PROJECT MUSE®

Concessions, Conflict, and the Rebirth of the Honduran Mahogany Trade

Craig S. Revels

Journal of Latin American Geography, Volume 2, Number 1, 2003, pp. 1-17 (Article)

Published by University of Texas Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/lag.2004.0014>

➔ *For additional information about this article*

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/174028>

CONCESSIONS, CONFLICT, AND THE REBIRTH OF THE HONDURAN MAHOGANY TRADE

Craig S. Revels

Department of Geography, Portland State University

In the 1830s Central America underwent a period of rapid transformation, and an array of ambitious individuals capitalized on the uncertainty to aggressively seize and exploit new economic opportunities. At the same time, the world trade in big-leaf mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*) entered a boom period, largely in response to the English furniture trade. Combined, these events helped stimulate a resumption of mahogany cutting in the lowland forests of northern Honduras. Central to this process was the commercial partnership of Francisco Morazán and Marshall Bennett, in particular the enormous concession Morazán received from the Honduran government in 1835. Administration of the concession shifted the core of mahogany operations to the heart of the north coast, stimulating commercial exploitation as well as a range of territorial disputes over land and access to the forest in both western and eastern Honduras. This article examines that concession in the light of its foundational role for the mahogany trade, which ultimately established a template for large-scale landscape transformation through the nineteenth century and beyond.

En la década de 1830s América Central experimentó un período de transformación rápida, donde individuos oportunistas se aprovecharon de la incertidumbre del momento para explotar agresivamente nuevas oportunidades económicas. Al mismo tiempo, el comercio mundial de la caoba (*Swietenia macrophylla*) presentó un período del auge, en gran parte en respuesta al comercio inglés de muebles. Estos acontecimientos combinados, estimularon la reaparición de la tala de caoba en los bosques del norte de Honduras. Central a este proceso fue la asociación comercial de Francisco Morazán y Marshall Bennett, en particular la inmensa concesión que Morazán recibió del gobierno hondureño en 1835. La administración de esta concesión cambió el núcleo de las operaciones de caoba al centro de la costa del norte, estimulando la explotación comercial así como muchos conflictos sobre tierras y acceso al bosque en Honduras occidental y oriental. Este artículo examina tal concesión en la luz de su papel fundamental en el comercio de caoba, que estableció un modelo para la transformación del paisaje en el siglo diecinueve y más allá. *Keywords:* Honduras, mahogany trade, historical geography, forest history

In the first third of the nineteenth century, Honduras and its sister states on the newly independent isthmus of Central America were faced with an assortment of political, social, and economic challenges. This period of rapid and dramatic transformation is remarkable in a number of ways, the most telling of which details the post-independence quest for new economic sustenance and

a broad array of measures to tame untapped resources. Notably, a select group of individuals was able to secure ascendancy to the top of Central American power structures, capitalizing on much of the chaos and uncertainty surrounding independence to secure unfettered access to newly available economic riches and political power. At almost the same juncture, world trade in mahogany

Figure 1. Key mahogany rivers of Honduras, early 1800s. The boundary of the Miskito Shore effectively reached from various points west of the Río Patuca and south past the Río Coco, including the entire Atlantic seaboard of Nicaragua.

(*Swietenia macrophylla* King) began a boom period that was to last through most of the nineteenth century, largely in response to increasing demand from the English furniture trade (Symonds 1934a, 1934b; Lamb 1966). These seemingly disjunct events converged in distinct places such as the Caribbean littoral of Honduras, where vast forests of tropical hardwood drew commercial interest both within and without the isthmus. Here, where commercial logging had all but ceased after British withdrawal from the Miskito Shore in the 1780s, worldwide interest in the emergent “king of the forest” spurred an intensity of exploitation and progressively expanding mahogany extraction destined to permanently alter the human and physical landscapes of Honduras’ northern reaches.

Unlike its earliest manifestation, when English settlers at Black River cut mahogany on the margins of legality and in the shadow of imperial conflict (Naylor 1989, Revels 2002), the resumption of the trade in the 1830s occurred under the aegis of the newly independent Hon-

duras. Specifically, mahogany would become just one of several means by which the state would attempt to generate revenue for its virtually nonexistent treasury (Guevara-Escudero 1983). More importantly, the new epicenter of the trade also shifted, from the margin of the perpetually contested Miskito Shore to the heart of the north coast, between the valleys of the Ulúa and Aguán rivers (Figure 1). This paper examines that spatial shift, which can be directly traced to the influence and personal ambition of Francisco Morazán and the mahogany concessions he secured in the mid-1830s as well as the oft-uncertain geographical conceptions and misperceptions of the early independence period. In particular, the current study details the conflicts and territorial disputes that marked the resumption of the trade in Honduras, events that foreshadow the large-scale transformations of Central American landscapes engendered by external influences and internal authority throughout the nineteenth century and beyond.

Mahogany and the Mahogany Trade

Though mahogany is the commonly used name for three species of the genus *Swietenia*, the three types of true mahogany have vastly different geographic ranges, with *S. macrophylla* the most widespread, occurring naturally around the Bay of Honduras and the Central American littoral, and extending south into the Amazon basin. In Honduras, this establishes its native range throughout much of the northern and eastern portions of the country (Zon and Sparhawk 1923; Record and Mell 1924; Lamb 1966; West and Augelli 1989). Though a second species of mahogany, *S. humilis*, is also native to Honduras, its range is confined to the Pacific margin of Middle America from southern Mexico to Costa Rica, including only a small portion of the Pacific coast of Honduras, and *S. humilis* has historically been of limited commercial importance. While Honduran mahogany in general became increasingly important on the world market throughout the nineteenth century, that of the Pacific coast languished and was never successfully exploited (Wells 1857), a condition unchanged well into the twentieth century (Zon and Sparhawk 1923). Thus, for all practical purposes, discussion of the Honduran mahogany trade implicitly refers to *S. macrophylla*, which also remains commonly referenced as big-leaf or Honduran mahogany (Lamb 1966).

Though mahogany has been of use and value for hundreds of years, it gained prominence as a commodity only in the eighteenth century. More specifically, the Honduran mahogany trade developed in response to English demand, specifically for fine furniture, and in relation to the English woodcutting enclave at present-day Belize. The initial mainstay of the Belize economy was logwood (*Haematoxylon campechianum* L.), but by the 1770s mahogany supplanted logwood as the most remunerative export from Belize (Camille 1996, 2000). A constant source of tension between Spain and Great Britain (Naylor 1989), the Belize settlement also played a key

role in the early Honduran mahogany trade. The settlement at Black River east of Trujillo was founded by refugees from Belize, several subsequently establishing the first commercial exports of mahogany from Honduras (Dawson 1983; Naylor 1989; Offen 2000; Revels 2002). Though ultimately abandoned under the terms of the London Convention of 1786, this earliest Honduran trade established a sustained Belizean interest in the forests of eastern Honduras. In turn, this interest would condition most of the protracted debate over the establishment of the Miskito Kingdom, British involvement in the Miskito Shore, and eventual territorial disputes with independent Honduras throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. The settlement at Belize was also the foundation of British woodcutting culture in the Bay of Honduras. Though Belize would remain a key source of mahogany throughout the nineteenth century, its mahogany merchants and cutters expanded their operations and influence beyond the territorial limits of the settlement itself. This expansion would eventually establish a Belizean presence in most aspects of the Honduran mahogany trade, from extraction to shipping and supply (Naylor 1967, 1989; Revels 2002).¹

Commercial Partners: Morazán and Bennett

Clearly central to the resumption of the mahogany trade in Honduras was one of the most famous yet enigmatic figures in Central American history, Francisco Morazán. Though his political and military exploits have been treated with varying degrees of objectivity, depth, and passion, there is consensus that Morazán was the most important Central American political and military figure in the late 1820s and throughout the 1830s (Karnes 1961; Griffith 1977; Woodward 1985). In particular, Morazán's importance arose from his leadership as president of the Central American Federation and dominant role in military attempts to maintain federal

power and the idea of union itself in the 1830s and early 1840s.² The Central American Federation (1824-1838) was established as a means to balance power amongst the newly independent republics of Central America - Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica - and the various political, economic, and regional interests that were agitating for power in the messy early throes of independence. This attempted union of the Central American republics was doomed to fail for a number of reasons, prominent among them recurring concerns about the distribution of power in the isthmus, inability to secure an effective treasury, and subsequent failure to establish an effective administrative apparatus. Ultimately, power and administration was never effectively reserved in the federal state, and the five republics abrogated much of the power and responsibility for their own affairs, particularly the regulation and administration of commerce (Karnes 1961). As chief of state for much of the federation's existence, Morazán expended a substantial amount of capital, time, and blood in an attempt to forge a successful federal state. At the same time, he was also well positioned to develop working relationships with the various state administrations.

That said, some of the most persistent and contentious questions concerning Morazán's role in the affairs of his time center on his business concerns. Like many of his peers in the upper echelon of Central American society, Morazán used his political power and influence to secure a wide range of business transactions for personal gain. Because mahogany was one of the most valuable and relatively accessible resources in Central America during the turbulent early years of independence, it is not surprising that Morazán's most lucrative business concerned the mahogany trade. In this, he was able to secure the rights to nearly all of the commercially valuable mahogany in Honduras, and the prosecution of Morazán's mahogany affairs not only spurred the resumption of cutting on the north coast, but also pro-

vided fodder for a number of the political and commercial conflicts surrounding his tenure as president of the Central American Federation (Griffith 1977).

The other key figure in the resumption of mahogany cutting on the north coast was the Belizean merchant Marshall Bennett. Like Morazán, Bennett was a highly controversial figure. Originally one of the leading members of the woodcutting oligarchy at Belize, he was also one of the first to realize the economic advantages to be gained by leaving the settlement and allying himself with Central American interests. Capitalizing on the Guatemalan government's willingness to establish large colonization grants, Bennett managed to appropriate grants to extensive areas of unoccupied land in Guatemala, one in conjunction with the East Coast of Central America Land Company and the other under his own name. In the first instance, Bennett facilitated the grant to the company and used the same process to secure land in Vera Paz while establishing his credibility for the second. The latter grant, in particular, was highly advantageous for Bennett, as it included the rich mahogany forests on the north shore of Lago Izabal as well as those on the lower Río Motagua (Griffith 1965, 1977; Naylor 1989). Before entering into partnership with Morazán, Bennett also established interests in Honduran mining concessions and an agreement to provide a new mint apparatus to the government in Comayagua (Griffith 1977). Engaged by Morazán to conduct some of his business affairs in 1834, Bennett realized that solidifying his commercial relationship with Morazán would give him a financial stake in most of the available mahogany in the Bay of Honduras. Indeed, after Morazán secured his second contract from Honduras, Bennett became the sole agent for the concession and received one-third of all the profits cleared from the sale of mahogany trees on the north coast of Honduras (Morazán 1840a).

The Morazán Concessions

Morazán actually received two mahogany concessions from Honduras. The initial, short-lived, contract was signed in November of 1834. Although particulars of the contract have yet to be uncovered, it is clear that rival woodcutting interests worked aggressively to counteract the concession. In January 1835, Armando Cabal and the North American Augustus Follin offered the Honduran government 8,000 pesos for a quantity of mahogany cut on the north coast (Maradiaga 1835a). In February, the authorities at Omoa stopped several foreign mahogany cutters from felling trees in an unspecified locale under their jurisdiction. Apparently the commander was unaware that the cutters were operating under the auspices of Morazán and his agent Bennett (Herrera 1835). Rebuffed in their efforts to secure a contract with the government, Cabal and Follin petitioned to have Morazán's concession rescinded on the grounds that it was illegal, or at the very least that Bennett should be prohibited from selling trees until the status of the concession had been determined (Maradiaga 1835b; Griffith 1977). The government responded by declaring a temporary suspension of mahogany operations on the

mercial partnership with Bennett, and the new proposal incorporated Bennett's efforts to supply minting machinery to Honduras (Griffith 1965, 1977). However, the Preparatory Committee and the Executive Council refused to act on Morazán's proposal, claiming that it required the full attention of the legislative assembly (Castanon 1835a, 1835b). Despite those reservations, Chief of State Joaquín Rivera used his executive privileges to sign a contract with Morazán on April 14 (Morazán 1840b). In choosing to work solely with Morazán, Rivera ignored the fact that additional offers had been made by other interested parties; as just one example, it appears that an unidentified Belizean interest offered to pay 12,000 pesos for a three-year concession similar to that signed by Morazán (Chatfield 1835).

Under the terms of the concession from Honduras, Morazán was given the exclusive right to cut or sell nearly all the commercially available mahogany in Honduras for a period of twelve years; the term was fixed from the date on which each particular tract of mahogany began to be worked. The villages of San Pedro Sula and Yoro were named as the western and eastern edges of the concession, respectively, although the actual longitudes given in the contract ex-

Figure 2. Extent of second Morazán concession, from 88° 45' W to 84° 15' W and from the Honduran coast inland to 15° N.

north coast, which prompted Morazán to lodge protests of his own and begin pursuing a second contract to resolve the situation (Herrera 1835, Griffith 1977).

By early April, Morazán submitted a new proposal to the government. He had by this time strengthened his com-

pressed far different boundaries. The western boundary of 88° 45' is well west of San Pedro Sula, and Yoro is nowhere near the eastern boundary of 84° 15' specified in article two of the contract. Rather, the eastern limit was in actuality the mouth of the Río Patuca, far to the

east on the Miskito Shore. In total, the grant was quite obviously intended to stretch along the entire north coast (Figure 2). The sites included in the contract lend credence to this interpretation: Río Chamelecón, Río Ulúa, Estero Salado (Salt Creek), Río Papalotepe (Papaloteca), Guaymoreto, Río Aguán, and the valley of Olanchito all fall within the larger boundaries, with only the Ríos Chamelecón and Ulúa in the more restrictive interpretation. The contract also extended from the coast inland to the fifteenth parallel, effectively giving Morazán control of all the mahogany on the north coast (Morazán 1840b).

Morazán managed to manipulate the terms of the contract to cover a larger range of activities than mere woodcutting. In the first article of the contract, Morazán assumed the responsibility for Bennett's promise to deliver the mint, valued at 24,000 pesos, within eight months; the value of the mint was to be paid with the proceeds from the mahogany concession. Morazán was also promised a payment of 14,000 pesos, which could be satisfied in a number of ways, most of which were creative measures to draw money out of the virtually nonexistent Honduran treasury. Among the most notable was a provision to direct tobacco receipts from Costa Rica into Morazán's purview (Griffith 1977). In addition to the compensatory elements of the contract, Morazán was given duty reductions for the wood cut under the concession, as well as the right to use whatever wood was found in the granted area for establishing works and other facilities. Honduras also agreed to protect any mahogany works established under the provisions of the contract (Morazán 1840b).

Though the contract reached with Honduras was enormous, it is worth noting that Morazán tried to extend his monopoly even farther, into Nicaragua. Like the Honduras concession, the proposed extent in Nicaragua was vast; British consul Frederick Chatfield claimed Morazán sought exclusive rights to the territory between the Río Pantasma (in

the highlands north of Jinotega) and the Río San Juan, or almost all of eastern Nicaragua. Curiously, Morazán offered only two dollars per tree in Nicaragua, even though the going rate in Honduras was ten to twelve dollars per tree (Chatfield 1837d). However, Morazán was not the only one aware of the potential profits from mahogany concessions, and Nicaraguans with similar designs managed to thwart the concession (Chatfield 1837b).

In its earliest manifestation, the mahogany trade was little more than sustained competition among numerous small groups of woodcutters conducting independent operations in the forests of Belize (Naylor 1989). By the time Morazán acquired his concession from Honduras, the trade had grown to acquire several more layers of complexity. Concessions were granted by state legislatures to an individual or group of individuals. These grants did little more than provide legal right to the standing trees in any given tract of land not privately owned (Griffith 1977). The concession holder then directed the extraction of the timber at their convenience. In the case of the Morazán concession, Marshall Bennett sold cutting rights to individual mahogany gangs, primarily Belizean by virtue of experience, to provide the timber at a set price and in a given cutting season; some of those seeking concessions after Morazán would prove to be mahogany merchants with their own gangs and thus no need to engage cutters on a contract basis. Typical mahogany gangs ranged from twenty to fifty individual workers, with a foreman overseeing several cutting locations and a well-defined hierarchy of workers. Laborers were hired on a seasonal basis, and eventually included former slaves from Belize, Black Caribs (Garífuna), and various ladinos and recently arrived English woodcutters (Henderson 1809; Chatfield 1836b; Squier 1855; Wells 1857); prior to the 1830s, slaves were the primary labor source for the mahogany gangs of Belize (Naylor 1989; Camille 2000). Ultimately, this subcontracting process meant a

given mahogany gang could conceivably cut timber for more than one mahogany concession, in different seasons but in the same general area, adding another layer of competition and complexity to an already competitive process (see Usher 1850).

Conflict on the Western Boundaries

Morazán's concession immediately engendered a number of disputes and intrigues, establishing a precedent for the mahogany trade throughout the nineteenth century. By summer 1835 Bennett began negotiating for the disposal of mahogany on the Río Ulúa. At the same time, other mahogany concerns were approaching the Commandant of Omoa in the hope that they could negotiate an arrangement with him for mahogany tracts in the same area (Bennett 1835a). Mere days after informing Morazán of his progress in selling the trees, Bennett wrote another letter in which he implicated the Belizean mahogany cutter Joseph Swasey as well as the still contentious Cabal and Follin, who were resisting the second contract as much as they had the first. Swasey even went so far as to contact Morazán directly in the hope that he would sell the trees at a lower price than Bennett was demanding (Bennett 1835b). At the same time, Cabal was planning to make overtures to Morazán about purchasing part of the concession outright (Bennett 1835c). However, it appears that these entreaties were of little consequence, and Bennett and Morazán remained in full control of the concession.

The next February Bennett informed Morazán that many of the Belize cutters were still occupied cutting in their own territory, but would soon be proceeding to the Ulúa to fell the trees he had sold. Bennett sold 600 trees in the first year of the contract, to a total of four different interests from Belize (Bennett 1838). However, several of the cutters voiced concerns to Bennett over the difficulties they encountered loading ships off the mouth of the Ulúa. After arranging a demonstration loading at the river bar,

Bennett managed to secure the sale of a thousand more trees, at ten dollars per tree, in the expectation they would be felled shortly (Bennett 1836a). Still aware of the threat posed by Cabal and Follin, Bennett also sent them a reminder that he was Morazán's sole agent for the sale of trees on the Ulúa, and if they wished to cut trees there they must make arrangements with him (Bennett 1836b). But Morazán's name and Bennett's administrative control of the concession was no guarantee that conflicts could be avoided, and discontent emerged again once the Belize cutters moved into the area.

Perhaps in an attempt to reaffirm the boundaries of the concession, most of Bennett's initial sales were far up the Ulúa, near the towns of Tiuma and Santiago (Figure 3). However, local officials took exception to the arrival of the mahogany gangs, and aggressively harassed their operations; one of the mahogany cutters was fined 200 pesos by the mayor of Tiuma for dishonoring a local woman. The same mayor forced another cutter to cease his operations, even though he had already felled some thirty trees, on the pretext that they were beyond the legal limits of the concession (Cubas 1836a, Morazán 1836a, Soper 1836). This logger was so frustrated with the hindrances placed in his way that he returned to Belize and demanded compensation for his losses (Bennett 1836c).

Even more disturbingly for Bennett and Morazán, the actions of the mayor of Tiuma were apparently predicated on a competing grant issued by the Honduras government. The new contract either abutted the Morazán concession or fell in the same territory, depending on how the boundaries of the 1835 contract were read. Although details are scarce, it appears that this grant was for all of the wood between the town of Amapa and a ford on the Ulúa somewhere near Tiuma. Concession holder José Francisco Zelaya claimed to Morazán confidant Miguel Cubas that the concession included more than 16,000 mahogany trees, and that he hoped to

Figure 3. Lower Ulúa and Chamelecón rivers, sites of early Morazán mahogany operations.

sell as many as 6,000 as quickly as possible to cutters from Belize (Cubas 1836a). In detailing the dispute, Cubas expressed his opinion that the area certainly fell under the terms of Morazán's grant, but suggested a commission might be required to measure the degrees of longitude and latitude to everyone's satisfaction (Cubas 1836b). In response, Morazán drafted letters of protest to the government, reasserting his right to all of the wood on the Ulúa and complaining about the activities of the local populace. Morazán also reminded the government of the stipulation that it provide protection for those cutting under the auspices of his grant, but there is no evidence that he felt a clarification of the boundaries was necessary. Indeed, he claimed that even a cursory glance at a map would be proof enough that the area fell under his purview (Morazán 1836b). This author has thus far been unable to document a response from the government, but

neither is there evidence that Morazán, Bennett, or Cubas evinced further concern over the matter, suggesting that the dispute was resolved to their satisfaction, and the name Zelaya does not appear in further references to the developing mahogany trade of Honduras.

Conflict on the Eastern Frontier

Though Bennett managed to stabilize the western end of the concession, problems on a larger scale soon arose far to the east, beyond Trujillo on the Río Limón (Figure 4). Increased competition and a reduction in easily accessible timber had forced many of the Belize mahogany concerns to look elsewhere for more profitable sources of mahogany; because Bennett, either outright or as Morazán's agent, controlled nearly all of the available timber from the Guatemala border through Honduras, the only place available to secure mahogany was on the Miskito Shore. Seeking any

Figure 4. Contested mahogany lowlands east of Trujillo. Limón likely originated as a supply point for mahogany operations working the interior.

advantage possible, the Belize interests found it expedient to revive the authority of the Miskito King, based on the premise that the Miskito Shore was a sovereign state apart from Central America. The Belize-based firm of Hyde and Forbes procured a grant between Cape Camaron and Cape Honduras from King Robert Charles Frederick, an area including the easily accessible timber of the Limón. Disregarding the fact that it was claimed in the Morazán concession Hyde and Forbes proceeded to launch their woodcutting operations in late 1836 or early 1837 (Hyde 1837).

Despite his initial inclination to merely direct the Commandant of Trujillo to dismantle the works, Morazán sent a confidential note to Chatfield in December to ascertain the best way to deal with the situation (Morazán 1836c). For his part, Chatfield replied that to his knowledge the boundary of the Miskito Shore had always been Cape Honduras, and that the Central American claims to the territory were of no consequence (Chatfield 1836c). Chatfield, under the mistaken assumption that Morazán's concession stretched only from Omoa to

Trujillo, suspected that Morazán's actions were motivated by a desire to reduce the amount of mahogany available on the market (Chatfield 1836d). Nearly a year passed before Chatfield recognized his mistake and understood that Morazán's concession stretched all the way to Punta Patuca (Chatfield 1837b).

The next February, Robert Frederick sent notice to Alexander MacDonald, the Superintendent in Belize, that he had received letters from both Bennett and the Commandant of Trujillo, threatening the use of force against the contested works on the Limón (Frederick 1837a). Frederick also sent a petition to the King of Great Britain, asserting the Miskito Shore extended to Cape Honduras and seeking protection from Central American aggression (Frederick 1837b). MacDonald, who referred to Bennett as "a notoriously bad character", was convinced that the Miskito King had legitimate concerns and that neither Bennett nor Morazán had any right to claim the disputed area as theirs since it was obviously not Central American territory (MacDonald 1837a). He also notified

Chatfield that he would not sit idly by while mahogany cutters from Belize were hindered in any way, especially as the Bennett claim to the Limón was superfluous anyway (MacDonald 1837b). In March, Morazán arranged to meet privately with Chatfield to discuss the mahogany cuttings on the Limón. In that meeting Morazán, wary of conflict with Great Britain, assured Chatfield that the government had no intention of using force to settle the dispute (Chatfield 1837a).

Instead, that spring Morazán instructed Bennett to notify those cutting under his auspices on the Limón to temporarily forego cutting more trees, although they should continue their efforts to remove the timber already felled. Bennett quite possibly was also operating with more discretion in consequence of his recent meeting with MacDonald in Belize, in which the Superintendent had warned him of the political implications of his actions. MacDonald felt it improper for Bennett, a British subject, to sell mahogany on behalf of a Central American concern (Morazán) to British subjects in an area where Great Britain did not officially recognize Central American sovereignty. Whatever his personal opinion may have been on the matter, Bennett felt it prudent to confine his operations to an area that was indisputably within Central American territory. Though woodsmen from Belize had recently returned from Cape Gracias a Dios, where they failed to find any trees worth felling, and entreated him to sell them mahogany on the banks of the Limón, Bennett declined. Instead, he offered to sell them the wood on Guaymoreto Lagoon, just east of Trujillo (Bennett 1837a). Despite Bennett's judicious withdrawal, there was enough mahogany at stake on the Limón that the issue remained contentious.

British Foreign Secretary Palmerston, spurred by entreaties from both the Miskito King and the Superintendent of Belize, directed Chatfield to remind the Central American government that Great Britain " . . . cannot view with indifference any interruption to the peace-

able commerce of Her Majesty's subjects." (Palmerston 1837). Also convinced of the legitimacy of the British claimants, Colonial Secretary Glenelg suggested to Palmerston that the practice of sending gifts from Belize to the Miskito King should be renewed (a 1837). In October MacDonald wrote a letter to Glenelg agreeing with the decision to revive the long-dormant practice, but only if the Belize residents were not forced to pay for it out of their own funds (MacDonald 1837d). Clearly, the Belizean woodcutting interests were interested in solidifying their claims to the mahogany on the Miskito Shore.

However, in the fall of 1837 Morazán and the government were still asserting the territory to be Central American, and were demanding duties on vessels loading off the Miskito Shore (Hyde 1837). By this time Hyde and Forbes were not the only mahogany concerns operating in the area. In fact, two vessels were being sent from Belize to the Aguán to load mahogany cut by John Booth, and MacDonald had given notice that they were not to be interfered with in any way (Bennett 1837b). At this time Booth was apparently working for the firm of France and Cox, who were sending regular payments for their trees to the Miskito King (Walker 1847b). At the time he wrote to Lord Palmerston, Hyde was apparently unaware that mahogany cut under his Miskito grant had already been seized by the Commandant of Trujillo. MacDonald, incensed by the seizure, threatened to call in naval support from Jamaica if the wood was not returned to Forbes and Hyde (MacDonald 1837c). For his part, Chatfield informed Morazán directly that actions taken against British subjects on the Miskito Shore could not be taken without the expectation of some kind of response from Great Britain (Chatfield 1837c). But the British government, in particular Colonial Secretary Glenelg, had begun to question the wisdom of closer ties with the Miskito Kingdom (Stephen 1837b). After Hyde complained to the Foreign Office about the seizure, he received the reply that, if the

grant was received under the auspices of the Miskito king, then that was the authority to which he should turn for protection against interference with his works (TNA: PRO 1838). There is no indication that either Hyde or MacDonald pursued this particular matter any further, although MacDonald would eventually take an even more aggressive role in supporting the Miskito Shore as a quasi-independent state (Rodríguez 1964; Naylor 1989). Additionally, the dispute on the Limón piqued the interest of Lord Palmerston, who would remain actively involved in the affairs of the Miskito Shore through the height of the mahogany era.

Irrespective of the territorial disputes, Bennett continued selling trees throughout the extent of Morazán's concession. The offer to sell the trees at Guaymoreto that Bennett had made at the start of the controversy was accepted by the Belize resident James Welsh, who paid Bennett for 273 trees felled by the summer of 1837. Bennett also continued selling trees on the Río Aguán to at least one woodcutting concern despite its proximity to the area of dispute, receiving payment from José Farrel for one hundred trees in the same year (Bennett 1837c). Additionally, overtures were made to sell trees as far east as Black River, although Bennett eventually recommended to Morazán that the sale be abandoned (Bennett 1838).

The records Bennett maintained for Morazán to justify his expenses and accounts also indicate that each successive year became progressively more lucrative for the two partners. The initial sale of just 600 trees in 1835 almost doubled in 1836, and the number of Belize houses working under Bennett's administration increased from four to eight. That year Bennett sold 1,068 trees, ultimately taking in more than ten thousand dollars for the timber (Bennett 1838). The following year appears to have been the most lucrative; with seventeen concerns under contract, 1,979 trees were felled, all except the 373 sold to Welsh, Jennings, and Farrell coming from the banks of the Ulúa and Chamelecón. Owing to the

prospect of unrest and the pending disposition of the Galvez government in Guatemala (Woodward 1985), the number fell sharply in 1838 to barely more than a thousand trees (Bennett 1838).

Given the vast extent of the concession and the difficulties faced in traveling through the region, it is not surprising that attempts to circumvent Bennett's administration continued unabated, even in the uncontested areas. The most direct way to accomplish this was to surreptitiously fell more timber than the amount for which one had contracted. John Usher, one of the original cutters to whom Bennett sold trees in 1836 and 1837, managed to cut and remove at least 152 more trees than had been arranged with Bennett. The illegal cut was not discovered until late in 1838, but Usher was nonetheless compelled to submit 1,520 dollars as payment for the trees (Bennett 1838). There is no indication that Usher was penalized or subjected to any legal proceedings, attesting to the value of experienced cutters and the unremitting focus of all involved on maximizing profits from the sale of any and all mahogany possible.

By 1839, Morazán began to lose control over his political and commercial affairs. Morazán's second term as president of the Central American Federation ended that year, and the Federation itself was crumbling. To compound matters, Bennett died that fall, leaving Morazán's commercial affairs, especially the mahogany concession, in disarray. Perhaps attempting to capitalize on the unsettled state of Morazán's affairs after Bennett's death, at least one enterprising woodcutter made attempts to secure mahogany outside the constraints of the concession. In October 1839 Martin Bulnes appeared before the authorities and expressed his intent to cut one hundred trees of mahogany at Puerto Caballos. Quite possibly Bulnes was intending to cut trees that were only marginally saleable, hence he only offered four pesos per tree rather than the standard rate of ten dollars (Velasquez 1839).

Upon losing Bennett, Morazán was

left without a knowledgeable partner to administer his concession. He first sought to engage Francisco Camoyano, a Spaniard living in Belize, but Camoyano lacked any real experience in the mahogany trade (Camoyano 1839); his lack of experience quickly proved insurmountable. By January 1840, Morazán's trusted friend and associate José María Lozano assumed a *de facto* role as Morazán's new agent. After a fact-finding visit to Belize, Lozano informed Morazán that Camoyano was making sales without clearly specifying locations or terms of removal, but that Lozano had thus far managed to smooth any difficulties with the Camoyano arrangements. He also informed Morazán that concerns over the boundaries of the concession were once again becoming a problem. In this instance, the Honduran government directed authorities in the departments of Yoro and Santa Barbara to prohibit any cutting under Morazán's auspices in two disputed locales. The former involved sales made far inland on the Ríos Amapa and Cuyamapa, the latter at Tulian, Cienaguita, and Puerto Caballos, all on the coast in the vicinity of Omoa. As before, the longitudinal boundaries of the concession were being questioned, although all of the sites identified are within even the most restrictive interpretation of the grant. Lozano managed to make arrangements with Augustus Follin that would apparently procure the trees near Omoa, but a resolution to the matter, according to Lozano, would require cash payments to curry local favor. If such payments were forthcoming, Lozano assured Morazán that he might be able to secure the sale of as many as six thousand trees (Lozano 1840a). However, subsequent events would render the point moot.

By this time, the Central American Federation was in its final days, and Morazán was facing imminent defeat in Guatemala (Griffith 1977). Though faced with the most significant defeat of his professional career, Morazán appointed Lozano as his agent for the concession. Sensing the pending dissolution of his contract with Honduras, Morazán

also directed Lozano to make a general sale of trees as quickly as possible (Morazán 1840a). Unfortunately the document was intercepted and used by Morazán's enemies as additional proof of their claims that Morazán had placed his personal ambition ahead of the public good, and the resultant outcry for all practical purposes ended the ability of Lozano to make any additional sales (Griffith 1977). Morazán's agreement with Honduras was officially terminated in June 1840 (Aguilar 1840b). Morazán himself had already fled into exile, and the cancellation was merely a formality, predicated on Morazán's failure to uphold the terms of his agreement with the state. Worse, the state also held Morazán liable for the proceeds he had realized for the sale of mahogany trees over the course of the concession, and an additional sum from payments made on the mint (Aguilar 1840a, Morazán 1840a).

Mahogany Ascendant

As Central America staggered through the early stages of independence, one of its most noble resources became progressively lucrative on the world market, and the emergent *Swietenia* giants of the coastal lowlands increasingly became the subject of commercial and political rivalry. The early dominance of Francisco Morazán and Marshall Bennett spurred a revival of the Honduran mahogany trade, focused on the vast forests of northern Honduras. Indeed, though mahogany had been cut commercially in varying degrees for nearly a century, mahogany works became a regular feature of the Honduran landscape, from Omoa to Trujillo and beyond, only under the purview of the Morazán concessions during the 1830s. Save the untimely demise of first Bennett, the Central American Federation, and finally Morazán himself, the erstwhile general may have continued exploiting the mahogany of the north coast well into the 1840s. Yet despite receiving nominal control over all of the major river valleys on the north coast, conflicts over the Miskito Territory and an abundance of easily ac-

cessible timber in the alluvial margins of major northern rivers such as the Ulúa limited the actual area exploited under Morazán's purview. Save for the sales at Guaymoreto east of Trujillo, nearly all tended inland along the watersheds of just two rivers, the Ulúa and the Chamelecón.

Despite this surprisingly contracted range of exploitation, the rebirth of the mahogany trade under Morazán's auspices signaled the beginning of profound transformations in the Honduran landscape. Once Honduras rescinded Morazán's second concession, the entire coast once again became open for exploitation; the still-abundant mahogany remained available for those resourceful enough to find and cut the great trees, particularly those who continued to pressure the Morazán concession throughout the 1830s. As the mahogany trade expanded and assumed a prominent role in the extractive landscapes of northern Honduras during the mid-nineteenth century, the personal ambitions and territorial controversies of the Morazán era would be aggressively revisited with new actors and stages. In particular, the Aguán valley would later become a focal point for ongoing conflict between British (and Belizean) designs in Honduran territory and the exercise of Honduran state authority, a conflict linked largely to the continuing pursuit of mahogany (Naylor 1989, Revels 2002). This pursuit would also expand exploitation of the lowland forests in the watersheds of the north coast, effectively beginning the processes of deforestation, settlement, and agricultural exploitation that continue through the present era. And the Honduran state would intensify its attempts to generate economic returns from the north coast via the export economy, moving quickly from the ephemeral timber concessions to a rapid, extensive, and ultimately more remunerative disposal of land for the export fruit trade (Kepner and Soothill 1935; Soluri 1998), which effectively solidified Honduran economic, social, and political authority in the late nineteenth and early

twentieth centuries in this once-peripheral region of Honduras (Euraque 1996). Though the specifics of this transition from mahogany to bananas, the banana republic, and beyond remain an alluring and thus far minimally explored theme of inquiry, there is little doubt that the opportunism and exploitation expressed in the Morazán concession cast a long shadow into this process and the rich geographical record of Honduras itself.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the three anonymous reviewers of this manuscript for several helpful suggestions. In addition, Bill Davidson, Joby Bass, and Taylor E. Mack all provided useful comments on various versions of the paper and the research upon which it is based. Any shortcomings or oversights remain the responsibility of the author.

Notes

¹ Additional context for the resumption of mahogany logging in Honduras during the 1830s can be found in the recurring question of mahogany import duties into Great Britain, particularly as it related to Belize. Though not an official colony of Great Britain, Belize nonetheless enjoyed a marked preference in the amount of duties it paid on goods shipped to the British Isles; mahogany was no exception. As long as mahogany cutting was confined to the territory identified in the 1786 agreement between Spain and England, there was little concern over the question of duties on goods imported from the Bay of Honduras. However, once the Belize cutters began to exhaust their supply of easily accessible trees, they were forced to venture beyond the established limits into Spanish territory, and the duty issue became a point of contention; a thorough rendering of the issues and events prompting mahogany concerns to venture beyond the legal limits of Belize can be found in Griffith (1965) and Naylor (1958, 1967, 1989).

The question of the duty itself is somewhat peripheral to events on the ground in Honduras, but its gradually developing inclusiveness (such that eventually all mahogany cut by British subjects anywhere in Central America would receive import duties) provided an additional impetus for enterprising mahogany cutters to venture around the Bay of Honduras and play an ongoing role in the development of the Honduran trade.

² Morazán's role in the events of his time is amply treated in the literature. For more specific consideration of Morazán and the debates concerning his governance, see Chamberlain (1950), Karnes (1961), and Rosa (1971).

References

- Aguilar, F. 1840a. Cedulaario de Decretos y órdenes comunicados a este Tribunal pertenecientes al año de 1840, Comayagua, 6 de junio, 1840. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, App. III, pp. 285-286.
- _____. 1840b. *Aviso a los Ciudadanos Representantes de la Camara Legislativa del estado, Comayagua, 31 de julio*, 1840. Archivo Nacional de Honduras (ANH), nf.
- Bennett, M. 1835a. Letter to Francisco Morazán, Belize, July 26, 1835. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 9, p. 223.
- _____. 1835b. Letter to Francisco Morazán, Belize, July 31, 1835. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 10, pp. 224-225.
- _____. 1835c. Letter to Francisco Morazán, Belize, August 3, 1835. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 10, pp. 225-226.
- _____. 1836a. *Letter to Francisco Morazán, Omoa, February 6, 1836*. The National Archives (TNA): Public Record Office (PRO) FO 254/7, 77-78.
- _____. 1836b. *Letter to Armando Cabal and Augustus Follin, Omoa, February 6, 1836*. TNA: PRO FO 254/7, 78.
- _____. 1836c. Letter to Francisco Morazán, Guatemala, May 13th, 1836. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 19, pp. 235-236.
- _____. 1837a. Carta a Francisco Morazán, Omoa, 23 de marzo, 1837. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc.22, pp. 239-240.
- _____. 1837b. Carta a Francisco Morazán, Belize, 28 de agosto, 1837. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 26, p. 243.
- _____. 1837c. Venta de Arboles de Caoba por orden de Don Francisco Morazán, Belize, November 6, 1837. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 27, p. 245.
- _____. 1838. Account of Mahogany Trees sold in the Rivers Ulúa, Guaymoreto, Aguán, and Chimilicon by Marshal Bennett by order of Don Francisco Morazán, Belize, November 1, 1838. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 39, pp. 259-260.
- Camille, M.A. 1996. Historical Geography of the Belizean Logwood Trade. *Yearbook, Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers* 22: 77-85.
- _____. 2000. The Effects of Timber Haulage Improvements on Mahogany Extraction in Belize: An Historical Geography. *Yearbook, Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers* 26: 103-115.
- Camoyano, F. 1839. Carta a Francisco Morazán, 12 de noviembre, 1839. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 51, pp. 270-271.
- Castañon, J.A. 1835a. Carta a Francisco Morazán, Comayagua, Abril 9 de 1835. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 6, p. 219.
- _____. 1835b. Carta a Francisco Morazán, Comayagua, 9 de abril, 1835. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 7, p. 220.
- Chamberlain, R.S. 1950. *Francisco Morazán, Champion of Central American Federation*. Coral Gables: University of Miami Press.
- Chatfield, F. 1835. *Letter to Lord Palmerston, Guatemala, September 16, 1835*. TNA: PRO

FO 15/16, 176-177.

_____. 1836a. *Letter to Lord Palmerston, San Salvador, May 27, 1836*. TNA: PRO FO 15/18, 87-90.

_____. 1836b. *Letter to Lord Palmerston, San Salvador, June 1, 1836*. TNA: PRO FO 15/18, 91-94.

_____. 1836c. *Letter to Francisco Morazán, San Salvador, December 15, 1836*. FO 15/18: 174.

_____. 1836d. *Letter to Lord Palmerston, San Salvador, December 16, 1836*. TNA: PRO FO 15/18, 170-171.

_____. 1837a. *Letter to Alexander MacDonald, San Salvador, March 31, 1837*. TNA: PRO FO 15/19, 73-74.

_____. 1837b. *Letter to Lord Palmerston, San Salvador, August 19, 1837*. TNA: PRO FO 15/19, 127-128.

_____. 1837c. *Letter to Lord Palmerston, San Salvador, September 1, 1837*. TNA: PRO FO/19, 135.

_____. 1837d. *Letter to Lord Palmerston, San Salvador, November 15, 1837*. TNA: PRO FO 15/19, 182.

_____. 1840a. *Letter to the Secretary General of the Government of Honduras, May 14, 1840*. TNA: PRO FO 252/14, nf.

_____. 1840b. *Letter to Lord Palmerston, Guatemala, May 30, 1840*. TNA: PRO FO 15/23, 223-224.

_____. 1841. *Letter to Earl of Aberdeen, London, December 31, 1841*. TNA: PRO FO 15/26, 126.

Cubas, M. 1836a. Carta a Francisco Morazán, Omoa, 26 de abril, 1836. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 17, p. 233.

_____. 1836b. Carta a Francisco Morazán, Omoa, 11 de mayo, 1836. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 18, pp. 234-235.

Dawson, F.G. 1983. William Pitt's Settlement at Black River on the Mosquito Shore: A Challenge to Spain in Central America, 1732-1787. *Hispanic American Historical Review* 63(4): 677-706.

Euraque, D.A. 1996. *Reinterpreting the Banana Republic: Region and State in Honduras, 1870-1972*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Frederick, R.C. 1837a. *Letter to King of Great Britain, Gracias a Dios, May 8, 1837*. TNA: PRO FO 15/19, 218-220.

_____. 1837b. *Letter to King of Great Britain, Gracias a Dios, June 25, 1837*. TNA: PRO FO 15/19, 236-238.

Gallardo, M.A. 1954. *Papeles Históricos, Vol. 1*. Santa Tecla.

Griffith, W.J. 1965. *Empires in the Wilderness*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

_____, ed. 1977. *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*. New Orleans: Middle America Research Institute.

Guevara-Escudero, J. 1983. *Nineteenth-century Honduras: A Regional Approach to the Economic History of Central America, 1839-1914*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, New York.

Henderson, G. 1809. *An Account of the British Settlement of Honduras*. London: C. and R. Baldwin.

Herrera, C. 1835. Carta a Francisco Morazán, Omoa, Marzo 6 de 1835. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 4, p. 218.

Hyde, G. 1837. *Letter to Lord Palmerston, London, October 24, 1837*. TNA: PRO FO 15/19, 296-297.

Karnes, T. L. 1961. *The Failure of Union: Central America, 1824-1960*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Kepner, C.D., and J.H. Soothill. 1935. *The Banana Empire: A Case Study of Economic Imperialism*. New York: The Vanguard Press.

Lamb, F.B. 1966. *Mahogany of Tropical America: Its Ecology and Management*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Lozano, J.M. 1840a. Carta a Francisco Morazán, Omoa, enero 11 de 1840. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 53, pp. 273-274.

- _____. 1840b. Carta a Francisco Morazán, San Miguel, noviembre 28 de 1840. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 55, pp. 277-278.
- MacDonald, A. 1837a. *Letter to Lord Glenelg, Belize, February 12, 1837*. TNA: PRO FO 15/19, 230-232.
- _____. 1837b. *Letter to Frederick Chatfield, Belize, February 20, 1837*. TNA: PRO FO 15/19, 69.
- _____. 1837c. *Letter to Frederick Chatfield, Belize, July 6, 1837*. TNA: PRO FO 252/8, nf.
- _____. 1837d. *Letter to Lord Glenelg, Belize, October 25, 1837*. TNA: PRO FO 15/21, 47-49.
- Maradiaga, E. 1835a. *Nota de Encarnacion Maradiaga de la Secretaria del Consejo representativo acerca una oferta de la casa de Cabal y Follin por la cantidad de 8000 pesos por una parte de la caoba vendida en la costa norte, Comayagua, 26 de enero, 1835*. ANH, nf.
- _____. 1835b. *Nota de Encarnacion Maradiaga de la secretaria del Consejo Representativo, para el Ministerio General del Gobierno, acerca de la peticion hecha por Armando Cabal, de las propuestas de contrata de madera, que tiene hechas al Consejo, y el Gobierno, Comayagua, 11 de marzo, 1835*. ANH, nf.
- Martinez, J.J. 1850. *Estado que forma el que subscribe como comisionado especial para contar las maderas se han cortado en la jurisdicción de este Puerto en el presente año, de las que se han marcado en los respectivos cortes con espresion de . . . , Trujillo, 24 de octubre, 1850*. ANH nf.
- Morazán, F. 1836a. Carta al C. Srio. Gl. del Gbno. del Estado de Honduras, San Salvador, Mayo 26 de 1836. In Gallardo, ed., *Papeles Históricos*, FM-14, p. 138.
- _____. 1836b. Carta incompleta. In Gallardo, ed., *Papeles Históricos*, FM14, p. 139.
- _____. 1836c. *Letter to Frederick Chatfield, San Salvador, December 14, 1836*. TNA: PRO FO 15/18, 172-173.
- _____. 1840a. Carta a José María Lozano, San Salvador, 8 de marzo, 1840. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, app. II, pp. 283-284.
- _____. 1840b. Contrata con el Gobierno de Honduras, Comayagua, 14 de abril, 1835. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 8, pp. 220-222.
- _____. 1840c. Carta incompleta. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 54, pp. 275-276.
- Naylor, R.A. 1967. The Mahogany Trade as a Factor in the British Return to the Mosquito Shore in the Second Quarter of the 19th Century. *Jamaica Historical Review* 7: 40-67.
- _____. 1989. *Penny Ante Imperialism*. Rutherford: Farleigh-Dickinson Press.
- Offen, K.H. 2000. British Logwood Extraction from the Mosquitia: The Origin of a Myth. *Hispanic American Historical Review* 80(1): 113-135.
- Palmerston, H.J.T. 1837. *Letter to Frederick Chatfield, London, July 24, 1837*. TNA: PRO FO 15/19, 9-10.
- Record, S. J., and C.D. Mell. 1924. *Timbers of Tropical America*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Revels, C.S. 2002. *Timber, Trade and Transformation: A Historical Geography of Mahogany in Honduras*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.
- Rodriguez, M. 1964. *A Palmerstonian Diplomat in Central America*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
- Rosa, R. 1971 (1899). *Historia del benemérito Gral. don Francisco Morazán, ex Presidente de la República de Centro-América*. Tegucigalpa: Instituto Morazánico.
- Soluri, J. 1998. *Landscape and Livelihood: An Agroecological History of Export Banana Growing in Honduras, 1870-1975*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.
- Soper, S. 1836. Letter to Marshall Bennett, Omoa, May 1, 1836. In Griffith, ed., *The Personal Archive of Francisco Morazán*, doc. 9, p. 236.
- Squier, E.G. 1855. *Notes on Central America; Particularly the States of Honduras and San Salvador*. New York: Harper and Bros.
- Stephen, J. 1837a. *Letter to John Backhouse,*

London, June 15, 1837. TNA: PRO FO 15/19, 244-246.

_____. 1837b. *Letter to Fox: Strangeways, London, October 21, 1837*. TNA: PRO FO 15/19, 291-293.

Symonds, R.W. 1934a. Early Imports of Mahogany for Furniture. *The Connoisseur* (October 1934): 213-220.

_____. 1934b. Early Imports of Mahogany for Furniture II. *The Connoisseur* (December 1934): 375-381.

TNA: PRO (The National Archives: Public Record Office). 1838. *Foreign Office Memo to George Hyde, London, February 14, 1838*. TNA: PRO FO 15/21, 31.

Usher, E.P. 1850. *Plan of the Mosquito Territory and the adjacent Port of Truxillo*. TNA: PRO FO 925/1523.

Velasquez, J. 1839. *Aviso al Público, Juticalpa, 11 de octubre, 1839*. ANH nf.

Walker, P. 1847b. *Letter to Lord Palmerston, Bluefields, March 19, 1847*. TNA: PRO FO 53/7, 36-40.

Wells, W.V. 1857. *Explorations and Adventures in Honduras, Comprising Sketches of Travel in the Gold Regions of Olancho and a Review of the History and General resources of Central America*. New York: Harper and Bros.

Woodward, R.L. 1985. *Central America: A Nation Divided*, 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

West, R.C. and J.E. Augelli. 1989. *Middle America: Its Lands and Peoples*, 3rd ed. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall Inc.

Zon, R., and W.N. Sparhawk. 1923. *Forest Resources of the World, Vol. II*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.