

*"What avenues of commerce, will you, Americans, not explore!"
Philadelphia's Commercial Vantage on St. Domingue, 1789-1793*

Alec Dun, Princeton University

"The Atlantic Economy in the Era of Eighteenth-Century Revolutions"
Program in Early American Economy and Society Conference
The Library Company of Philadelphia

Friday, September 19, 2003

In 1860 Abraham Ritter set out, aged 70 and describing himself as in the "downhill of life," to place before the public of Philadelphia a written collection of memories from the city's past. "Old folks are apt to mount the throne of retrospect," he explained, "and rejuvenate and play their early games over and over again," for "the past to us is as the present, and even more *picturesque*."¹ Historical memory, as Gary Nash has recently pointed out, was something of a Philadelphian invention, and in the antebellum period it was in full swing. Patrons of Philadelphia's past picked selectively through its surviving remnants, valuing materials according to contemporary needs. Their desires to recall the gentility of days of yore or to hearken back to the heroism of the American Revolution, for example, were directed at specific modern woes, and involved decisions as to which materials were or were not fit to be collected and remembered.²

Ritter wrote firmly in this tradition. Seeking to remind Philadelphia's citizens of their mercantile forebears in order to demonstrate the intricate binding of the city's fortunes and their labors, he conducted a literary walking tour along the waterfront streets of the old port, stopping often to offer narrative tidbits about the merchants who had done business there. As a child, Ritter had scampered along these wharves, had plunged into the Delaware from their heights, and had played games in the warehouses and stores that stood behind them. Now, to demonstrate his

This paper is a derivation of the first chapter of my dissertation in progress, "Dangerous Neighbors: Slavery, Race, and St. Domingue in the Early American Republic, 1789-1808." I would like to thank John Murrin and Denver Brunsman for their time in reading and commenting on it, and Gail Farr of the National Archives Mid-Atlantic Region for her extensive help in locating and deciphering the various documents I used there.

¹ Abraham Ritter, *Philadelphia and her Merchants, as Constituted Fifty & Seventy Years Ago, Illustrated by Diagrams of the River Front, and Portraits of Some of its Prominent Occupants, together with Sketches of Character, and Incidents and Anecdotes of the Day* (Philadelphia: by the author, 1860) 3.

² Gary B. Nash, *First City: Philadelphia and the Forging of Historical Memory*, ed. Daniel K. Richter, Early American Studies (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002) especially 1-18. The Library Company and, to a lesser extent, the American Philosophical Society, had been engaged in the collection of historical materials since the middle of the 18th century. More recently, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania had been created to preserve, celebrate, and use Philadelphia's past. For a literary expression of this effort, see John Fanning Watson, *Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania, in the olden time; being a collection of memoirs, anecdotes, and incidents of the city and its inhabitants, from the days of the Pilgrim founders: intended to preserve the recollections of olden time, and to exhibit society in its changes of manners and customs, and the city in its local changes and improvements*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia: Uriah Hunt, 1830).

city's commercial prowess, he recalled the men he dodged during the day and whose doings he heard talk of in the evenings.

The opening story he chose to evoke this time, however, was set in St. Domingue, not Philadelphia. It was a memory of a tale told repeatedly to him as a youth: that of the schooner *Fly* and its voyage to "St. Domingo" after the slaves rose there in "1792-3." The insurrection had interrupted a trade with the French colony that had hitherto been "a fruitful source of life to the commercial interests of Philadelphia." Violence and mayhem, however, now made the enterprise dangerous. The island was, in effect, "embargoed by the savage hatred of the blacks against the whites." Nevertheless, Abraham Piesch, the *Fly's* energetic owner, risked a cargo. "Scented by the rich odor of the garden before her," the vessel approached the fearsome coast, where her captain, one Wallace, made contact with a white customs official, the "decrepit survivor of his race" on the island. Though the insurgents had spared him because he was useful, "they marred and mutilated ...his fingers and toes, and nose too, to prevent his escape and secure his services to whatever commercial interest might turn up." Wallace and this man negotiated, and a sale was made. The *Fly's* holds, having been "invitingly laden" in Philadelphia with apples, onions, hogs lard, and other foodstuffs, were emptied in return for coffee in bulk, "poured like sand into the hold" to such an extent that the crew were forced to wade through it to their bunks. The *Fly's* return meant great profits for her owner and crew, and, for Abraham Ritter, provided a sturdy testament to the vibrant spirit of Philadelphia's mercantile community.³

Ritter heard the story from his father, Jacob Ritter, Jr., who had served as the *Fly's* supercargo on the voyage. Memory, however, can be treacherous as the basis of a narrative. Jacob Ritter did not travel to St. Domingue in the early 1790s. He entered the employ of

³ Ritter 19-20.

Abraham Piesch in 1801.⁴ The nasally challenged Frenchman with whom he dealt, therefore (assuming the man existed at all), was likely a survivor of Jean-Jacques Dessalines' notorious purges after 1804. On February 14 of that year, the older Ritter arrived in Philadelphia from Jacmel on a schooner called *Fly*, though the vessel was owned by J.W. Foussatt and John F. Dumas, and was captained by Jeremiah Norris.⁵

In a certain sense, however, Abraham Ritter's story was quite accurate. By 1860 St. Domingue had become a byword for slave revolt in many American minds and had developed into a trope for massacre and white death.⁶ In the wake of the Denmark Vesey trials in 1822, for instance, a South Carolinian was relieved that Charleston had averted "a war of extermination to their fellow-citizens, their wives, and children, as was the case in St. Domingo."⁷ Faithful to this understanding, Ritter depicted the slaves as an anonymous force, scarcely meriting personification. His audience's understanding of "them" was assumed.

While he was fuzzy on the details, Ritter also correctly presented the Haitian Revolution as a time of opportunity in Philadelphia. Whether these elements were Abraham's or Jacob's (or both) is unknown. We can be sure, however, that they both told their tales according to what Michel-Rolph Trouillot describes as the "acknowledged rules of their time." Histories, Trouillot

⁴ Henry Simpson, ed. *The Lives of Eminent Philadelphians, now deceased, collected from original and authentic sources* (Philadelphia: William Brotherhead, 1859) 846. Simpson was a member of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

⁵ Records of the Bureau of Customs – Philadelphia District (Record Group 36), Inward & Outward & Coastwise Manifests, 1789-1918 (Entry 1059B), box 71, National Archives Mid-Atlantic Regional Branch, Philadelphia, PA (hereafter NARA RG 36 E1059B). See also NARA RG 36, Record of Arrivals and Clearances (Entry 1057), volume 3. Of the 657 bags of coffee Ritter brought back for Foussatt and Dumas, only thirty-six were noted as destined for Piesch. The supercargo seems to have brought more coffee home on his own account. The *Fly*'s manifest notes 124 bags and six barrels of varying sizes as consigned to him. Ritter's Captain Wallace proves more elusive. Both a James and a John Wallace captained vessels out of Philadelphia that traveled to ports in St. Domingue between 1789 and 1803, though none of them were called the *Fly*. Abraham Piesch was noted as the owner of only one vessel doing business on the island, the schooner *George*, whose master, William Dunton, sailed from Cap-Français to Philadelphia in October 1799 (see NARA RG 36 E1059B inward foreign manifests, box 37. Also NARA RG 36 E1057, volume 3).

⁶ For a demonstration of the trope, rather than an explanation of its workings, see Alfred N. Hunt, *Haiti's Influence on Antebellum America: Slumbering Volcano in the Caribbean* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988).

⁷ Quoted in Hunt 120.

notes, reflect contemporaries' choices about what to deem "fact," how to organize and relate them (in an archive or on a page), and, indeed, even what questions to ask in the creation of "the stories that matter."⁸ Haiti mattered to the story that both Ritters wanted to tell. To describe Philadelphia's energy, Abraham and Jacob remembered the Haitian Revolution, conflating more than a decade of Haitian history in order to paint a picture of a paradoxical moment of anarchic destruction and economic possibility.

This will parse that conflation by assessing Philadelphia's commercial vantage on St. Domingue as events unfolded. It will focus specifically on the period between 1789 and 1793, looking at the information available to commercial actors as they evaluated their prospects for doing business on the island. If the Ritters were correct to stress the opportunities available in St. Domingue for Philadelphians, they were wrong in thinking that Jacob's experience was singular. Hundreds of voyages were made to the troubled colony, even after various outbreaks of violence there. What news from the island prompted these efforts? What factors conditioned commercial Philadelphia's responses? To answer these questions is to begin to approach larger ones about how Americans made sense of these opening years of what later would be demarcated as a Haitian Revolution. Before moving to them, however, we must first examine the relationship between commerce and the movement of information in the late 18th-century and discuss the media by which it traveled.

"Authentic Information": commerce and newspapers in Philadelphia

Information from St. Domingue traveled alongside the various cargoes that were transported to Philadelphia from the island. Once landed, it was re-laded into another vessel: the city's

⁸ Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995) 52-53 and passim.

newspapers. Commercial news was a mainstay for American newspapers in the 1790s and Philadelphia, the commercial hub of the new nation, was no exception.⁹ A significant portion of every major paper in the city was devoted to shipping news. In addition to arrivals and clearances, these sections often printed reports from captains or merchants from around the Atlantic littoral. St. Domingue, as a vitally important source of trade, received close and constant attention.

This very fact ensured that Philadelphians would "know" about St. Domingue. In the 18th-century, trading relationships conditioned the degree and quality of the connections between geographically distant locales. Before the invention of the telegraph in 1844, communication across space depended upon the physical movement of human bodies. The number of commercial contacts that caused travel between two disparate places, therefore, determined the familiarity each had with the other.¹⁰ Philadelphia's active trading sector made it a vital point of entry for news from St. Domingue.¹¹ The information that came in the vessels returning to its wharves was the basis for first—and often lasting—impressions in the city. What was printed in the newspapers would have as much to do with the wind and currents as it did with a captain's biases or an editor's inclinations, but the regularity and volume of its flow attest to the island's centrality.

Of course, the commercial vantage onto St. Domingue presented in these newspapers was hardly objective or comprehensive. The assurance given by one editor that he had "received this intelligence from a person who had it from the Captain's own mouth," strikes modern ears as

⁹ See Frank Luther Mott, *American Journalism: A History of Newspapers in the United States Through 250 Years, 1690-1940* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941) 144-5.

¹⁰ Alan Pred has charted the importance of information flow to the development of city systems between 1790 and 1840, noting the relationship between commercial news, business decisions, and comparative urban development. He argues that information was circulated in this period with a high degree of what he terms "spatial bias." This measure represents the confluence of both a particular area's "time-lag" bias (the distance around each place in which it was feasible to send out information in a given period of time), and its "contact array" bias, a measure of its

shaky grounds for confidence.¹² Just as commerce directed the newspapers' gaze, its vagaries complicated the process by which what was printed could be reliable. One editor publicly bemoaned the difficulties of obtaining "authentic information" in tumultuous times.¹³ Captains and crews only saw events in St. Domingue from the mastheads and wharves of the colony's port cities. They rarely received news first hand, and what they brought back was sometimes merely scuttlebutt that had been passed between mariners in the shipping roads outside the harbors. Language was another barrier. In August 1791 one editor complained that the "frequent contradictory accounts received," of late had "chiefly been founded on the reports of American Captains...who generally not speaking the language of the inhabitants, and being the greatest part of their time on board their vessels...anchored out at some distance...have not many opportunities of gathering information."¹⁴ Passage from the island to the North American coast took between one week and one month in mild weather, and often double that in the winter months.¹⁵ Newspapers were stuck recounting events that had transpired weeks previously and over a thousand miles away.

Besides potentially being outdated, inaccurate, self-exculpatory, or aggrandizing, commercial communications also revolved around a single focus: the conditions of trade. Captains and merchants in St. Domingue wrote to Philadelphia about prices, markets, profits, and losses. Limited in scope and purview, the commercial vantage provided in American newspapers is a precarious one for historians to use to determine how events transpired. This very limitation, however, also makes commercial news useful. Whereas other Philadelphians would evaluate the news from St. Domingue according to a host of interests, inclinations, and

quotient of non-local contacts. Allan R. Pred, *Urban Growth and the Circulation of Information: The United States System of Cities, 1790-1840*, Harvard Studies in Urban History (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973).

¹¹ New York, Baltimore, and, to a lesser extent, Charleston, were also important points of entry.

¹² *General Advertiser* 7/20/1791 (hereafter *GA*).

¹³ *GA* 7/26/1793.

¹⁴ *GA* 8/4/1791.

predilections, those involved in commerce made their evaluative bases explicit. This is not to suggest that captains and merchants were particularly rational in their dealings with the colony or that they were oblivious to the issues raised by events there. Unlike most others, however, their actions based on those evaluations are demonstrable. The public words they provided were part of a collective decision-making process with regard to the island that can be gauged.

"Disorder" and Opportunity: Revolution in St. Domingue

The records of the Philadelphia Customs House provide one measure of the changing degree of the city's contact with St. Domingue. Between August 1789 and the end of 1793 vessels coming from the island made up between 18% and 25% of all arrivals to the city from foreign ports in the same period (see appendix A, part one). Analysis of the same data broken down by month shows numerous ebbs and flows, but also demonstrates that contact was maintained, and even intensified, as events shook the colony (see appendix B, *passim*). The commercial news in the city's newspapers represents the attempt to negotiate these curves. Whereas Abraham Ritter remembered the Haitian Revolution as a cataclysmic slave insurrection that produced a fundamentally disordered society, the newspapers in Philadelphia indicate that his mercantile forbears were equally interested in the doings of St. Domingue's white population, and that they strained the events they saw through a vocabulary concurrently being employed to describe what was going on in France. Commercial Philadelphia saw potential, as well as problems, in the tumult the French Revolution created in St. Domingue.

"French liberty" and "the turbulence of the times," 1789-1791

The French Revolution was initially received in the United States with nearly universal joy. With regard to American commerce, however, the developments that made Americans feel

¹⁵ This is a rough approximation, based on the duration of trips mentioned in Philadelphia newspapers in this period.

ideological and political affinity for the "regeneration of the kingdom," and eventually for the new republic, led to practical questions.¹⁶ Franco-American trade relations during the years following the American Revolution had been rife with unfulfilled expectations.¹⁷ Hampered in the British West Indies, American merchants hoped to recoup their losses via expanded trade with French possessions in the Caribbean. Indeed, the treaties signed by the two nations in 1778, in addition to cementing a political and military alliance, had seemingly paved the way for a similar economic relationship.¹⁸ In Paris, Thomas Jefferson had sought to formalize these arrangements. Jefferson's hopes were not borne out, however, at least in part because he was in contact with the wrong people. Whereas he and French physiocrats may have idealized the notion of free trade between the United States and France as a symbol of unity and as a weapon against the British, the French merchant community, a forceful component of what would shortly become the revolutionary bourgeoisie, saw fewer advantages to a commercial relationship in which American goods had unfettered access to French markets.¹⁹ While American trade with continental France failed to develop, however, that with the French West Indies flourished. By 1790 the value of American exports to St. Domingue alone was greater than that to all other West Indian islands combined.²⁰

This trajectory put French colonial merchants at odds with authorities in the islands, who were charged with enforcing metropolitan policies that restricted and controlled access to French

¹⁶ *Pennsylvania Gazette* (hereafter *PAG*) 11/18/1789 (Port-au-Prince 10/7).

¹⁷ See Alexander DeConde, *Entangling Alliance: Politics and Diplomacy Under George Washington* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1958) 141-163.

¹⁸ Rayford W. Logan, *Diplomatic Relations of the United States with Haiti, 1776-1891* (Chapel Hill: University Press of North Carolina, 1941) 17.

¹⁹ See Stanley Elkins and Eric McKittrick, *The Age of Federalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 209-211.

²⁰ John Coatsworth, "American Trade with European Colonies in the Caribbean and South America, 1790-1812," *William and Mary Quarterly* 24 (1967): 246. In the same year, the French West Indies imported more flour, beef, pork, fish, livestock, and butter—all goods most easily obtained from the United States—than any other place in the world (246-7).

markets.²¹ Philadelphians noted this tension in the waning days of the *Ancien Regime*. Readers surely registered the note of incredulity struck in one account telling that the new colonial Intendant, Barbé de Marbois, "seems, upon several late occasions *rather inclined to look upon the Americans as strangers*."²² Concurrent reports, however, suggested that other segments of the population held a different viewpoint. When the *Vigilant*, a customs house tender operating out of Cayes, brought in two American vessels, Philadelphians read that her captain and crew were accosted by the port's inhabitants, angry at the loss of American trade.²³

In November 1789, therefore, when Philadelphians began to read of the outbreak of violence between various factions on the island, it was unclear where their sympathies should lie. Those engaged in business with the colony might have seen merit in the efforts of the *pompons rouges*, planters and small merchants who hoped to take advantage of the new order to secure greater economic freedom and autonomy from the metropole. Many observers saw their adversaries, colonial officials and their allies known as the *pompons blancs*, as "aristocrats" and as "tyrannical."²⁴ Indeed, as events progressed, it seemed clear that the old administration was crumbling and American merchants might expect changes in their affairs with the island.

"Advices" that came to Philadelphia by arriving vessels told that the French colonists, "animated" with "unabating energy [by] the glorious cause in which their patriotic countrymen of

²¹ Philadelphia newspapers are replete with evidence of American frustrations with French commercial policy in the Caribbean. Special notice was taken of the royal *arret* of August 30, 1784, which defined what goods could be legally imported to the colony, maintained a restriction on exports to molasses and tassia, and defined Cap-Français, Port-au-Prince, Môle St. Nicholas, and Les Cayes as the only ports with which Americans could do business. See *PAG* 3/16/1785 (New York 3/7), *PAG* 4/13/1785 (Môle St. Nicholas 2/23), and *PAG* 4/27/1785 (Cap-Français 3/3). For American characterizations of these measures, see *PAG* 7/6/1785 (Philadelphia), reprinted 8/3/1785 (New London 7/22).

²² *PAG* 11/7/1787 (Hispaniola 9/25).

²³ *PAG* 7/25/1787 (Nassau 6/9). See also *PAG* 5/23/1787 (Kingston 4/7), in which American vessels were reported as being taken as prizes as soon as they entered port. One brig was said to have been forced to pay \$74 in port fees, simply for sending in her boat to Les Cayes to get market conditions there.

²⁴ Newspapers took careful notice of who on the island wore the national cockade. See *PAG* 11/25/1789 (Philadelphia), reprint *Federal Gazette* (hereafter *FG*) 11/27/1789: "Business of every kind is stagnated here, and every thing in confusion.... All domestic affairs give place to politics; scarcely a French native to be seen, who has not a cockade, composed of red, white, and blue." In this same period, Governor Marbois' travails were placed parallel to those of the "governor" of the Bastille (*FG* 11/25/1789).

old France are embarked," felt "a spirit of resistance to the measures of their government, as forcible as it was unexpected by those entrusted with the executive power."²⁵ By the fall of 1790 one editor would offer a conclusive summary of the past year's events in the "FRENCH WEST INDIES" that suggested they were "little else than the revolution in Old France in miniature."

altho' they have no *Bastiles* [sic] to storm, or Monarch to bring to a sense of *his duty*, yet in every one of these distinct and minute dependent governments, such efforts have been made as to convince the retainers to despotic and aristocratic tyranny that the spirit of French liberty has reached them, and must soon (if not already) have its full effects there as well as in the mother country.²⁶

Those "effects" were of particular interest to Americans doing business in St. Domingue, especially since "French Hispaniola," as the above writer added, "seem[s] to take the lead in the cause of liberty." How would French liberty, however, affect American commerce?

Readers in Philadelphia received some hints through the discussions and rulings on the colonial question in the French National Assembly. Driven by its planter-dominated Colonial Committee, the Assembly decreed on March 8, 1790 that the self-created "patriot" General Assembly at St. Marc would have legislative powers over local issues, though subsequent instructions warned against those who sought independence for commercial reasons.²⁷ Despite this sanction, the *rouge* patriots lost out to their "royalist" *blanc* adversaries after attempting in May to promulgate a constitution that would have made St. Domingue nearly autonomous, and which included provisions for deregulating foreign commerce.²⁸ Forced to flee the island by Governor Blanchelande and Antoine de Mauduit, colonel of the Cap-Français regiment, the St. Marc delegates arrived in France to plead their case in September. There, the National Assembly

²⁵ PAG 12/16/1789 (Montego Bay 10/17).

²⁶ FG 10/14/1790 (emphasis in original).

²⁷ For the March 8 decree, see FG 6/1/1790 ("By This Day's Mail. Foreign Intelligence. Paris), reprint *Gazette of the United States* (hereafter *GUS*) 6/2/1790. For the instructions of March 28, see *GUS* 7/14, 17, 21, 28, 31, and 8/4/1790 (all under the heading, "Paris. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE COLONIES"). The warning appears on 7/28/1790.

²⁸ Carolyn E. Fick, *The Making of Haiti: The Saint Domingue Revolution from Below* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1990, 81.

responded with a decree on October 12 which dissolved the General Assembly and gave legislative control over local issues to its *blanc* competitors. In the meantime, new violence had broken out when free colored forces under Vincent Ogé, demanding that they be given the rights of French citizens, attacked Cap-Français in October. Though quickly routed, Ogé's efforts typified those of free coloreds across the colony. Clashes between white factions as well as between whites and free coloreds would continue.²⁹

Without question, these "disorders" created difficulties for American commerce in St. Domingue. "No business is going on here," one letter told, "as every one is taken up with meetings, committees, and arming themselves."³⁰ Factional violence on St. Domingue meant that American businessmen would have to wait, inconvenienced and perhaps even frustrated completely in their efforts to take advantage of the opportunity to procure French sugar.³¹ The complaint of one captain that the "turbulence of the times hath arisen to such a pitch as to have produced an almost total stagnation of business," is telling.³² Events on the island were noteworthy—and problematic—because they disrupted a situation ripe with advantage.

Other problems derived, however, from the very promise of the trade itself. Heightened demand in St. Domingue for flour beginning in the middle of 1789 prompted hundreds of American voyages, including 54 from Philadelphia alone between August and December.³³ This influx led to a overstocking of flour in St. Domingue markets and a drop in price. "Twenty thousand barrels of flour are at present in this city," a correspondent from Cap-Français related

²⁹ For contemporary reactions to free coloreds' struggles and the French colonial question, see chapter 2.

³⁰ *FG* 12/4/1789 (Cap-Français 10/29). See also *FG* 6/25/1790 (Philadelphia): "At Aux-Cayes little business [is] done except training and exercising the inhabitants."

³¹ See *PAG* 9/15/1790 (Cap-Français 8/22): "Politics engross the attention of every one so much, that commercial concerns are neglected," Philadelphians read shortly before Ogé began his revolt, "punctuality in payment is not much regarded, even by many who before were minute on this subject."

³² *PAG* 2/10/1790 (Philadelphia).

³³ NARA RG 36, E1057 outward entries, vol. 58.

toward the end of 1789, noting that 542 American vessels had arrived since January.³⁴ Flour prices received especial attention in reports from the island, as anxious captains relayed current conditions and nervously projected future conditions that were worse. "The produce of America is a mere drug," a captain told towards the end of 1790, "particularly flour, of which 20,000 barrels on hand, besides supplies daily dropping in."³⁵ Yet vessels with flour continued to arrive.³⁶ When one thousand barrels arrived at Cap-Français from "the Ohio country" via the Mississippi River in fall 1790, a correspondent must have been both exasperated and impressed when he exclaimed, "what avenues of commerce, will you, Americans, not explore!"³⁷ As the violence increased, captains and merchants faced additional challenges. A letter from Cap-Français in early August 1790 complained that "a great part of the people's time is taken up with the present disturbances, so that they cannot attend to the plantations."³⁸ Scarcity drove sugar and molasses prices up, further hampering American efforts. "Just now arrived a droger," a merchant in Cap-Français wrote to Philadelphia in early 1791, "which I sent with casks to the out ports in search of molasses but she has spent fourteen days going from port to port, and returned without a drop."³⁹

³⁴ *FG* 1/5/1790 (Cap-Français 11/28). The same writer added that, "The laws here are in suspense, and security requires us to sell nothing but for cash." See also *FG* 8/21/1790 (Cap-Français 8/6): "Yesterday arrived several vessels from Baltimore, Wilmington, and Philadelphia, in which were upwards of 3000 barrels of flour," a correspondent moaned later, "before these arrivals we were well supplied; we had as much flour in stores as will serve the consumption as long as it will keep good."

³⁵ *PAG* 9/15/1790 (Cap-Français 8/22). The writer went on to beseech his countrymen from sending any more, "even could it be purchased by you at four dollars per barrel."

³⁶ A New England captain reported in November that "Scarce a Day for some Time past but we have had 700 Barrels arrive from different parts of America." See *GA* 11/10/1790 (Providence, 10/30).

³⁷ *FG* 11/10/1790, reprint *GA* 11/11, *GUS* 11/13. Four months later a Cap-Français merchant vowed he "never knew so dull a time here as the present," explaining that vessels had arrived with flour from Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Norfolk, Alexandria, Charleston, and elsewhere. "It is generally supposed," he continued, "some thousands of barrels will spoil for want of purchasers at any price." See *GA* 3/15/1791 (Philadelphia).

³⁸ *FG* 8/21/1790 (Philadelphia). Several months later another writer made a similar judgment that "the disturbances" and the "heart burnings of the people" were "destructive to their agriculture." See *FG* 11/11/1790 (New London 11/3).

³⁹ *GA* 3/15/1791 (Philadelphia). "We have nothing new to tell you that is ...agreeable," a New London correspondent had written earlier to Philadelphia, "Our vessels are continually returning from the French West Indies with little more than ballast, being in numerous instances disappointed of their cargoes of sugar and molasses." See *FG* 11/11/1790 (New London 11/3).

Despite these travails, captains and merchants describing St. Domingue's markets also saw reason for hope. Contemporary observers hoped that the French Revolution would have a positive impact on American trade in the French West Indies. The glowing rhetoric of the National Assembly in France seemed to lead toward a new era of free trade. "If the governments of the French West India islands should be really free, and formed upon the principles and declarations made by their National Assembly," one Philadelphia editor surmised, "a very beneficial commerce to those islands and these states must follow."⁴⁰ While the factional fighting complicated this scenario, it also seemed to offer opportunities for temporary openings to become permanent. As the problems continued, colonial officials extended the relaxation of importation regulations on several occasions.⁴¹ Furthermore, as French metropolitan control became more tenuous, Americans looked increasingly to local authorities for redress. One of the more arcane legal restrictions put on foreigners engaged in commerce on French soil was a regulation called the *Droit d'Aubane*, which gave the crown the right to claim the property of foreigners who died in French territories.⁴² American merchants at Cap-Français successfully petitioned the colonial General Assembly for a suspension of the "odious" measure in mid-1791.⁴³ A similar disjunction between local and central authority surfaced over American efforts to place a consul in St. Domingue. The Washington administration sent Sylvanus Bourne to St.

⁴⁰ *FG* 3/11/1790 (Philadelphia). Neighboring sugar islands that maintained the old stance, he reasoned, would be unable to compete with the low costs incurred "in a colony that has a free trade with this country."

⁴¹ See *FG* 1/5/1790 (Philadelphia), *PAG* 3/10/1790 (Salem 2/16), and *PAG* 6/16/1790 (New York 6/11). All three tell of decisions to extend the period during which the colony's ports would be open.

⁴² For American complaints, see *GA* 3/14/1791 (Philadelphia), reprint *FG* 3/15/1791 and *FG* 5/31/1791 (Baltimore 5/27).

⁴³ For the rumors of the suspension, see *National Gazette* (hereafter *NG*) 11/3/1791 (Cap-Français 10/7) and "The following is translated from the original decree of the National Assembly of France for abolishing the *Droit d'Aubane*, August 6, 1790." The suspension was provisional, awaiting sanction from the National Assembly to become permanent. See also *FG* 11/8/1791 (Philadelphia), reprint *PAG* 11/9/1791, *NG* 11/10/1791. Several papers noted that the rule had been set aside by the General Assembly specifically for any Americans who died while fighting on behalf of the white colonists after the beginning of the slave insurrections on the island in late 1791. See *FG* 11/22/1791 (Congress 10/13), reprint *GA*, *NG* 11/24/1791, *GUS* 11/26/1791. Also *GUS* 11/26/1791 (SAYS A CORRESPONDENT), reprint *PAG* 11/30/1791.

Domingue, in 1790.⁴⁴ Bourne's status was not recognized at Cap-Français, however, and his efforts to aid American vessels were constrained to such an extent that he decided to leave. A letter from Bordeaux printed in Philadelphia had hinted at these problems earlier, noting the "great complaints" amongst French merchants that a consul had been appointed. "These officers are only admitted into countries where commerce is free," the writer explained, "the trade of our islands is not free; it cannot, it will not be free."⁴⁵ With Bourne about to depart the colony, however, the General Assembly in St. Domingue was ready to bend on this score. In late September 1791 it issued a provisional decree that Bourne could stay on in his official capacity, if only in the colony's three free ports.⁴⁶ Once again, from the vantage of American commerce, local authorities had proved to be more reasonable and amenable to their needs than the metropole.

Of course, spanning these different transactions with Americans was the advent of a series of massive slave insurrections across the colony, the effects of which I will return to shortly. There is no doubt but that the dire situation in which white government found itself at the end of 1791 forced it to confound or alter national economic policy in the name of survival. Nevertheless, from the outset of the "disturbances" on St. Domingue, evidence surfaced that some Americans saw the colony's independence or quasi-independence as another source of potential advantage. Trade under the *Ancien Regime*, after all, had been restricted and onerous. An independent St. Domingue, or even one that simply had greater control over its economic activities, was a tempting prospect. Early reports took note that some of the combatants seemed

⁴⁴ For a brief mention, see Timothy Morrison Matthewson, "Slavery and Diplomacy: The United States and Saint Domingue, 1791-1793" (Ph.D. diss., University of California Santa Barbara, 1976) 15-16.

⁴⁵ *GUS* 2/5/1791 (Bordeaux 10/25). The letter also described the merchants' anger over the recent news that the United States had determined to levy discriminatory tonnage duties against all foreign vessels alike, a result they felt flew in the face of the Franco-American treaty of 1778. For the debates on the tonnage duties, see Elkins and McKittrick, 65-74.

to be pointed in that direction. "The Island is divided into two parties, who are in arms against each other" a captain wrote from Port-au-Prince in late summer 1790, "one party are for declaring themselves independent from France altogether, the other are for the National Assembly."⁴⁷ During one particularly intense moment of general opposition to the national authority, a correspondent described "bodies of merchants, officers of the volunteers &c. &c. [that] have had meetings...and have voted and resolved similar to the meetings in New-England previous to the commencement of the last war."⁴⁸ American witnesses placed white colonial anger towards the metropolitan power in parallel to their own recent revolutionary past, making a comparison that was packed with positive resonance.⁴⁹

These reports indicated that local control would likely mean greater freedom of trade. Several correspondents charted the restrictions put on colonial administrators who, under duress, acceded to the demands of committees of "the inhabitants."⁵⁰ One (incorrectly) told that the municipality of Cap-Français had declared itself independent from France, and that their first act had been "to declare their port open to the vessels of every nation and [to] permit the importation of all sorts of commodities."⁵¹ Shortly thereafter news came from Martinique that authorities at St. Pierre had sent a committee to American captains in the harbor "to know what part they would act in case of a rupture" with France. The captains informed the officials that "our wish

⁴⁶ *NG* 11/7/1791 ("Extract from the Proceedings of the General Assembly of St. Domingo, Sept. 28"), reprint *GA* 11/9/1791. Summarized *GUS* 11/9/1791. Subsequent reports made it apparent that Bourne left the colony anyway. See *GUS* 11/12/1791 and *GUS* 11/16/1791.

⁴⁷ *PAG* 9/15/1790 (Philadelphia). Shortly beforehand another report explained the sides as "the friends to the National Assembly, and the people who will acknowledge no other supremacy than the King's." See *GUS* 9/8/1790 (Philadelphia, 9/2).

⁴⁸ *GA* 9/5/1791 (Boston 8/29). This described reaction to the reception of the Decree of May 15 amongst white colonists. See chapter 2.

⁴⁹ See, for example, *PAG* 12/16/1789 (Cap-Français 10/21), describing efforts to embark Marbois: "There are the greatest commotions here you can possibly conceive, much greater than at Boston at the commencement of the late war." "We have had here, as in France, an entire Revolution," another account ran (though in reference to events on Martinique), telling of the arrival of a French general who was "received by the inhabitants under arms, with similar marks of joy to those shewn by the Bostonians to their beloved President." See *FG* 5/4/1790 (Boston 4/21).

⁵⁰ See, for example, *FG* 2/24/1790 (Norfolk 2/18).

⁵¹ *PAG* 4/7/1790 (New Bern 3/18).

was to act in such a manner as to give them satisfaction," a result that was "highly acceptable to them" and which garnered the Americans the public thanks of the town's citizens.⁵² Violence marred the trading opportunities that St. Domingue's needs provided, but the "tranquility" that commercial actors publicly wished for was not necessarily that derived from the reassertion of French control.

Opportunities in an "irretrievably lost" colony, 1791-1792

Of course, tranquility in St. Domingue was not in the offing. On August 21, 1791, large numbers of the slaves of the colony's *Plains du Nord* acted in concert to destroy the human and material incarnations of the slave regime there, beginning a period of violence and war that would continue, with some moments of respite, for more than a decade. Nearly concurrently, free coloreds in the West Province also gathered together to renew their efforts to attain equal rights as French citizens. Here too slaves were involved (though scholars debate the timing), as both intransigent *rouge* whites and their free colored opponents sought to acquire allies in their struggles, confident in their ability to reassert control over the slave population in general once they were victorious. Soon thereafter violence flared in the South Province as well.⁵³

The advent of the insurrection in the North and the intensification of violence in the West and South exacerbated the existing problems for Americans trying to do business in St. Domingue. With Cap-Français itself seemingly imperiled by the insurgents' torches, officials immediately passed regulations preventing any vessel from departing, ensuring that a general evacuation could be performed if conditions demanded. Gradually, as the direct threat to the town dwindled, the Assembly allowed vessels to leave as new arrivals came to replace them.⁵⁴

⁵² *FG* 5/4/1790 (Boston 4/2).

⁵³ For the different ways in which these developments were understood in Philadelphia, see chapter 3.

⁵⁴ For various opinions as to the causes and probable duration of what Americans called the "embargo," see *FG* 10/3/1791 ("Translation of a Letter from CAPE FRANCOIS, dated September 11"), reprint *GUS*, *PAG* 10/5/1791, *FG* 10/3/1791 (Philadelphia), reprint *GUS* 10/5/1791, *GA* 10/11/1791 (Cap-Français 9/13), and *PAG* 10/12/1791

Pressed for supplies, colonial officials took additional measures that impinged on American merchantmen. Philadelphians learned of a decree passed on August 23 that authorized an armed vessel to cruise off of Cap-Français in order to force vessels bound to the port to enter, for fear that news from the pilots might lead them to bear away for other places on the island.⁵⁵ Other captains were induced to unpack their holds of goods purchased previous to the violence, now that the need on shore was so great.⁵⁶ These measures aggravated American captains. "I am still lying here with my cargo on board, as well as all other vessels which are loaded with American produce," a master wrote to his owner in the middle of September, "they will neither buy our produce nor let us out of port."⁵⁷

Besides oppressive regulations, captains had to contend with the chaos created by the insurrection. Consignees and contacts were difficult to locate, sugar and coffee quickly became scarce as transportation from the interior ceased, and white colonists proved uneager to spend money in uncertain times. "Hence it is that no man will pay, and every man keeps by him what he has," a captain noted, "it being easier to fly, in such a tragical act, on board of a vessel with cash than produce."⁵⁸ American flour glutted St. Domingue markets, causing fears that it would rot before captains could find a sale. One wrote that he thought both his brig and its cargo would shortly be destroyed, the first by the insurgents and the second by the West Indian climate. "Should I remain here, both will be lost," he worried, telling that in desperation, American captains had requested Sylvanus Bourne take their case to the Assembly.⁵⁹ Shortly thereafter Philadelphians learned that the General Assembly had lifted the embargo on foreign vessels and

(AUTHENTIC PARTICULARS, 9/11). For reports of similar measures at Port-au-Prince, see *GA* 10/17/1791 (Philadelphia).

⁵⁵ *GA* 10/11/1791 ("Extracts from Papers of ST. DOMINGO").

⁵⁶ *GA* 10/11/1791 (Cap-Français 9/2).

⁵⁷ *FG* 10/11/1791 (Philadelphia), reprint *GA*, *PAG* 10/12/1791.

⁵⁸ *GA* 11/12/1791 (Philadelphia). Another captain counted 59 vessels in port at Port-au-Prince, noting that some had been there for six weeks and "not sold sixpence worth, nor even opened their hatches." See *GA* 10/31/1791 (Middletown 10/22).

decreed that they would be allowed "to proceed to such ports in the colony as to them shall seem best."⁶⁰ Free trade, then, a longstanding object of commercial desires, came not from American political pressure or the new era brought by the French Revolution, but from the desperation of colonial officials.

These officials made several efforts to counteract the baleful conditions Americans faced. As noted, they skirted the national authority with regard to the *Droit d'Aubane* and to the registry of Bourne as a consul. Efforts were also made, however, simply to convince American merchants that trade with the island was worth the risk. A letter printed in Philadelphia papers in October argued that the present period was, in fact, an opportune one for American commerce. Fears for the safety of vessels and over the interference of the embargo were unfounded, it told, referencing recent orders from the French minister at New York that vessels carrying goods were to "be at liberty to dispose of their cargoes, and depart without the least hindrance." Finally, it noted that cash was plentiful at Cap-Français, because the wealthy planters had all fled there with what was their most movable property.⁶¹ Over a month later a similar line was taken by the President of the General Assembly in a letter to the United States House of Representatives. Making a point to emphasize that the island was still a part of France, the missive stressed that the oppressive measures taken were born of expediency, and that they were now at an end. Finally, the President hoped that the colonial agents who bore the letter would be welcomed and enabled to speedily make the purchases that were their mission, "the success of which will undoubtedly extend its influence to the commerce, which the subjects of the United States carry on with this Colony."⁶² When such efforts proved insufficient, French officials in the United States were brought in. One editor was given an account of the island from "the Hon. Consul of

⁵⁹ GA 11/16/1791 (Providence 11/5).

⁶⁰ NG 11/24/1791 (Philadelphia).

⁶¹ GA 10/12/1791 (New York 10/8).

⁶² FG 11/22/1791 (Philadelphia), reprint GA, NG 11/24/1791, GUS 11/26/1791.

France" that painted a picture of an insurrection that was waning. To end it "will not be very difficult; as the Negroes are without subsistence [sic], and without ammunition," he wrote, adding "the rest of the island is perfectly tranquil."⁶³

These accounts contrasted with the horrific tales and gloomy prospects described by American merchants and captains on the island. They seem, however, to have been effective. Large numbers of Philadelphian vessels continued to engage in commerce with the island after the slave uprisings commenced. While the number of vessels arriving from St. Domingue ports dropped immediately after the violence began, the dip was temporary. Many arrived from the island late in the year, presumably after being released by the government at Cap-Français. Thereafter, after a typical winter lull, Philadelphians continued to send vessels to St. Domingue. Indeed, contact with the colony increased (see appendix B, charts 2 & 3).

The reasons for this trend are multifold. In some cases vessels may have been sent and cargoes risked because of hints that the worst was over. A Mr. Worlock wrote in early October that "the situation of the colony is growing better," claiming that the country around Cap-Français was nearly clear of insurgents.⁶⁴ The papers in which his optimistic assessment were printed were also replete with news of apparently successful offensives by colonial troops. When it became obvious that these efforts were not enough, observers both in the United States and in the colony began to hang their hopes on the arrival of succor from France. "It appears from the best information from Cape-Francois," one editor opined, "that the island can never be recovered but by a great and early exertion of France."⁶⁵ Beginning in late November accounts

⁶³ *FG* 12/1/1791 (Boston 11/19). The editor wrote in an introduction to the report that "Many melancholy accounts of the recent losses...being in circulation; and too much credit being often given to vague reports," that he had secured the Consul's report, so "that the interests of commerce might not be injuriously affected."

⁶⁴ *FG* 11/8/1791 (Philadelphia), reprint *GA* 11/9/1791.

⁶⁵ *GUS* 11/16/1791 (Philadelphia).

arrived from the island that French troops were on the way.⁶⁶ While the optimistic tenor of these reports was blasted by the news arriving in late December that Port-au-Prince had been burned during a fight between free colored and white forces, a measure of hope was retained with further news of arriving French forces, and also of three commissioners from the National Assembly.⁶⁷ By early February, Philadelphians were reading about the landing of a modest number of French regulars, about rumors of the imminent arrival of more, and about the efforts of the commissioners to restore order. In one paper, a price current for Cap-Français was published amidst these accounts, suggesting a degree of opportunity and even predictability that had been absent for the past six months.⁶⁸ This news came alongside that of the outbreak of problems in the South and of the continuing disarray in Port-au-Prince in the West. Despite continuing reports of violence in the North, many Philadelphia vessels continued to make Cap-Français their port of call. The spotty rumors of the parleys offered by insurgent leaders in the province only added to this tendency.

Even before the island seemed to be returning to normal, however, vessels came to St. Domingue because they sensed an opportunity. Early on after the open violence began, one piece of commercial news noted that, although American provisions sold cheap and island goods were becoming increasingly scarce, "any price was offered for powder and arms."⁶⁹ Other voyages may have been prompted by a short squib reporting a price of flour in Port-au-Prince that was higher than any other listing to that point.⁷⁰ As noted, colonial officials took efforts to present the period as one of opportunity, decrying American hesitations "at a time so favorable

⁶⁶ See *GA* 11/24/1791 (Philadelphia 11/23, "INTERESTING ACCOUNTS"), reprint *GUS* 11/26/1791. Also *FG* 11/29/1791 (Philadelphia, "Extract of a letter from Cape-Francois, of the 2d of Nov. received by the brig James, Capt. Row, arrived here yesterday"), *GA* 1/11/1792 (St. John's, Antigua 12/13), and *GUS*, *FG* 1/25/1792 (Philadelphia).

⁶⁷ For the first news of the commissioners, see *NG*, *FG* 1/12/1792 (Philadelphia).

⁶⁸ *GA* 2/8/1792 ("Price Current at Cape Francois Dec. 31, 1791").

⁶⁹ *FG* 10/6/1791 (Philadelphia).

⁷⁰ *GUS* 11/2/1791 (Philadelphia).

as the present seems to be."⁷¹ These early hints were surely flattened by subsequent reports of the disastrous conditions that ensued, but, early in 1792 a discernable vein of commentary emerged that saw better prospects ahead. "Times grow more quiet," a letter from Cap-Français told, "our market promises good prices for your produce in a short time."⁷² "There is very little provision in the place," another wrote, "so that there must necessarily be a demand."⁷³ Scarcity and security seemed to combine to make conditions especially ripe. In late January Philadelphians read an open letter from "A FRIEND TO AMERICA" addressed to "*all Farmers, Planters, Millers, and Owners of Vessels, in America*" telling that a contract had been made at Cap-Français for nearly 50,000 barrels of flour at higher prices than those seen for months.⁷⁴ The news was subsequently discounted as the effort of a speculator, but the fact remained that St. Domingue appeared to be the seat of potential profits, as well as of risks and difficulties.⁷⁵ Arrivals from the colony would reach new high-points over these months (see appendix B, chart 2).

This optimism was, however, ill-founded and illusory. Throughout the first half of 1792, few would have any positive information to offer concerning commerce in St. Domingue. By the middle of February reports revealed that the troops had failed to be effective (or very numerous) and that the commissioners were increasingly powerless. A correspondent in Cap-Français described dull markets and dangerous times, admitting that "I as well as many more were too sanguine at the time of my last writing you."⁷⁶ Further news later in the month prompted similar sentiments from another writer, who apologized for his former optimism and was "fearful it may have induced you to adventure property to this port sooner than you

⁷¹ GA 10/12/1791 (New York 10/8).

⁷² FG 1/7/1792 ("*Extract of a letter from Messrs. J. Mayer Belzous & Co., merchants, Cape-Francois, dated December 6, 1791, to T. Allen*"). See GUS 1/11/1792 (Philadelphia) for a rephrasing of the same.

⁷³ FG, NG 1/12/1792 (Philadelphia).

⁷⁴ FG 1/25/1792 ("*To all Farmers, Planters, Millers, and Owners of Vessels, in America*"), reprint NG 1/30/1792.

⁷⁵ See GA 2/8/1792 (Baltimore 2/3), reprint NG 2/9/1792.

otherwise would have done."⁷⁷ Besides describing the general tumult surrounding the divisions among the colony's white factions, those between whites and free coloreds, and the seemingly continual violence of the insurgent slaves, American commentators described stagnant markets, uncertain business conditions, and their great difficulties in even finding tropical produce for sale. "For three weeks past I have only been able to procure three hogsheads of Sugar, not a single hogshead of Molasses can be got, at any price," one captain wrote from Port-au-Prince, telling of the quantities of goods destroyed by the insurgents and stating his intent to return his consignees' money.⁷⁸ The inhabitants of that town, another captain told, "began to despair [sic] of receiving any succours [sic] from Europe." A fever raged, American goods were rotting, and "nearly 100 sail of vessels were lying there with part of their cargoes on board, and no prospect of selling."⁷⁹ Though the island was destitute of food, American goods failed to sell in part because of the distribution of relief from the public storehouses, which had been filled early on by American traders willing to sell low in order to depart.⁸⁰

This course was one of several that different colonial officials took during this period in efforts to control and remedy problems concerning American commerce with the island. To ensure supplies, municipal officials clamped down on traders' attempts to tour the island's ports in search of the best markets, sabotaging the freedom of trade Americans had gained shortly after the violence commenced. One captain arrived at Port-au-Prince in early January 1792 after visiting Fort Dauphin and St. Marc, but was then forced by the government to stay there.

"Yesterday a Philadelphia schooner was condemned for being caught trading in one of the out

⁷⁶ *FG* 2/15/1792 (Philadelphia), reprint *GA* 2/16/1792.

⁷⁷ *FG* 2/28/1792 (Philadelphia), reprint *GA*, *GUS* 2/29/1792.

⁷⁸ *FG* 5/1/1792 (Philadelphia), reprint *GA*, *PAG* 5/3/1792.

⁷⁹ *FG* 3/17/1792 (New London 3/8).

⁸⁰ One effect of the arrival of the commissioners was the use of French naval ships to trade directly with American ports in order to bring provisions to the island. For news of the arrival of one such vessel, the frigate *Mousell*, captain Ferrarie, see *FG* 3/24/1792 (Philadelphia) and *NG* 3/29/1792 (Philadelphia).

bays," he reported.⁸¹ Indeed, during this period Philadelphians read of a number of American captains who ran afoul of St. Domingue officials. These were variously reported as having made "short entry," as trading in the "bye ports," and even as trading with the slaves or free coloreds.⁸² "I am still detained in this place, by the Assembly and Municipality," a captain wrote to the vessel's owner, telling that his petitions to depart fell on deaf ears. Indeed, a captain who was allowed to leave was forced to pay ten thousand livres, on top of the usual port charges and duties, as security for his oath that he would not land any of his cargo on the island.⁸³ Other regulations were published establishing penalties for landing passengers without permission.⁸⁴ Vessels languished in St. Domingue's ports because of phlegmatic markets, terrorized inhabitants, and factional battles, but they also were held in place by restrictive measures that returned American trade to conditions similar to those under the *Ancien Regime*. In early June, reports in Philadelphia told of a colony that was "beyond a doubt, irretrievably lost" and in which the destruction of "all confidence between man and man," was added to the list of damages from the violence.⁸⁵

Sonthonax and "the enemies of France," 1792-1793

Over the second half of 1792 and into the early months of 1793, however, Philadelphians received some of the most promising news for business on St. Domingue since the opening of

⁸¹ NG 3/5/1792 ("Extract of a letter from a Captain of a vessel in Port-au-Prince, dated Jan. 20, to his owner in this city"), reprint PAG 3/7/1792.

⁸² FG 3/16/1792 (New London 3/8/1792). FG 3/5/1792 ("Extract of a letter..."). For accusations of trade with free coloreds, see FG 2/28/1792 (Philadelphia), reprint GA, GUS 2/29/1792, FG 3/23/1792: "It is reported here, and I believe from pretty good authority, that Capt. T. and the supercargo of a schooner belonging to your port are close prisoners, and that the schooner is confiscated, on account of trading with those opposed to the Whites." Also FG 2/29/1792 (Philadelphia), for trade with free coloreds, and FG 3/2/1792 (Dover, NH 2/17): "We hear by a vessel directly from Port-au-Prince, that the French fleet had arrived there—and having caught a number of American vessels trading with the negroes—condemned them without ceremony or hesitation." See also GA 3/8/1792, reprint FG 3/17/1792, for report of the execution of "Perkins" for selling arms to the "revolted men of colour."

⁸³ FG 6/28/1792 (Philadelphia, "Copy of a letter from a Captain of a vessel to his owner in Philadelphia, dated Port-au-Prince, June 9th, 1792").

⁸⁴ FG 3/18/1792 (Providence 3/9).

⁸⁵ GA 6/7/1792 (Baltimore 6/5), reprint GUS 6/9/1792. GA 6/7/1792 (Portland, 5/28).

the insurrection in the North a year previously. Again, this phase of optimism was generated by the arrival of new forces from France. In September 1792 a second commission arrived at Cap-Français, accompanied by 6000 troops. Led by Léger Félicité Sonthonax and Etienne Polverel, these forces were directed to enforce the National Assembly's Decree of April 4, 1792, by which the colony's free colored population was granted full civil rights. To the extent that this effort pointed towards the unity of free coloreds and whites who were loyal to the new French government, and therefore to the end of violence between them, American commercial interests viewed this development positively. Reports from all corners of the colony resounded with accounts of the return (or the impending return) of prosperity. "Peace was perfectly established, and ...business was approximating towards regularity," according to one captain.⁸⁶ Besides news of widespread acceptance of the decree, Philadelphians read that Governor Blanchelande had been embarked under a cloud of suspicion, and that French regulars were successfully pushing the insurgents back under General Rochambeau in the North. "The latest letters from Hispaniola speak in very flattering terms of the prospect they have of a very speedy termination of all their disquiets," one newspaper summarized late in the year, adding "commerce bids fair to lift her drooping head," and "there is plenty of all kinds of produce, particularly sugars, at market."⁸⁷ Reports of advantageous prices accompanied these judgments, and vessels from Philadelphia were among those American sails who looked to prosper by them.

Commissioner Sonthonax emerged at the forefront of this revival. The second commission's early efforts to bring stability to St. Domingue were viewed in Philadelphia according to their effects on American commerce. Sonthonax's first major mention in the city's newspapers came at the culmination of a running controversy over the payment of drafts made

⁸⁶ *GA* 8/13/1792 (Boston 8/4). See also *FG* 8/11/1792 (Boston 8/6/1792): "There is a probability of peace and tranquility soon taking place," and *NG* 8/25/1792 (Philadelphia): "Peace is as good as restored."

on the French government by officials in the colony purchasing goods in the United States. Having secured four million livres for these payments from the National Assembly, to be drawn out of the debt due to France by the United States, Sonthonax assured American readers in an open letter that previous refusals to accept St. Domingue bills on France would now cease.⁸⁸ Thereafter, however, his reputation suffered, as captains reported continuing travails resulting from arbitrary proceedings against them in the various ports controlled by the commissioners.⁸⁹ With the rumors of an Anglo-French War circulating in Philadelphia's papers in April 1793, however, the commissaries —and Sonthonax in particular— came to stand for the efforts of metropolitan France against both her European foes and Caribbean counter-revolutionaries.

When American captains reported that the commissioners had marshaled forces against the town of Port-au-Prince and had subjected it once more to destruction, this time by cannonade, reports in Philadelphia differed over who was at fault.⁹⁰ American captains, reports told, refused to aid the municipality, which was led by Auguste Borel.⁹¹ They were similarly portrayed, however, petitioning the commissaries not to attack and "remonstrating against the approaching destruction of the town," for the sake of peace and prosperity.⁹² While one paper stressed the anarchy created by Sonthonax's "thundering proclamation against the town, whom

⁸⁷ *GUS* 12/8/1792 (Kingston 10/20). See also *GUS* 10/10/1792 (Philadelphia), in which the editor judged that Decree of April 4 would "restore unanimity among every class of citizens, which is absolutely necessary to effect a return of good order, and restore tranquility."

⁸⁸ The controversy was played out in the public papers. See *FG* 8/10/1792, reprint *NG* 8/11/1792, *PAG* 8/15/1792, for the refusal of the French consul in Philadelphia, Antoine DelaForest, to accept further bills from St. Domingue. This step was answered by St. Domingue émigrés with calls for charitable donations to the island in *NG* 8/22/1792 ("To the Colonists of St. Domingo, now residing in the United States of America"). For DelaForest's partial agreement to offer payment, see *FG* 1/17/1793 (Philadelphia). For Sonthonax's letter to French Minister Jean-Baptiste Ternant, see *GA* 1/18/1793 ("*In the Name of the Nation, National Civil-Commission*" and surrounding notices), restated *GUS* 1/23/1793.

⁸⁹ *FG* 3/25/1793 (Providence 3/16), reprint *GA* 3/26/1793. *GA* 3/28/1793 (Philadelphia, "Extract of a letter dated, AUX-CAYES, February 14") reprint *NG* 3/30/1792, *GUS* 3/30/1792 (in part), *FG* 4/2/1793, *PAG* 4/29/1793 (in part).

⁹⁰ For the initial reports, see *FG* 4/16/1793 (Richmond). Also *GA* 5/6/1793 (Philadelphia), reprint *NG* 5/8/1793.

⁹¹ *GUS*, *PAG* 4/17/1793 (Boston 4/8), reprint *GA* 4/22/1793. Borel had recently been lauded as a hero for foiling the plans of *blanc* Hanus de Jumécourt to import a quantity of arms from an American smuggler. See *GA* 3/28/1793 (Philadelphia, "Extract of a letter dated, AUX-CAYES, February 14") reprint *NG* 3/30/1792, *GUS* 3/30/1792 (in part), *FG* 4/2/1793, *PAG* 4/29/1793 (in part).

he branded with the term of Counter-revolutionists," another, more francophilic gazette saw the affair as the result of "an obstinate opposition made by the aristocratic faction."⁹³ Once again, Sonthonax himself subsequently strove to assert his own case, presenting a version of events closer to the second account to Philadelphia in late May. "Tell Free Americans, and the Friends of the Republic that the colony has at length found severe executors of the laws," he proclaimed, "that we have put to flight the enemies of France."⁹⁴

This missive was written to generate and maintain American commerce, demonstrating the importance of American produce to St. Domingue's subsistence. Significantly, it was directed to the new French Minister to the United States, Citizen Edmond Charles Genet, who had been in the country since April 1793, but who was only just arriving in Philadelphia. In contrast to Ternant, Genet presented a vigorous public presence in the new nation. His efforts to fit out privateers and to gather American financial and military support behind various aggressive (if somewhat ill-defined) enterprises against the Spanish in Florida and New Orleans are well known.⁹⁵ For our purposes, however, it is important to recognize St. Domingue's importance to his mission, and his focus on maintaining American commerce with the island. An official French state paper translated in a Philadelphia newspaper in mid-April informed the commission of the declaration of war on France, directing that efforts "to keep the intercourse between the United States and the Colony free, as it has been hitherto, to draw thence the precious assistance they afford," be foremost among their preparations. Genet was expressly put in charge of supplying the island.⁹⁶

⁹² *GUS* 5/18/1793 (Philadelphia).

⁹³ See *GUS* 5/18/1793 (Philadelphia) versus *NG* 5/18/1793 (Philadelphia).

⁹⁴ *GA*, *FG* 5/28/1793 (Philadelphia, "General Advertiser"). The editor introduced this account by noting that "the accounts we have hitherto received of the cannonade of Port-au-Prince, were given by persons not well affected to the national cause in the islands."

⁹⁵ Most recently, see Elkins and McKittrick 330-373

⁹⁶ *GA* 4/18/1793 (Philadelphia, "For the GENERAL ADVERTISER").

Over the subsequent months, the French minister would join Sonthonax and Polverel as local personifications of the new French state, attracting praise and opprobrium according to domestic viewers' opinions of the French Revolution. Indeed, French endeavors in both areas were seen as closely linked. Both, for example, were reported as sending out privateers. Just before the bombardment of Port-au-Prince, a passenger arrived in Philadelphia telling that his vessel had been boarded by a French privateer that had been fitted out at Cap-Français and had then gone to Charleston to get more crew.⁹⁷ Given its geographic location, St. Domingue was often the font of war news from the continent, reinforcing Sonthonax and Polverel's position in the constellation of French Revolutionary figures in American minds.⁹⁸ Their communication to Genet concerning the affair at Port-au-Prince displayed their interwoven projects. "Those inveterate enemies to France, are, no doubt those who have spread a notion through the United States, that American vessels carrying provisions to the French parts of St. Domingo, might run the risk of being seized there," one pro-French newspaper opined shortly afterwards; "the citizens of the United States, may on the contrary rest assured, that they shall always receive from the National Commissioners and public functionaries in that colony, the protection which they have a right to expect...and that they shall be duly paid for all such articles as they may supply the colony with."⁹⁹

The advent of war gave commercially-minded observers cause for further optimism. Rumors of the conflict surfaced as early as March, and fit snugly into hopes that a neutral

⁹⁷ *GA* 5/6/1793 (Philadelphia), reprint *NG* 5/8/1793. The next paragraph of this report told of preparations in Philadelphia to receive Genet when he arrived. For a similar report, blending the issue of privateering, St. Domingue, and Genet, see *GA* 5/1/1793 (Charleston 4/17).

⁹⁸ See for example, Sonthonax's letter to Mangourit, French consul at Charleston, in *GA* 5/10/1793 ("From the Charleston STAR), reprint *GUS*, *NG* 5/11/1793. John Fenno appended the missive in his *Gazette of the United States* with a sardonic, if somewhat inscrutable, comment.

⁹⁹ *NG* 6/8/1793 (Philadelphia).

America would benefit from it.¹⁰⁰ With regard to St. Domingue, those hopes seemed to be well-founded. An American at Cap-Français was sure that French merchantmen would be easy prey for the British navy, noting that "good freights are already offered to American vessels" and that the island would soon be in desperate need of produce.¹⁰¹ Reports were shortly in circulation that the French government had opened all ports in the French West Indies to American shipping, official confirmation of which was printed in Philadelphia in mid-May.¹⁰² While British depredations on the high seas may have given Americans pause, reports from St. Domingue told of empty markets and high prices.¹⁰³ War imperiled trade with the French West Indies, but it also pushed French authorities back towards a policy of free trade that Americans had pursued since the early 1780s.

In the same season that Citizen Genet's star fell in many American circles, those of Sonthonax and Polverel (which had never been as secure to begin with) also lost much of their luster. After having successfully reduced Port-au-Prince and Jacmel and the West, the commissaries rushed back to Cap-Français, where the newly arrived governor, Thomas François Galbaud, had begun to challenge their power. Arriving in the capital in mid-June, the commissioners quickly outmaneuvered the general and had him confined to the fleet in the town's harbor. Galbaud, however, contested his arrest, and landed with a contingent of sailors on the 20th to fight the commissioners and their free colored allies. Driven out of town, Sonthonax and Polverel offered freedom to any slave who fought on their behalf in the North, a bid taken up by forces under Peirrot. Expanded to the families of fighting slaves on July 11, and to the South

¹⁰⁰ For example, see *GA* 3/15/1793 (Philadelphia, "Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Cape-Francois to a mercantile house in New York, February 15") in which the writer told of the probable onset of war and surmised that "should it be true, it will be much to the benefit of America."

¹⁰¹ *NG*, *PAG* 4/24/1793 ("Extract of a letter from an American house at Cape-Francois, dated March 25").

¹⁰² For rumors, see *GUS* 4/27/1793 (Philadelphia), *NG*, *PAG* 5/8/1793 (Philadelphia). For the text of the decree, see *GA* 5/10/1793 ("Extract from the (French) MONITOR, No. 51, *Decree concerning the United States of America*").

on the 25th, the commissioners' policy of emancipation continued to the point where on August 29, 1793, Sonthonax proclaimed all Northern slaves free—a decision Polverel later supported in a qualified manner for the rest of the colony. These actions would be ratified by the Legislative Assembly on February 3, 1794.¹⁰⁴

These events caused a firestorm of reaction in Philadelphia, as Americans of all political stripes strove to understand them and eventually to work out the repercussions of a policy of immediate emancipation.¹⁰⁵ The initial reports came from captains who sailed with the fleet of American shipping and French naval vessels that had evacuated the town. As they had in August 1791, these tales concentrated on the destruction and disruption that ensued. American seamen watched the developments from their mastheads. One noted that the road into Cap-Français was filled with "negroes from the country" who were "continually travelling on the 22d and 23d; supposed to be coming in, in consequence of the proclamation, to reinforce the commissioner's party."¹⁰⁶ Some had made attempts to save their goods from the flames. One group was shot at as they approached the shore. Another captain successfully recovered money and account books of a Philadelphia merchant.¹⁰⁷ While accounts differed as to the cause of events, many came to identify the trigger as the General's dealings with American shippers. Under pressure from Cap-Français's inhabitants, he had agreed to a contract to provision the town with flour under excellent terms. Once delivery had begun, however, it became obvious that the townspeople would not pay. The commissioners arrived at this juncture, accused Galbaud of overstepping his

¹⁰³ See, for example, *FG* 6/6/1793 (Baltimore 6/4, "Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Cape Francois, to his Friend in Baltimore, dated May 18, 1793"), reprint *GA* 6/7/1793. This development impacted American trade around the Atlantic littoral. For comment about trade with New Orleans, see *PAG* 6/19/1793.

¹⁰⁴ Robert Louis Stein, *Léger Félicité Sonthonax: The Lost Sentinel of the Republic* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1985) is especially good on the details of this period, though I agree with his critics that he is too forgiving of Sonthonax as purely inspired by humanitarian and republican revolutionary motives.

¹⁰⁵ See chapter 4.

¹⁰⁶ *GUS* 7/10/1793 (Philadelphia). See also *GA* 7/8/1793 (Philadelphia).

¹⁰⁷ This was Joshua Barney, who acted on behalf of Etienne Dutilh. See *FG* 7/9/1793 (Baltimore 7/6).

power, and forced the inhabitants to honor their obligations. This, among other things, prompted the General to land his forces and begin the fray.¹⁰⁸

In the aftermath, French officials strove to maintain American commerce. To combat prevalent depictions that tended to cast aspersions on Sonthonax and Polverel's radical actions, officials in Port-au-Prince wrote to Genet in late June, labeling Galbaud a counter-revolutionary "traitor" bent on destroying the colony and refuting the charges that the commissioners had decreed a "general enfranchisement of the slaves," a "calumny" circulated by their enemies to "prevent that aid and subsistence which we should expect from the United States, & cause all kind of shipments to this Island to cease." Their city, they stressed, enjoyed "the most perfect tranquility," and was filled with American vessels from the North who were engaged in filling their holds with goods from surrounding plantations.¹⁰⁹ A captain's letter printed a week later told that he had received assurances from the commodore of the port of Cap-Français that "order is entirely re-established" and that he would be safe and could "sell your cargo advantageously, and besides will render a great service to the town."¹¹⁰ These reports were likely less than convincing. Philadelphia's vessels continued to travel to and from St. Domingue in the second half of 1793, but fewer ventured to the North, or especially Cap-Français. An assurance "From a Boston Paper" printed in Philadelphia, therefore, that "the havoc and destruction supposed to have befallen Cape Francois are not so great as reported," probably rang hollow. The excerpt's assertion that "the American public are more interested in the state of St. Domingo, than they appear to be aware of," however, undoubtedly struck a chord. To support his claim the author

¹⁰⁸ These details emerge in *NG*, *PAG* 7/10/1793 and especially in *FG* 7/15/1793 (Baltimore 7/11), reprint *GUS* 7/17/1793. Galbaud's initial offer to the American merchants was for a higher price, to be drawn on bills in Philadelphia or in Paris, but this was rejected by them, perhaps because of their payment difficulties in the past. More likely Americans found the prospect of getting specie or island produce, which was the core of their counter-offer, more appetizing. At least one captain had begun to receive payment in sugar and coffee when the violence began. See *FG* 7/26/1793 (Baltimore 7/25), reprint *PAG* 7/31/1793.

¹⁰⁹ *GA* 7/30/1793 ("St. Domingo. Interesting Information to the Mercantile Interest"), reprint *GUS* 7/31/1793, *FG* 8/2/1793.

delineated a balance sheet of the trade between the island and the United States that was estimated to be \$1,162,400 in the latter's favor.¹¹¹ Undocumented and unproven, this nevertheless conveyed the sense of opportunity, and opportunism that had buoyed American commercial efforts with the quaking colony since 1789.

The invasion of St. Domingue by Spanish and British forces in the late summer and early fall of 1793 did not halt American commerce with the island, but it did change the nature of their perspective on events there. No longer confronting an unfolding revolution, American traders were now busily seeking to supply both sides of a local battle in a wider war. The commercial vantage presented in Philadelphia's newspapers was now absorbed with the depredations suffered by American vessels at the hands of the British or French and, as such, the tales of captains and merchants were employed by increasingly politically partisan newspaper editors as one of many arrows to be launched at their opponents. Indeed, Republican editors such as Benjamin Bache, increasingly turned away from commercial actors as sources for news as part of an effort to avoid anglophilic accounts and to provide more French voices in American prints.¹¹²

Modern histories of the Haitian Revolution have correctly stressed the events occurring in St. Domingue between 1789 and 1793 for their relevance to issues of race and slavery.¹¹³

¹¹⁰ GA 8/7/1793 (DOMESTIC ARTICLES, Providence 7/27).

¹¹¹ GA 8/10/1793 ("ST. DOMINGO").

¹¹² The changed nature of commerce with St. Domingue after this point is the subject of chapter 5.

¹¹³ Changing interests and inclinations have led historians to focus on different elements of the period, but at a basic level all seek to assess the relationship between acts and ideas in metropolitan France and those in the colony, as well as the relationship between colonial white disaffection and the struggles of free coloreds and slaves. Older works granted little agency to the actors on the ground in the colony, especially those of color, instead finding the edicts and efforts in France to be determinative of events. See, for example, T. Lothrop Stoddard, *The French Revolution in San Domingo* (Boston and New York: 1914). Even C.L.R. James, in his seminal *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, 2 ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1963), granted nominative authority to a revolution that was French, though he expanded its meaning to embrace more than white revolutionaries ever did. For a more recent incarnation of this orientation, see Eugene Genovese, *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), which grants slaves agency, but only in actions that point them towards a "modern" world

Looking at this period, they have emphasized episodes surrounding the free coloreds' struggle for civic equality and have tested the relationship between French ideology, edicts, and slave resistance acts.¹¹⁴ Contemporary Philadelphians recognized these dimensions of events on St. Domingue, but the "disorder" they witnessed and described when relating news of them had more concrete connotations than did the shaking of racial hierarchies. This period, which has (appropriately) become prehistory in histories of a Revolution for racial equality and Haitian independence, was an important series of current events to Philadelphians attempting to gauge the colony's future as a French possession and as an entrepôt for American goods. Commercial actors saw different benchmarks in this story, or rather they evaluated the same moments according to different standards. The periods they demarcated were dictated by their own criteria in assessing events, and are therefore different from those applied by historians using their observations (among other things) to craft narratives. From the vantage of the mastheads and wharves, the revolutionary qualities of circumstances in St. Domingue, be they French or Haitian, were of secondary importance to their immediate implications. Abraham Ritter remembered the Haitian Revolution as an end where modern scholars have described a

described in European terms. For a critique, see David Geggus, "The French and Haitian Revolutions, and Resistance to Slavery in the Americas: An Overview," *Revue Française d'Histoire d'Outre-Mer* 56 (1989): 107-124. Historiographical trends of the past several decades have emphasized non-elite experiences in general and, with regard to studies of slavery, slave and free colored experience and ideology specifically. While few Haitianists find France irrelevant, scholars have increasingly looked to St. Domingue to explain the origins, aims, and course of the slave revolt and eventually the Revolution. An excellent example is Carolyn E. Fick, *The Making of Haiti: The Saint Domingue Revolution from Below* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1990). More recently, historians interested in evaluating the Haitian Revolution in an Atlantic context have sought to balance the two approaches, depicting a dialectic dance between periphery and metropole. See Robin Blackburn, *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848* (London: Verso, 1988), 161-204. Also David Barry Gaspar and David Patrick Geggus, eds. *A Turbulent Time: The French Revolution and the Greater Caribbean*, ed. Darlene Clark Hine, Jr. John McCluskey and David Barry Gaspar, *Blacks in the Diaspora* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997). David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770-1823* (1975) remains an important early effort in this regard, albeit one that focused exclusively on white ideology. For a fine synthesis of many of the major elements of the debate, see the essays by Davis, Blackburn, and Seymour Drescher in *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*, ed. David P. Geggus (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 3-20.

¹¹⁴ In addition to the works cited above, see David Patrick Geggus, "Racial Equality, Slavery, and Colonial Secession during the Constituent Assembly," *American Historical Review* 94 (1989): 1290-1308, and Carolyn E. Fick, "The French Revolution in Saint Domingue: A Triumph or a Failure?," in *A Turbulent Time: The French Revolution and*

beginning. Recovering the perspective of those who saw it as a changing present helps elucidate the questions and assumptions that ground both.

the Greater Caribbean, ed. David Barry Gaspar and David Patrick Geggus, Blacks in the Diaspora (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997), 51-75.

Appendix A

Inward Entries to Philadelphia from Foreign versus St. Domingue Ports, 1789*-1805 (part one)

	1789	1790	1791	1792	1793	1794	1795	1796	1797	1798	1799
total arrivals	338	645	586	655	655	595	775	817	646	487	449
SD arrivals °	63	121	117	156	167	105	225	281	204	117	43
<i>% of total</i>	<i>18.64</i>	<i>18.76</i>	<i>19.97</i>	<i>23.82</i>	<i>25.5</i>	<i>17.65</i>	<i>29.03</i>	<i>34.39</i>	<i>31.58</i>	<i>24.02</i>	<i>9.58</i>
arrivals <i>du Nord</i> •	33	73	60	87	71	32	55	74	77	59	27
<i>% of SD</i>	<i>52.38</i>	<i>60.33</i>	<i>51.28</i>	<i>5.77</i>	<i>42.51</i>	<i>30.48</i>	<i>24.44</i>	<i>26.33</i>	<i>37.75</i>	<i>50.43</i>	<i>62.79</i>
<i>% of total</i>	<i>9.76</i>	<i>11.32</i>	<i>10.24</i>	<i>13.28</i>	<i>10.84</i>	<i>5.38</i>	<i>7.1</i>	<i>9.06</i>	<i>11.92</i>	<i>12.11</i>	<i>6.01</i>
arrivals <i>de l'Ouest</i> ø	19	34	25	46	68	34	72	95	66	25	14
<i>% of SD</i>	<i>30.16</i>	<i>28.1</i>	<i>21.37</i>	<i>29.49</i>	<i>40.72</i>	<i>32.38</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>33.81</i>	<i>32.35</i>	<i>21.37</i>	<i>32.56</i>
<i>% of total</i>	<i>5.62</i>	<i>5.27</i>	<i>4.27</i>	<i>7.02</i>	<i>10.38</i>	<i>5.71</i>	<i>9.29</i>	<i>11.63</i>	<i>10.22</i>	<i>.13</i>	<i>3.12</i>
arrivals <i>du Sud</i> •	6	10	21	10	16	31	88	104	54	31	2
<i>% of SD</i>	<i>9.52</i>	<i>8.26</i>	<i>17.95</i>	<i>6.41</i>	<i>9.58</i>	<i>29.52</i>	<i>39.11</i>	<i>37.11</i>	<i>26.47</i>	<i>26.5</i>	<i>4.65</i>
<i>% of total</i>	<i>1.78</i>	<i>1.55</i>	<i>3.58</i>	<i>1.53</i>	<i>2.44</i>	<i>5.21</i>	<i>11.35</i>	<i>12.73</i>	<i>8.36</i>	<i>6.37</i>	<i>.45</i>

Sources: Records of the Philadelphia Customs House, Record Group 36, Inward and Outward entry volumes (E1057), National Archives Records Administration, Regional Branch Division, Philadelphia, PA.

*1789 figures begin in August

° total arrivals from St. Domingue include those from which no specific port of origin is listed and those with generic names such as "Hispaniola" or "Santo Domingo"

•predominantly Cap-Français; also includes Port de Paix, Môle St. Nicholas, Ft. Dauphin

ø predominantly Port-au-Prince; also includes Gonaives, St. Marc, L'Arcahay

• predominantly Les Cayes; also includes Leogane, Jérémie, Jacmel

Appendix A (part two)

	1800	1801	1802	1803	1804	1805
total arrivals	565	694	654	577	551	506
SD arrivals °	86	107	100	46	36	26
<i>% of total</i>	15.22	15.42	15.29	7.97	6.53	5.14
arrivals <i>du Nord</i> •	56	68	54	17	16	10
<i>% of SD</i>	65.12	63.55	54	36.96	44.44	38.46
<i>% of total</i>	9.91	9.8	8.26	2.95	2.9	1.98
arrivals <i>de l'Ouest</i> ø	27	30	38	17	7	3
<i>% of SD</i>	31.4	28.04	38	36.96	19.44	11.54
<i>% of total</i>	4.78	4.32	5.81	2.9	1.27	.59
arrivals <i>du Sud</i> •	1	9	6	10	7	2
<i>% of SD</i>	1.16	8.41	6	21.74	19.44	7.69
<i>% of total</i>	.18	1.3	.92	1.73	1.27	.4

Sources: Records of the Philadelphia Customs House, Record Group 36, Inward and Outward entry volumes (E1057), National Archives Records Administration, Regional Branch Division, Philadelphia, PA.

*1789 figures begin in August

° total arrivals from St. Domingue include those from which no specific port of origin is listed and those with generic names such as "Hispaniola" or "Santo Domingo"

•predominantly Cap-Français; also includes Port de Paix, Môle St. Nicholas, Ft. Dauphin

ø predominantly Port-au-Prince; also includes Gonaives, St. Marc, L'Arcahay

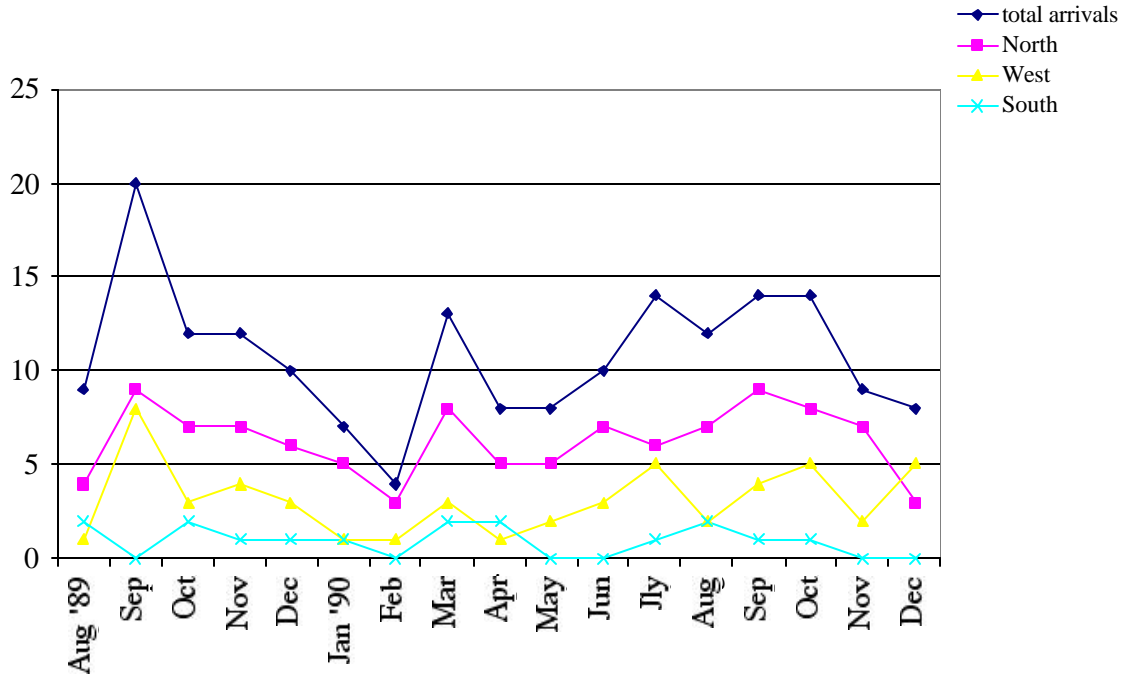
• predominantly Les Cayes; also includes Leogane, Jérémie, Jacmel

Appendix B

Arrivals to Philadelphia from St. Domingue, 1789-1793

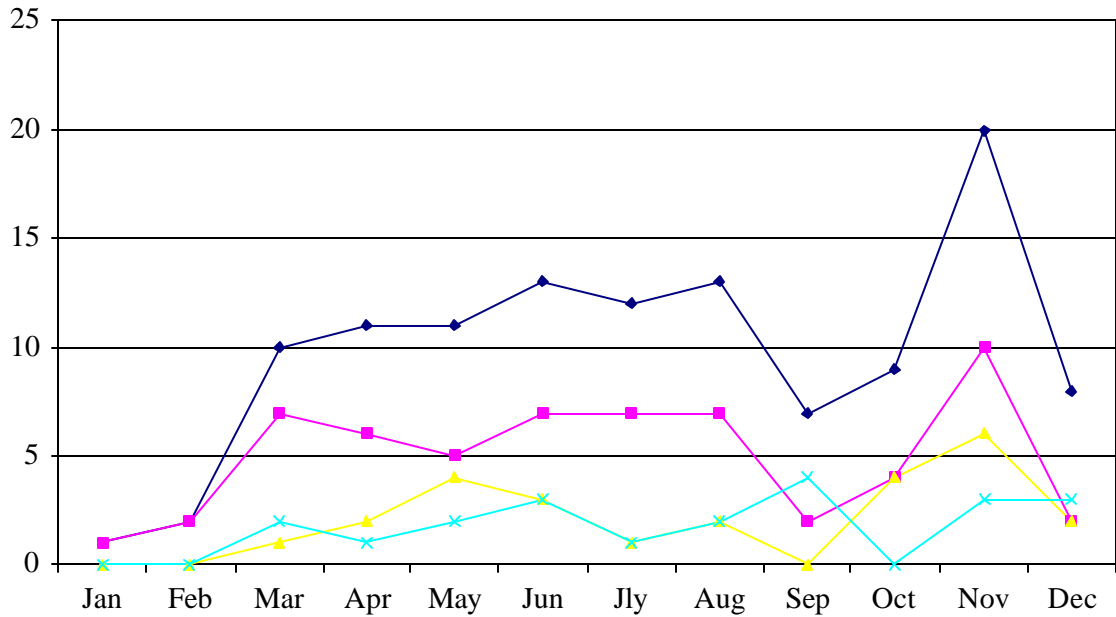
1.

1789-90



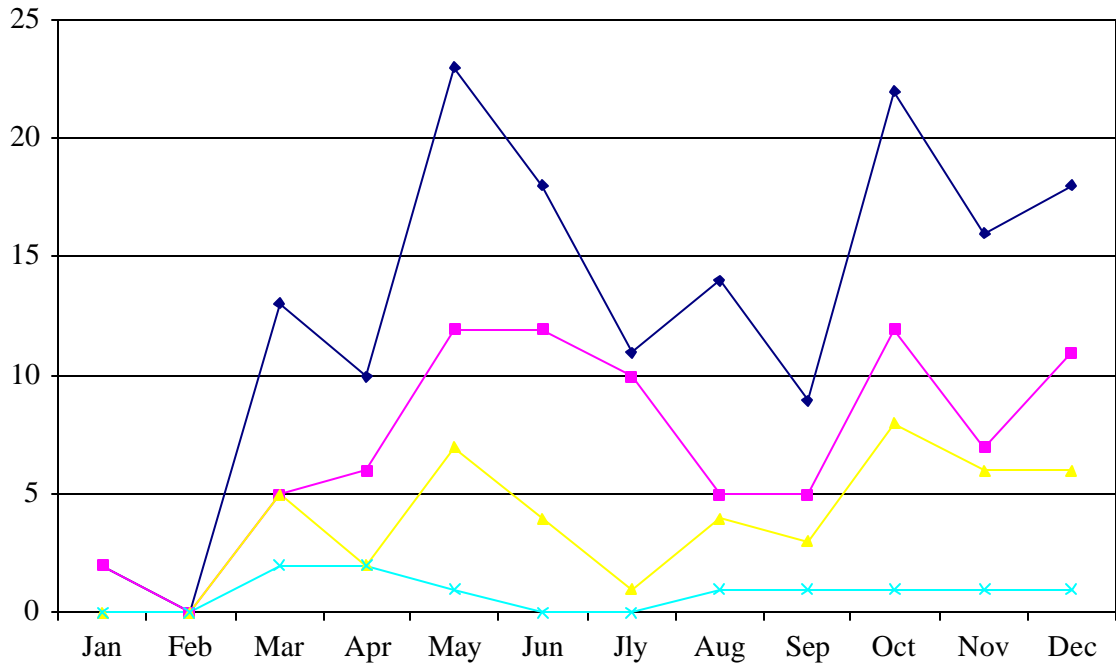
2.

1791



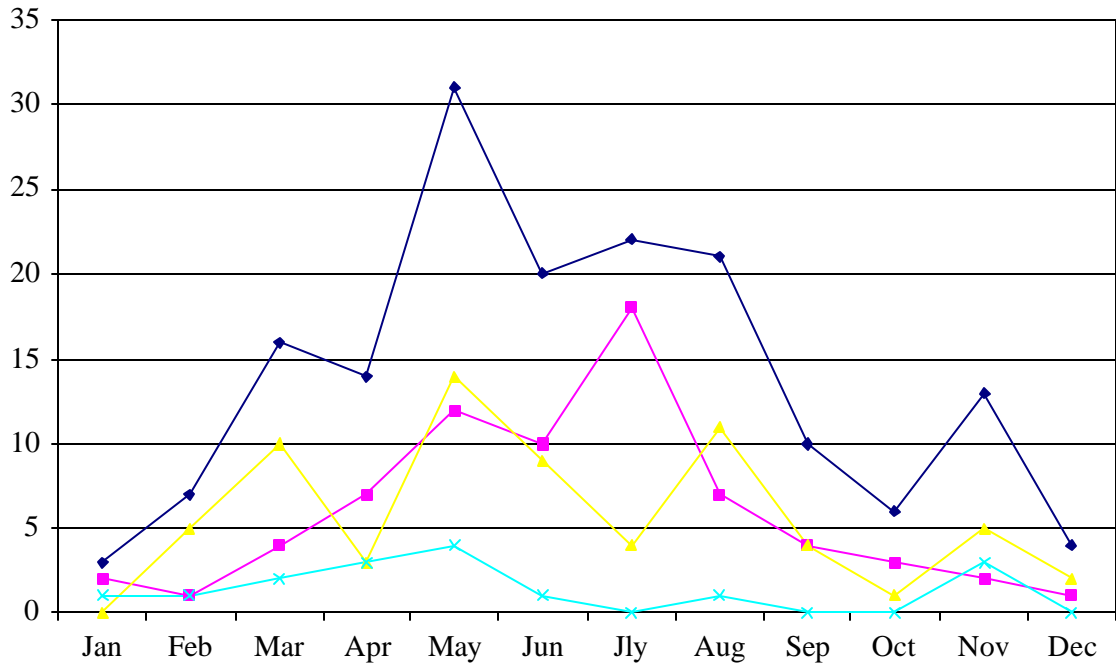
3.

1792



4.

1793



Sources: Records of the Philadelphia Customs House, Record Group 36, Inward and Outward entry volumes (E1057), National Archives Records Administration, Regional Branch Division, Philadelphia, PA.