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## THE WRECK OF LA SUPERBE IN THE GULF OF MEXICO EN ROUTE FROM VERA CRUZ TO NEW ORLEANS, MAY, 1745

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With an account of the disaster by her Captain and other persons on board, and of the losses, sufferings and adventures of the survivors in Texas and Mexico and among the Atakapas Indians in Texas and of the voyage by some of these in an open boat from that Coast to New Orleans.

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Translated with some assistance by the editor from the original documents in the Archives of the Superior Council of Louisiana at the Cabildo, New Orleans.\*

By HELOISE H. CRUZAT

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### INTRODUCTION

BY HENRY P. DART

The Superbe was a french vessel commanded by the Chevalier Grenier. She sailed from New Orleans March 14, 1745, for Vera Cruz to purchase flour for the needs of the Colony. She was therefore either owned or chartered by the local government and had an official character. This further appears from the fact that the Captain had a "detachment" on board in charge of Mr. Duhomel, officer of the same.

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\*Referring to her work on this record, Mrs. Cruzat in a letter to the Editor says: "I could not resist going over it again, adding and retrenching, which I could continue indefinitely, without bettering it as I cannot change the text which, though the script is good, is horrible in construction and orthography and at times very obscure and full of contradictions. For instance, even Grenier will say that he sailed westward and adds: 'I say eastward' or something similar. All I can do is to set it down verbatim even if it does seem nonsensical."

(NOTE BY THE EDITOR) Mrs. Cruzat's transcription of the text has been filed with the latter in our archives for the use of anyone sufficiently interested. A comparison of this carefully typed copy with the original text will show the enormous labor that is expended on these documents before they reach the eye of the reader.



She arrived at Vera Cruz March 29th and sailed on the return voyage April 19th, with a cargo of 472 sacks of flour and a crew and company of 116 men. At Vera Cruz Captain Grenier hired and loaded for his own account another vessel, a Spanish Brigantine, and the two ships left that port together and kept company at sea until the 27th of April, when they parted because the *Superbe* was running short of water and Captain Grenier believed he could make the home port by crowding sail, as the *Superbe* was the better sailer.

After parting with his consort he seems to have concluded to search the shore for water and wood and he altered his course accordingly, making here the first of a series of unhappy errors of judgment which ended in the destruction of his vessel and cargo and the ultimate loss of a large part of his crew and company.

On the 29th of April, at night, the soundings showed his vessel in 30 fathoms, with muddy sandy bottom. He altered his course to the north and at four o'clock the next evening found himself in 3 fathoms and the same bottom. Believing he was west of the Mississippi, he shifted the helm and ran for three days with light winds, that soon failed entirely. He was evidently in sight of the coast for now he put out a boat for water and wood, getting only a small supply of the former. The wind freshened and he took his bearings while over a sand bank three fathoms beneath. A wise sailor gave his opinion, that they were east of the Balize and they raised anchor and ran southwest for three days coasting the shore.

Seeing smoke on the land, he sent in a boat which after long delay reported a talk with Indians from which they gathered they were near Pensacola. The course was again altered and they continued until May 11th, suffering for water and evidently hopelessly fuddled as to their location. His experience on the outward voyage should have taught him that with the fair winds he had been having he should have long since sighted the Balize and certainly at not more than 15 days out. That night, the wind increasing, he instructed Sr. Yvon, his second officer, to run to sea, but the latter insisted they were in seven to eight fathoms with nothing to fear and that they should not think of leaving the coast without water.

"after which he contented himself with telling him to be careful to have soundings taken and after prayers he went



to bed ordering his boatswain to keep strict watch and always to have his plumb in hand. The Declarer thinks he too went to bed, for at half past nine at night, that is one hour later, the said boat struck a sandbank amidst breakers."

The story of the ensuing struggle in the darkness, is very graphically told by the Captain. A part of the cargo was jettisoned, the main mast was cut away and a raft was made upon which thirteen men threw themselves and were washed upon the shore a league away. The two boats of the ship which are called a dory and a canoe, with their crews were washed away and drifted upon a sand bar or little islet. By strenuous efforts at day break the next morning the remainder of the company reached this refuge save one, a spanish sailor who spent the night lashed to the stump of the mainmast which still held to the ship and this unfortunate was drowned at daylight. The ship went to pieces during the second night.

The sailors who had gained the mainland by way of the raft spent their time looting the chests that had been cast ashore, and it would seem that a like demoralization affected the remainder of the crew, who with the Captain kept to the island. He next sent thirteen armed men ashore to explore the country and seventeen Spaniards shortly afterwards requested permission to leave. The latter met the first contingent. The raft-men and that whole party turned back to report finding Indians who had frightened them with tales of bad Indians further on and saying also they were about six days from Pensacola.

The Captain thereupon led all his men ashore and divided them into two parties, one with 14 men to follow the coast in the canoe and the remainder, 100 men to march with him in search of rescue. In this last body, a large portion were armed with guns, pistols and ammunition which had been saved, and they were supplied with bread made from some of the flour that they had salvaged on the island the morning after the wreck.

The line of march was evidently south, but this like much else is an inference deduced from the results. The Captain's story, all we have on that part of the adventure, shows that there was dissension, disobedience of orders, diversion and separation. The separated parties lost sight of each other. They were attacked in detail by Indians, many died, and ultimately the group that remained with the Captain were captured, stripped of their



clothes and arms and marched into Mexico, where on July 5, 1745, the survivors now reduced to twenty-seven reached Tampico, naked and starving. In Duhomel's deposition he says that the party got away from Tampico on a boat hired by the captain "La Notre Dame de la Gaudeloupe".

They left Tampico August 31st and reached New Orleans September 26, 1745. On the next day in the Registry (Clerk's Office) of the Superior Council the Captain and Sieur Duhomel told the story of the wreck and the former gave the details of the tragedy from the point of view of the Cabin and in substantial accord with the story of the crew of the canoe who had reached New Orleans before the Captain on August 3, 1745, and had been examined in the Registry, as we shall presently relate. The Captain also told the adventures of the expedition conducted by him on land that ended in the dismal arrival of the sad remnant at Tampico.

It will later on appear that the eight members of the crew of the canoe succeeded in navigating the Gulf in their open boat and had reached New Orleans on August 3rd, one month and twenty-three days before the arrival of Grenier's party. The deposition of the Captain makes no mention of this fact and it is entirely possible that he was concerned at that moment only to put forward the briefest account of his own mismanagement of the voyage.

From the report of Captain Grenier it appears that in the midst of his misery at and after the wreck, his crew were of no service at all and confessedly were out of control. The sailors who first reached the shore by the raft travelled he says around a "bottom" more than a league in extent, breaking open and plundering the chests and trunks that had been thrown ashore by the sea and casting what they did not want back into the water;—the second quota did the same, nothing was saved through their efforts, the merciful sea being the sole agent in preserving such part of the cargo as was afterwards used by the Captain to keep the castaways alive. In his journey south the same characteristics appeared. The Captain says he kept the Indians off so long as the men took care of their arms and powder, but in passing through many lagoons and rivers they allowed the powder to get wet and at the last stand against the Indians they were reduced to the contents of one small flagon of powder. Provisions failed, they



turned to the Indians for succor and were reduced to live in misery, that the Indians robbed them of all their belongings and stripped them "stark naked and sent them to Tampico, which they reached 27 in number after a march of 44 days." A curious feature of the Captain's report is its lack of detail as to his cargo papers and other valuables entrusted to his men, possibly because he could not add anything to the tale as told earlier by the survivors of the Canoe.

The story of Duhomel is brief but particularly interesting as he tells a feature mentioned by none of the others. He was an officer of the detached troops of the Marine in Louisiana and on the *Superbe* commanded a detachment of troops of the Colony. When leaving New Orleans on the outward voyage the *Sieur Forstall* entrusted to him four ingots of gold to be delivered by him at Vera Cruz to *Forstall Jr.*, who went out with him on the *Superbe*, the gold to be employed by the latter as privately directed by *Forstall Senior*. The junior, however, could not use the gold and he returned these ingots to Duhomel to be delivered to his father in New Orleans. When leaving Vera Cruz Duhomel locked them in his trunk and at the shipwreck took care to throw the latter into the sea and the trunk was washed ashore and saved with its contents. Then at this point he took the gold ingots out of the trunk and delivered them to soldiers to carry, but when they were near Tampico the savages of that place killed some of the party and plundered all of the others, leaving them naked. It is to be assumed, though not mentioned, that the gold disappeared at this time, though that is not affirmatively stated by Duhomel. Just why he (Duhomel) did not keep the gold in his own possession is another unexplained issue.

Let us now turn to the adventures of the fourteen volunteers who manned the small boat, to follow the coast-side march of the Captain. It appears these men faithfully obeyed the instructions of their superior officer and followed his party until it was lost to sight owing to the nature of the coast line which threw land travel further into the interior. Nevertheless they kept on until they had sailed 70 leagues. Enroute they picked up a sailor of the Captain's party, left behind with an abscessed thigh. He was starving, living on grass. Eventually the boat reached the scene of the wreck, but before arriving they had again landed and while camped were surprised by hostile Indians whom they



"amused" by abandoning some bolts of taffeta they were carrying. Here, or soon after, six of their party abandoned the boat, saying they preferred to remain with the Indians and declaring they would as soon die on land as at sea. At the scene of the wreck they found the Indians had salvaged all the rest of the flour and they effected an exchange of part of their own cargo (a few bolts of silk) for six sacks of flour and resumed their voyage, leaving behind the seaman "Le Bonhomme Yvon," who did not wish to go on with them. This Sr. Yvon was the luckless second in command whose advice on the fatal night caused the captain to stay in shallow water while the boatswain slept and failed to feel the dragging anchor sweeping the boat into the breakers. He had doubtless a twinge of conscience or mayhap suffered from the criticism of the survivors. In any event, it is meticulously set down by the sailor Jean Baptiste Viole that Yvon said he

"would not embark with them on account of the risks they had to run, saying that he preferred to remain with these savages whom he believed to be good people with whom he would get on as best he could than to risk drowning with them."

On the determination of *Sieur Yvon* (*Hyvon*) to remain with the savages, *Sailor Pierre Montel* of *Bordeaux* says "the eight others embarked trusting to the mercy of God," and after a journey of a month or five weeks recognized the *Balize* and went there (at the mouth of the *Mississippi*) and departing thence for *New Orleans* delivered some clothes belonging to *Mr. Duhomel* and after reporting to the *Governor* and *Commissaire*

"they went to the home of *Sr. Hevier* who has the details of the merchandise of the said boat, to whom they delivered the remainder of the clothes they had for *Mr. the Chev. Grenier*, some papers and silverware he was told were owned by *Sr. Rasteau*."

These eight men arrived in *New Orleans* the night of *August 14, 1745*, and as was the custom of those days, they were taken the next morning into the *Registry* (*Clerk's office*) of the *Superior Council* and before *Messire Henry*, the *Greffier* (*Clerk*) they made separate statements of their adventures, which were reduced to writing and signed by them or not according to their ability to write. Doubtless too, they told their tales out of the presence of each other, for that was another rigid method of the times and the several depositions would seem to confirm this view. Only seven men testified before the *Clerk* at that session,



the other, Francois Vrignan or Brignan "has fever, colics and pains in his chest which confine him to his bed and who cannot come to make his declaration," but his declaration is in the record,—the last one to appear and taken doubtless at his bedside by the Clerk, though this is not stated by him.

Of those survivors, Louis Poitevan was a sail-maker and the remainder all sailors, before the mast, viz:—Jacques Colino, Francois Molino, Blaize Benoist, Jean Baptiste Viole, Louis Besson, Pierre Montel, Francois Brignan (Vrignan). Evidently all these people are French, but the natal place of one only is given, Montel of Bordeaux; neither do we know their ages. Viole shipped at Martinique. None but Vrignan, the sick man, could read or write,—he alone acknowledges in the affirmative the clerk's inquiry, and it is worth nothing that this man gives the briefest and clearest account of the adventure. They are typical seamen, and talk a language of their own. It is palpable Messire Henry had a struggle to get it straight and strove to put it down as they said it. We would be glad to have had even more than the Clerk has given us, but as the record lies here are all the elements of a first-class sea story from the lips of men before the mast.

There are many other points of interest in the story of these sailors. From it we learn that the brigantine (the slow sailer of the voyage) arrived safely "long ago," that Sieur Rasteau, a prominent merchant in New Orleans was a passenger on that boat, but that he had entrusted his papers and silverware to the *Superbe*, probably believing that her fast *heels*, armed soldiers and large company spelled for safety against the *rovers* of the Caribbean and Mexican seas, rather than the slow brigantine, only to prove anew that the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. Nor could merchant Rasteau foresee that in the hour of peril to the fast ship his valuable papers and his silverware would fall to the custody of eight unknown seamen in an open boat and that they would guard and watch over their charge through every peril of the sea and while their own lives were endangered by savage Indians on land and by wind and water and starvation at sea. Our heart warms to the simple words wherein Viole recites that

"on arriving here they returned to the store of Mr. the Chevalier Grenier his clothes, silver and papers which they saved by hand at the time the bad savages fell upon them and they saved themselves"



and we read with equal warmth the longer but no less simple statement of Besson that having journeyed during about a month and a half they recognized the Balize and went there

"where they delivered the packet of clothes from the trunk of Mr. Duhomel to Mr. Chavoy and having arrived here (New Orleans) and having made their report to Mr. the Governor and (the) General Commissaire they carried the remainder of clothes belonging to Mr. the Chevalier, papers and silverware of Mr. Rasteau, which they delivered to Mr. Hervier in their warehouse."

We gather also that the crew of the *Superbe* was a motley one and that when the Chevalier detached the canoe and the dory to follow along the coast, he manned it with negroes and mulattoes but

"seeing how badly the men in the dory and canoe handled the boat and that they ran the risk of drowning \* \* \* he detached fourteen who offered to take their places, including Sr. Ivon who could not walk."

These volunteers took on board the best they could find in the trunks that had come on shore and they held on to these valuables until they were compelled to use some of the goods to "amuse" the assaulting Indians whilst they fled to their boat, and to exchange other parts for food at the last stage of their journey. They were evidently good men and true and save for the six who preferred to die on land as they feared they would on sea, there must have been a strong sense of discipline mixed with steadfast courage and sterling honesty in these eight shipwrecked sailors who reached New Orleans on the night of August 4th, 1745, with the papers and silverware of Rasteau the merchant prince of those old days in New Orleans. Let us believe though the record does not show it that he did not fail to reward these faithful fellows, both physically and financially, as they so well deserved.

Another angle to the story of the sailors is the indian one. The first "nation" they met was at the scene of the shipwreck and these were Atacapas who seemed both friendly and thrifty, for they made no attempt to harrass the castaways, though helping themselves (as was their right) to the cargo that had been cast upon their barren shore. Mrs. Cruzat has prepared a note about these Indians that must be read in this connection, showing the wide range of the Atacapas tribe who were at home in South-western Louisiana and in Northeastern Texas. Had the crew of the canoe fallen into the hands of the "Indios Bravos" who set



upon them seventy leagues south of the wreck, we would have lost this racy story of a voyage in an open boat in the Gulf of Mexico around the coast of Texas and Louisiana, for this last named tribe proved that they were the real "man eaters" and not the Atacapas who bear that legend in our history.

## THE DOCUMENTS

By HELOISE H. CRUZAT

### I

Declarations in Registry of Superior Council by members of the crew,  
*La Superbe*.

Aug. 4, 1745.  
Louis Poitevin  
Declaration  
(4038)  
fo. 29.  
26728

On this fourth day of August, one thousand seven hundred and forty-five, appeared in the Registry of the Superior Council of Louisiana, Louis Poitevin, sailmaker, of the boat *La Superbe*, Captain Mr. Le Chevalier Grenier, who said and declared to us that he left on the said boat with a crew composed of one hundred and ten men, including Mr. Duhomel, officer of the troops of this garrison, commanding a detachment of a sergeant, a sailmaker ("*Coutrier*") and four soldiers, on the nineteenth of last April second feast of Easter<sup>1</sup> to come to New Orleans, accompanied by a brigantine freighted for account of Mr. le Cher Grenier, with a cargo of flour for this Colony; that on the twenty-seventh of the said month, the said boat *La Superbe*, detached itself from the brigantine owing to shortage of water and wood which made it necessary for her to sail with all speed for the Bazile; that on the twelfth of May following they struck a sand-bank and the boat split open which obliged them to save themselves on land from which they were about a good quarter league distant. They were all saved but one Spanish sailor whom the Chevalier had engaged at Vera Cruz who had the misfortune to perish. After having remained eight days upon the land which was unknown to them ("*sur une terre qui leur etoit inconnue*") they determined to separate to try and reach a place they  
26729 could recognize, he, the declarer embarked in a canoe with fourteen other men and another named Louis to follow the Chevalier Grenier who had taken the party to follow the coast to Vera Cruz; after having made seventy leagues coast-

<sup>1</sup>First feast: Palm Sunday.

Second feast: Easter Sunday.



ing the land they met Savages who prevented them from landing, and they concluded to turn back, as their provisions were running short and they returned to the place where they were wrecked and where they had seen the Savages salvage flour from the cargo of the boat when it broke up. They gave them enough to live on and they came here on the eighth, sailing close to the shore, to the Isle of the Balize and they arrived here last night about eight o'clock and slept at (house of) Sr. Hervier, merchant charged with commercial affairs of the said boat; that they brought with them some packages belonging to Chevalier Grenier and to Monsieur Duhomel, that he left the one owned by my said Mr. Du-

homel with Mr. de Chavoye, Commandant at the Balize, 26730 and brought and delivered to Sr. Hervier that of Mr. le

Chevalier Grenier; that there were also some papers and silverware belonging to Sr. Rateau (Rasteau) who embarked in the said brigantine and had arrived here safely long ago, and he made the present declaration to us to serve and avail as need may be at New Orleans on the above day, month and year, and declared that he did not know how to write nor sign following inquiry as per Ordinance.

JACQUES  
COLINO

Also appeared Jacques Colino, sailor on the boat La Superbe, Captain Mr. Le Ch<sup>r</sup> Grenier, who said and declared to us that they left Vera Cruz in the said boat about four months ago with a brigantine, that having left the said brigantine eight or nine days after their departure from Vera Cruz they stayed eight days on the way and the pilot said that they were below the Balize though they had gone much beyond it; that on the eighth day they were wrecked near an islet in a Bay, that the third time the ship struck the rudder broke and they were obliged to cut down the mast, Mr. le Ch<sup>er</sup> Grenier giving the first stroke with the axe; then they threw their canoe into the sea, to be able to wait until the next day to see if they could save themselves. The first time the ship struck it was about half past eight at night. The next day perceiving that they were not far from land some of them swam over and brought the canoe which had been washed ashore to Mr. le Ch<sup>er</sup> Grenier and Mr. Duhomel who also went to shore, and afterwards all of them little by little went to land in the said canoe; a short while afterwards the boat went to pieces entirely and a quantity of flour was thrown from the sea on the coast. A number of the sailors having crossed to the



main land two days after their shipwreck found seven Savages whom they conducted to Chevalier Grenier but no one could understand their language and fourteen days after the wreck they all crossed over to the main land and set out to make their way along the coast; that Mr. le Chevalier Grenier told one La Cadie and others in the canoe, the declarer being one of them, to follow him along the shore; that not being able to go as fast on water as the Ch<sup>er</sup> Grenier by land they coasted for about twenty days in this way; about the fifteenth day they found a sailor who had remained behind because he had an abscess in his thigh. This sailor told them that he had fasted a great deal and been obliged to eat grass. He told them Chevalier Grenier had passed there eight days before; they took this man in the canoe and continued following after Chevalier Grenier, during four days when they met a small nation of "little" Savages who tried to kill them with arrows, and they threw them some bolts of taffetas with which they amused themselves, and that six of them entered the woods and continued their way by land to overtake Mr. le Chevalier. The declarer with the others in the canoe turned back, as they had no more provisions, to where they were wrecked, where they took some flour and left Sr. Hyvon with the nation of Savages first found and they continued their route along the shore and came to the Balize and from there to New Orleans where they arrived last night, which is all he said he knew and made the present declaration to us to serve and avail as need may be and declared that he did not know how to write nor sign, after inquiry as per Ordinance.

**FRANCOIS MOLINO** Also appeared Francois Molino, sailor on the boat La Superbe, Captain Mr. le Ch<sup>er</sup> Grenier, of Vera Cruz (who said) that they left Vera Cruz three months and a half ago with another Spanish brigantine which was loaded with flour for said Sr. Grenier, that eight days after their departure from Vera Cruz Mr. le Chevalier having hardly any water told Mr. Ratau (Rasteau) who was on the brigantine that he would put on full sail to endeavor to make land to get water. They touched land and continued to follow the shore during seven or eight days until they found water; they still counted on being below the Balize, that ten or twelve days after having left the brigantine, between eight and nine o'clock at night, the ship ran aground near an islet and as there was a heavy sea and their canoe could not resist the waves they were



unable to carry an anchor to work her off and the wind made them sink more and more, their rudder broke and they were obliged to cut the mast and throw the cannon into the sea as well as flour in order to lighten the boat and to be able to hold out until the morning. The next day, seeing that they were not far from land, a number of those who could swim swam to land and found there the canoe which had been cast up by the sea. They went in it for Mr. Duhomel and Mr. le Chevalier, and little by little they crossed over every one excepting a Spaniard who was drowned; only a half hour after all had left the ship it went to pieces at four or five o'clock in the evening; that everybody on shore gathered sacks of flour, they picked up about 250 qrtrs and they saved from the wreck forty-two guns, some pistols, two barrels of powder and balls, that they remained on this island about fifteen days after which they crossed to the mainland where they slept one night and remained a part of the day, after which Mr. le Cher de Grenier and all his crew made their way on land thinking they were going to Pensacola, and he (Grenier) told those who were in the canoe to follow him along the coast, that the sea being heavy they were obliged to put in on an island where they remained during eight days, after which the weather being good they continued to follow the route taken by my said Sr. le Cher Grenier, and ten days after leaving the island they found a sailor of said Sr. Cher Grenier who told them that he had passed there eight days previously and that they were in three bands. They took this man in their canoe and continued their route during eighteen days at the end of which time they found Savages who seemed to wish to kill them they gave them all they had and whilst they amused themselves with what they had abandoned they pushed off their canoe and nine returned in it, the others saying they would rather perish there than in the sea and they returned to the isle where they were wrecked where they found nothing; they went to the mainland and found that the Savages had taken all the flour of which they gave them six sacks for a few bolts of silk which were all that was in the canoe. They left the seaman ("Le Bonhomme hyvon") who did not wish to go on with them. They resolved to follow the land hoping to find some post and they reached the Balize last Tuesday, which is all he said he knew and made the present declaration to us to serve and avail as need may be, declaring that he did not know how to write nor sign, after inquiry as per Ordinance.



BLAIZE  
BENOIST

Also appeared Blaize Benoist, sailor on the boat La Superbe, commanded by Mr. le Chev<sup>r</sup> Grenier, who said and declared to us that he left Vera Cruz with the Mr. the Chevalier Grenier and a brigantine loaded with flour for said Sr. Grenier about four months ago, that eight days after their departure from Vera Cruz Mr. the Chev<sup>r</sup> Grenier being in want of water told Mr. Rateau (Rasteau) who was in the brigantine that he was forced to go full sail in order to find water and that the next day they touched land where they secured water, then they followed the land during five days and afterwards having taken to the open sea they passed the Balize without being aware of it as the pilot said that they were above it, the (Balize); that about ten days after they had left the brigantine, they were wrecked on an islet on the twelfth of May, at eight or 26736 nine o'clock at night, and were compelled to throw their cannon into the sea, to cut down the mast and to throw their flour overboard in order to lighten the boat and be able to hold on until morning, they saw that they were near an islet to which some of them swam and found the canoe on shore, in which they returned to fetch Mr. Grenier and Mr. Duhomel and later the remainder of the crew, after which they saw the ship go to pieces entirely. They remained about three weeks on the said island after which they crossed to the mainland where they met Savages. That having rested some time the Chevalier Grenier and his folks took the route along the coast the canoe following Mr. Grenier, they set sail and not being able to gain headway because of the sea that was on they sought harbor, that having spoken to Mr. Grenier he told them to await better weather to join and follow him, that they remained eight days on the said island and then followed after Mr. le Chevalier, that after having proceeded during fifteen days they met one of the sailors who had gone with Mr. le Chevalier and had dropped behind because he was ill and who told him that the Chevalier had passed eight days previously, that they took this man and were yet five or six days trying to catch up with Mr. the Chevalier and that, not being able to do so and having come upon Savages who wished to kill them, they turned back to the place where they had been wrecked and the Savages who had taken the flour gave them six sacks of it after which they followed the coast to the Balize and from there to New Orleans where they arrived last Tuesday and he had made the present declaration to us to



serve and avail as need may be and declared that he does not know how to sign nor write after inquiry following the Ordinance.

JEAN Bte  
VIOLE

Also appeared Jean Baptiste Viole, sailor on the boat La Superbe, Captain Mr. the Chevalier Grenier, who told us that he was engaged on the said boat at Martinique, that having left Vera Cruz, not knowing the day but about eighteen days after, they had the misfortune to be wrecked by the wind at the Bay St. Bernard, that later on the twelfth of May, Mr. the Chevalier Grenier being unable to hold out longer where he was on account of bad weather and that his boat had struck a sandbank, he ordered him into the canoe, with five men and provisions and told him to make for the land half league off to find out if they could recognize some of the tribes ("nations"), to which the declarer and others answered that they did not think it necessary which compelled the Chevalier to tell them to take tinder (*mèche allumée*) to build a fire on reaching land, which wick was extinguished shortly afterwards by the waves which washed over the canoe; that the next day after having been to land they came back, carried Mr. the Chevalier to the land and all the rest of the crew without having saved any clothes for anyone whomsoever, that at the end of twelve days there came some Savages who spoke to them and made them understand that Pensaloca ("*passacole*") was to the west of them. That they had previously left the land on which they were, which was an island to go to the mainland, where they made bread with some cases of flour which had come ashore, that on the report of the Savages Mr. the Chevalier caused to be embarked in the canoe and in the dory all the provisions they could save from the shipwreck with a trunk belonging to Mr. Duhomel which had come to the shore, that they had only negroes and mulattoes in the boats, that having gone about a league by land along the coast with Mr. the Chevalier Grenier they saw that the canoe and the dory could not keep up on account of the bad weather and rough water which obliged the declarer and others to tell Mr. the Chevalier that if he wished it, they would themselves go aboard the canoe and would handle it much better than these negroes and mulattos who would infallibly have perished if they had continued their manoeuvre to which Mr. the Chevalier answered: "I am willing, my children," and that they numbering fourteen embarked in the canoe and in the dory and



sent the negroes and mulattos ashore that, following the orders of Mr. the Chevalier Grenier, they coasted land by sea, and Mr. the Chevalier and his troop went by land, for about twenty-eight days without seeing either the Chevalier Grenier or his crew after their departure; they saw to landward several rivers and lagoons and Savage tribes ("nations") who shot at them with bows and arrows to prevent them from landing, that they, seeing themselves without provisions and unable to advance further owing to the opposition of these bad tribes, decided by common accord to abandon the trunk they had with them in which

28740 were shirts and bolts of silk and other things of which he has no certain knowledge, these bad Savages fell on

and took possession of them and gave their party the chance to leave the land where they had set up a tent to cook some provisions and intended to wait for Mr. the Chevalier and his troop to join them there; that they all then turned back together to the place where they had first saved themselves on land; that he calculates that they covered from sixty to eighty leagues going and as many in returning to this place. He also explained that of the fourteen who left together one part went by land and the other in the canoe, that when they resolved to save themselves in the canoe they left six of their number with those same Savages as they were not willing to embark for fear of perishing, saying that they would return by land to the island for which the others were bound; that on arriving there they found Savages of the "Atacapa"<sup>2</sup> nation who gave them provisions and the next day they departed and left with these Atacapas Sr. Ivon who would not embark with them on account of

<sup>2</sup>The word "Atacapa" as here spelled, agrees with the orthography given by Hodge in his handbook of American Indian p. 114. (Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 30, Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico, edited by Frederick Webb Hodge in two parts.) He says that it comes from the Choctaw "hatak"—man, and "apa"—eats, hence cannibal; "a name applied by the Choctaw and their congeners to the different tribes inhabiting S. W. Louisiana and S. Texas."

The Attacapa country extended formerly to the coast in S. W. Louisiana and their primitive domain was outlined in the popular name of the old Attacapa or Tuckapa County, still in use, which comprised St. Landry, St. Mary, Iberia, St. Martin, Lafayette, Vermillion and later Calcasieu and Vernon Parishes; in fact all the country between Red, Sabine and Vermillion Rivers and the Gulf. (Dennett, Louisiana 1876.)

Swinton, in Bulletin 43 of the Bureau of American Ethnology, p. 35, spells the name "Attakapa" p. 360, and asserts that the name of this tribe is "Choctaw" signifying "man-eater" and mentions southwestern Louisiana and the entire Texas coast as the country occupied by them. He says that there were three main bands of Atakapa in Louisiana. On the Neches and lower Trinity he indicates as the place where Simars de Belle-Isle was abandoned and it seems to be the same vicinity in which Grenier and the crew of the Superbe met these Indians.—H. C. C.



the risks they had to run saying that he preferred to remain with these Savages whom he believed to be good people with whom he would get on as best he could, than to risk drowning with them, and they continued their route during about a month when they found themselves at the Balize where they returned to Mr. de Chavoy, Mr. Duhomel's clothes which had remained in their canoe. On arriving here (N. O.) they returned to the store of Mr. the Chevalier Grenier his clothes, silver and papers which they saved by hand at the time that the bad Savages fell upon them and that they saved themselves, and has made the present declaration to us to serve and avail as need may be and declared that he could not write nor sign after inquiry as per Ordinance.

LOUIS  
BESSON

Also appeared Louis Besson, sailor on board the boat La Superbe, commanded by Mr. the Chevalier Grenier, who said and declared to us that he left Vera Cruz on the second feast of Easter, that they remained with the brigantine in which was Mr. Rasteau during eight or ten days at the end of which time they put on full sail as they were in want of water and wood, that on the next day having lost sight of the said Brigantine, they discovered land, they drove forward, sailing before the wind, believing that they had passed the Balize, to reconnoitre the land, that having seen three Indians they secured water and wood and not being able to make these Savages understand them, to be informed where they were, they embarked and sailed with a light wind during eight days, that between eight and nine o'clock at night having gone into a bay they ran aground on a sandbank opposite a small islet, that Mr. the Chevalier Grenier, having heard the boat strike, cried to the hands to luff but that it was impossible as the rudder of the boat suddenly would not work and they immediately lowered their canoe into the sea, but that the currents threw the canoe into the Bay without being able to control it on account of the stormy weather, seeing which they threw the flour overboard to lighten the boat as well as their swivel guns, that in the interval the boat had split in two, they succeeded in saving three barrels of powder and about fifty fire arms which they sent to the land they saw before them, which was an islet and as the Chevalier saw that the boat was breaking more and more, he gave the first stroke of the axe to cut the masts; at daybreak they saw land near them and Mr. the Chevalier and Mr. Du-



homel got into the canoe with several of the crew who  
26743 did not know how to swim, that the rest of them swam  
to the islet they saw before them; that one of the crew  
tried to save himself with the sail and perished not being able  
to join the others who from the small island saw their boat go  
to pieces entirely at dawn. Mr. the Chevalier Grenier having  
asked his crew who among them wished to reconnoitre the main-  
land, seven or eight of them offered and embarked in the canoe,  
who remained away about seven or eight days and came back to  
them; the crew of the canoe reported that they had gone to the  
mainland where they found Savages and that having run along  
the coast they saw a large lagoon which obliged them to retrace  
their steps; that on this report Mr. the Chevalier Grenier and  
all the others passed over to the mainland in the canoe and in  
the dory and there they made provisions with some sacks of  
flour which the sea had washed ashore and which the Savages  
who were there and who seemed to be friendly to the French  
had salvaged and given them, that Mr. the Chevalier and all the  
others deliberated on the situation, it was decided that they would  
proceed by land and that they would arm the canoe and the dory  
which would follow by water, manned with mulattos and  
26744 negroes. Those on land seeing that the canoe and the  
dory could not make headway and were filling with water  
on account of the poor work of these folks, fourteen offered the  
Chevalier to embark in the canoe and the dory and to row them,  
which he accepted and sent away to land the negroes and mu-  
lattos who followed the troop by land. They, themselves en-  
deavored to follow Mr. the Chevalier's troop along the coast but  
the bad weather prevented them from advancing and they  
remained eight days awaiting fine weather and seeing the sea  
more calm they embarked to follow Mr. the Chev<sup>r</sup> Grenier and  
having followed their route nearly twenty days, always west-  
ward, they found several lagoons and stopped at the entrance  
of a large bay where they set up a tent and began cooking bread  
whilst awaiting Mr. the Chevalier and his troop, and that they  
were surprised to see coming towards them a large number of  
Savages whom they counted to more than a hundred, bow and  
arrow in hand to shoot at them, that he believes those Savages  
to be those called Indios Bravos (Indes Bravas), that on going  
they found some of their folks on the road who had  
26745 remained as they could not follow the others, to whom  
they gave food and embarked with them and that see-



ing the Savages "Indios Bravas" approaching them in threatening to kill them, it obliged them to embark instantly in the canoe including Sr. Yvon; ~~that~~ the other six remained saying: "Perish, for perish we prefer to stay among these nations, because if we embark we would infallibly perish in the sea" and that the other nine proceeded on their way and came to the islet where they were wrecked, and resolving to gain the land where they had been saved all together they found there a great number of "Atacapas Savages" who had arrived since their departure, who had erected huts at the entrance of the Bay on both sides and had salvaged a quantity of flour. The said Savages received them well enough and even swapped provisions for some merchandise, such as bolts of silk, shirts they had saved from trunks of Mr. the Chevalier and Mr. Duhomel, being obliged to abandon the trunks to the Indios Bravas (Indes Bravas) from whom

they escaped and loaded all the flour they could; that  
26746 the next day they determined to return all the way by coast, with the idea that they were above the Balize.

Sr. Yvon told them that it was impossible for him to re-embark, that perhaps these Savages who appeared to be good folks would lead him to some nation, be it French or Spanish, which the said Savages had given him to understand, as some among them spoke a few Spanish words. They re-embarked and after having journeyed during about a month and a half they recognized the Balize and went there, where they delivered the packet of clothes from the trunk of Mr. Duhomel to Mr. Chavoy, and that having arrived here and having made their report to M. the Governor and General Commissioner they carried the remainder of clothes belonging to Mr. the Chevalier, papers and silverware of Mr. Rateau (Rasteau) which they delivered to Mr. Hervier in their warehouse and he has made the present declaration to us to serve and avail as need may be and declared he knew not how to write not sign, wherefore inquiry as per Ordinance.

PIERRE  
MONTEL

Also appeared Pierre Montel of Bordeaux, sailor on the boat La Superbe commanded by Mr. the Chevalier Grenier who told us that he embarked as a sailor with M. the Chev<sup>r</sup> at Portobello one year ago, on the 26th of last May, on his boat La Superbe, that he left Vera Cruz on the boat of said Sr. the Chev<sup>r</sup> that he does not exactly remember at what time, but it was about four months ago, with a Brigantine in which was Mr. Rasteau, in which company they



were about ten or twelve days; that lacking wood and water M. the Chevalier, he told Mr. Rasteau that he would crowd sail to reach land; the next day they lost sight of the Brigantine and two or three days later they saw land which they could not recognize; there they found water and, believing they were to windward of the Balize, they continued their route coasting land and that three or four days later between eight and nine o'clock at night their boat ran aground on a sandbar opposite a small island; that a part of the crew when day came swam over to said isle, and that but one Spanish sailor was lost trying  
26748 to save himself on the mast, that M. the Chevalier Grenier and all the rest saved themselves little by little in the canoe and gained the small island from which they crossed to the mainland; after having remained twelve or fifteen days on the said island they crossed to the mainland, where they found sustenance on flour which they gathered along the coast, and that the next day they made their way by land, on having been told by some Savages whom they saw that Pensacola (passacola) was above them, that M. the Chevalier loaded the canoe and the dory with as much supplies as possible with the three trunks that the waves had washed on the isle. He manned the canoe and the dory with negroes and mulattos and ordered them to follow him by sea, whilst they went along the coast on land that seeing how badly the men in the canoe and dory handled the boats and that they ran the risk of drowning and for the purpose of saving both the canoe and dory, he detached fourteen who offered to take their places, including Sr. Yvon who could not walk, and then having embarked, all the rest took the route by land, and these the coast, that bad weather retarded them for seven  
26749 or eight days but when the sea became calm they re-embarked to followed the route and join M. the Chev<sup>r</sup> Grenier. After some time they met a man of the crew on land who could not walk owing to sore legs; having fed him, as he had suffered several days he embarked him with them, coasting for twenty days without meeting any of M. the Chev<sup>r</sup> Grenier's band, they found several lagoons on their way and finding a large bay deep into land they thought it suitable to land and shelter themselves and to make bread whilst awaiting M. the Chev<sup>r</sup>. Having set up their tent, brought their effects and their canoe to land they saw a troop of over a hundred Indians who were coming towards them bow and arrows in hand to shoot them. That these were small men and he believes them to be of



the nation called "Indes Bravos"; that nine of them having embarked as quickly as they could with the best they could find in the trunks they abandoned the trunks and some other things to the Savages and escaped; that the other six said, "we  
26750 may as well die here as there ("Perir pour perir") we would as soon make it with these Savages as to risk drowning, perhaps they will treat us better. Upon this they (the nine) concluded to go to the island when they were saved from the wreck expecting to find food there as they had no more. That they found nothing at all on the island and perceiving in the distance huts of Savages which the "Atacapas" had put up since their departure, on the shore of the bay, they went there and found a great number of Savages who received them well enough and gave them some of their flour in exchange for a few shirts and some bolts of silk. The next day they resolved to return along the coast with the idea that they were below the Balize and not above it, excepting Sr. Hyvon who told them: "Do as you choose, I cannot go further, these folks seem to be kind, they will not harm me and have made me understand that not far from here there are men like me." On the determination taken by Sr. Hyvon to remain with the Savages the eight others embarked trusting to the mercy of God and after a journey of a month or five weeks recognized the Balize and went to Mr. Chavoy, Commandant of that Post to whom they delivered some clothes belonging to Mr. Duhomel which they had saved from the trunks abandoned to the "Indes Bravos" and that having arrived here after reporting to M. the Governor and Commissaire, they went to the home of Sr. Hervier who has the details of merchandise of the said boat, to whom they delivered the remainder of the clothes they had for M. the Chev<sup>r</sup> Grenier, some papers and silverware he was told were owned by Sr.  
26752 Rasteau. He moreover declared to us that there is another man named Francois Brignon, a sailor who was with them, who has fever, colics and pains in his chest which confine him to his bed and who cannot come to make his declaration following the orders given them by M. the Commissaire and he made this present declaration to us to serve and avail to such end as may be right and declared that he knew not how to write nor sign, after inquiry as per Ordinance.

VRIGNAN  
FRANCOIS

And also appeared Francois Vrignan, sailor on the boat La Superbe, commanded by M. the Chev<sup>r</sup>. Grenier, who hired himself to M. the Chev<sup>r</sup> about a year ago,



who said and declared to us that he left Vera Cruz in the boat of the said Chvr. Grenier about four months ago with a Spanish Brigantine with whom they were in company during ten or twelve days, that the Chev<sup>r</sup> seeing the bailing short, told Mr. Rasteau, who was on the Brigantine, that he would sail for land as fast as he could; the next day they lost sight of the

said Brigantine and two days later they found themselves near land where they took on water and continued

on their way along the coast, and three or four days later they ran aground on a sand bank between eight and nine o'clock at night, opposite an islet. That at the first touch of the ship the rudder broke and they were obliged to lighten the boat, to throw their flour and their swivel guns overboard and to cut the mast in order to hold out until day. At day-break they all went to the small island, some by swimming and the others in the canoe, losing only one sailor who drowned. Having stayed about twelve days on the said island they crossed to the mainland and lived on the flour which the sea had washed up along the coast. The next day they laid out a route by land; believing that Pensacola was above them. Mr. the Chev<sup>r</sup> caused some provisions to be loaded in the canoe and the dory with three trunks which they found on the shore and as the canoe could not keep the sea, M. the Chev<sup>r</sup> changed

the crew and placed fourteen (other men) in the canoe and in the dory with orders to sail along the coast whilst the others went by land. Bad weather prevented them from continuing (by sea) and they were compelled to wait seven or eight days at the end of which the sea being calm they reembarked to follow their route to join M. the Chev<sup>r</sup>. After some time they came upon a man of their crew on land who had not been able to follow the others owing to illness, who told them that M. the Chev<sup>r</sup> had passed there eight days previously; they took this man with them and again continued on their way during twelve or fifteen days and saw no more of their (men). They found several lagoons on their way and having come to a bay stopped on the shore, to which they drew up their canoe and landed their effects. They saw a great many savages coming towards them with loud cries and much howling, and as the savages approached they reloaded some of their effects and abandoned the trunks and part of what was in the canoe and nine of them reembarked



26755 as the others would not, saying that they might as well die on land as at sea. That they retraced their way and arrived at the island near where they had been shipwrecked hoping to find some flour, for they were in need of provisions. As soon as they reached this place and found nothing on the island, they went over to the mainland where there were a number of savages who gave them flour for which they gave a few bolts of silk. The next day they left, eight in number, having left Sr. Ivon with these last savages as he would not come with them and they came all the way along the coast and recognized the Balize where they turned over to Mr. de Chavoy some clothes belonging to Mr. Duhomel which they had saved from the trunks they abandoned to the savages and they came here where they made their report to MM. the Governor and Commissaire and remitted the remainder of the effects they had to Mr. Hervier, and made this present declaration to us to serve and avail as need may be and signed Francois Vrignan.

Signed: Henry, Greff. (paraph).

## II

### Declaration of the Captain of La Superbe

#### TRANSLATION:

Sept. 27, 1745.  
The Chevalier  
Grenier  
Declaration.  
fol. 29. 4062.

On this day, September twenty-seventh, one thousand seven hundred and forty-five, appeared in the Registry of the Superior Council of Louisiana, Monsieur the Chevalier Grenier, who arrived here at New Orleans yesterday, and requested us to receive his declaration, to-wit: that on the fourteenth of March of the present year, one thousand seven hundred and forty-five, he left New Orleans to go to New Vera Cruz to secure flour for the needs of this Colony; he reached there on the twenty-ninth of the said month of March and left there to return here on the nineteenth of April, in company of a Spanish Brigantine which he had loaded and freighted for his own account; that he had in his boat four hundred and seventy-two sacks of flour, that they kept together until the twenty-seventh of the said month, when the need of water made him leave as the said boat of the declarer navigated much better than the other.



Proces  
Verbeaux.

On the twenty-ninth at night the sounding showed thirty fathoms muddy sand bottom. In the uncertainty the said declarer ran to the north to reconnoiter the land which they could not recognize; that the next day at four in the afternoon, by twenty-nine degrees and a few minutes, they had three fathoms of water, and always the same bottom, then believing himself to be to the west of the river\* they stood to the northwest, the wind being east, southeast. They continued this course during three days with very little wind, which having failed entirely, the said Sr. declarant put out his canoe to get water and wood which he greatly needed. The canoe did not return until very late and brought back but a small quantity of water. The wind had freshened from the east and the men in the canoe not being able to give any information (of the land) the said declarant was obliged to bear off to take observations and fixed their location at 29 degrees 55 minutes, but while standing off found himself on a sandbank, with three fathoms of water.

A sailor under the said Sr. declarer told him that coming from Pensacola to New Orleans they had found a similar one where they had anchored at night and the next day recognized the Balize. The said Sr. declarer ran nearly six hours with a good fresh wind, sailing northwest. The next day sighting land to the north, east and west, he sent out his canoe a second time and being told that he was to windward he sent a pilot who was with him in his small canoe to sound higher up. At more than three leagues in the open sea, his observation showed 30 degrees, 30 minutes. Then believing he was in the east, they raised anchor and ran southwest coasting the shore. They sailed thus during two or three days and having seen smoke on land he sent his canoe to secure water and reconnoitre.

They found on land five Savages with a few huts, and not being able to get any information from them, the declarer requested Mr. Duhomel, officer of the detachment to go there as he spoke the Mobilian language and thought he could be understood. But he could draw nothing from these Savages. They remained thus all day; the next day he made ready to sail, finding seven or eight fathoms of water at a half league from land. He did not make much headway owing to the

\*The Mississippi.



calm which made him determine to anchor and to send the small canoe back to land and landed five Spanish sailors, thinking that they might be understood by some Savages whom

they saw on the shore and who happened to be the  
26819 same ones they had spoken to. They returned aboard in about an hour shouting "Victory," saying that they were near Pensacola. They even assured him that the Savages had told them in Castilian that from where they were they had but three days' journey to reach there, whereon he made ready to set sail and to steer following the coast to the southwest, with the same depth. The next day they did not advance much on account of the calm.

The third day, eleventh of May, they made good headway, always to the southwest; on the twelfth the wind freshened from the southwest, I say from the southeast, and we ran all day along the coast with seven and eight fathoms of water; towards night the wind increasing, he told his Second, Sr. Yvon, to run to sea, but he told the said Sr. declarer that they could not thus leave land for lack of water, that there was nothing to fear and indeed they were in ten fathoms. After which he contented himself with telling him to be careful to have soundings taken and, after prayers, he went to bed, ordering his boatswain to keep strict watch forward and always to have the plumb in hand. The said declarer thinks that he too went to bed, for at half past nine at night, that is one hour later, the said boat struck a sandbank, amidst breakers.

The declarer rose at the stroke and started to luff, but found no one at the helm, the rudder having snapped at the second shock and unfortunately he found that they had lowered the main sail. He then sent out the canoe to carry an anchor to deeper water, but this could carry only the small anchor, and did not serve them as the boat dragged it after her. He then sought to lighten the boat by throwing overboard as many sacks of flour as they could and other things and kept a man at each pump until he saw that they were pumping sand which left him no doubt that the boat was opening. He then ordered the mainmast cut down to relieve the ship and to give them time to save themselves, as the current would carry her ashore with the wind on her quarter and increasing in violence; he ordered the canoe away to land fearing it might break up against the side where it was filling



every moment. He made a raft<sup>3</sup> of three pieces, the main top yard, the outside end and a few boards. It was barely finished when thirteen men threw themselves on it and a great wave having washed it off the ship they suffered greatly as the sea covered the side where the raft was lashed. They cut the lashing and abandoned themselves to the mercy of the waves which brought them to land at a whole league distant from the ship. The said Sr. declarer was thus reduced, when at dawn they saw the two canoes which had passed the night on a little isle or sandbank which they discovered. They did all they could to gain the ship but only the large one came after having filled several times. The said Sr. declarer embarked in it by the way of his bowsprit and had himself brought to land on a reef which was not a half league in circumference and the point of which was a fourth of a league distant from the ship. He sent the canoe back, and it passed the day going and coming, carrying away three or four men at each trip. Finally all reached the land except a Spanish sailor who threw himself on the mainmast which they 26821 had cut and which still held lashed to the ship. He spent the whole night there and they saw him drown at daylight without being able to succor him.

The said Sr. declarer passed the first night on the reef in hope of saving something from his ship, but the next morning it was not in sight. He sent the canoe to reconnoitre: they saw only the top of the forward deck and the poop. Having come to shore the declarer thought of naught else than of means to maintain himself on the islet. For this purpose he sent the canoe to search for the mainmast in order to set up a tent. It was found on a little sand bar where it was held by the guys of the ship, but the wretched (sailors) amused themselves breaking open all the chests and trunks they found there, imitating in this those who saved themselves on the raft and who to reach this wreckage had traveled around a bottom more than a league in extent, where they spared none of the chests they found on the shore, plundering the best and throw-

<sup>3</sup>The Editor has inserted the word "raft" here notwithstanding the opinion of Mrs. Cruzat, who says: "You will notice that I effaced a word (in the first translation) to substitute 'punt' which seems to be the logical one, which I submit to you. The word in the text is 'rat' (meaning *ras*) which is punt or flatboat, but the text says that it was made of three pieces in the water and tied together with (lians) bindweed which makes it more probable that it was a punt. It was not raft, which in French is "radeau" or in old Canadian records "cajeu" or "cayeu"; the word "radeau" is never used in the text by sailors or officers.—H. P. D.



ing the rest into the sea. The declarer asserted also that all that was saved had been thrown on the shore by the sea, none of the crew being willing to do anything to that end. They allowed the mainmast to get away, which was the last resource remaining to the declarer to maintain himself on the said islet. Fortunately water was found there and with the flour washed ashore, of which they made a pile of over two hundred sacks, they might have subsisted there for a long time.

He thus remained exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather until the sixteenth of the month, when he sent thirteen armed men to explore the country. On the eighteenth, seventeen Spaniards demanded permission to go away. He granted

it, they met the others who had retraced their way  
26822 and they also turned back. They told the Sr. declarer

that the first day they had met Savages who led them during two days' march to a great Lagoon on the other side of which they saw a great many other Savages and that their guides gave them to understand that those were bad and would kill them. They became frightened and came back after six days always speaking of Pensacola which the Spaniards claimed to be near; one of them even told the Sr. declarer that he had once been lost where they were and recognized the place and that in six days' march they would be there. From the mainland there came every day other Savages who spoke of Christianos and made them understand that in six days the said declarer would be with them.

Unwilling to send any one else since thirty men had not dared to pass, he determined to go himself, and to this end he ordered each one to make bread to subsist on the way. All of them passed over to the mainland in the two canoes on the night of the twenty-third and walked a half league to a point where they spent the night. He had placed a crew in the canoe expecting it to follow along the coast and to enable them to cross the lagoons and rivers which they might meet; he had loaded it with four bags of flour, and a tierce of water, and he took all that he could carry of the best, particularly Mr. le Chevalier's trunk, and two for Mr. Duhomel, in one of which there was a bag with seven or eight hundred piastres. He had also ordered the small canoe to follow, but those he placed  
26823 in it said that they could go no longer and that they would be drowned. He did not wish to compel them and told them to break it and set it adrift fearing it might serve



the Savages to carry away the flour they had left on the reef, and thus they abandoned the small canoe.

The next day, twenty-fourth, in the morning, all of them began their march, expecting the canoe to follow them; when they reached the other side of the point they no longer saw the canoe. This caused them to turn back and they found it filled with water. They could not double the point, whereon the said Sr. declarer assembled all his people and asked who among them wished to return to the reef; all wished to follow him and there remained with the canoe only fourteen men among whom was Sr. Yvon, his second, his mate and boatswain. He left them orders which were to follow him as soon as the sea would allow them to do so, which they promised, and he began his march with one hundred men. They had also saved thirty-five to forty guns and as many pistols, some powder and balls, thus, all were armed and were in condition to pass notwithstanding the Savages, in case they opposed it and for this reason he ordered them to march all together and that none go forward but to wait for those who would remain in the rear.

They advanced in this order for a few days, the fourth day of the march they found a large lagoon where those he had sent to reconnoitre said they had seen the Savages and indeed they saw a troop of twenty or thirty. Three men swam across to the other side, spoke to them and were exceedingly surprised to find they were the same ones who came 26824 to see them every day on the reef. They had several canoes and they asked them for one to go back, not daring to swim again on account of the sharks they had seen in crossing before. The Savages would not consent and they came back.

Thereupon the (declarer's) party went to search for wood to make a raft with vines. While making it they saw the Savages in their canoes going up into the depth of the bay; they signaled to them to come to them; the Savages hesitated a long time but finally three of them bolder than the others, who were going away as fast as they could, advanced in a canoe, left it near in the open water and jumped overboard bringing smoked fish. They returned to bring some of their comrades who, emboldened by the welcome given the others, came to the number of twelve or fifteen in two or three worn canoes. They passed to the other side with them, where they



found an old Chief who spoke a few words of Spanish and talked to them a great deal of Christianos and made them understand that they still had to pass five lagoons. He was right, for they had already passed over thirty without having seen their canoe. However, they still hoped to reach Pensacola soon, but after a march of ten or twelve days they could no longer doubt that they were near the coast of Tampico because the land ran to the south. Provisions began to fail, water even, which until then they had found to be good by digging a hole thirty paces from the sea, became salty.

Then it was no longer possible to restrain any one; they disbanded. Those who still had bread went ahead, 26825 fearing to be obliged to give some to the others; others who had pillaged, fearing to be searched if they arrived all together, also went ahead so that on the thirtieth day of the march the said Sr. declarer found himself with only sixteen. On the twenty-fourth of June he found four of the men who told him that all those who had gone ahead had been killed; they themselves had been attacked by five Savages whom they put to flight by presenting their guns. They had remained in the woods during three days but hunger and thirst had made them come out and they had thus met the declarer. They had seen five of their companions dead who marched immediately before them, which led them to believe that all the others had been killed. Thereupon he returned to the place where they had slept in order to prepare for defense. He wished to see how many arms remained; he found fifteen pistols and five guns but there were not ten charges of powder because they had passed so many lagoons and rivers, the whole had been wet; there still remained a little in a flagon which he distributed to each one who cleaned his arms. He had placed a negro on a small mound of sand which separated the river shore from the plain to warn those who stayed in the rear and who might think he was in the meadow. (Savanné) This negro came to warn him that a troop of Savages armed with arrows were coming and in the same instant they appeared, twenty-one in number, making their usual cry. They ran towards them and an old Chief said to the declarer, in good Castilian that he had nothing to fear, that he had come 26826 to prevent their killing him. However the said Sr. declarer, not trusting him beyond measure, still held him at the point of his pistol.



This old Chief sent nine men to fish; they brought back a great deal of fish and made them eat some with them. They then led them to their homes saying that they were some worn huts where they lived on roots and a kind of thistle which they gave them to eat. During six days that they remained with them the said Savages took off everything they had, put them stark naked and sent them to Tampico, which they reached, twenty-seven in number, after a march of forty-four days, on the fifth of July, one thousand seven hundred and forty-five, and left there to come here on the thirty-first of August in a Spanish ship named "La Notre Dame de la Guadalupe,"\* commanded by Captain Dom\* Francois Bomond, and entered the River on the twenty-second of September of the same year, and he has made this present declaration to serve and avail as need may be and demanded that it be certified at New Orleans the aforesaid day, month and year and has signed

Le Ch<sup>er</sup> Grenier.

### III

#### **Declaration of Sr. Duhomel, a Passenger on La Superbe**

26827 And the aforesaid day, twenty-seventh of September, one thousand seven hundred and forty-five, appeared in the Registry of the said Council the Sieur Chevalier Duhomel, officer of detached troops of the Marine in this Colony, arriving with Mr. Le Chev<sup>r</sup> Grenier on the boat (La Superbe)\* commanded by my said Sr. Grenier, on which he commanded a detachment of troops of this Colony, that at his departure were remitted to him by Sr. Forstal four ingots of gold, of which he knows the weight, having given his acknowledgment of the same which was handed to Sr. Forstal junior, embarked on the same boat, to be remitted to him at Vera Cruz, to be employed as ordered by his father, which he did. Sr. Forstal junior not being able to use them he remitted them to the said declarer to be returned to him or to his father in New Orleans. As they had the misfortune to be wrecked the said declarer took care to have his trunk, in which were the ingots, thrown into the sea, which trunk having been washed ashore was saved on land; that there he took out the gold ingots and

\*Our Lady of Guadalupe. In Spanish : "Don," in Portuguese: "Dom."

\*Space left in text and filled.

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give them to soldiers to carry, but having arrived among a Savage nation near Tampico, the Savages plundered them, and left them as naked as the hand, having shot a portion of their men, the other portion saved themselves without their shirts, the said Savages having robbed them entirely without leaving them anything, which is affirmed as the truth by the undersigned Sieurs who escaped from this shipwreck and who arrived here with him in a boat hired by my said Chevalier Grenier at Tampico, and made the present declaration to us to serve and avail as need may be, of all of which he requested that certificate be given him.

At New Orleans the aforesaid day, month and year and has signed with my said Sieur Chevalier Grenier, Chauvagere, surgeon of the said boat, Laville and Tixerant, Cadet of troops in this Colony.

Le Cher Grenier. S Chauviere. Tixerant fils.  
du hommeel.

Henry Greff.

Written thus in text, should be Chauviere as signature shows.





DOCUMENTS CONCERNING BIENVILLE'S LANDS IN  
LOUISIANA, 1718-1737

SIXTH INSTALLMENT

Translation by Heloise H. Cruzat

PART III.

Surveys and Reports Upon the Situation and Condition of Bienville's Lands  
in 1737 Made by the Official Surveyor of the Colony Under the  
Direction of Governor Bienville and Ordonnateur Salmon.

(Continued from January, 1928 Qy.)

Document No. 20  
Translation  
1737—Nov. 20.  
Proces-verbal of  
survey and titles  
of Sieur Bienville  
March 27, 1719.  
49 arpents by a  
league in depth.

In the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty-seven, on Wednesday, November twentieth, by virtue of the order of Mssrs. de Bienville, Governor of the Province of Louisiana, and Salmon, Commissaire Ordonnateur of the said Province, We, Francois Saucier, surveyor, went to a tract forty-nine arpents front on the River Saint Louis by a league in depth, situated below New Orleans and on the opposite side, having four hundred and sixty superficial arpents cleared, on which land we found two buildings on the ground, a barn measuring sixty feet in length of brickwork, a dove-cote of upright joists and twenty negro quarters, belonging to said Sieur de Bienville forming a part of a concession in allodium of one hundred and thirty arpents granted to him by the Company of the Indies March twenty seventh one thousand seven hundred and nineteen and reserved by him as his domain, for which land said Sieur de Bienville presented an act of the said concession in allodium, dated as aforesaid, confirmed and approved by the Directors of the said Company at Paris, February sixth, one thousand seven hundred and twenty, signed by them and registered in the Registry of the Superior Council of Louisiana, April twenty-first one thousand seven hundred and twenty-three by Rossard, Clerk of the said Council. Of which titles, land and buildings, we, surveyor undersigned, for this purpose, have drawn the present proces verbal in the presence of Sieur Fabry de la Bruyere, witness undersigned. Done the above day and year.

Signed: F. Saucier  
Fabry de la Bruyere