

commissaries, or whether he first suggested the movement, is not clear, but in the month of April, 1797, Ochterlony presented to Wentworth his scheme for embodying the Maroons as a regiment, himself to be colonel, to be transferred to the Cape of Good Hope. The plan was not regarded in a favourable light by Wentworth, who represented to the Secretary of State that the regiment would be encumbered with a train of women and children double the number of the men, and to turn such a body of men loose at the Cape with arms in their hands would be dangerous to the community. The safest place for them, he maintained, was Nova Scotia, where they could do no mischief nor mix with people who could corrupt them. He charged Ochterlony with being actuated by interested motives, hoping to make a fortune as colonel. The scheme was defeated, and Ochterlony was dismissed from his office, on the charge of causing serious losses to Jamaica by his mismanagement. The Maroons were then placed in charge of Capt. Howe, under whom they are reported to have made satisfactory progress, but that they made any real progress is exceedingly doubtful, for although a favourable report is made of the children at school, the men, it is complained, would do no work, hoping to be kept in idleness, a fact not to be wondered at, considering that whilst in Jamaica they did absolutely nothing but amuse themselves.

The number who left Jamaica and landed at Halifax is nowhere clearly stated. "About" 600 are said to have been on board the transports on leaving Port Royal, but this can have been only an approximate estimate. The first enumeration reported is that made by the surgeon, Oxley, on 1st July, 1797, who gives the total as 526, increased 1st August to 532, and on 1st September to 543, both increases being due to births. But that these must have been more numerous seems evident, as one death is noted and there were probably more, so that there must have been births to counterbalance the losses by death.

Early in 1799 Wentworth complained of intrigues to foment discontent among the Maroons, who but for these would have been happy and contented, yet in the same despatch he reports that they are determined to get back to Jamaica—two statements which it is not easy to reconcile.

In 1796, before the Maroons had been sent to Nova Scotia, a correspondence had been opened by the Secretary of State with the African Company on a proposal to send them to Sierra Leone. But the experience of the company with the negroes who had fled from the United States during the war ending in 1783 and taken refuge in Nova Scotia, from which they were removed in 1792, led the directors to refuse to entertain the idea of dealing with another body of negroes whose reputation could not be held to warrant such a step. The conduct of the first body of negroes had been turbulent and mutinous, causing great anxiety and expense to the company, and not unnaturally the directors dreaded that the Maroons would make common cause with their brethren in