THE MISSISSIPPI FORT, CALLED FORT DE LA BOULAYE

by

MAURICE RIES

Reprinted from
THE LOUISIANA HISTORICAL QUARTERLY
Vol. 19, No. 4. October, 1936
THE MISSISSIPPI FORT, CALLED FORT DE LA BOULAYE,  
(1700-1715)  

THE FIRST FRENCH SETTLEMENT IN PRESENT-DAY LOUISIANA

A Report by Gordon W. Callender, Prescott H. F. Follett, Albert Lieutaud and Maurice Ries

Written by MAURICE RIES

DEDICATION

To the memory of the French pioneers in Louisiana, to that of Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville; and of the Sieur de la Boulaye; and the Comité France-Amerique also, this memoir of the forgotten fort is respectfully dedicated.
The Louisiana Historical Quarterly

CONTENTS

Foreword.
Figure A: Fort de la Boulaye and its Geographic Area.
Figure B: Detailed Map of Site of Fort de la Boulaye.
Figure C: Parts of cypress logs from foundation of the Fort.
Figure D: Cannon-ball found on site of the Fort.
Chapter I: Introduction.
Chapter II: The Source-Materials.
Chapter III: Summary and Conclusions.
Appendix 1: Maps of the region of the Fort.
Appendix 2: Affidavits.
Appendix 3: Recognition.
Bibliography.
FOREWORD

This is the story of the Mississippi fort that was called Fort de la Boulaye; how it was founded; what part it played in the history of France in the New World; how it was abandoned, erased from the face of the earth in a Louisiana marshland until it became the forgotten fort; and how, nearly two and a half centuries after heroes set it bravely against the world for their King, it was found again.

Always man's curiosity has given him knowledge; out of questing in musty books and following the bleached little creeping things that gnaw patiently through dry pages, comes history. So it was in this instance. Curiosity about the markings on an old map—one tiny obscure quadrangle, and one half-hidden word. "Fort", said the map. And four men wondered, "What fort?"

When they set out to answer their own question, they did not know their curiosity would lead them into a prolonged search for the first white settlement in present-day Louisiana, a settlement far more important than any in its own day could know; nor that it would yield them the site of that settlement, and relics of that same, to prove it.

More than four years were required to complete their search. Now it is done, and this is the story of it.
Fig. A

FORT DE LA BOULAYE AND ITS GEOGRAPHIC AREA.
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

Fig. B
DETAILED MAP OF SITE OF FORT DE LA BOULAYE
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Much has been said and written about the early years of the French in "Louisiane"—the Louisiana that was; the "Louisiane" Napoleon sold to the United States and from which twenty-nine states later were carved. Much, too, has been written and spoken of the French in that other Louisiana—the Louisiana of today.

But in all this historical material, one event has been neglected. In itself, it did not seem of immediate importance. No one participating in it paid it a great deal of attention. Nevertheless, the effect of this event was more vital, more far-reaching than anyone of its own day dared dream.

In short, it was the founding of the first French fort—indeed, the first French settlement—in what was to become the present State of Louisiana.

The post was a tiny establishment on the bank of the Mississippi river, a little more than fifty miles from the river's mouth. It lasted only some seven years; its population may never have exceeded twenty-five persons. It was no imposing structure that lies now in a heap of crumbling ruins, but mighty men built it, heroes held it and died in it, and its site is the scene of one of the most notable, though most neglected, chapters in the history of French colonial Louisiana.

Now it is the forgotten fort. But it may be the most important French historical site in America.

Its effect was to secure for France her last North American possession, the vast Louisiana Territory. By its establishment, it directly prevented the British from seizing Louisiana in a day when the infant colony was far too weak to have defended itself. It gave France control of the Mississippi Valley; and by so doing it connected Canada with the Gulf of Mexico—the dream of great La Salle, of Jean Talon, of Pere Marquette, and of many another of the valiant men of early French days in the New World. Too, it definitely marked the turning-point between exploration and possession. Louisiana now belonged to France; the vast horde of savages in the land drained by the mighty Mississippi were France's to convert to Christianity, and to civilize.
Fig. D
THE CANNON-BALL
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

Now, after 236 years, the site of that ancient post has been located. Four men, intensely interested in the history of French colonial Louisiana, have spent more than four years in historical research and in field-trips in search of the site of the fort—but more, of any physical traces that might have remained. The site has been located, as subsequent narration reveals. But so little now remains of this little frontier establishment, obscure in its own struggling lifetime, neglected, abandoned, stripped, and eventually forgotten. No palisades, rotting and fallen. No broken brick, no rusted scraps of iron, no wrecked cannon, mute and half-buried in debris. Only two small pieces of cypress log, and a little cannon-ball.

Now, a small private canal, used principally by fur-traders of Louisiana's great muskrat marshes, cuts directly through the site of this early post.

Here is the grave of a place that, itself passive, allowed history to be made. A mile away, a little town sleeps beside the river. Upstream, more than 30 miles distant, sprawls the busy city of New Orleans—stepchild of the little fort. Back of the somnolent village, a few acres of unproductive ground hold the secret of power, the power of arms that affected the destiny of hundreds of thousands of square miles in the center of the present United States; the power of arms that two centuries ago touched the destiny of millions of people yet unborn.

It is possible to mark this site today; to travel the winding river road to the little town of Phoenix, below New Orleans, and to stop at a certain place and say, "Here France planted more importantly than she knew. Here Iberville stood, and here Bienville; here lived and died those brave men who dared wilderness, disease, discomfort, death itself—for France!"

The historians of its own day could not know how vital was to be the simple act of building a rude little fort on the river-bank, against the swamp and the bayous nearby. And since it endured only a few brief years, vanishing utterly from the face of the earth, historians of a later time have neglected it. They have failed to consider what the ultimate importance of the first French fort in present-day Louisiana might be. Nothing happened there, they say, and dismiss the subject from mind.

It is not what occurred there that matters; it is what that out-post made possible to happen.
CHAPTER II
THE SOURCE-MATERIALS
D'Iberville to the Minister of the Marine:

Des Bayougoulas,
February 26, 1700.

Monseigneur:

I have already had the honor to render to you the account of my voyage from La Rochelle . . . to the Bay of Biloxi. We arrived on the 8th and anchored our vessels in twenty feet of water.

On the morning of the 9th, the Sieur de Sauvolle came aboard and told me that an English sloop of war of twelve cannons, commanded by Captain Bank, had entered the Mississippi River during the latter part of September, where my brother, de Bienville, accompanied by five men in two canoes (canots d'escorce) is now located for the purpose of sounding the depth of the passes. He having found this armed vessel at a distance of twenty-five leagues from the mouth commanded them to retire voluntarily or be compelled to do so. This captain lost no time in taking the route back to the sea.

It is believed that during October 1698 three warships left London to establish claim to the Mississippi. They sailed to the Carolinas from whence sailed two warships, one of twenty-four cannon and the other of twelve.

Having sought the entrance to the Mississippi where reports place it, at almost one hundred leagues more to the west, they found no other harbor than a bay twenty-five leagues to the west from here, where they found water deep enough for warships but no rivers other than a small stream on a sandy wooded coast where there is a Spanish settlement. From there they followed the coast until they reached the Mississippi, which the two small warships entered . . .

Captain Bank did considerable inquiring for news of several Englishmen, who had settled in the country farther up the river, who had come from the Carolinas and with whom he wished to confer.

He made a threat to my brother that he would return with warships light enough to enter the river (where he had not found more than ten or twelve feet of water) with the purpose of making a settlement on one of its banks. He said that the English had discovered and taken possession of the Mississippi more than fifty years before.
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

I do not believe that this threat shall amount to much.

I believe, sire, that it will be a propos, to take possession of the Mississippi by means of a small establishment for fear that if we do not do so, the English will make one, they knowing that we do not have one here, and that this may not furnish them with a pretext for maintaining one there. For this purpose, I departed on the first of February in the large fishing boat and two feluccas with a total of sixty men who were necessary for the expedition.

On the third of February at nine o'clock in the morning, we entered the river with a strong southeast wind by way of the east pass, where I found only eleven feet of water and a very difficult entrance, the channel being no larger than in the neighborhood of twenty paces. In the two other passes there are no more than seven or eight feet of water. At midnight, I met my brother de Bienville and six men who were eighteen leagues up the river at a place, the nearest to the sea that was not swampy, which a Bayogoula whom he had brought from the village has showed him as he came up the river. Here he found six or seven leagues of country which he assured us was never covered with water. On the bank was the edge of a wood, fifty paces deep, of oaks, ash, elms, planes, poplars. The back country consists of prairies fifteen leagues deep, with occasional clumps of woods.

I have set to work to cut down these trees and square them in order that we may build a square house twenty-eight feet on each face, with two stories and with machicoulis, with four cannon (four pound) and two eighteen pound cannon, with a moat twelve feet across. I left my brother, de Bienville, in command with fifteen men.

On the 10th, I sent my feluccas filled with supplies to go up the river as far as the Bayogoula. It is a very bad winter with much strong wind from the south which delayed my work a great deal.

... I need help, having but thirty Canadians whom I can take with me of those I have here, having left twenty sick at the fort and the others at the settlement which I have made on the river.

M. de Tonty was a great help to me....

M. de Tonty denies strongly ever having made a report on this country and says that it is a Parisian adventurer who has written these false memoires in order to earn money.¹

This is Iberville's own account of the founding of the Mississippi fort, with the reasons behind it. M. d'Iberville did not realize

¹Margry, IV, 361.
the potential value of his establishment: that is clear from his letter. (Note that the party came from Biloxi by way of the east pass of the Mississippi; that Iberville gives the site of the post as "eighteen leagues up the river; that a Bayogoula Indian was responsible for the selection of the site with the assurance that floods never covered this ground; and that the block-house is described as being twenty-eight feet square, with a twelve-foot-broad moat and, apparently, mounting a total of six cannon. Other comments later will have bearing upon these facts).

It is proper here to consult d' Iberville's personal journal of the voyage of His Majesty's ship La Renommee in 1699 from Cap François to the Mississippi coast and its return; bearing in mind the fact that d' Iberville has reached the mouth of the river and has entered it:

At midday I was as far as the three forks. The wind is very strong and to the S. E. Raining and hazy. At this minute I am opposite a point on the right bank 17 or 18 leagues from the sea where I have found my brother who came up from the lower part of the river in a canoe and joined the others at this point where he awaited me and where the savage said the land was never flooded for a distance of 6 leagues in several directions.

On the 5th I visited the land in the vicinity of the point which seems to be the best place around here. For the distance of 3 leagues along the lower part of the river, there is a skirt of open woods 600 paces wide, and behind, prairies and clumps of trees. Throughout the neighborhood, there are many cypress trees, wherever we go.

On the 6th and 7th I continued the work of clearing and squaring logs with which to build the house and have been working on a powder magazine 8 feet square, raised 5 feet above the ground, made of wood and covered and surrounded with 1 1/2 feet of mud plaster.

On the 8th I was two leagues above the fort to see about some cedars, which are called cedars of Lebanon, with which to make pirogues. I left the sieur La Ronde, Marine guard, and six men at the fort.

... I have found the latitude of the fort to be 29 degrees, and 45 minutes north...

On the 28th, I had been to visit a river which is a quarter league behind the fort. Here I found fresh water, twenty paces wide, twelve feet deep, flanked on both sides by prairies

*Ibid., IV, 402.*
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

which are covered at high water. They seemed dry enough for such a season as this when it rains so often. The work on the fort is little advanced, the greater part of the men whom I left there having been sick. The wheat they have sown is good and strong, as are the peas.

On the 29th, I sent the sieur du Guay with a canoe and three men to go to the anchorage where the ships are, by this river which must empty into the sea rather near the anchorage, while I, myself, left in a small boat with two men to go to the ships by way of the portage which is two leagues above the fort. I found the portage so bad that I was obliged to return with a strong fever.

On the 30th, the fever continues with me. I was in no condition to go to the ships. I was obliged to send the sieur de Maltot there in my armed boat to advise MM. de Sauvolle and de Ricouart of my indisposition and to send by the fishing boat, when it has returned from Pensacola, the cattle and other things.

On the 31st, the fishing boat and the felucca arrived at the fort coming from the coast in 36 hours. They brought me five cows, one bull, a calf, 12 pigs and some chickens (coqs d'Inde) and many other things that I had asked for.

On the 1st, the sieur du Guay returned, having been unable to go to the sea, he having taken a fork to a lake which led him deep into the interior, . . .

On the 15th, I left at 9 o'clock in the fishing boat, leaving the fort in the command of the sieur La Ronde of the Marine Guard and for his attendant, the sieur de Maltot. I made my departure with two canots d'escorce by way of the river which passes back of the fort, to follow two exits which go to the sea and see if they empty very far from the ships. . . . I have left 15 men at the fort to work there.

Several points in this diary need comment:

The "three forks" to which d'Iberville refers is the point at the delta of the Mississippi where the east, south, and southeast passes separate it.

D'Iberville is not certain of the distance between the sea and the new fort.

He writes that the site is on "the right bank"—obviously the east bank, as he is ascending the river from the mouth.

The first date, the "5th", is of February, 1700. The "28th" is of March. The "1st" is of April.
That building operations were under way on the 6th and 7th of April is borne out by a journal, cited later, of Pere Paul du Ru.

No palisade is mentioned here or later.

The latitude observations are incorrect, as revealed by checking on modern maps and checking other observations reported elsewhere by d'Iberville. In the light of present-day knowledge, d'Iberville's findings prove to be consistently, if not greatly, wrong—usually from 10' to 25' in error, which is, roughly, a mile to the minute. At Natches, for example, there is approximately 40' difference between Iberville's reckoning and actuality; there is 26' difference at Bayou Goula; and at a point on the Mississippi below New Orleans, there is an error of 6'.

The river behind the fort (though it is slightly more than a quarter of a league) is present-day Oak River, or Riviere aux Chenes, with its broad branch, Bayou Lessep (Bayou Portage). Oak River is, indeed, about twenty paces wide and is easily twelve feet deep; its water is fresh, and prairies flank it on either side—inundated by periodic high water, then as now. It might easily have appeared to d'Iberville to have flowed to the sea, though it does not. D'Iberville mentions exploring "two exits which go to the sea" from Oak River, "the river which passes back of the fort." These exits probably were present-day Orange Bayou (the route which is used even today as a short-cut to the Mississippi Gulf Coast), and what is known as Cross Bayou. It would have been surprising had Sieur La Ronde not become lost. The end of Bayou Lessep (and it could easily be mistaken for part of Oak River itself) is approximately a quarter of a league behind the fort ridge.

At the same time, modern maps show what might well have been used as a portage, approximately two leagues (about six miles) or less above the post.

As late as about 1715, remarkably little was known, geographically, in Paris about Louisiana, as evidenced by a curious undated document presented as a memoir by Antoine Crozat. Differences of a few miles or even of a league or two must be excused, as well as exact locations to the right or left, to the east or west. Crozat writes: "The new posts which have been proposed to His Excellency for occupation are, first of all, Biloxi, on the Mississippi, eighteen or twenty leagues from the sea. It is the spot where M.
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

d’Iberville made his first establishment; it is also the spot by which the Mississippi River is reached from Lake Pontchartrain, through a small stream.”

Baron Marc de Villiers, writing the History of the Foundation of New Orleans (1717-1722), points out in this connection, that in Crozat’s memoir, “three very different posts are confused and located in one same spot; Iberville’s original Biloxi; the Portage of the Mississippi . . . and the abandoned Mississippi Fort”.

The indefatiguable Bénard de la Harpe contributes his narrative of the founding of the fort. He wrote it only a short while after the event actually occurred, and after he had himself become thoroughly familiar with the history and geography of Louisiana, so it may legitimately be regarded as a primary source:

M. d’Iberville was informed of the attempt of the English to find the Mississippi, and he resolved to make a settlement on its banks. He accordingly set sail in two shallops, with fifty men, and arrived in the river on the 15th January, 1700. He had previously sent M. de Bienville to the Bayogoulas to procure guides, and to select a place above inundation. They conducted him to a ridge of high land, at a distance of about eighteen leagues from the sea. Four days after, M. d’Iberville arrived there and commenced building a fort . . .

On the 28th May, M. d’Iberville set sail for France, and on the same day M. de Bienville took command of the Fort on the Mississippi. On the 29th he dispatched M. de Saint Denis to explore the country in the Red River, and to watch the Spaniards.°

Erroneously, de la Harpe sets January 15th as the date M. d’Iberville entered the Mississippi River to found the little fort. Iberville himself gives the date as February 3rd.

The “M. de Saint Denis” mentioned by de la Harpe was the Sieur Juchereau de St. Denis, kinsman of the Le Moynes, a heroic and all-too-neglected figure in early Louisiana history.

What was the first mention of the Mississippi fort? Apparently, it is contained in a letter (August 11th, 1699) from d’Iberville to the Minister of Marine, discussing plans for his proposed second voyage in 1699 to the new Louisiana colony, at Biloxi. He proposed, wrote d’Iberville, “to establish a good fort, as near to

°In French, Historical Collections of Louisiana; Part III, pp. 16, 17, 19.
the river as may be", to keep watch over the Spaniards and natives. This was before the excitement caused by the presence of the English—for at this time the English had not been regarded as being dangerous. Thus plans actually were under way months in advance of the actual establishment of the Mississippi post. Founding of the little colony was only speeded by the English Turn incident.

Reporting his actual deeds, d'Iberville wrote the Minister of Marine under date of September 7th, 1700: "I have been content to make only a small establishment". But the chain was complete—the intent, the motivating factor, and the deed itself.

Another of the first-hand narratives was penned by Jean Pénicaud, author of Annals of Louisiana, from 1698 to 1722. The young Pénicaud was ship's carpenter on one of the vessels in Iberville's fleet on the first Louisiana voyage in 1698; he served the colony in various capacities until 1720, when he settled near Natchez.

M. Pénicaud describes d'Iberville's naming of Bayou Mardi Gras (its present name) "at the end of 6 leagues on our way up" the Mississippi on that first trip. He continues, "Eight leagues farther up M. d'Iberville remarked to the right a place very proper to make a fort, which he resolved to do when he came down the river. From there 8 leagues farther up one finds a detour of an arc of about 3 leagues which is called English Turn. Twenty-four leagues farther up one finds the river of the Chetimachas".

Carpenter Pénicaud's observations of distances in leagues is rather accurate; they are interesting to use in locating known distances—such as English Turn, Bayou Mardi Gras, and the river of the Chetimachas—with regard to the length of a league.

Returning down-river, M. Pénicaud says, the boats arrived again at the site selected, "...where we found a traversier which M. d'Iberville had already arranged there from Biloxi, for M. d'Iberville had sent from Natchez his brother, Bienville, in advance, to prepare there the provisions and necessary equipment to establish there a fort, which was well advanced in 15 days", Pénicaud says; "he had sent munitions of war and provisions to be put in the storerooms of the fort. He set up a battery of six cannon on
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

The river bank and he left his brother, de Bienville, with M. St. Denis as commandant at the fort with 25 men." Then, he continues, d' Iberville went by the traversier to Biloxi.

Now, a traversier was the name given the small boats which sailed coastwise in the early days of the Louisiana colony. Pere du Ru in 1700 called it such. But it is also translatable as a short-cut, a crossing. And since Pénicaud relates that d' Iberville left the Mississippi fort and went to Fort Biloxi in a shallop, or small ship's boat, the meaning here must be that of a short-cut. It is not impossible that de Bienville, already used to cruising in a canoe the maze of tiny streams, lagoons, little lakes, bayous, miniature rivers, ponds, and swamps which make up much of that part of the present state of Louisiana behind the fort-site, had selected a route for most quickly reaching the Mississippi Gulf Coast without dropping down the Mississippi River to its mouth; that he had discovered one of the routes used by trappers and fishermen in that section today, and had caused some small bayou, extending perhaps almost to the rear of the French post, to be widened or deepened sufficiently to accommodate the shallops. That would have been an excellent traversier, a cutting or short-cut to the coast and Fort Biloxi.

Père Paul du Ru, a Jesuit, is another of the pioneers who saw history in the making in early Louisiana, and who has left us his own journal for first-hand information about the establishment of the first settlement on the lower Mississippi. His "Journal de voyage en Louisiane du Père Paul du Ru (1700)" contains the following relation:

On the 1st of February, 1700, I baptised a small savage at the village of the Onguiloussas; I left in a small boat called traversier with M. d' Iberville, who was going to make an establishment on the Mississippi.

The 3rd, we are in the water of the Mississippi.

The 4th, we found M. de Bienville with an old Bayogoula who came to show him a place on the Mississippi good for an establishment. As it had thundered much, I asked the Bayogoula what the thunder was; he replied that this was the Great Ouga, that is to say the Great Chief, who fired cannon as we did. It is not to be doubted from the behavior of these barbarians that they believe us to be spirits descended from the sky, and that the fire from our cannons is of the same nature as celestial fire. Opposite the fort of the Bayogoula, the river

*Journal de la Société des Americanistes de Paris, n.s. Tome XVII (1925), 119.*
The Louisiana Historical Quarterly

seemed to be no larger than the Seine opposite the Hôtel de Mars, but it is twenty times deeper. This is at seventeen leagues from the mouth.

The 5th and the succeeding days we were working at the fort...

The 14th, Sexagesima Sunday, a cross was planted, and a cemetery was blessed, where this inscription was placed:

\[\text{D. O. M.}\]

\[\text{Galli cum hoc venissent pri mi, primum ex Canadensi plaga duce de la Salle, anno 1682; 2\textsuperscript{em}, ex eodem loco duce de Tonty, anno 1685; 3\textsuperscript{em}, ex oris maritimius duce d' I berville, anno 1699; 4\textsuperscript{em} ex eodem loco et eodem duce anno 1700, hanc crucem hoc ipso anno 1700, 14 Feb. posuerunt, ad cujus pedem ara constructa eodem anno et die fecit sacerdos e societate Jesu atque hoc septum mortuarii sepulchrae rite devovit.}\]

It might be well to point out that the Onguishouas, according to the great Americanist, John R. Swanton (Indian Tribes in the Lower Mississippi Valley), were the Okelousas. The Hôtel de Mars; it is noted by Baron Marc de Villiers in Volume XVII of the Journal de la Société des Américanistes de Paris (1925), is the present Hôtel des Invalides.

Note that Pére du Ru calls the fort (certainly at that time unnamed) the “fort of the Bayogoula”, apparently for the old Indian who had assisted in the selection of a site.

The Mississippi River at that time (early February) must have been quite low to have caused the Jesuit to write that it was no wider than the Seine. February is, however, a low-water period in the Mississippi.

Pére du Ru, too, gives seventeen leagues as the distance from the mouth of the river at which the outpost was planted.

Both the cross and the inscription, which was on the cross, were planted in the cemetery, according to Pére du Ru.

It would be well to translate the Latin inscription:
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

To God, the Best, the Greatest
The French, as they had first come here, first from Canada under De La Salle in the year 1682; secondly from the same place under de Tonty in the year 1685; thirdly from the seacoast under d' Iberville in 1699; fourthly from the same place under the same leader in the year 1700, planted this cross February 14th in the same year 1700. At the foot whereof an altar being erected, a priest of the Society of Jesus said Mass and duly consecrated this enclosure for the burial of the dead.

Baron de Villiers, editing the extract from Pere du Ru's journal, says it came from a copy of the original written and so preserved by the hand of the King's geographer, Claude De Lisle (1644-1720).

Life was not easy among the scattering of rude little huts along the bank of the yellow Mississippi. A sparse living had to be wrung from swampy soil, undrained then and ridden with fatal fevers. Letters in the files of the Ministère des Colonies (Series C 13, Correspondance Générale Louisiane) are as eloquent now as they were two hundred years ago.

M. De Sauvole de La Villantray, governor of the colony of Louisiana (1699-1702), wrote one of them. From Biloxi, under date of August 4th, 1701, he penned a letter to Paris "relating to the succession of events that took place" in Louisiana between May and August. The yellow document bears a marginal note in a forgotten hand: "To be classified in the portfolio of the journals and relations about this colony." The letter itself, referring to May, 1700, says in part,

... on the fifteenth I received a letter from M. d' Iberville from the Mississippi in which he informs me that he has been obliged to send some of his men hunting on Bay St. Louis to provide them with food, since he was not able to do so along the river. I sent him at once all the corn that I had here, counting on the return of a boat that I had sent to Mobile to look for some. ... I had very strongly expected that the detachment of the Mississippi would be much better off than we were by means of the Natchez and the Houmas, but my opinion has been changed by their plight. ... the twelve pirogues that we needed have been completed. I am sending at once to the
Mississippi some people who have been back for a week. They are thirty and thirty-five feet long. . . . I have received from the Mississippi a little which consists of eighty chickens. Those that we had here have been eaten to the last one.

References to "the Mississippi" mean the fort on the river. In the instance of the statement, "They are thirty and thirty-five feet long", the gender of the French pronoun refers to the pirogues.

M. De Sauvole de La Villantray's letter is only one of scores that accumulated in the official archives during the first twenty years of the French in Louisiana—letters intoning over and over again the pitiful lack of food, the continual misfortune that befell the iron-hearted colonists.

Pere du Ru, too, had to report ill-luck about food. In his journal he writes, "On the 5th of April I left to return to the Mississippi fort and am now there. The sugar-cane we planted is dead, or rather they are withered before they were planted. The orange seeds which I planted are also missing. However, I am certain that all that grows in the Islands will grow here, but that there is a season for sowing and planting which perhaps we have not observed."

An intensely human interpolation is in the latter part of this excerpt, written by d' Iberville March 1st, 1700:

On the 1st I left with my brother in a bark canoe and two pirogues, and a Bayogoula who is coming to ransom some of their people who are prisoners at the Houmas. I am going to make peace between them and get them to exchange prisoners.

I gave orders for my pilot, Richard, to leave in the felucca with a sailor and four savages in a bark canoe which I bought from the Canadians that they may go together to the fort and then make a portage to a river which flows from there to near the boats, that they may explore it and see if it is practicable. Erewhile, the savages had five villages on that river, which were destroyed by war. They esteem it good to live upon. I left at noon with two canoes belonging to the Canadians who came from the north, leaving M. du Guay with six of his men, who went to the fort to carry back one of their fellows whose left arm was shot off by a gun and which was amputated by my surgeon with a saw made from a knife. Gangrene has set in..."
What was the fate of this sufferer? Was he transported to Biloxi, his life saved, and his health slowly regained under the pines along Mississippi Sound? Or was help too late: did gangrene move more swiftly than the carriers? He may have been buried in the little cemetery Pere du Ru had consecrated a half-month earlier, perhaps the first to lie under the cross with its brief Latin inscription that recounted the valor of a handful of unconquerable Frenchmen who had dared the dangers of the lower river—for France!

The priests who braved the Mississippi wilderness in those early days in Louisiana's history not only were men of prodigious action and high resolve; they did a thing as valuable by setting down their memoirs of the things they actually saw and heard in this strange new world. And, being men of education, they usually were able to write accounts more complete and more accurate of what transpired than those of the soldiers, carpenters, sailors, and political appointees who likewise left records.

Pere James Gravier, another of the hardy Jesuits, kept perhaps the most detailed account of his journeys of any of the churchmen or laymen who were in colonial Louisiana, with the exception of Bénard de La Harpe. Following are extracts from the *Journal of the Voyage of Father Gravier of the Society of Jesus, in 1700, from the Country of the Illinois to the Mouth of the Mississippi, addressed to Father de Lamberville, and sent from the Fort of the Mississippi, seventeen leagues from its Mouth in the Gulf or Sea of Mexico, Feb. 16, 1701.*

There is this said of Pere Gravier in *Early Voyages Up and Down the Mississippi,* with introduction, notes and index by John Gilmary Shea:

Father James Gravier of the Society of Jesus, the writer of this narrative, was one of the earliest Illinois missionaries, and the first who sufficiently mastered the language to compile a grammar. . . . He arrived in Canada apparently after 1679. . . . He descended the Mississippi in 1700, but returned to his mission. . . .

Pere Gravier came downstream to meet the priests who were accompanying d' Iberville on his second expedition. Pere du Ru was one. Pere Gravier reached the Mississippi fortification December 17th, nearly at the end of 1700. The excerpts follow, plunging into the narrative in the month of December, 1700: On the 11th,
we reached the cross which marks the village of the Baiougoula, on the north of the Mississippi and 40 leagues from the Houma. As the waters have been extremely high this year they have undermined the cliff more than ten feet along, so that the cross has fallen with the earth that slid down. . . . I planted a large cross on the bank instead of that carried away by the waters. They rose twenty feet high. . . . It is a long voyage this down the Mississippi, very tedious and very difficult, especially coming back, and very inconvenient on account of the gnats and other flies, called maringouins, brulets and moustiques, the great rains, the excessive heats, the wretched landings, in mud and potter's clay, often knee deep, and for the scanty fare. . . . At last, on the 17th of December, I reached the Fort of the Mississippi, after 68 days sail down. This first establishment is on the south side of the river, eighteen leagues from its mouth. There is no fort nor bastion, entrenchment or redoubt; all consists of a battery of six guns, six and eight pounders, planted on the brow of the bluff, and of five or six cabins separate from each other and covered with palm leaves. The commandant M. de Bienville has quite a nice little house there. I perceived on arriving that they began to cry Famine, and that the bread stuffs began to run out, which obliged me to take to Indian food so as to be a burden to none, and put up with Indian corn without meat or fish till the vessels come which are hardly expected before the end of March. If the Mississippi is settled they will transfer the fort, or rather they will build it at the Baiagoulas, forty leagues further up, for the high waters overflow so furiously here that they have been four months in the water often knee deep outside their cabins, although the Indians had assured them that this place was never inundated. The wheat which had been planted here was already quite high when the inundations caused by a furious swell of the sea in the month of August swept it away. The garden was hardly more successful, besides there being a great quantity of black snakes that eat the lettuce and other vegetables off to the root. . . .

To go from here to Fort Billocchi, you must on starting make a portage of a good eighth of a league knee deep in mud and water, and take in a supply of water as you need to go to Billocchi, for the little river you meet a quarter of a league from here is brackish, that is to say it is mingled with salt water. It empties into a lake two leagues across and after running five or six leagues southeast on the sea along the isles, you cut northeast off the isles till seven leagues from the fort, when you make the main land which you follow to the entrance of Billocchi bay, in sight of the fort where you must cross. . . .
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

Leaving Biloxi for the Mississippi settlement, Pere Gravier "was eleven days in getting here through the fault of our guide who lost his way, and made us lose a favorable wind which would have brought us to the fort on the third day, but after using up our half barrel of water we filled it with brackish water, which troubled my canoe men much more than me, who accustom myself to drink hardly anything when traveling." There follows a description of being lost among the Chandeleur islands, resuming,

We at last, thank God, entered a river where we quenched our thirst and which led us to an eighth of a league from the Mississippi, where we arrived safely and after an eighth of a league portage we found ourselves eight leagues from the fort, where we arrived on the eleventh day after our departure from Bilocchi...

There are 15 or 16 fathoms here... There are few spots for more than eighty leagues hence which are not inundated at the great overflow of the Mississippi...

Pere Gravier's journal was in the form of a letter, addressed, as it has been stated, to Pere de Lamberville. He continues:

Here is exactly, Reverend Father, the details of my voyage and all I could learn on my route, and of all that I have seen and remarked, and of all that I learned here from M. de Bienville, M. d'Iberville's brother, who has most explored the country... They could not make the first settlement in a spot where there are more mosquitoes than here. In sooth they have given us little truce for seven or eight days, but at this moment they sting me in close ranks, and in the month of December, when you ought not to be troubled by them, there was such a furious quantity that I could not write a word without having my hands and face covered, and it was impossible for me to sleep the whole night. They stung me so in one eye that I thought I would lose it. The French of this fort told me that from the month of March there is such a prodigious quantity that the air was darkened with them and that they could not distinguish each other ten paces apart.

I remain here until the arrival of M. d'Iberville, as I am in some sort obliged to serve as chaplain to the French who are in this fort and of whom several are Canadians. I have much to suffer from these importunate insects till the month of May, and still more remounting the river, since I shall not be able to do so till the number is so great that you cannot rest by night or land by day to cook your Indian corn without being devoured by them. Blessed be God for all...
In the English translation of Pere Gravier’s journal, published in Shea’s *Early Voyages Up and Down the Mississippi*, there appears a postscript to this journal of Pere Gravier’s, as follows:

Since this letter written a year ago last February (of the present year, 1702), the French abandoned the two posts here-in mentioned, on the Mississippi and on Bilocchi bay to settle at the river called Mobile . . . .

Several things should be noted here in connection with Pere Gravier’s report:

He states that the village of the Bayogoula is “on the north of the Mississippi”. By this he means the west bank, for there has never been any question as to the precise location of this tribe’s village. The town of Bayou Goula today occupies the same site as that of the early settlement. And the Jesuit states definitely that the Mississippi establishment “is on the south side of the river”, which is the opposite or east bank. This is direct, unassailable eyewitness testimony.

A cross “marks the village of the Biaogoula”, according to Pere Gravier. It appears that these crosses, planted near the river-bank itself, were used as aids to navigation—marine traffic-signals, of a sort. Because the high waters of the Mississippi in the end of 1700 had undermined the bank at the “Bayogoula” community, the cross fell into the river. The French, it is obvious, did not know much about the eroding qualities of the great Mississippi river.

The Mississippi’s waters “rose twenty feet high” in 1700—at least at the village of the “Baiogoulas”, Pere Gravier reports.

Reaching the Mississippi establishment on the 17th of December, 1700, the Jesuit priest arrived almost a year after the establishment of the post. His description, therefore, is of the little frontier garrison nearly at the end of its first year of existance.

Pere Gravier says the site of the fort was “eighteen leagues from its mouth”. This is in sufficient agreement with other authorities.

Most interesting is the priest’s flat, positive statement that “There is no fort nor bastion, entrenchment or redoubt”, in view of the declarations of Iberville that he has constructed a 20-foot-
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

square block-house of wood, indicating that the guns were mounted here. Commandant de Bienville must have been occupying the wooden block-house as a residence when Pere Gravier arrived.

Interesting, too, is the Jesuit observer's assertion that the battery of six guns, six and eight pounders, was "planted on the brow of the bluff". Even more than interesting, it is highly important in the light of later logic.

The cabins, too, are memorable. The site had become a small colony, not merely a rude wooden fort.

The sage old Bayogoula, who so glibly assured the French that their ridge was quite safe from inundation, was wrong. The place did flood—even atop the ridge, with its bluff, the water was knee-deep.

The portage deserves attention. Pere Gravier was quite correct. It would be impossible to navigate any sort of over-land crossing behind the new fortification: more so in 1700, before scientific land-drainage began.

Modern maps supplied by the United States government show clearly evidences of what logically might have been a portage, a short eight leagues (less than twenty-four miles) upstream from the Mississippi post. The best portage, however, is that directly behind the fort site (see maps).

The postscript or addenda to the Gravier narrative is incorrect. The fort was not abandoned before 1702; that was, somehow, an error. It was occupied officially until 1707; unofficially for years afterward, and even was used for a gathering of troops as late as 1715.

Positive evidence that the post was not abandoned by 1702 is contained in a letter written at Fort Louis (Mobile) September 6th, 1704, by de Bienville to the Minister of Marine, Jérôme Phelppeaux, Comte de Pontchartrain. Bienville, serving his first term as governor of the Louisiana province, wrote:

The Mississippi settlement has not been changed at all as my brother d'Iberville had ordered me to do since I discovered after his departure that the lands were not submerged everywhere. M. de St. Denis is in command there of fifteen men whom I have placed there as a garrison. He is a very good officer with whom I am very well pleased and very well adapted to command the Canadians and knows perfectly well how to lead the Indians and make himself liked by them.
Apparently de Bienville's letters do not mention the struggling establishment on the Mississippi River again until, in an official communication to Pontchartrain dated February 20th, 1707, the governor writes from Ft. Louis and includes the following passages:

Our old small ship that remained was destroyed by a squall in the port of Massacre last month while coming from the Mississippi where I had sent it to get the King's goods that were there. . . .

All the Indians of those countries are thoroughly treacherous. They have already committed many assassinations. There is reason to apprehend that they may commit more because of the small fear they have of the French. They have such a low opinion of them that recently the Chickasaw and Choctaw chiefs asked me in great seriousness if there were really as many people in France as here and whether there were many more. I tried to make them comprehend the truth about the matter by means of striking comparisons. It was impossible to make them believe although I understand their language perfectly well. They gave me as a reason that if there were really as many people as I said, some of them would come here to avenge the deaths of the Frenchmen "or you have no courage at all", they said to me. "You have been here for six years. Instead of increasing you are diminishing. The good men are dying and only children come in their places". In fact they are right. Of the soldiers that we have three-fourths are young and incapable of enduring the wars of these countries. . . . We have only forty-five soldiers at present from one hundred that we ought to have in the two companies that the King maintains in this country. . . .

I have had the Mississippi establishment abandoned since I do not have enough men to guard it. It is however necessary to have one there in order to keep the Indians in check who are grumbling at present since they truly think that they are being abandoned. I am making them think that this post will be re-established. What has most induced me to abandon it is because I have no ship's boat at all to send there to carry assistance.

Almost exactly a year later (on February 25th, 1708, to be exact), de Bienville again wrote Pontchartrain from Ft. Louis about the now-officially-abandoned Mississippi outpost:

One cannot suffer more than I am suffering. . . . I have learned, my lord, that complaint has been made to your Lordship that Sieur de St. Denis, a lieutenant of infantry, was not
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

present with his company and that he was still residing in the lower part of the Mississippi. They were apparently not informed that he was there by my orders in order to keep the Indians of those quarters on good terms since I was not in a position to leave a garrison there. He knows perfectly well how to manage them, knowing their languages. I shall not fail, my lord, to have him return since M. d'Artagette has told me that M. de Muy had orders from your Lordship to do so.

Diron d'Artagrette was sent to Louisiana June 30th, 1707, as commissary-general (commissaire ordonnateur). De Muy, commissioned the same day as governor to succeed Bienville, died at Havana en route to the colony, and Bienville continued at the head of affairs in Louisiana.

Three days later another letter was indited to Pontchartrain, this time from Mobile by de Bienville's cousin, Major Pierre Dugue, Sieur de Boisbriant, who assured the Minister of Marine that all complaints against Bienville "are without foundation", continuing: "Sieur de St. Denis, the lieutenant of a company, who was sent by the said Sieur de Bienville to restrain the Indians, has performed his task with great prudence and it is important for the colony to continue him in this duty". A brief marginal note on the manuscript says merely; "Good".

Pontchartrain next took up his pen to enter the discussion of St. Denis and the erstwhile Mississippi fort. In a letter to de Bienville, dated from Versailles on July 11th, 1709, the Minister wrote:

I have rendered the King an account of what you wrote me on the subject of Sieur de St. Denis, a lieutenant of infantry whom you have sent to the lower part of the Mississippi. Since you think that he is useful there to retain the friendship of the Indians for you His Majesty approves of your leaving him there.

Another year passes. Then, from Port Dauphin on October 27th, 1711, Bienville (apparently succeeded as governor by Antoine de Lamothe Cadillac) writes Pontchartrain again:

Sieur de St. Denis, a lieutenant, who since I was not very well pleased with his conduct, at the order that I sent him to return from the Mississippi where he was in command replies that he did not wish to serve the King any more at all and that I should inform your Lordship of it.
Whether the wrath of the Comte de Pontchartrain was called down upon the impudent head of Sieur de St. Denis in his damp fastness on the lower Mississippi as a result of this communication is not clear. St. Denis did, however, continue to serve the King, for he appears in later pages of Louisiana's history in various official connections, finally completing his life as commandant of a French fort at Natchitoches.

M. de Remonville, active in the early Mississippi Company, wrote August 6th, 1702, in his *Historical Letter Concerning the Mississippi*, that "The fort which was in the Mississippi River, eighteen leagues from the mouth on the west side... must also be changed". Remonville was wrong; the fort was on the east side of the river. He must not be blamed, however, for this error. So little was known of Louisiana's geography; de Remonville, himself, apparently was not present at the fort; and the Mississippi river contorted itself so strangely that the novice could never be quite certain in which direction was north. A memoir of the period complained that "The Mississippi does nothing but twist; it goes the rounds of the compass every three leagues. For six months it is a torrent, and for six months the waters are so slow that at many places pirogues can scarcely get past".

It is worth noting also that 1719 brought Louisiana a spectacular and altogether unprecedented rise in the Mississippi—Baron de Villiers writes of it that even "the Indians did not remember having ever seen its like". It was floods like this one, and the known high water of 1700, that played havoc with the little fort—or, in 1719, what may have been left of the little wooden block-house and huts.

There is much about the short-lived but important little Mississippi River fort in the secondary sources—the histories of Gayarré, Fortier, French, and Rowland, for example. But this is drawn almost wholly from the same primary sources considered herein; there is little worth in quoting them except as they might condense long accounts in the first-hand narratives.

Charles Gayarré, however, maintains in his *History of Louisiana* that when Antoine Crozat took over the Louisiana Province in 1712, five forts existed at Mobile, Biloxi, Ship Island, Dauphine Island, and the Mississippi fort. Apparently Sieur de St. Denis still was there at that date.

Gayarré is one of the several historians and narrators who explain that the post was established "on the first solid ground" met by d'Iberville on his voyage up the Mississippi from its mouth at the east pass. Gayarré and others say the little fort was fifty-four miles from the mouth of the Mississippi. That would be eighteen leagues, at three miles to the league.

B. F. French, in a footnote to his *Historical Collections of Louisiana*, says that d'Iberville "selected a spot on Poverty Point, about thirty-eight miles below the present city of New Orleans, where he built a fort and located a small colony".

Fortier, in a footnote in his *History of Louisiana* has this to say about d'Iberville's establishment, "fifty-four miles from the mouth of the river", of a fort: "The first settlement in the present State of Louisiana. It was abandoned in 1705".

In his *Mississippi, the Heart of the South* Dr. Dunbar Rowland makes this statement:

They entered the Mississippi with which they were now acquainted on the 15th of January, 1700, and eighteen leagues from its mouth—an eight below the English Turn, Iberville selected a spot of high ground as the site for the fort (La Boulaye) which he resolved to construct when he descended the river...

After making plans for the building and maintenance of Fort La Boulaye... he left Bienville in command with twenty-five men and returned to Biloxi.

The parentheses in the first Rowland paragraph are his own.

It has already been pointed out that de la Harpe's narration is essentially a primary source. It is de la Harpe who makes almost indisputable the statement that the Mississippi post was used as late as 1715. He describes de Bienville's expedition from Mobile to found Fort Rosalie at Natchez:

M. de Bienville set out accordingly, and arrived at the fort on the Mississippi, where he found MM. de Paillou and de Richebourg with the pirogues which had been sent from
Mobile, laden with provisions and utensils to form the settlements at Natchez and on the Ouabache. He ordered them to proceed.

A "M. de la Boulay, who commanded at the Arkansas" in April, 1722, is mentioned by Bénard de la Harpe" at least three times.

Was he the same person as Jean du Boulay, mentioned under the heading "Canadians" in the "Roll of staff officers, petty officers, sailors, Canadians, freebooters, soldiers, laborers and cabin boys who have been left in garrison by M. d'Iberville at the fort of Maurepas in the Mississippi River, on the coast of Florida, to whom are due the sums hereinafter indicated for each of them, to begin, according to the terms of their engagement, on the first day after the termination of the advances made to them in France, and on the island of S. Domingo, until the last day of December of the present year 1699 (make the discount to the end of the year and remit the present)? It is not probable. The passage reads:

Jean du Boullay, at 25 1. per month, for the last
10 days of October, November and December,
1698 .......................................................... 58 l. 6s. 8r.
and for the year 1699 ....................................... 300 0 0
358 l. 6s. 8r.

Engaged on July 20, 1698. Advances 75 l.

The fort Maurepas mentioned is not the Mississippi establishment. There was a Maurepas on Back Bay, at Biloxi, at this time. Also, the date in "the present year 1699" precludes the possibility of the Mississippi establishment being meant—it was founded in 1700.

No Boullay is mentioned in a roll of staff officers, Canadians, etc., prepared May 25th, 1700, by de Bienville, nor is any in a list of 13 persons who died between the establishment of a fort on the Gulf coast April 8, 1699, and October 18, 1700.14

A letter from Perier and De La Chaise to the directors of the Company of the Indies, dated at New Orleans on April 22nd, 1727, says in part, "Laboulaye married here, where he has a plantation" (la Boulaye marié ici y a une habitation).15

15Rowland, Mississippi, East of the South, I, 170-184.
16Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, II, 339.
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

The same officials again wrote their directors from New Orleans March 25th, 1724, under the heading "Sieur La Boulaye":

"Sieur La Boulaye applies himself to his plantation and we have had negroes delivered to him in several allotments; we shall continue this, seeing that he deserves to obtain some".\footnote{Ibid., II, 641.}

The title "Sieur" indicates that this La Boulaye is not the same as Jean du Boullay, a Canadian; nor, necessarily, as the "M. de la Boulay, who commanded at the Arkansas" in 1722.

On the other hand, a boulaie is the old French word for a birch-plot or wood.

This does not by any means exhaust the available documentary materials. It is simply presented in an attempt to indicate the type of information to be found in the first-hand accounts. It is impossible here to begin to go into even the primary sources in any sort of detail.

A summary of all the preceding material seems in order at this point.

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It is possible definitely to locate the site of the Mississippi fort called de la Boulaye.

Physical evidence, research, and field-trips offer conclusive evidence to this end. Armed with reliable information and indisputable fact, the four interested investigators—Prescott H. F. Follett, Maurice Ries, Gordon W. Callender and Albert Lieutaud—were able to go into the field and, by a process of elimination, to narrow the search after a year to a site near the town of Phoenix, Louisiana, on the river road between New Orleans and Pointe a la Hache.

Consider the facts first:

(1) A fort was established.
(2) It was the first French post, the first settlement that was intended to be permanent, on the lower Mississippi.
(3) It did officially establish the claim of the French to the vast Louisiana territory.
(4) It was in use over a period of at least fifteen years.
(5) It consisted of more than a single fortified building—it was a small settlement including not less than half a dozen structures.
(6) An enclosed cemetery was dedicated.
(7) The post was founded "on the first high land" reached on a journey up the Mississippi from its mouth at the east pass.
(8) The site selected by d' Iberville was high land; the Bayogoula Indian guide asserted it was land safe from inundation, while Pere Gravier declared the "battery of six guns" was "planted on the brow of the bluff".
(9) The Bayogoula guide was wrong. The "high land" was inundated, with water standing at least knee deep. These floods were not only caused by overflow from the Mississippi river, but also "by a furious swell of the sea".
(10) Reliable witnesses repeatedly assert that the outpost was on the east bank of the Mississippi.
(11) A portage behind the establishment brought travelers to the settlements at Biloxi and Mobile after they journeyed by boat to the coastal islands and along Mississippi Sound.
(12) No mention whatever is made of having to cross the Mississippi to begin the short cut to the coast.
(13) A small fresh-water river, deep and fairly wide, ran behind the establishment on the Mississippi. This stream had two major outlets that seemed to lead to the sea.
(14) The distance from the sea was always given as seventeen or eighteen leagues.
(15) Another portage was available a short distance above the fort.
(16) The establishment was stripped in 1707 and these materials transported by boat to the Isle of Massacre in Mobile bay.
(17) The small vessel bearing the equipment from the Mississippi post sank in the harbor of the Isle of Massacre and has never, so far as is known, been raised.
(18) A detailed contemporary description of the terrain (including trees, prairie, and general conditions) tallies definitely with the general aspects of the present site of the town of Phoenix.

(19) A number of ancient maps are available, bearing the site of the "vieux fort". An overwhelming majority—including the most reliable—place it on the east bank.

Now consider the above facts (which cannot be otherwise than accepted), in the light of modern knowledge: (Numbers below correspond to numbers above.)

(1) If the fort was once established, its site must remain, and can be located.

(3) If the post was utilised as late as 1715, then its complete abandonment could not have begun until that date, and it could not have begun to fall in ruins until then. Therefore, its ruins should have lasted even later than they would be supposed to endure if the place had been abandoned entirely in 1707 at de Bienville's order (or in 1705, as many historians erroneously state).

(5) Since the Mississippi establishment was a little colony, including a half-dozen huts and the log-house, it occupied more ground than if it had been only a single fortified building. Likewise, its gardens, cemetery and the clearing that was made must be included as an integral part of the post. The site of any part of the original settlement is the site of "the Mississippi fort", since that name was given to the entire community on the river-bank.

(6) The enclosed cemetery, however small, helped swell the land area of the post.

(7) United States Army engineers at New Orleans have found in their official surveys that "the first high land" of note on the way up the Mississippi from the east pass is well above Point a la Hache—it is, indeed, at Phoenix.

(8) At Phoenix a definite ridge runs at a right angle to the Mississippi River, meeting the river itself. It is the highest ground between the mouth of the river and New Orleans, United States Army engineers say. Now, at this point Professor R. A. Steinmayer, head of the Department of Geology at Tulane University, and F. Webster McBayde, associate in geography in the Department of Middle American Research at Tulane, both give as their expert opinion the belief that the river, at the place where the ridge meets the water, is wearing away the bank. On the other hand,
just under Poverty Point, the river-bank on the east side is "making", or building. This second point is directly in front of the fort site. Under such circumstances, the fort that once mounted its guns at the edge of the river now is some distance from it.

While considering the ridge in question—the same that runs from the water's edge at Phoenix diagonally away from the river to a point beyond where the fort actually stood, it must be remembered that a ridge meeting the river at a right angle, on an eroding bank, would be sheared off by the action of the water. This would leave a definite rise, much as appears when the tapering end of a loaf of bread is sliced off and the cut viewed from the front. Now, such a high point—though it would not have risen but a few feet above the surrounding flat country—would instantly have attracted the attention of one looking for a suitable place to make an establishment. It will be recalled that d' Iberville first remarked his selection from a boat in the river. Certainly such a bank would have been the first thing to attract his attention. And the early French in Louisiana were not familiar with the idiosyncrasies of the Mississippi River. They did not know with what speed it can cut its sandy banks in the most unexpected places—or build them, in others. They were used to the rivers of France, running their unchanging course between banks of stone and hard earth; rivers not subject to such tremendous periodic flood-tides as is the Mississippi, when in a single night the entire river has been known to change its course by miles, cutting across one of its own banks to form what is known as an ox-bow cut-off. French missionaries planted a tall cross at the Bayogoula village so near to the stream that flood-waters cut the banks and caused the cross to slide into the river—they could not have known much about the habits of the great Mississippi. They could not have known—they had been in Louisiana only a year.

(9) The ridge running through Phoenix is approximately 200 feet wide. Its length is relatively unimportant, except that it runs away from the present river-bank for some distance beyond the site of the fort. As for height—while it is higher than any of the surrounding ground, and is plainly visible behind the little town of Phoenix today (for it stands above the monotonous flat prairie, crowned by trees for a little distance much as it must have looked two centuries ago to d' Iberville and de Bienville and the rest), it is never more than three feet above the plains roundabout.
Pere Gravier states positively that it was flooded in 1700 or early in 1701: "knee deep", he said. That is quite possible. Inhabitants of Phoenix assured the investigators that their whole town is flooded, often twice a year, by water that backs up from the Gulf of Mexico through the swamps and lagoons, and through Oak River, behind the town. The ridge, they declared without hesitation, in these days of modern drainage and with the Mississippi held permanently away by tall levees, has been covered many times within their own memories by this water which a high southeast wind blows up from the sea through the prairies. It is not surprising to them; it is one of the accepted and apparently inevitable facts of their existence. And water a foot deep over the crown of the rise might well be knee-deep in places on the ridge.

There should be no better proof of the fact that the establishment was on the east side of the river than that contained in d' Iberville's own words. He wrote in his journal, "At this minute I am opposite a point on the right bank 17 or 18 leagues from the sea... the savage said the land was never flooded..." This is proof positive, for d' Iberville was ascending the river as he wrote, and the east could only have been on his right hand. M. Pélicaut, too, wrote of d' Iberville's ascent, "Eight leagues farther up M. d' Iberville remarked to the right a place very proper to make a fort". The italics are for emphasis in this connection. And Pere Gravier, thoroughly confused by the eternal twisting of the Mississippi on his long down-stream journey, wrote of "the village of the Balagoula, on the north of the Mississippi". No one has ever questioned the indisputable fact that the Bayogoulas lived on the west bank, or that the French settled there, or that the present town of Bayou Goula on that side of the river occupies the identical site of the early Indian village. Conversely, when Pere Gravier a few paragraphs later states that the Fort of the Mississippi is "on the south side of the river", he means not the actual south, but the side opposite to the Bayogoula town. And he was right—the Mississippi settlement was on the opposite side from that of the Bayogoulas. B. F. French, though a secondary source, places the site on Poverty Point, which is on the east bank a mile or more above the town of Phoenix.

A portage from the site at Phoenix would not only bring the early colonists to the Gulf Coast with little trouble, but, indeed, it serves the same purpose today. A study of old and new maps clearly demonstrates that this was the only possible place
for a satisfactory short cut to the Biloxi and Mobile area from the Mississippi, anywhere between New Orleans and Bayou Mardi Gras near the mouth of the Mississippi. Likewise, a careful inspection of the older maps in relation to the newer ones shows clearly that small bayous and waterways once extended much closer to the Mississippi from Oak River than they do today. Continual overflow from the Mississippi, inundation from back-water, as well as almost uninterrupted cultivation of the land for two centuries have produced a gradual levelling and filling-in process that has obliterated many of the small waterways. It must be noted that a very excellent map, Lafon's Carte Générale du Territoire D'Orleans Comprenant aussi la Floride Occidentale et une Portion du Territoire du Mississippi, of 1806, definitely names the Phoenix site "le Portage". It is given no other name.

(13) The small but definite river behind the fort can only be Oak River, with its equally broad branch, Bayou Lessep (Bayou Portage). Incidentally, there is no such stream behind a point on the west bank anywhere near this approximate site, seventeen or eighteen leagues from the river's mouth. And use of such a stream as a portage or short cut would only lead navigators away from the Mobile-Biloxi posts. It is noteworthy, also, that Oak River has several outlets on its own east bank which lead eventually to the sea.

(16) There is little need to speak of the distance from the mouth of the river—always given as seventeen or eighteen leagues. A league—whatever type meant by the early explorers—is always approximately three miles. The site would therefore be about fifty-four miles from the mouth of east pass. The mouths of the Mississippi are continually building, which makes accurate measurement impossible. Even in the early days of the colony, due to sandbars, tides and currents, the mouths shifted and made measurements of distances most difficult, as several early engineers complain. The canal site near Phoenix fits this requirement, too.

(15) Following Oak River to its very end would have brought an explorer two hundred years ago almost to the banks of the Mississippi, a little more than two leagues above the fort, for Oak River once was a branch of the Mississippi. On the other hand, the prairie almost everywhere between English Turn and the mouth of the Mississippi is so threaded by mazes of interlacing bayous and waterways navigable to light craft but too small to show on ordinary maps, that it would have been quite possible to
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

have used a number of these as emergency routes, difficult and long, between the coast and the river. This is probably what Pere Gravier did when his guide was lost.

(16) The fort was stripped of its equipment and what de Bienville calls "the King's goods". It is not surprising that nothing remains to be found in or above the ground of this first establishment in present-day Louisiana, save the two small logs and the little cannon-ball aforementioned, which will be described in detail shortly. The comparatively flimsy two-story wooden structure which was the central figure in the little community could hardly have lasted more than a few years after its final abandonment—even if the Indians had not torn it down or burned it, which they probably did. However, maps as late as 1777 bear the cryptic legend, "ruins of Fort de la Boulaye" at the site where the canal now crosses the Phoenix ridge.

(18) The ridge has been discussed. Some trees named by d'Iberville in his description still flourish on the undisturbed portions of the higher land. The prairie behind is, as Iberville said, some fifteen leagues deep. It is dotted with occasional clumps of trees, just as the early explorers beheld it.

(19) The maps must be studied to realise how convincingly they bear out the fact that a point on the Phoenix ridge, now some distance away from the river's edge, is the actual site of the ancient establishment on the Mississippi.

Pere Gravier stated that in going to the Gulf coast, the little river behind the fort "empties into a lake two leagues across". Roughly, to traverse Bayou Lessep (Bayou Portage), part of Oak River, and then Orange Bayou takes one directly into the combined Grand Lake and Petit Lake. To cross them is a journey of approximately six miles: Gravier's "two leagues". This is the best and most convenient route to the coast.

Another point must be remembered: the ridge is not more than two hundred feet across, and extends away from the river for several miles. Now, since this is the only high ground anywhere within miles of a point at the accepted seventeen or eighteen leagues from the river's mouth at the east pass, the ridge must have been the high ground selected by d'Iberville.

Where was the cannon-emplacement? "On the brow of the bluff", Pere Gravier declared. What site did d'Iberville select?
One he saw plainly from the river. He could best see the end of
the ridge nearest him, where it met the river. Where would a mili-
tary man place a fort? Where it would command the river, his
purpose from the first. Then he must place it as near the bank as
possible. The farther back on the ridge, the less serviceable would
the fort have been. The ridge was as high at the edge of the river
as it was a mile from the river, the investigators found. The fact
that high water today stands a foot deep a mile from the river as
well as the same depth on the ridge within a hundred yards of the
present bank proves that the ridge is the same height close to the
water as at any reasonable, serviceable distance from it.

There is in the town of Phoenix a small and very old cemetery.
It is situated on the ridge, a half-mile or more from the fort site.
Cemeteries in old communities are perhaps the most unchanging,
the most permanent things in them. It is highly possible that the
Phoenix cemetery of today is on the site of that dedicated by Pere
du Ru on February 14, 1700.

It has been stated repeatedly that the fort was on the ridge,
where that ridge met the Mississippi River. That is true. Not
where it meets it now, but where it originally met it. The fort was
at a place where the river formerly ran alongside, not across, the
ridge. It was not where the river is perpendicular to the ridge, but
where it was parallel to it. This will be discussed more in detail
later.

Briefly, the activities of the men who inaugurated and pushed
this search for the location of the ancient, important old fort must
be traced:

Early in January, 1932, four men—all residents of New Or-
leans—discussed the fact that they had noted on several old maps
that a fort once was on the Mississippi River bank somewhere, ap-
proximately halfway, between New Orleans and the delta. Each
of the group has long been intensely interested in the history of
French colonial Louisiana. Out of the discussion grew the resolve
to attempt to locate the precise site of the fort. Thus began a quest
that lasted more than three years before the group had satisfied
itself as to the definite location of what they learned to have been
the first French establishment on the lower Mississippi.

During that time, documents had been searched, maps studied,
books probed for information that might aid in the hunt. Officials,
United States Government engineers, engineers of the State of Lou-
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

isiana, experts in geography and geology, local historians, natives of the possible sections were interviewed, and documents asked of the French Departments of war and of Marine. A number of field-trips were made, in which, by boat and on foot, the searchers examined the terrain for miles in all directions from what they early felt to be their focal point—somewhere within several square miles centering upon Phoenix.

Automobile trips were made. The party waded through sticky swamps and fought mosquitoes to probe thoroughly some local tradition that might have had bearing upon the case. One of the group even studied the site from an airplane.

They had made boat-trips through the bayous and lakes for miles behind the possible Mississippi sites. They had demonstrated to themselves how the portage could be made and the short cut taken to the Gulf coast.

They had even enlisted the aid of electrical science. An accomplished electrical engineer, Milton Clerc, designed and supervised the construction of the most modern possible instrument for locating any sort of metal underground. Mr. Clerc's assistance throughout the latter months of the hunt was valuable. With this device, the ridge and other sites were studied in the hope of finding some weapons, some metal relic that would have endured the ravages of time in the damp ground. Most of the ground has long been under cultivation, however, and this presented obvious difficulties. So did the fact that the ridge now is largely covered by the town. The electrical instrument was greatly hampered here.

Photographs were taken and measurements made at various places investigated. A record of field-trips was carefully kept.

Several preliminary compilations of their data were typewritten, gathering the mass of historical material most useful to them in their search. Still they continued their work. And at last they were signally rewarded. Briefly, they learned from former Louisiana State Senator Joseph Gravolet, of Phoenix, that several years earlier he and two employees, while dredging a canal across the ridge on Gravolet property, had brought up a number of ancient hand-hewn cypress logs, which had lain in tiers underground. Two pieces of the logs only remained, the others having been destroyed. Senator Gravolet had not known what the purpose of the original log-bed might have been, but when he learned that Fort de la Bou-
laye originally had been located somewhere close to the place where the logs were found, he was struck by the resemblance of circumstances. The searchers, acquainted with the historical and geographical details of the original Mississippi fort, saw at once how all details of this new information tallied with their own.

Senator Gravolet coöperated splendidly in the renewed activities which immediately were begun. The site where the logs were dredged up was examined minutely, and further corroborative evidence was found. Boats and men were provided by Senator Gravolet, who himself most courteously assisted in the renewed search. A number of expeditions were made to the new site, maps were drawn, measurements made, and photographs taken. Affidavits likewise were obtained from Senator Gravolet and his two workmen. This new material is presented herein.

Shortly after the new information was in the hands of the quartet of searchers, members of this group visited the site.

M. René Delage, French consul at New Orleans, accompanied the party, and early saw the authentic site in person. He was present also when Senator Gravolet exhibited the two pieces of logs which were all that remained of the original number brought to the surface. These logs Senator Gravolet later brought to one of the four Orleanians in New Orleans, and presented them with the hope that they would be helpful, and as a reward for their efforts.

Mr. James I. McCain, New Orleans attorney and notary public, notarized the affidavits given by the Senator and by Joseph Lighten and Joseph Schexnayder, his workmen. His interest was of great value.

Mr. Dan Leyer's photographs of the site and of the three men whose work in 1923 brought the logs to light—photographs made under the most trying atmospheric conditions, in a disturbing rainfall—are particularly helpful in making visualization of the site possible.

The affidavits (reproduced herewith) of Senator Gravolet and of Lighten and Schexnayder tell the same story. It is this: That in November or December of 1923, while dredging the present Gravolet Canal on the Gravolet-owned Marja Plantation at Phoenix, the three men reached the ridge as they proceeded away from Bayou Portage toward the Mississippi River (see maps of the ridge
A former canal from the ridge to Bayou Portage was being enlarged and redredged. As their dredge reached the ridge, however, the old canal was found to take a turn to the right, with another abandoned branch turning to the left. On the opposite side of the low ridge was a small canal extending from the ridge toward the Mississippi River. Senator Gravolet ordered the workmen to dredge straight ahead, cutting through the ridge, in order to avoid the detour and to connect the two canals on either side of the ridge in a practically straight line. This they did. Joseph Lightell, as operator, and Joseph Schexnayder, as fireman, operated the dredge, with Senator Gravolet directing their work. When the dredge was approximately in the center of the ridge, Lightell brought up a log which obviously had been shaped by man. It was cypress, with two surfaces flattened, and about 18 feet in length, though the ends were broken. The log was some 24 inches wide by 14 inches high. In all, 92 logs were brought to the surface from where they had lain under a shallow six-inch deposit of decayed vegetation and leaf-mold, for centuries. They averaged 15 to 20 feet in length, and had lain in two tiers of 46 logs each. The tiers ran in opposite directions, one across the other, and obviously were part of a foundation. Part of this same foundation, at the same level, was the stump of a huge oak-tree, its trunk (which had been six feet in diameter) cut off level with the log tiers. With the sturdy roots, this stump covered an area of perhaps 36 feet in diameter, and the roots, too, appeared to have been part of the foundation. The upper tier of logs, having been nearer the destructive elements of the surface, was badly rotted, but those in the lower group were in an excellent state of preservation, especially toward the center.

The dredge lifted the logs to the south side of the new canal’s bank, and there they remained for some time, gradually disappearing as they were utilized on the Gravolet plantation for various purposes. Some were burned as firewood to make smudge-fires to protect from insects the cattle which collected on this ridge. Finally, after years, only two pieces of the original 96 logs remained. These were approximately 24 inches high, when stood on end, and they had been sawed from longer logs at Senator Gravolet’s order for use in raising a portable electric light plant and a toolbox above floodwaters from the Mississippi River during the disastrous 1927 Carnaervon crevasse. Later, they were used in Senator Gravolet’s barn as legs for a bench. They were in this use
when M. Delage and the others first saw them, early in July, 1935. Shortly afterward, Mr. Gravolet brought the logs to Albert Lieutaud at 531 Royal street, in New Orleans.

Senator Gravolet had not of course at first realized the importance of these logs. But inspection of the site where they had been taken up revealed corroborative evidence of considerable weight. Iberville wrote that he had "set to work to cut down these and square them in order that we may build a square house twenty-eight feet on each face, with two stories and with machicoulis." Machicoulis were overhangs, the second story being wider than the first. The squared trees have been found; incidentally, Iberville mentions that oak-trees and "many cypress-trees" existed on the ridge when he set to work to clear it. The rotted ends of the logs make it impossible to determine precisely how long they were originally, but those of 20 feet that were found certainly may have been 28 feet in length when first laid. Iberville further states that the fort had "a moat twelve feet across". This is important.

For the two branching canals mentioned herein describe the two sides of an ellipse and come together again on the opposite side of the ridge, enclosing a space ideal for a fort and for the powder-magazine eight feet square which Iberville's journal mentions also was built. And the two canals, now almost completely filled in with debris and weeds, but long subjected to the erosive forces of time, are even today only a little more than twelve feet across. Surely these formed the original moat. What purpose otherwise would there have been in laboriously digging two curved canals, each converging at either end, through the stump-laced difficulties of a ridge in a swamp? The space between the two halves of this moat is ideally protected from all directions.

So we are faced by the fact that on a ridge, at a location agreeing in all respects with those given in early historical accounts, was a man-made foundation of the sort of logs described by Iberville, nearly the size mentioned by him, covered by the accumulation of the years, and surrounded by what obviously is a man-made moat of the width detailed by Iberville himself. There can be no logical conclusion but that this is the precise and exact site of the old fort.

The present distance of the ridge (where the Gravolet canal crosses it) from the banks of the Mississippi River must be treated. It may be argued that the Mississippi now is nearly a mile from the
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

ridge. Nevertheless, the river once ran alongside the ridge; as a matter of fact, it originally built the ridge, as the geological structure of this little elevation clearly shows. But the winding Mississippi continually is building and eroding its banks; innumerable changes have taken place along its course in the memory of living men, and for it to build its bank a distance of a mile within the space of 236 years is a feat of slight consequence for this river. The land lying between the ridge and the present east bank of the river is "made" land—reclaimed swamp-land of the sort familiar in Louisiana: land built by overflow deposit and aggradation by the river.

Senator Gravolet and others at Phoenix are positive the river is building its banks at a point directly in front of the fort site. They can prove it. For maps show the river-bank at this place is "making" maps that have received legal sanction and recognition because they were part of the admitted evidence in recent lawsuits relating to trapping privileges on Gravolet land, in which this very point of building-or-cutting was a bone of contention between owners and trappers.

But most conclusive of all is the forty-arpent line. When grants of land were parceled out under French dominion in Louisiana in the eighteenth century, and when these grants fronted on the river-bank, it was the practice to issue grants and titles extending back from the river to a depth of forty arpents (an arpent is 196 feet). All grants were uniformly forty arpents deep away from the river-bank. If the river then "made" in front of a man's property, he was fortunate. Conversely, if the river eroded his property, he had no recourse and simply saw his land being washed away.

It was customary to dig a small ditch or canal to mark the back of the property, and this watercourse commonly was called "the forty-arpent canal".

The front of the ridge, on the Mississippi River side, on Gravolet property, is today exactly forty arpents from the old forty-arpent canal behind it!

There the river incontrovertibly has built the land between the front of the ridge and the present Mississippi bank, in the 236 years since the fort originally was built where the river ran alongside the ridge and the fortification with its six cannon was planted on the
"brow of the bluff" overlooking the river. The ridge is now not high—perhaps three or at the most four feet above the surrounding terrain. But once it was higher. It has been suffering erosive wear, without the beneficial annual deposit it once might have had from the overflows of the river in the days before protective levees were built. Also, at low water in the river the ridge would have been a very obvious landmark.

When the Gravolet dredge was deepening the canal between ridge and river, according to its operators, the ground beneath the topsoil deposit of decayed vegetation and slush was found to be hard-packed river-sand, to a considerable depth. This, again, points to "making" conditions.

When Mr. Leyrer made photographs of the fort site on the afternoon of Sunday, 8 October 1933, the water in the canal was between six inches and a foot higher than its normal level. This, in those photographs, prevents the full height of the ridge from being realized.

Elated though they had been over the finding of the logs, the four who sought the forgotten fort were equally delighted when, on January 3, 1936, Senator Gravolet himself, sounding the bottom of his canal at a place within two or three feet from where the logs had been dredged up years earlier, made a singular find. He was using a long steel rod, and as he thrust it into the clay on the canal's bottom, he felt it strike some hard unyielding object four or five feet underground. He had his workmen work at it until the thing was brought up. It was a small round cannon-ball.

Any doubt there might have been that the logs marked the site of a military establishment now was dispelled. Why else would a rust-pitted cannon-ball, obviously of ancient make, be buried many feet deep in this deserted bit of marshland? No, this was one tiny part of "the King's goods" that was not removed to a watery grave at the Isle of Massacre in 1707. For almost exactly 229 years it lay forgotten, like the fort it once protected.

The ball, cast in two halves and joined, weighs exactly four pounds seven and four-sixteenth ounces. It is three and one-fourth inches in diameter, and ten and one-eighth inches in circumference.

In 1700 D' Iberville wrote to the Minister of the Marine that the fort mounted "four cannon (four pound) and two eighteen-pound cannon. Is further proof needed?
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

Time may bring to light other relics. For here was the place that allowed history to be made while it kept the Louisiana Territory for France. Here heroes lived and worked; had the perspective of centuries not been necessary to determine the real value of the little Mississippi post, it would be easy to cry shame upon the historians and the teachers and students who have allowed the world to forget the first French settlement on the lower Mississippi River.

The four men who set out to seek the location of the establishment on the river-bank feel that their work is done. They know that Fort de la Boulaye, the Mississippi fort, is nearer now to life than it has been these two centuries and more.

They feel, too, that some suitable marker should be placed, for all the world to see, to preserve forever memory of this neglected site, where so much that affected the history of later Louisiana had its beginning. A marker, they feel, that should reproduce Pere du Rhu's brief Latin inscription that was placed those centuries ago on the cross in the little cemetery enclosure.

What a curious note that first simple ceremony must have sounded in the barren, floating prairie-land on that February Sunday in the year 1700; witnessed by silent, wondering savages, by hardy soldiers and laborers, by the venturesome Canadian voyageurs, and, lastly, by the young man who was to become the greatest figure, the most heroic name, in all the history of Louisiana: Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville.

If a marker were placed, then the Mississippi fort called de la Boulaye would be forgotten no longer. It should never have been forgotten; it should always have been a bright page in the history of the gigantic land that once bore the name of Louisiana. This tiny settlement, this short-lived, undramatic outpost, had on it the invisible stamp of greatness. And greatness too often is neglected.

New Orleans, Louisiana, 14 February 1936.

[Signed]

ALBERT LIEUTAUD,
PRESIDENT H. F. FOLLETT,
GORDON W. CALLENDER,
MAURICE RIES.
APPENDIX 1—MAPS OF THE REGION OF THE FORT

Obviously, maps were a vital factor in the search for Louisiana's first French post. This appendix contains reproductions of those maps which proved most valuable to the searchers, or were most significant. Of course, it was impossible to reproduce all the maps which were utilized.

None of these charts shows the fort in the actual spot it occupied; several differ by miles in locating the old fort of the Mississippi. Most of the maps are of too large an area to make a precise location possible. But all of them place this earliest outpost somewhere between the site of present-day New Orleans and the mouth of the Mississippi River. And they prove beyond question that the fort was on the east side of that river.

Arranged chronologically, the maps tell a convincing and nearly unassailable story. They begin with an undated chart (Map 1), the original of which is in the library of the Department of Middle American Research at Tulane University, in New Orleans. It is this map which actually incited the search. It will be noted that at the crudely-drawn mouth of the Mississippi appears the conventional symbol for a fortification, and the single word, "Fort". What fort? the group wondered.

Map 2, a detail from A New Map of North America, by Guillaume Del'Isle, is dated 1703.

Guillaume Delisle (the spelling of which name varies with his numerous maps) definitely set the vieux fort on the east bank of the Mississippi in his 1718 chart which is here called Map 3.

Now follows the De La Tour map of 1720 (Map 4). De La Tour, a noted engineer in his day, was a resident of Louisiana for several years on the King's business. He notes "Ruins of Fort la Boulaye the first settlement made in 1700". There is no indecision here. De La Tour was well-informed.

The Carte Particuliere de Fleuve St. Louis (Map 5), circa 1723, does not contain the site of the Mississippi fort, called de la Boulaye. But it is interesting, in this chronological sequence, to note the spread of plantations downstream at this time. Also, it is valuable in noting how grants to the early colonists were made to a uniform depth of forty arpents.
Map 1

This map shows the Gulf of Mexico and the surrounding regions. It includes labels for various places and features, such as

- An Apalaxy in Possession of the French
- A Map of Florida, Baha, and Baracoa
- The Western Part of the Indian Land
- The whole West

The map also indicates the trade winds and distances. The text at the bottom reads:

In this Gulf or Bay you may know what Distance you are from a Shore by sounding a Depth of Water and take many Fathoms as you find so many Leagues you are from a Shore.
Map of the Course of the Mississippi River from Bayou la Batre to the Gulf.
CARTE PARTICULIÈRE
DU FLVUÉ S. LOUIS
aux lieux au delà et au dessous
DE LA NOUVELLE ORLEANS,
ou l'on marque les habitations et les
terres concédées à M. Fruisseau

AU MISSISSIPY

Map 5
GOLPHE DU MEXIQUE

PARTIE DE LA COSTE DE LA LOUISIANA

Map 7

Reproduced from the Unclassified/Declassified Holdings of the National Archives
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

Map 6 is a detail from D'Anville's Carte de la Louisiane, drawn in May, 1732. Here we have a straddler. M. D'Anville exhibits the curious phenomenon of having the "Ancien Etablissement fait en 1700" on both sides of the river. Unfortunately for his choice of the west bank in locating half the establishment, no documentary evidence bears him out. Unless, of course, there had been a garden on the west side, supplying the little post at some time in its existence. But in 1732 M. D'Anville was faced by the fact that the fort had been abandoned for seventeen years; perhaps its exact location already was beginning to be forgotten completely.

Next comes the modest "N. B."—"Ingr. du Roy at de la Marine"—with his map (Map 7) of 1744. The "Vieux Fort de la Boulaye" has come back to its rightful place on the west bank. It is specified to be "abandonne", of which there is no question by 1744.

Maps 2, 3, and 6 show the Bayogoula village to be on the west bank. This bears out Pere Gravier's assertion, and is an index in ascertaining the general correctness of their determinations of the fort.

APPENDIX 2—THE AFFIDAVITS

Following are copies of affidavits certifying the finding of the logs and the cannon-ball from Fort de la Boulaye, and of an affidavit declaring that a single piece cut from one of the logs was given by the four interested Orleanians to Louisiana State University 29 March 1935, to be placed by the University in its Maison Française, being dedicated at that time.

The originals of these affidavits, made before James I. McCain, notary public in the Parish of Orleans, State of Louisiana, are in the possession of the authors of this report.
October 8, 1933.

Personally before me, the undersigned authority, came and appeared JOSEPH DENNIS GRAVOLET, who after being duly sworn deposes and says:

That I was born May 22, 1884, at Pointe-a-la-Hache, Louisiana, and have been a resident of Plaquemines Parish ever since. I served as president of the Plaquemines Parish East Bank Levee Board for four years, and was in the Louisiana State Senate from the Ninth District from 1924 to 1928.

I am the co-owner with E. W. Gravolet, my brother, of the Maria Plantation located at Phoenix, Louisiana, comprising about 240 arpents, on which the canal known as Gravolet Canal is located.

That in November or December of 1923 two workmen of mine, namely Joseph Lighten and Joseph Schexnayder, while dredging and enlarging the said canal at a new point, turned up a log foundation which I inspected and found as follows: two layers of hand-hewn cypress logs, each approximately 24 inches in width by 14 inches in height by 15 to 20 feet in length. They were Louisiana red cypress, and we dredged up a total of 92 logs, in two layers of 46 each. These covered an area of approximately 20 feet square. Next to them was the stump of an old oak tree, with a trunk some six feet in diameter and with its roots totaling approximately 36 feet in area. The oak tree apparently was part of the same foundation. All of this was buried under a deposit of decayed vegetation approximately six inches deep. The two tiers of logs were laid in opposite directions, one across the other. The logs were flattened on two sides only.

That at this time we were dredging toward the Mississippi River from Bayou Portage, and at the point where the ridge was met by the dredge (distant approximately 21 arpents from the bank of the Mississippi River) the former canal turned to the right while another branch of this former canal, abandoned, turned to the left. I instructed my workmen to dredge straight ahead across the ridge, in order to connect the canal on the Bayou Portage side of the ridge with a smaller canal which extended from the
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

ridge toward the Mississippi River. It was in this previously undredged area crossing the ridge that this foundation was found.

At this point the ridge land is high and very hard. There is indication here that the foundation was surrounded by a former canal having a circular length of approximately 1000 feet. The logs were lifted to the south side of the new canal and were later used for various purposes. Some were used for firewood, some for blocking buildings, some for smudge-fires to protect cattle from insects. Two pieces only remained, each measuring approximately 24 inches in length. One of these was used to raise a portable light-plant from high water in 1927, while the other one was employed to raise a tool-box as protection from the same flood. Later they were stored in my barn as bench-supports. Early in July, 1933, I was visited by Mr. René Delage, French consul at New Orleans, Mr. Gordon Callender, Mr. Prescott H. F. Follett, and Mr. Albert Lieutaud. We visited the location where the logs originally had been found. I gave the two remaining fragments mentioned above to Mr. Albert Lieutaud. Two days later I brought them personally to Mr. Lieutaud at 531 Royal Street, where as far as I know they still remain.

(signed) J. A. GRAVOLET.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 8 day of October, 1933.

(signed) J. I. McCain, Notary Public.

[SEAL]

STATE OF LOUISIANA
PARISH OF ORLEANS

October 8, 1933.

Personally before me, the undersigned authority, came and appeared JOSEPH LIGHTELL, who after being duly sworn deposes and says:

That he was born December 25, 1896, at Davant, Louisiana, and has lived there ever since.

That he is a citizen of the State of Louisiana and is presently an employee of Louisiana State Senator Joseph Gravolet in the capacity of gravity dredge operator and has been so employed for the past twelve years.
That in November or December of 1923 while re-dredging the canal now known as Gravolet Canal on the property of Senator Joseph Gravolet owned jointly with E. W. Gravolet at Poverty Point in Plaquemines Parish in the State of Louisiana, on the east descending bank about 35 miles below the City of New Orleans, at a point on the canal approximately 21 or 22 arpents from the edge of the water of the Mississippi River, he turned up a log foundation, where the canal cuts through a ridge at that point, described as follows:

Two layers of hand-hewn cypress logs, each approximately 24 inches in width by 14 inches in height by 15 to 20 feet in length. They were Louisiana red cypress, and he dredged up a total of 92 logs, in two layers of 46 each. These covered an area of approximately 20 feet square. Next to them was the stump of an old oak tree, with a trunk some six feet in diameter and with its roots totaling approximately 36 feet in area. The oak tree apparently was part of the same foundation. All of this was buried under a deposit of decayed vegetation approximately six inches deep. The two tiers of logs were laid in opposite directions, one across the other. The logs were flattened on two sides only.

That at the time he was dredging toward the Mississippi River from Bayou Portage, and at the point where the dredge reached the ridge (which is distant approximately 21 arpents from the banks of the Mississippi River), he found that the former canal turned to the right while another branch of this former canal, abandoned, turned to the left. He was instructed to dredge straight ahead across the ridge, in order to connect the canal on the Bayou Portage side of the ridge with a smaller canal which extended from the ridge toward the Mississippi River. That it was in this previously undredged area crossing the ridge that this foundation was found.

The ridge land at this point was high and particularly hard. There is indication here that the foundation was surrounded by a former canal having a circular length of approximately 1000 feet. The logs were lifted to the south side of the new canal and were later used for other purposes. The dredge crew consisted of himself as operator and Joseph Schexnayder as fireman. Only this crew and Senator Gravolet were present when the logs were moved.

(signed) JOSEPH LIGHTELL.
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 8 day of October 1933.
(signed) J. I. McCain, Notary Public.

[SEAL]

STATE OF LOUISIANA
PARISH OF ORLEANS

October 8, 1933.

Personally before me, the undersigned authority, came and appeared JOSEPH SCHEXNAYDER, who after being duly sworn deposes and says:

That I was born April 1, 1885, at Harlem Plantation, Phoenix, Louisiana, and have lived in Phoenix ever since.

That I am a citizen of the State of Louisiana and presently am employed as utility-man by Louisiana State Senator Joseph Gravolet and have been so employed for the past 19 years.

That in November or December of 1923 while re-dredging the canal now known as Gravolet Canal on the property of Senator Joseph Gravolet owned jointly with E. W. Gravolet at Poverty Point in Plaquemines Parish in the State of Louisiana, on the east descending bank about 35 miles below the City of New Orleans, at a point on the canal approximately 21 or 22 arpents from the edge of the water of the Mississippi River, I assisted in turning up a log foundation, where the canal cuts through the ridge at that point, described as follows:

Two layers of hand-hewn cypress logs, each approximately 24 inches in width by 14 inches in height by 15 to 20 feet in length. They were Louisiana red cypress, and we dredged up a total of 92 logs, in two layers of 46 each. These covered an area of approximately 20 feet square. Next to them was the stump of an old oak tree, with a trunk some six feet in diameter and with its roots totaling approximately 36 feet in area. The oak tree apparently was part of the same foundation. All of this was buried under a deposit of decayed vegetation approximately six inches deep. The two tiers of logs were laid in opposite directions, one across the other. The logs were flattened on two sides only.

That at the time were dredging toward the Mississippi River from Bayou Portage, and at the point where the dredge reached the
ridge (which is distant approximately 21 arpents from the bank of the Mississippi River), I found that the former canal turned to the right while another branch of this former canal, abandoned, turned to the left. We were instructed to dredge straight ahead across the ridge, in order to connect the canal on the Bayou Portage side of the ridge with a smaller canal which extended from the ridge toward the Mississippi River. That it was in this previously undredged area crossing the ridge that this foundation was found.

The ridge land at this point was high and particularly hard. There is indication here that the foundation was surrounded by a former canal having a circular length of approximately 1000 feet. The logs were lifted to the south side of the new canal and were later used for various purposes. The dredge crew consisted of myself as fireman and Joseph Lightell as operator. Only this crew and Senator Gravolet were present when the logs were moved.

(signed) JOSEPH SCHEXNAYDER.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 8 day of October 1933.
(signed) J. I. McCain, Notary Public.

[SEAL]

STATE OF LOUISIANA
PARISH OF ORLEANS

Personally before me, the undersigned authority, came and appeared JOSEPH DENNIS GRAVOLET, who, after being duly sworn, deposes and says:

That I was born May 22, 1884, at Pointe-a-la-Hache, Louisiana, and have been a resident of Plaquemines Parish ever since. I served as president of the Plaquemines Parish East Bank Levee Board for four years, and was in the Louisiana State Senate from the Ninth District from 1924 to 1928. I am co-owner with E. W. Gravolet, my brother, of the Maria Plantation, located at Phoenix, Louisiana, comprising about 240 arpents, on which the canal known as Gravolet Canal is located.
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

That in November or December of 1923, two workmen of mine, namely Joseph Lightell and Joseph Schexnayder, while dredging and enlarging the said canal at a point distant approximately 21 arpents from the bank of the Mississippi River, turned up a log foundation which was later identified as part of the Mississippi fort (Fort de la Boulaye) founded at this site by Bienville in 1700. That I gave the only two pieces of these logs which now remain in existence to four residents of New Orleans interested in relocating the site of this fort, namely Albert Lieutaud, Maurice Ries, Gordon Callender, and Prescott H. F. Follett.

That on January 3, 1936, I was sounding the bottom of said canal with a steel rod, at a point within two or three feet of the place where the logs were found in 1923; and that at a depth of four or five feet in the mud at the bottom of the canal, my steel rod struck a hard object which I had excavated from this mud and brought to the surface. This object upon examination proved to be a small iron cannon-ball. The ball is pitted with rust, but it is readily identifiable as a cannon-ball. It weighs four pounds seven and four-sixteenths ounces; it is three and one-fourth inches in diameter; and it is ten and one-eighth inches in circumference. I believe it is cast-iron.

That during the first week of January, 1936, I personally brought this cannon-ball to Mr. Albert Lieutaud at 531 Royal Street, in New Orleans, as a gift to the four Orleanians aforementioned.

It is my firm conviction that this ball is a relic of Fort de la Boulaye, and that it has been buried in the mud at this site since the period when the fort was occupied.

(signed) J. D. GRAVOLET.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 7 day of February 1936. (signed) James I. McCain, Notary Public.

[SEAL]
STATE OF LOUISIANA
PARISH OF ORLEANS
CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Before me, the undersigned authority, personally came and appeared Maurice Ries, Albert Lieutaud, Gordon Callender and Prescott H. F. Follett, who are all residents of New Orleans, who, after being duly sworn, depose and say:

That the herein identified piece of Louisiana Red Cypress log is a piece taken from the original Fort de la Boulaye, first French establishment in present day Louisiana built in 1700 by Iberville and Bienville at what is now Phoenix, Louisiana.

This said piece was unearthed on Maria Plantation located at Phoenix, Louisiana, in December, 1923, by Joseph Dennis Gravolet.

The foundation of Fort de la Boulaye, of which this piece is a part, was unearthed while dredging Gravolet canal at a point about 21 arpents from the East bank of the Mississippi River, said canal being located about thirty-five miles below the city of New Orleans.

After the foundation of Fort de la Boulaye was discovered same was kept on the plantation of J. D. Gravolet and the two sole remaining pieces were turned over by him to affiants in 1933. The two remaining parts have been in the physical possession of Mr. Albert Lieutaud, 531 Royal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana. It is from one of these two parts of the said Fort that this identified piece is taken. This piece is presented to Louisiana State University by affiants.

(Signed) MAURICE RIES,
F. H. F. FOLLETT,
G. W. CALLENDER,
ALBERT LIEUTAUD.

Sworn to and subscribed before me, this 29 day of March, 1935.
(Signed) J. I. McCain, Notary Public.
APPENDIX 3—Recognition

It has been stated in the foregoing pages that several preliminary reports were made on the progress of the search for the forgotten fort. This report takes precedence over all of them; it is more complete, and obviously brings the history of the search to a later date than those others.

However, it is logical that the preliminary reports—written and oral—would yield a certain amount of comment from those interested. It is the purpose of this appendix to record briefly some of those reactions. Nearly all of the comments below are extracts:

René Delage, Consul-General of France at New Orleans, to Messers Ries, Callender, Follett, Lieutaud (extract):

New Orleans, La.,
20 March 1933.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of and to thank you for the preliminary report about the site of Fort La Boulaye, first French establishment in Louisiana . . . I read with great interest this document, dated 4 February 1933, and I wish to send you my very hearty felicitations for the care you have given to this difficult research, and for the success with which it has been crowned.

G. Chabaud, Secretary-General of the Comité France-Amérique, to Mr. Delage (translation of extract):

Paris, France,
18 May 1933.

I have the honor of acknowledging receipt of . . . the report of Monsieurs Follett, Ries, Callender, and Lieutaud. I immediately communicated with the Comité and it . . . has requested me to express its sincere thanks for this friendly gift, and to assure you of the interest it has in this work, which it will use to best advantage. Our Comité has shown much lively interest . . . Will you also please be so kind as to convey the gratitude of our Comité to the authors of the report and express to them its gratitude for the honor they have shown it in dedicating to it their work.

Mr. Delage to Maurice Ries (extract):
I did not fail to pass on to the Comité France-Amerique a copy of the study that you very kindly gave me on the subject of the location of Fort de la Boulaye. The Comité France-Amerique has requested me, by the letter* of which I am enclosing a copy, to pass on its gratitude. It has also written His Excellency, the Ambassador of France to the United States, that it has decided to consider the following eventualities: 1st., Whether to publish a resumé or extracts from the report; 2nd., The promoting of a manifestation of Franco-American friendship in Louisiana on the occasion of the erection of a monument on the site of the ancient fort.


THE LOCATION OF FORT LABOULAYE IN LOUISIANA

Much has been written already about Louisiana, ceded by Napoleon I to the United States, and on the French mementoes, which, though much time has elapsed, still are there. One fact, however, was almost completely forgotten—the founding of the first French fortified work, the Fort Laboulaye, on the ground which was to become that of Louisiana. This post was established on the banks of the Mississippi about 50 miles from the mouth of the great river. It lasted only about 15 years, between 1700-1715, and its population never exceeded 25 persons. This fort, of which the ruins have disappeared, and of which the traces nearly escaped the memory of man, and which very unjustly has not found its place in official history, was of first importance, as it commanded and controlled the entrance to the Mississippi Valley. Four historians, Messrs. Prescott Follett, Maurice Ries, Gordon Callender, and Albert Lieutaud, have located precisely, following long and detailed research, the site of this fort, called Laboulaye. They have condensed the result of their research in a work of which only a few copies have been made. The principal documents on which rest their argumentation are old maps, taken from different libraries. These maps, extremely beautiful, have been photographed and reproduced in the work of these learned historians, and are not one of its lesser attractions. A very detailed bibliography completes this very important work.

Pierre Mory, vice-consul of France at New Orleans, writing for Mr. Delage, to Mr. Ries (in full):

*Quoted above, under date of 18 May, 1933.
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

New Orleans, La.,
3 December 1933.

I have the honor to inform you that the Minister of Foreign Affairs of France has just acknowledged receipt of the reports written by you in collaboration with Messrs. Albert Lieutaud, Prescott H. Follett and Gordon Callender, relative to the researches which have enabled you to discover traces of the old Fort de la Boulaye, first French establishment built in Louisiana.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs informs me that he has read with great interest these reports which constitute an important and useful contribution to French colonial history. He has asked me on this occasion to convey to you his personal congratulations to which he wishes to add his thanks for your kind thought in communicating to him the results of this most interesting work.

M. Chabaud to Mr. Delage (translation of extract acknowledging receipt of new report):

Paris, France,
28 December 1933.

...we thank you for sending it to us; we have studied it with interest and we will be happy to preserve this report with the preceding one in our library, and together the two will constitute valuable documents of the history of the first occupation of Louisiana by the French.

Furthermore, we have requested the Journal des Nations Américaines “France-Amérique du Nord”, to publish a new article on the subject...we would be obliged to you if you would...express to them in the name of our Comité our most sincere congratulations on their work and the success of their research.

Mr. Delage to Mr. Ries (extract):

New Orleans, La.,
16 January 1934.

The Secretary-General of the Comité France-Amerique, in acknowledging receipt of this report, has asked me to convey to you in the name of the Comité and in his name personally, his most sincere congratulations upon your work and the ultimate success of your researches.
Andre de Laboulaye, Ambassador of France to the United States, to Mr. Delage (translation of extract):

Washington, D. C.,
5 February 1934.

You have had the kindness to forward in the name of their authors two important memoirs by Messieurs Maurice Ries, Albert Lieutaud, Prescott Follett, and Gordon Callender. Thanks to the remarkable knowledge they possess of manuscripts and printed sources and to the intelligence with which they have conducted their investigations on the site itself, these erudite gentlemen have made a notable and meritorious contribution to the history of French Louisiana. I have decided that their very remarkable work deserved to be preserved at the French Institute of Washington, the purpose of which is to preserve evidence of French influence in the historical development of North America.

Mr. Delage to Mr. Ries (extract):

New Orleans, La.,
10 February 1934.

Mr. de Laboulaye, Ambassador of France at Washington, in acknowledging receipt of the copy of your recent report on the Fort de la Boulaye, informs me that he has judged this remarkable document worthy of being preserved at the French Institute of Washington.


THE LOCATION OF THE FORT DE LA BOULAYE IN LOUISIANA

Despite considerable passage of time, there are still in Louisiana many traces of the first occupation by the French. Last year we noted the work of four historians, Messers. Prescott Follett, Maurice Ries, Gordon W. Callender, and Albert Lieutaud, on the first French fortified works in Louisiana, Fort de la Boulaye, established on the bank of the Mississippi,
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

and which commanded and controlled the entrance of the Mississippi. These historians, basing their work on old maps, had succeeded in determining the location of this fort, which was only in existence about 15 years, from 1700-1715, and the garrison of which never exceeded 25 persons in spite of its strategic importance. Their first findings have been set forth in a report of only a few copies, of which we have spoken a year ago. New facts have permitted them to change the conclusions of the first report and to fix with absolute certainty the location of this fort and to recover the last vestiges of it. These remains had been discovered in 1923 by laborers digging a canal, who brought to light two rows of hand-squared cypress pieces. They were found only several hundred meters from the location determined by the conclusions in the first report. The pieces of wood that have been preserved have been turned over to the historians and Mr. Lieutaud now is in actual possession of them. These new facts have been set forth in a report supplementing that of last year, and these historians have had the delicacy to dedicate the second as well as the first to the Comité France-Amérique.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abstracts of Letters from Cadillac, Dirigoin and Bienville to Crozat: Louisiana, October 1713. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 174.)

An Account of Louisiana, laid before Congress by direction of the President of the United State, November 14th, 1803. An account of its boundaries, history, cities, towns, and settlements; of the origin, number and strength of its inhabitants; of its rivers, canals, mountains, minerals, and productions of soil; of the different tribes of Indians, and the number of their warriors; and of its navigation and laws under the Spanish government; etc., etc. Providence, Printed by Heaton and Williams. (n. d.)


Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: Letter to Pontchartrain. Fort Louis (of Louisiana) September 6, 1704. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 18.)

Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: Letter to Pontchartrain. Fort Louis (of Louisiana) April 10, 1706. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 18.)

Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: Letter to Pontchartrain. Fort Louis (of Louisiana) February 20, 1707. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 35.)

Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: Letter to Pontchartrain. Fort Louis (of Louisiana) February 25, 1708. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 111.

Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: Letter to Pontchartrain. Louisiana, August 12 and September 11, 1709. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 132.)

Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: Letter to Pontchartrain. Fort of Louisiana (Mobile), August 20, 1709. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 135.)
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye

Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: Letter to Pontchartrain. Port of Massacre (Dauphine Island), June 21, 1710. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 151.)

Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: Letter to Pontchartrain. Port Dauphin, October 27, 1711. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 158.)

Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: Letter to Pontchartrain. Louisiana, March 2, 1712. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 171.)

Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: Letter to Pontchartrain. Fort Louis (of Louisiana), June 15, 1715. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 181.)

Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: Letter to Pontchartrain. Fort Louis (of Louisiana), September 1, 1715. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 184.)

Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: Fort Louis (of Louisiana), January 2, 1716. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 191.)

Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: Letter to Cadillac. Fort St. Joseph at the Tunicas, June 23, 1716. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 213.)

Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: Letter to the Navy Council. Fort Louis of Louisiana, June 12, 1718. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 227.)

Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: Letter to Raudot. Fort Louis (of Louisiana), January 20, 1716. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 197.)

Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: Letter to the Regency Council. Fort Louis (of Louisiana), May 10, 1717. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 218.)

Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de: (See also Abstracts.)

Boisbriant, Pierre Dugué, Sieur de: Letter to Pontchartrain. Mobile, February 28, 1708. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 125.)

The Louisiana Historical Quarterly

Cadillac, Antoine de Lamothe: Letter to Pontchartrain. Fort Louis of Louisiana, (Mobile). May 16, 1714. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 178.)

Cadillac, Antoine de Lamothe: (See also Abstracts.)


Company of the West to the Navy Council: Paris. (1716) (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 190.)

Coxe, Daniel: A Description of the English Province of Carolina, by the Spaniards called Florida, and by the French La Louisiane. As also of the great and famous river Meschacebe or Mississippi, the five vast navigable lakes of fresh water, and the parts adjacent. Together with an account of the commodities of the growth and production of the said province. (In French, B. F.: Part II, 1850.)

D'Artagouette, Commissaire Ordonnateur Diron: Letter to Pontchartrain. Fort Louis. June 20, 1710. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, II, 55.)

D'Artagouette, Commissaire Ordonnateur Diron: Memoir. Ft. Louis (of Louisiana), February 25, 1708. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 107.)

D'Iberville, Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur: Extracts from the journal of the voyage of d'Iberville on His Majesty's ship "La Renom-mee" in 1699 from Cape French to the Mississippi coast and his return. (In Margry, IV, 402.)

D'Iberville, Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur: Historical Journal, or, Narrative of the Expedition Made by Order of Louis XIV, King of France, Under Command of M. d'Iberville, to Explore the Col-
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye


D' Iberville, Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur: Letter from D' Iberville to the Minister of the Marine. Des Bayougoulas, February 26, 1700. (Margry, IV, 361.)

Dirigoin, Director of the Company of the West in Louisiana: (See Abstracts.)

Duclos, Commissary General of Louisiana: Letter to Pontchartrain. Dauphine Island, June 7, 1716. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 203.)


Falconer, Thomas: On the Discovery of the Mississippi, and on the Southwestern, Oregon, and North-western Boundary of the United States. With a translation from the original ms. of memoirs, etc., relating to the discovery of the Mississippi, by Robert Cavelier de la Salle and the Chevalier Henry de Tonty. London, S. Clarke, 1844. (See also Tonty.)


Gravier, Father James: *Journal of the Voyage of Father Gravier of the Society of Jesus, in 1700, from the Country of the Illinois to the Mouth of the Mississippi, addressed to Father de Lamberville, and sent from the Fort of the Mississippi, 17 leagues from its Mouth in the Gulf or sea of Mexico, February 16, 1701.* (In Shea, *Early voyages up and down the Mississippi.*)


La Salle, Nicolas de, Commissary of the Navy in Louisiana: Letter to Pontchartrain. Massacre Island, March 4, 1708. (In Rowland and Sanders, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, III, 125.)

Le Seur, M.: *Voyage up the Mississippi in 1699-1700 by Mr. Le Seur, as given by Bénard De La Harpe, from Seur's Journal.* (In Shea, John Gilmary, *Early Voyages Up and Down the Mississippi.* Albany, 1861.)


The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye


Navy Council: Minutes. Paris, November 18, 1716. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 216.)


Pontchartrain, Jerome Phelypeaux, Count de, Minister of Marine and Colonies: Letter to Bienville. Versailles, January 30, 1704. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 15.)

Pontchartrain, Jerome Phelypeaux, Count de: Letter to Bienville. Versailles, February 13, 1704. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 18.)

Pontchartrain, Jerome Phelypeaux, Count de: Letter to Bienville. Versailles, June 30, 1707. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 68.)

Pontchartrain, Jerome Phelypeaux, Count de: Letter to Bienville. Versailles, July 11, 1709. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 127.)

Pontchartrain, Jerome Phelypeaux, Count de: Letter to Bienville. Marly (-le-Roi), May 10, 1710. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 139.)

Pontchartrain, Jerome Phelypeaux, Count de: Letter to Bienville. Marly (-le-Roi), May 13, 1710. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 142.)

Pontchartrain, Jerome Phelypeaux, Count de: Letter to Bienville. Marly (-le-Roi), September 2, 1710. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 154.)

Pontchartrain, Jerome Phelypeaux, Count de: Letter to Bienville. Marly (-le-Roi), September 9, 1710. (In Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, III, 155.)


Pontchartrain, Jérôme Phélypeaux, Count de: Letter to de Muy. Marly (le-Roi), July 23, 1707. (In Rowland and Sanders, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, III, 74.)


Sanders, A. G.: (See Rowland, Dunbar, and Sanders, A. G.)

Sauvole (De Sauvole de La Villantray): Sauvole to (Pontchartrain): Biloxi, August 4, 1701. Letter of Mr. De Sauvole relating to the succession of the events that took place in the fort of Biloxi from the departure of the vessel for Santo Domingo on May 2, 1700. (Ministry of the Colonies, Series C. 18, *General Correspondence of Louisiana*, Vol. I, pp. 315-322; Copy Vol. I, pp. 149-162. Marginal note: “To be classified in the portfolio of the journals and relations about this colony.” P. 315) (In Rowland and Sanders, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 9.)
The Mississippi Fort, Called Fort De La Boulaye


Soniat Du Fossat, Chevalier: *Synopsis of the History of Louisiana from the founding of the colony to the year 1791.* Translated from the French, at the request, and by resolution of the Louisiana Historical Society, by one of its members, Charles T. Soniat, Esq., a descendent of the Chevalier and a member of the Louisiana Bar Association. n.d. n.p.

Société des Américanistes de Paris: (See Villiers, Baron Marc de.)

Villiers, Baron Marc de: *A history of the Foundation of New Orleans* (1717-1722).


Tonty, Henry, Sieur de: “Memoir sent in 1693, on the discovery of the Mississippi and the neighbouring nations by M. de La Salle, from the year 1676 to the time of his death, and by the Sieur de Tonty to the year 1691.” (In Falconer, *On the Discovery of the Mississippi.*)

