thereupon decided that they could solve both of their perceived problems at one stroke. The Spanish, in contradistinction to the English, did not make a distinction between a colony and a military base. They set up a family unit which consisted of one Spanish Christian soldier and his legal wife, a Spanish Christian woman, and three to five Conversio widows, where were officially designated as household servants, and sent them off to the New World. These family units were, therefore, predominantly Portuguese of Berber ancestry. As one would expect, the one man kept all the females reproducing at maximum capacity^(9, 10).

The modern State of Florida was first explored, and settlement started, in 1513, by Juan Ponce de Leon. The Spanish there kept hearing rumors from the Indians of gold to be found to the north. Hernando de Sota responded to these rumors by landing a massive expeditionary force on the western side of the Florida peninsular in 1539. That year he worked his way north to the Panhandle, and spent time with the Apalachee Indians at their town at the mouth of the river by that name. The next year de Sota went north through Georgia and South Carolina and into the Yadkin River Valley of North Carolina, stopping at Joara. This Indian Village was located at a major crossroads of Indian trails, one travelling east to west along the Yadkin River Valley to the coast at both the Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds, and the other a major north to south trail coming from the Charleston, S. C. area to Saltville, Virginia and on to the Ohio Country. Joara is at Morganton, N. C. de Sota followed current I-40 to Ashville, and then took the Nolichucky River Valley to the Tennessee River, which he followed to the mouth of the Little Tennessee, where the capital of the Overhill Cherokee, Chota, lay. He stayed there a while, and sent expeditions up the Holston River toward Virginia, and Juan de Villalobos and Francisco de Silvera, along with Indian guides, into present Lee County, Virginia. From there he turned to the states along the lower Mississippi, where he died.⁽¹¹⁾

In the years 1541-1545 the French were intensely active in the North Atlantic. They built a trading post and settlement at Los Bacallaos, which was near Point of Santa Elena, which is near present Parris Island, South Carolina. They made annual trips to buy gold, pearls, martin skins, and "other things" from the Indians.

Soon after the Spanish conquered Mexico they began to transport gold and silver to Spain. This flow was greatly augmented with their loot from Peru. The treasure galleons would hitch a ride on the Gulf Stream as it passed up the coast of the present South Eastern United States. Navigation was easy, as it involved keeping

the coast in sight until they reached a prominent cape, such as Cape Hatteras, or Long Island. Then they would set a bearing due east, which would bring them to the coast of Iberia, where they would recognize where they were. Pirates soon began to prey upon the treasure galleons. These pirates needed safe harbors along the route to hide in, and to repair their ships, and to take in water. The Outer Banks, the Inland Waterway and Sounds, and the bays and river mouths that are plentiful along the southeast coast were infested with pirates. Portugal, France, the Barbary Coast (the home of the Berbers) of Northwest Africa, and especially England were the origins of most of these pirates, who were joined by significant numbers of French Huguenots and German Pietists. Queen Elizabeth was especially involved in encouraging pirates, and then denying to the Spanish that she was doing so. She even had a 'spy master', who seems to have also been in charge of her pirates, named Sir Francis Walsingham. Simon Fernandes and John Callis were perhaps her best documented pirates. They operated out of South Wales. Fernandes was especially familiar with the coast of 'Virginia', which included North Carolina at that time. At one point, at least a third of the merchandise for sale in some English coastal cities was plunder supplied by pirates. As England and Spain drew closer and closer to war, and Spain began to hang her pirates, Elizabeth began to commission them as privateers, which gave them the status as combatants and protected them from execution^(12, 13).

The Chesapeake Bay became a favorite hide out for pirates and privateers. The specifics are poorly documented, but the generalities are well known, especially in Spanish records. The Spanish government began to send ships into the Chesapeake to explore the area, and to look for evidences of pirate activity. They found numerous sites where pirates had beached their ships for repair. They became especially concerned about the French, who had penetrated to the lower Mississippi, which the Spanish noted lay "just to the north of the silver mines in Mexico"^(12b, 17). Tangier Island in the Chesapeake became a haven for these "Picaroons", a Spanish term for these thieves^(14, 15). Though the term is largely forgotten in the United States, in Mexico they still teach their children about the "terrible Picaroons"⁽¹⁶⁾.

To counter all these threats the King of Spain ordered the naval officer Pedro Menendez de Aviles to become governor of Spanish Florida. He built the capital of his Province at the previously mentioned Point Santa Elena in 1566⁽¹⁸⁾. It was no inconsequential affair. A list of surnames of these some 400 soldiers / settlers exists, and shows them to have been primarily Imazighen with Portuguese and Spanish alterations to their spellings^(12c, 20).

The Spanish became uneasy about their capacity to counter the pirate / privateer threat along the coast, and ordered Juan Pardo to develop an overland route from Santa Elena to the Mexican silver mines. In December 1566 he embarked with 250 men on an exploratory expedition to do so. He took the Wateree / Catawba River system from just up the coast from Charleston, S. C. to Joara, where de Sota had stopped 26 years earlier. Pardo, himself a Portuguese and

a possible Conversio, had been an officer in that expedition. His surname is Portuguese Sephardic Jewish⁽²⁷⁾. There he built Fort San Juan, which was at the least a blockhouse, and may have included a palisade and a moat^(11,19). After waiting for winter weather to clear, he proceeded down the de Sota trail into East Tennessee. Some believe he built another fort there. He received word that the French were threatening Santa Elena, and abandoned his attempt to get to Mexico, and returned to Santa Elena, leaving Hernando Moyano de Morales in command of thirty soldiers⁽¹⁹⁾.

Up the Indian trail from Fort San Juan to the north lay the Yuchi Nation, owners and operators of the largest salt operation in the present United States. They traded salt as far away as Texas. They controlled the Great Warrior's Path as it passed through Southwest Virginia. The Yuchi chief and Moyano got into a mutual intimidation contest, with the chief telling Moyano to behave himself or the chief would come and eat him and his dog⁽²¹⁾. Moyano took a party of thirty men to Saltville, claiming to have killed 2,000 Indians. In the late 1800's a body of a Spanish soldier in period armor was found near Jacob's Creek near the Appalachian Trail, hidden in a recess in the rocks. A period Spanish coin was found associated with the body. The site is on the trail back to Morganton⁽²²⁾.

More recently archeologists have discovered and examined a site on the Nolichucky River near Erwin, Tennessee that documents several features of the above story. ETSU has been excavating a field that it calls 'the Runion Site', which has been shown to have been a large fortified town protected on the east by the Nolichucky River, and on the west by a moat. It was a multicultural site containing both an Overhill Cherokee population, and a Spanish one. Artifacts that have been found are early styled Overhill pottery, an iron needle, several brass artifacts, fragments of an olive jar, the lead ball of an arquebus (match lock musket), and a Spanish coin. Speculative connections are to de Sota, Pardo, or Sergeant Moyano, and even to Fort San Pablo⁽²³⁾.

In essence, there are three river valleys whose headwaters could have reasonably been used by the Spanish at Joara to have accessed the Tennessee River Valley and Chota. They are the French Broad, the Nolichucky, and the Little Tennessee. There is archeological evidence to support each of these routes, and each has its modern proponents. The Nolichucky route is currently the most popular, but in recent times both of the other routes were more highly regarded.

On the French Broad River a Spanish Blockhouse has been located near Ivy Creek at an Indian Village phonically rendered as either Cooweechee or as Cauchi. It was built in either November or December 1567 by the Juan Pardo Expedition. Between fifteen and thirty men were left her to garrison the fort, and probably they did not survive the winter⁽²⁴⁾.

The more traditionally favored route from Morganton via Ashville to Chota has been along the Cherohala Skyway (State routes 165 & 143), which is maintained

by the States of North Carolina and Tennessee as a historic and scenic route. Robbinsville, North Carolina is the nearest town, but Hooper's Bald is the most significant site in the larger region. The area, which today includes parts of Tennessee, North Carolina, and Georgia, were once Creek Indian territory, but was taken by the Cherokee in the frontier era. The gold mines in that part of Georgia were the basic cause of the Cherokee expulsion that centered around 1840. The region is said to be heavily loaded with Spanish artifacts. The people that worked the mines are variously said to have been Sephardic Jews, or Melungeons, whom the Cherokee called "Round Faces".

Hooper's Bald is a mountain top meadow, which has within it a large stone outcropping on which is inscribed a notation written in Sephardic Jewish Spanish an inscription commemorating the marriage and honeymoon of a Sephardic Jewish couple⁽²⁵⁾.

It would seem that there is sufficient evidence to support the usage of all three routes by the Spanish. There is also further evidence of Conversio Sephardic Jews in the Southeastern United States. Note the following excerpt of an old Spanish text:

"In 1644, Menasseh met Antonio de Montezinos, a Portuguese traveler and Marrano Sephardic Jew who had been in the New World."⁽²⁶⁾

In 1670 John Lederer, the famed explorer from Virginia, noted when he was in the Roanoke River Valley of North Carolina near the border with South Carolina, that two and a half day's travel away there lived a powerful nation of bearded men whom he presumed to have been either Spanish, or the English survivors of the Lost Colony. He described them as having a worship ceremony wherein at a specific time of day they prostrated themselves toward a bell^(28, 29).

This practice was also known among the Armenians who were a part of the Byzantine Army that conquered the Vandal Carthaginian Empire of Mauretania in 530 AD. This preChristian paganism persisted in the Berbers who conquered Iberia, and who were the 'grunts' of the Spanish colonial armies in the New World⁽³⁰⁾.

It is becoming apparent that the Spanish penetration of Western North Carolina, of East Tennessee, and of Southwest Virginia was extensive.

Now, back to Santa Elena, and the growing concern of the government of Spanish Florida about threatening developments to its north. In 1571 Pedro Menendez de Aviles, who for years had been a captain in the Spanish treasure fleet, was given two small ships and the responsibility of exploring the coast of North America for 100 leagues north of Santa Elena. About the same time, Angel Villafane, was commissioned to explore the same territory. One of these expeditions picked up an Indian boy somewhere in the Chesapeake, most likely on the peninsula

between the York and James Rivers. They gave him the name Don Luis de Velasco. He was a local chief of significance, and is thought to have been either the father or the brother of Chief Powhatan. In other records, the dates 1559-60 are implied. The dates are contradictory, giving confusion to the circumstances of Don Luis, as a letter of Menendez dated 1565 mentions Don Luis as "the Indian in New Spain". He referred to his home as "Ajacan", and the Spanish gave this name to "a large province in Florida, 37 degrees north of the equator and 170 leagues distant from Santa Elena." The Province of Ajacan evolved in the Spanish definition to include all the land that drained into the Chesapeake Bay, which included parts of New York State, Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, and Virginia.

In 1568 Menendez wrote a letter to the King expressing his expanding views of the importance of Ajacan to the Spanish Crown. He mentioned that the Portuguese were fortifying the Chesapeake Bay (this most likely referred to enclaves built by the Portuguese pirates and privateers), describes the Bay as the key to all the fortifications in Florida, that the Bay controlled a rich trade with the Indians from the interior, and contained a water passage to the Far East. The King gave 230,000 crowns to Menendez's plan to colonize the Bay. Implicit in correspondence is the reality that Spanish possession of the Bay would help in the defense of the treasure fleet against the pirates that used it as a base of operations.

Menendez sent a captain with 30 soldiers and 2 Dominican friars to colonize the Chesapeake, but they mutinied on the way. In 1570 a group of Jesuits, with Don Luis along as guide, tried again to establish a mission on the Chesapeake. Don Luis guided them to the site of his tribe, and they landed on the Peninsular just down stream from the future site of Jamestown. They took the traditional portage north, passing within two miles of the future site of Williamsburg, and onto the York River. The site likely is contained within the bounds of the Naval Station located there. The mission / colony was called 'Ajacan'.

In February 1571 tensions with the Don Luis's tribe over the Jesuits' demands for food boiled over, and Don Luis, himself, led the Indians in an attack on the mission. All the Jesuits were killed over a period of several days. The Indians spared only a young Spanish boy named Alonzo. He lived with the Indians for a while, and later was rescued by other Spaniards who sailed into the area. This was the end of Spanish attempts to colonize anywhere north of Santa Elena^(12 - b).

The story shifts to Sir Francis Drake. Born in Devonshire about 1541, in the 1560's he fell in with his second cousin, John Hawkins, the famous English sea dog. He started his career in the slave trade, raided Panama, and engaged in the undeclared war between England and Spain. Drake, in collaboration with the officials in London, conceived of an epic voyage through the Straights of Magellan and into the Pacific. He wished to find the Northwest Passage from its western end. Along the way he plundered the Spanish treasure fleet, which had never met an enemy in the Pacific. It was widely assumed that all this was done with the secret blessing of Queen Elizabeth. With his ship, the Golden Hind, heavily laden with

treasure, he limped across the Pacific, and recaulked his leaking ship in the Philippines. Returning to England, Queen Elizabeth knighted him, and he became a Member of Parliament. In 1585 the Queen ordered him to attack the Spanish colonies, so he ransacked the Atlantic of Portuguese and Spanish shipping, and raided Brazil. In 1586 he raided St. Augustine, Florida. He then went to the English colony at Roanoke Island and took most of the original colonists with him back to England. A small contingent remained. The next day a supply ship arrived, including new colonists. In 1578 he again sailed the Straights of Magellan, but returned the way he had come. In 1587 he sailed into the heart of the ports of Cadiz, and Corunna and destroyed 37 vessels. During the battle with the Spanish Armada of 1588 he was Vice Admiral of the English fleet. In 1589 he was ordered to support the rebellion of Portugal against Spain, and he resumed his attacks on the Spanish colonies. He died of diarrhea off the coast of Panama, and was buried at sea in a lead coffin⁽³¹⁾.

As part of her undeclared war with Spain, Queen Elizabeth and Sir Humphrey Gilbert commissioned Sir Walter Raleigh, a favorite courtier of Elizabeth's, to start a colony in the New World. His charter gave the usual purposes of exploration, but also contained a frank statement that the colony was to serve as a base of operations for privateers to attack the Spanish treasure galleons. The ships landed on Roanoke Island in 1585. The island was well situated, hidden behind the Outer Banks, and very close to Santa Elena. The commander of the expedition, Sir Richard Grenville, helped the colonists establish themselves, and that fall left with a promise of returning the next year with supplies. The ship was slow in arriving, and conflict with the Indians had erupted. That summer Sir Francis Drake arrived, and took the settlers back to England. The next day Grenville arrived with the relief ship. Finding the settlement abandoned, he left behind 15 men to maintain a presence in the colony. In 1587 Raleigh sent 115 new settlers, who were left on Roanoke Island, with a promise of a relief ship the next year. The attack of the Spanish Armada prevented that voyage. The continuing war with Spain delayed the relief ship until 1590, and when it arrived at Roanoke Island all the settlers were gone.

The Spanish at Santa Elena knew about the Roanoke Colony, but had few details. They had no idea of the problems that colony was experiencing. Given the significant amount of spying that went on back and forth between the Spanish and English courts, it seem likely that Spain knew that privateering was the major purpose of the colony. The increased English leadership in the privateering originating in the Chesapeake Bay provided them with a ready example of how bad it could get. Spain had sucked all the available money, supplies, support vessels, and manpower out of its colonies in order build and support the Armada in its invasion of England, which was supposed to have ended the privateering entirely. The governor of Spanish Florida feared invasion by the English to the north of him. Perhaps he exaggerated that potential in his own mind. But, it was true, was it not, that the terrible Drake was in the area, and that he had stopped at Roanoke. One cannot over state the fear that Drake stirred up in the Spanish. The Indians in the interior of North Carolina were in revolt. He decided that the best move was to

evacuate all the Spanish forces at St. Elena and its interior forts, and to reestablish his capital at St. Augustine, Florida. The evacuation must have been done in great haste. The command to evacuate got to Fort San Juan at Juara, but not to any Spanish in the interior to the west. No one will ever know how many Conversios were left behind, but the DNA evidence available today would suggest that they were numerous(12 – b, and several of the references already cited + see the following).

DNA is not often thought of as an archeological artifact, but indeed, it is the most readily available and the least disputable. A reasonable way to estimate the numbers of Conversios left in western North Carolina, North Georgia, and Tennessee would be to assess the DNA of current residents in these areas. If pockets of stable longterm residents could be assayed, so much the better. The best such group of modern residents would be the Cherokee of the Qualla reservation at Cherokee, North Carolina. They all are certified “Cherokee” by the United States Government. Each member of the group is individually certified as such, and has a government issued number. They were here when the Spanish came, and have been here ever since. The North Carolina Cherokees were chosen because after 180 years in the west, Oklahoma Cherokees are so thoroughly mixed with other ethnic groups, that any DNA test marker obtained would be meaningless.

Starting in 2007, DNA Consultants, Inc. began testing the certified Cherokee of the Qualla Reservation. The laboratory immediately stumbled into a scientific hornet’s nest. That Cherokee princess in someone’s genealogy was most likely a Jewish or North African princess. Its scientists have labeled the Cherokees not as Native Americans, but as ***a Middle Eastern-North African population***. Cherokees have high levels of test markers associated with the Berbers, Native Egyptians, Turks, Lebanese, Hebrews and Mesopotamians. Genetically, they are more Jewish than the typical American Jew of European ancestry. So-called “full-blooded” Cherokees have high levels of European DNA and a trace of Asiatic (Native American) DNA” (33).

These results should have been anticipated. Ever since inexpensive DNA testing has been available to the general public, many of the ‘white’ neighbors of the Qualla Cherokee’s neighbors have had their DNA analyzed. Many of these people have proud family traditions that they have a Cherokee great grandmother (perhaps with additional ‘greats’ being added) in their family tree. The author has had many of these people bring in their DNA reports to him for explanation. The same issue has often been discussed at meetings of groups who are interested in their ancestry. The results have almost universally shown “western Mediterranean” where they had expected to have seen ‘Native American’. Native American DNA has been extremely hard to find in such samples.

The explanation for this phenomenon is not hard to find. It is smallpox. Smallpox is a disease caused by a virus that was confined to the Old World. There was none in the New World before Columbus. In the Old World, everyone sooner or later caught it. Fifty percent of those who caught it died from it. The survivors

acquired life long immunity to it. In the New World everyone caught it, and ninety five percent died from it. In 1714 smallpox wiped out the Yuchi. The Catawbas were the next in the area to get it, and for practical purposes they were wiped out. In 1738 smallpox struck the Cherokee, and only half died. This means that even at this early date, the Cherokee were pretty much Old World people. It was not until the French and Indian War that significant British and German people were available for intermarriage with the Cherokee. The Spanish had been in close contact for three quarters of a century by that time, as documented by the "mixed people" that were living at the current Runion archeology dig on the Nolichucky⁽²³⁾. Ever since then 'being Cherokee' has been a cultural phenomenon, and not a genetic one.

Given the above facts, one should reasonably expect that there would be significant amounts of Berber culture in the Appalachia Mountains. In fact, this is the case. It is so pervasive that it is hiding in plain sight. The following is a partial list of examples of Berber culture endemic to the greater Appalachia Mountain area in the United States: a specific set of surnames, a specific set of female first names, snake handling, using ham hock to flavor kale and other greens, open air salt cured ham, the tambourine, speaking in tongues, bull tongue plow, haggling as part of the process of trading, xenophobia, a desire to live in the mountains, dislike of authority, a long memory of ill treatment, grits (wheat is used in the Old World instead of corn), tap dancing, hip swaying while dancing, cock fighting, the 'Rebel Yell', Donatism (Primitive Baptists), the doctrine of 'Free Will' Baptists, Arianism (LDS doctrine), the site of origin in America of the Holiness and Church of God being Monroe County, Tennessee, which is also the site of the capital of the Overhill Cherokee - Chota⁽³⁵⁾.

A good way to view the significance of the existing Spanish influence in the Southeastern United States is to make reasonable speculations on what that influence would have been if Spain had won the War of the Spanish Armada. Most Americans of today are aware that the present State of Florida was once a Spanish Colony. Very few are aware that the original definition of that Province of the Spanish Empire extended to include North Carolina, and all the current States to the south of it, and that its capital was on Parris Island, South Carolina. Very few modern Americans are aware that north of that the Spanish had the Province of Ajacan, which included everything north of North Carolina, including the Chesapeake Bay and its drainage system extending to the Catskills of New York State. The reality on the ground was that there would have been no English, Swedish, or Dutch presence of the eastern coast of the United States, and that only the French would have been available to have competed with the Spanish for possession of North America. The United States would never have existed, nor would the first British Empire. What all that would have meant concerning the Napoleonic Wars, the wars of German consolidation, the two World Wars, and the Cold War is beyond imagination. The world as we know it would not exist.

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