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DAVID BETTON MACOMB, FRONTIERSMAN

by ANDREW FOREST MUIR

Well known in American history is the peripatetic hunter and trapper, farmer and stockholder who at the head of the westward movement pushed into new areas only to abandon them when joined by too close neighbors. These folk were the vanguard of American civilization. Conspicuous among them are Daniel Boone and David Crockett. Less well known are the equally peripatetic professional men - lawyers, teachers, ministers, and physicians - who were largely instrumental in transmitting to the frontier the typical institutions of American life. Like the early group they too abandoned an area when it became stable and settled to turn their footsteps toward a newer frontier. During the 1830s there were two southern frontiers, Florida and Texas, and a surprisingly large number of professional men having played an active part in the one then moved to the other. To name lawyers only, Henry W. Fontaine, Thomas Jefferson Green, Algernon S. Thurston, and James Webb, who had been prominent in Florida, continued to Texas during or after the Texas Revolution and became even more prominent there. ¹ The movement was not, however, always westward, for John Ricord, who had been active in revolutionary Texas, later moved to Alachua County, Florida, during its formative period. ² A representative lawyer of the peripatetic type was David Betton ³

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1. For reference to these men in Florida, see Minutes of the Superior Court of Leon County, Florida (MSS. in Circuit Clerk's Office, Tallahassee), I, 6, 38, 144, 326; Tallahassee *Floridian*, August 14 and 28, 1832; Tallahassee *Florida Intelligencer*, October 6, 1826; Tallahassee *Florida Advocate*, November 25, 1828. For sketches, mostly concerned with their lives in Texas, see Walter Prescott Webb (ed.), *The Handbook of Texas* (Austin: The Texas State Historical Association, 1952), 2 vols. For Webb see Rerick, *Memoirs of Florida*, II, p. 73. For Thurston see Knauss, *Territorial Florida Journalism*. DeLand, 1926, p. 69.
 2. Andrew Forest Muir, "John Ricord" in *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LII (July, 1948), 49-59.
 3. Although no kinship can be demonstrated, it is interesting to note that during Macomb's residence in Tallahassee there were two prominent men there named Betton, Joseph R. and Turbott R.

Macomb, who had an affinity for frontiers, for he was born on one, lived on a second, and died on a third.

Macomb was born, October 30, 1793, in Detroit, nominally in Michigan Territory but actually under the jurisdiction of Upper Canada, the tenth child and fifth son of William Macomb and his wife Sarah Jane Dring.⁴ His father, a Scotch-Irishman, was a member of a prosperous family firm that combined Indian trading with general merchandise, real estate, and banking. A large land owner and foremost citizen, he had been elected, in the year before David's birth, a member of the provincial parliament of Upper Canada.⁵

David Betton Macomb's earliest years are obscure. His father died when David was in his third year, and apparently his mother together with her children moved to New York City where the mother died some years after her son.⁶ David apparently received a good education, for in his mature years he practiced both as a civil engineer and a lawyer, and he wrote in a literate hand and style. He knew Spanish and spoke French well enough for a Frenchman to think him a fellow. Sometime during his early life, he served briefly in a militia organization in which he acquired the title of colonel.⁷

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4. Henry Alexander Macomb, *The Macomb Family Record* (Camden, 1917) 11-13. See also, [Sarah Ann King], *Private Memair of Thomas Worthington* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1882), appendix. For the authorship of this anonymous volume, see Ed Kilman, "Miss Lyda Macomb of Harrisburg Cherishes Rich Heritage from Nine Generations" in *Houston Post*, December 13, 1936.
 5. M. M. Quaife, "Detroit Biographies: Alexander Macomb" in *Burton Historical Collection Leaflet*, vol. 10, No. 1 (November, 1931), 4-5.
 6. Macomb, *The Macomb Family Record*, 11-13; *Detroit Free Press*, March 1, 1928.
 7. On July 13, 1836, in a letter to Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, Macomb wrote that he had had "a short [military] service in the U States." Charles A. Gulick, Jr. and others (eds.), *The Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar* (Austin: Texas State Library and Historical Commission, n.d.), V, 103-04. There is, however, no record in the Department of the Army of any military service performed by Macomb. Courtesy of Major General William E. Bergin, U.S.A., The Adjutant General. Consequently, the service must have been in a militia. Macomb was called colonel between 1826 and 1835. See *Florida Intelligencer*, July 22, 1826; deposition of Justian F. Davis, March 23, 1830, in Abraham Russell, Jr. vs. David B. Macomb in Case Papers of the

In early manhood Macomb appeared in Ohio, and on March 13, 1816, he was married in Chillicothe to Mary Tiffin Worthington, daughter of the United States Senator (later Governor) Thomas Worthington.⁸ Seven children were born to this union, some of them at Worthington's home, Adena, in Chillicothe, others at Paint Creek Mill near Chillicothe, and the youngest in Florida.⁹ Macomb's activities in Ohio are obscure. It is possible that he was engaged in the operation of a grist or sawmill, for it is likely that Paint Creek Mill was a business as well as a place name. Certainly in 1819 and 1821 he was active in some business transactions in Chillicothe that entailed promissory notes for which he was subsequently sued in both Ohio and Florida.¹⁰

Possibly as the result of pressing debts resulting from unfortunate business operations, Macomb removed to Florida, that shortly before had passed into the jurisdiction of the United States and had been recently created a territory. The date of his arrival in the Territory is not known, but he appears to have been there as early as October, 1824.¹¹ He obviously migrated alone, for in the territorial census of 1825 he was listed

Circuit Court of Leon County, Florida (MSS. in Circuit Clerk's Office, Tallahassee), Law, file 334; *Floridian*, July 10, 1832; B. T. Archer to David G. Burnet, June 24, 1835, in David Gouverneur Burnet Papers (MSS. in Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas). Beginning December 7, 1835, Macomb held the rank of lieutenant colonel in the Texas Army.

8. Record of Marriages of Ross County, Ohio (MSS. in Office of Judge and Ex-Officio Clerk of the Probate Court, Chillicothe), AB, 275. For sketches of Worthington, see *Private Memoir of Thomas Worthington*; *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, III, 138; *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, VI, 617; *Biographical Dictionary of the American Congress, 1774-1949*, p. 2046; and that by Thomas T. Utter in *Dictionary of American Biography*, XX, 540-41.
9. *Private Memoir of Thomas Worthington*, appendix.
10. O. T. Reeves vs. David B. Macomb in Case Papers of the Circuit Court of Leon County, Law, file 471.
11. C. C. and R. W. Williams, assignees of John P. Duval, vs. David B. Macomb in Case Papers of the Circuit Court of Leon County, Law, file 356.

without a household.¹² Shortly afterwards, his family, then consisting of wife, two sons, and two daughters, followed him to Florida.

A short distance to the southeast of Tallahassee, already selected as capital of the Territory, Macomb established a plantation that covered portions of sections 9, 10, 15, and 16 of township 1 south and range 1 east, a part of which he was in possession of as early as June 1825.¹³ The plantation had 560 acres in 1828,¹⁴ and in addition, with George Fisher, Sr., Macomb held a farm known as Glass's Place.¹⁵ To his plantation Macomb gave the name Ben Venue, and here was born, on February 27, 1827, his seventh child, David Betton, Jr., who was to become a rear admiral in the United States Navy.¹⁶ In addition to his country seat, Macomb maintained, at least in 1826, a house in Tallahassee, on what is now Pensacola Street between Monroe and Adams.¹⁷ Like many others from the North, Macomb did not long remain a Yankee, for he soon became a slaveholder. Some, possibly all, of his slaves were hired by him rather than owned, for at times he had no slaves. For example, when he paid his 1829 taxes he paid no slave tax.¹⁸ In February, 1828, he rented three slaves, and he agreed to supply them with two linen suits in the spring and a comfortable suit of winter clothes in the fall, including shoes, stockings, and hats, and in

12. Dorothy Dodd, "The Florida Census of 1825" in *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XXII (July, 1943), 37.

13. Patent Books of Tallahassee Meridian (MSS. in Bur. Land Management, Washington, D. C.) II, 2, 71, 72, 240; III, 237; Deed Records of Leon County, Florida (MSS. in Circuit Clerk's Office, Tallahassee), A, 25-26, 175, 519-20; C, 146-47, 147-50, 362, 438-39, 511-12, 512, 596-97; D, pt. 2, 414-15.

14. A List of Tax's [*sic*] of Leon County for the Treasurer of Florida [for the year 1829] (MS. in Florida State Library, Tallahassee).

15. Charles E. Sherman vs. George Fisher, alias George Fisher, Sr., and David B. Macomb in Case Papers of the Circuit Court of Leon County, Law, file 405. Another Macomb suit involving land title was John Doe, lessee of L. and M. A. Armistead, vs. David B. Macomb in Minutes of the Superior Court of Leon County, I, 443, 446, 451.

16. *Private Memoir of Thomas Worthington*, appendix; *Who Was Who in America, 1897-1942*, 766.

17. *Florida Intelligencer*, May 5, 1826.

18. A List of Tax's of Leon County for the Treasurer of Florida.

addition to pay the taxes due on them, to provide necessary medical attention, and to return them to their owner at the end of the year.¹⁹ The 1830 census listed Macomb's household as a substantial establishment. In addition to his wife and five children it included two unidentified whites, fifteen slaves, and one free Negro.²⁰

No information is available on Macomb's agricultural activities, but seemingly they were not successful. Equally unsuccessful were his purchase of an eighth interest in the Steamboat *Steubenville* in April, 1829,²¹ and a sortie into dry goods and groceries in January, 1829.²² More successful probably was a small investment in a tract of land in Magnolia, a town laid out on the St. Marks River in 1827.²³

Between 1826 and 1834 Macomb was a mail contractor in Florida. From 1826 to 1830 he was responsible for the eastern route, from Tallahassee to St. Augustine.²⁴ At the same time he had the contract for the northern route, from Tallahassee to Pindertown, Georgia.²⁵ On this latter route Macomb had a rider whom he paid eleven dollars a month. Until March 24, 1826, when he died, the rider was Henry F. Young,²⁶ and between

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19. Samuel Parkill vs. David B. Macomb in Case Papers of the Circuit Court of Leon County, Law, file 417.
 20. U. S. Census, 1830, Florida (microfilm in P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida, Gainesville), sheet 120, line 5.
 21. William H. Mathers, Jr. and Thomas Hardyman vs. David B. Macomb in Case Papers of the Circuit Court of Leon County, Law, file 415.
 22. Daniel McRaeny and Timothy McCarty, merchants, trading under name of McRaeny & McCarty, vs. David B. Macomb in Case Papers of the Circuit Court of Leon County, Law, file 556.
 23. Deed Records of Leon County, B, pt. 2, 464-65. For material on Magnolia, see W. T. Cash, "Newport as a Business Center" in *Apalachee, the Publication of the Tallahassee Historical Society*, 1944, p. 14, and Dorothy Dodd, *The Tallahassee Railroad and the Town of St. Marks* (MS. read before the Tallahassee Historical Society, November 8, 1951; courtesy of Dr. Dodd).
 24. House Doc. 171, 19th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 14; House Doc. 121, 19th Cong., 2d Sess., p. 21; *Florida Advocate*, September 8, 1829.
 25. House Doc. 121, 19th Cong., 2d Sess., p. 21; *Florida Intelligencer*, March 11, 1826.
 26. *Florida Intelligencer*, March 24, 1826.

August, 1826, and August, 1827, it was James M. Kenion.²⁷ Between 1830 and 1834 Macomb had the contract for the western route, from Tallahassee to Pensacola, and a letter on mail transportation signed Loch-acray and published in 1833 was likely from his pen.²⁸ The United States later sued Macomb, possibly in reference to one of his mail contracts.²⁹

At least during the first years of his residence in Leon County, Macomb practiced law. On January 2, 1826, he "was admitted as a Counselor and Attorney . . . of the Court of Appeals." In March, 1826, he and William Allison McRea announced that they had associated themselves to practice in the superior and inferior courts of Jackson, Gadsden, and Leon counties, as well as the Court of Appeals at Tallahassee.³⁰ Later in the year McRea moved his office to Quincy in Gadsden County, but the partnership apparently survived, for in August the two jointly announced that they would attend to matters arising under the new congressional pre-emption law.³¹

Near the end of his life, Macomb wrote that he had been "a Judge in Florida for 7 years of a Court whose jurisdiction was concurrent with the Supreme [in reality, the Superior] Court, except in criminal cases," and he referred to a former Florida attorney who was then a brigadier general in the voluntary Texas Army for recommendations to his "reputation as a Lawyer

27. James M. Kenion vs. David B. Macomb in Case Papers of the Circuit Court of Leon County, Law, file 205.

28. Postoffice Department Records (MSS. in The National Archives, Washington, D. C.), 1830-1834, mail contract 2473; *Floridian*, June 1, 1833. Macomb's report on the St. Marks River was dated "Benvenue, on Lockacray."

29. The United States vs. David B. Macomb in Records of Leon County (MSS. in Circuit Clerk's Office, Tallahassee), vol. 99 (Minutes of the Superior Court of Leon County, July 17, 1828-April 9, 1836), 57; Minutes of the Superior Court of Leon County, I, 472, 482, 571.

30. Minute Book, Court of Appeals, Territory of Florida, p. 5; *Florida Intelligencer*, March 11, 1826. For cases handled by Macomb, see Minutes of the Superior Court of Leon County, I, 22, 26; Case Papers of the Circuit Court of Leon County, Law, file 334.

31. *Florida Intelligencer*, September 1, 1826. On May 24, 1829, McRea was killed in Key West by Captain Charles E. Hawkins, who later held a commission in the Texas Navy. *Florida Advocate*, August 1, 1829.

and integrity and independence as a Judge.“³² Macomb served on the bench of the county court of Leon County as late as February, 1832,³³ so, if his later statement was correct, his service must have begun in 1825. A paucity of executive records in Florida precludes conclusive evidence of the beginning of his judicial tenure, but he was certainly on the bench as early as February 5, 1826.³⁴ Newspaper announcements of his appointment as judge of the county court appeared in March, 1826, and February, 1827.³⁵ In November, 1828, the Legislative Council, that appears to have spent a good portion of its time tinkering with the county court, increased the number of judges of the court to three, designated as justices,³⁶ and at the same time it confirmed Macomb's appointment as one of the three justices of the county court of Leon County.³⁷ Shortly afterwards, Macomb's two colleagues on the bench elected him presiding justice.³⁸ In November, 1829, the Legislative Council again altered the court to the extent of abolishing all three justiceships and providing for the court a justice of the peace to be styled presiding judge.³⁹ On November 22, Macomb was appointed to the position,⁴⁰ and he served until sometime in late February or early March, 1832, when he was succeeded by Benjamin Chaires.⁴¹ Presumably, the governor preferred to pass over Macomb and to appoint another.

As judge, presiding judge, and presiding justice, Macomb of-

32. Macomb to Sam Houston, San Jacinto, Texas, November 6, 1836, in Army Papers (MSS. in Archives, Texas State Library, Austin).

33. Misc. Proceedings [of the County Court of Leon County] (MS. in County Judge's Office, Tallahassee), 64.

34. *Ibid.*, 9.

35. *Florida Intelligencer*, March 11, 1826; *Pensacola Gazette*, March 25, 1826, February 9, 1827.

36. Charles D. Farris, "The Courts of Territorial Florida" in *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XIX (April, 1941), 352.

37. [Executive Journal of the Territory of Florida] (MS. in Florida State Library), p. 49.

38. *Florida Advocate*, March 14, 1829.

39. Farris, "The Courts of Territorial Florida," 352-53.

40. [Executive Journal of the Territory of Florida], p. 49.

41. *Floridian*, March 13, 1832; Misc. Proceedings, 65.

ficiated over a court that had civil and at times criminal jurisdiction. In addition, the county court had exclusive jurisdiction over the probating of wills and the administration of estates.⁴² In his official capacity Macomb also issued election proclamations and fixed bonds for those bound over to the superior court.⁴³ He had the authority to solemnize marriages, but there is no record that he ever did so.⁴⁴

A Duel with Achille Murat

Macomb twice stood without success as a candidate to represent Leon County in the territorial Legislative Council. He first tried in 1826, when he was defeated by William Wyatt⁴⁵ and again in 1829, when he lost to Captain Thomas Brown and Dr. Isaac W. Mitchell.⁴⁶ His first contest led to a duel with Achille Murat, nephew of Napoleon, who gave two differing accounts of the events that precipitated it. In a spirit of reminiscence, Murat related:

Mr McComb [*sic*] was my neighbor; he was a Frenchman.⁴⁷ I love him very much; we have great congenialite, and he is my neighbor. . . . It is my custom when I cannot feed my negroes, when there is no meat in the smoke house and I have no money to buy any, to say to them, "I have no meat for you, but you shall not work - take the holiday, and when I get the money you will work again." Just so they take the holiday, and because they do not work [in reality, because they had no food], they despoil my neighbor, Mr. Ma-

42. Farris, "The Courts of Territorial Florida," 360-62; Misc. Proceedings, 1-64.

43. *Florida Advocate*, March 28, 1829; Minutes of the Superior Court of Leon County, I, 309.

44. There is no record of any marriage by him in Marriage Records of Leon County (MSS. in County Judge's Office, Tallahassee), White, X.

45. *Florida Intelligencer*, July 22, September 1 and 8, October 6, 1826.

46. *Florida Advocate*, February 21, June 13, 1829.

47. Actually, Macomb was substantially English and Scotch-Irish. One of his eight great grandparents, however, was French. Macomb, *The Macomb Family Record*, 11-13.

Comb, of his hogs. My friend infuriates himself, and he try to infuriate me; but I cannot let my friend despoil *mon honneur*, so I send my first friend that I have made in the United States to tell my friend, Mr. Macomb, that he can have the satisfaction.⁴⁸

In contemporary letters written to a friend, however, Murat gave a different account. At a political rally during Macomb's campaign for the Council, Murat called him a turncoat. Macomb demanded proof of the charge, and after Murat had particularized, Macomb impeached the allegations. In a fit of temper Murat described him as "a damned, infernal, liar and begged the people present to witness the fact."⁴⁹

Three days later Macomb and Murat met near Hiamones Lake. Murat's shot went through Macomb's shirt without touching flesh, and Macomb's took off half of the little finger of Murat's right hand. Murat then exclaimed: "Ah! Mr. McComb, you have made one mark on me I will have all my life." Later the participants discovered that Mrs. Macomb, whom Murat, in his Gallic English, described as "one admirable woman," had been a witness to the exchange of shots. A gossip had told her that her husband would not fight but rather would back down. To this allegation Mrs. Macomb had replied, "Never," and had then set out on horseback to the site of the duel, where from the shelter of some trees she witnesses the proceedings. In describing the incident Murat later exclaimed, "*Mon Dieu*, I believe if her husband had back [*sic*] down, she would have shot him, and then shot me."⁵⁰

During his residence in Florida Macomb authored two pam-

48. Ellen Call Long, *Florida Breezes; or, Florida, New and Old* (Jacksonville: Ashmead Bros., 1883), 160.

49. A. J. Hanna, *A Prince in their Midst: the Adventurous Life of Achille Murat on the American Frontier* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1947), 153. In a personal letter Professor Hanna gave as his source of this quotation manuscript letters of Murat to Antoine Claire Thibaudeau, August 13, 1826, and January 6, 1827, in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris.

50. Long, *Florida Breezes*, 160; Hanna, *A Prince in their Midst*, 152-53.

phlets on the Territory. In Tallahassee in 1827 he published a ten page pamphlet on the resources of Middle Florida entitled *Answer to Enquiries Relative to Middle Florida, Propounded by a Gentleman in Switzerland, with an Accompanying Letter of General Lafayette*.⁵¹ One reviewer thought the author had exaggerated the regional possibilities,⁵² but in the long run Macomb's judgment but not necessarily his bill of particulars has triumphed. In 1828, probably as a result of Macomb's kinship with the commanding general of the United States Army - for he was both first cousin and brother-in-law of Major General Alexander Macomb, U.S.A. - he was appointed by the Army Engineer Department to make a survey of the river and harbor of St. Marks with a view of ascertaining the "practicality and expense of removing the obstructions to the navigation of the same." Macomb spent two months on the survey, and in his published report, dated September 11, he expressed the opinion that the river and harbor could be made navigable at a trifling expense, especially by a novel use of an "improved mud-machine."⁵³ Although Macomb clearly anticipated a commission to perform the work, some years were to pass before the project was authorized, and then it was done under the direction of a regular army officer.⁵⁴

A man of cultured and cultivated tastes, Macomb in 1829 provided a pianoforte⁵⁵ for his elder daughter, Eleanor W., who was later described as "tho' not handsome . . . very bright and in-

51. Joseph Sabin, *A Dictionary of Books Relating to America, from its Discovery to the Present Time* (New York: J. Sabin's Son, 1879), XI, 83.

52. *North American Review*, XXVI (April, 1828), 494-97.

53. *Report from the Secretary of War, Transmitting a Report of the Survey and Estimate for Improving the Harbor of St. Marks, in Florida*, 20th Cong., 2d Sess., Doc. 45 (Serial 181), 4pp.

54. In 1832 a second survey and estimate was made by Lieutenant George W. Long, U.S.A., who subsequently removed the obstructions. Long to C. Gratiot, Magnolia, February 15, 1832, in *Floridian*, June 19, 1832

55. Eleanor W. Macomb, by next friend, David B. Macomb, vs. James D. Westcott, Jr. and James M. Mullin in Case Papers of the Circuit Court of Leon County, Law, file 540. Macomb later referred to this pianoforte in his will, executed February 2, 1837, that was neither filed for nor admitted to probate but preserved in Probate Case Papers of Harris County, Texas (MSS. in County Clerk's Office, Houston), file Mc 16.

telligent and cultivated, [who] sang and played well.“⁵⁶ Also interested in science, Macomb was a charter member of the Florida Institute of Agriculture, Antiquities, and Science, organized in 1825, and in the following year he was a member of the committee of arrangements to celebrate the institute's anniversary.⁵⁷

Macomb's position as lawyer and jurist gave him an important place in the ceremonial life of Tallahassee. At times he served as secretary of public meetings and as a member of committees of arrangements, as, for example, in connection with the celebration of Independence Day in 1826.⁵⁸ On this occasion he presided as master of ceremonies at a "barbecue" [*sic*] at which an ox, an ewe, two shoats, three dozen fowls, ten hams, and a quantity of fish and vegetables were consumed by some 150 persons. During the offering of toasts that followed, Macomb proposed "Henry Clay, the Orator, the Patriot and the statesman, whose genuine republicanism was strikingly manifested in preferring [*sic*] the Civilian to the Military Chieftain."⁵⁹ Six years later, he offered *in absentia* another political toast, and it showed that he had changed in the intervening years from a Whig to a Democrat: "Martin Van Buren - The democracy of the whole U. S. have him now in keeping, 'onward and fear naught.'"⁶⁰ Apparently a previous shift from the Democratic to the Whig party had had something to do with his duel with Murat.

By 1832 a number of unpaid promissory notes made in his early years in Florida, as well as two made in Ohio, clamored for payment, and much of Macomb's property was seized and

56. [Adele Lubbock Looscan (ed.)], "Journal of Lewis Birdsall Harris, 1836-1842" in *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XXV (January, 1922), 186. One writer interpreted Harris's description to mean that Eleanor was "as ugly as a mud fence." Houston Wade, *David G. Burnet Letters* (LaGrange: LaGrange Journal, n.d.), 74.

57. *Florida Intelligencer*, October 6, 1826.

58. *Ibid.*, May 5 and 19, 1826.

59. *Ibid.*, July 22, 1826.

60. *Floridian*, July 10, 1832.

sold by the marshal of the Middle District of Florida under executions issued by the superior court.⁶¹ Macomb obviously felt a sense of failure in his business affairs as well as in the termination of his political career. He then began to seek out a new frontier to which he might remove and where he might recoup his losses. By the middle of 1835 he had selected Texas, then on the verge of revolution against Mexico, to which place he went alone, leaving his family in Tallahassee, until June, 1836, when he escorted them to their new home.⁶² Although he had been for the most part unsuccessful in Florida, Macomb's entire life there was marked by honor and integrity, and these qualities extended to the grave, for in his will written a few days before his death he directed

. . . that all my estate real and personal in the County of Leon and Territory of Florida be placed in [the] hands of Edward Lockerman as Asignee [*sic*] for himself and all my creditors in Florida. . .⁶³

In Texas, near present day Houston, Macomb was elected to and sat in one of the revolutionary constituent assemblies, the Consultation.⁶⁴ In addition, he served as assistant adjutant and inspector general on the staff of Colonel Stephen F. Austin, of the Federal Army of Texas, in the autumn of 1835, during the first campaign against the Mexican forces in Texas,⁶⁵ and on December 7, he was commissioned lieutenant colonel of artillery in the regular Texas Army.⁶⁶ Having been sent on a purchasing

61. Deed Records of Leon County, C, 438-39, 596-97.

62. Macomb to Gen. Sam Houston, November 6, 1836.

63. Probate Case Papers of Harris County, Texas, file Mc 16.

64. H. P. N. Gammel (comp.), *The Laws of Texas, 1822-1897* (Austin: Gammel Book Company, 1898), I, 523-47; Comptrollers Civil Service Records (MSS. in Archives, Texas State Library, Austin), file David B. Macomb; *Telegraph and Texas Register* (San Felipe de Austin), I October 10, 1835), 2; I (November 7, 1835), 36.

65. [Eugene C. Barker (ed.)], "General Austin's Order Book for the Campaign of 1835" in *Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association*, XI (July, 1907), 1-3, 16.

66. *Telegraph and Texas Register*, I (January 16, 1836), 89; Comptrollers Military Service Records (MSS. in Archives, Texas State Library), file David B. Macomb; Liberty Bounty (MSS. in General Land Office, Austin), file 98.

mission to New York by Major General Sam Houston, T.A. in the same month,⁶⁷ Macomb missed service in the spring campaign of 1836. Upon his return to Texas in June, he was placed in charge of a sawmill at Lynchburg near the San Jacinto battlefield. There his wife, who on the passage from Florida had caught a severe cold that quickly developed into galloping consumption,⁶⁸ died on October 19, 1836,⁶⁹ and at the same place⁷⁰ almost four months later, on February 14, 1837,⁷¹ in a slough of despair, Macomb committed suicide by cutting his throat with a razor.⁷² His only monument is Macomb Street in Tallahassee.

67. Certificate of Sam Houston, January 25, 1839, in Comptrollers Military Service Records, file David B. Macomb.

68. Macomb to Houston, November 6, 1836. For an account of Macomb's activities at the sawmill, see Andrew Forest Muir, "POWs from Santa Anna's Army Proved Poor Sawmill Help" in *Gulf Coast Lumberman*, Sept. 15, 1953; 60, 62, 65.

69. *Telegraph and Texas Register* (Columbia), October 25, 1836; cenotaph in Grandview Cemetery, Chillicothe.

70. Lost Book of Harris County (MS. in General Land Office, Austin), 73.

71. Comptrollers Military Service Records, file David B. Macomb; Liberty Bounty, file 98.

72. A. M. Clopper to Nicholas Clopper, Highland Cottage, March 1, 1837, in [Edward Nicholas Clopper (ed.)], "The Clopper Correspondence, 1834-1838" in *Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association*, XIII (October, 1909), 141, and Edward Nicholas Clopper, *An American Family . . .* (n.p., no pub., 1950), 273.