

Brothers in Arms:
The Le Moyne Family and the Atlantic World,
1685-1745

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ABSTRACT

Between 1685 and 1745, the lives and careers of the thirteen children of Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil and Catherine Thierry Primot were profoundly influenced by the emergence of a French Empire in the Atlantic World. Whilst born and raised on the colonial periphery, the Le Moyne siblings took advantage of a turbulent period of imperial formation to re-invent themselves within the French Atlantic World, establishing themselves as prominent imperial figures in both metropole and colony. Taking up arms through service in the French navy, they embraced the mobility that this institution offered and travelled to all corners of the Atlantic World, interacting with all levels of its dynamic, multicultural society and building an expansive personal network that bound together several colonial enclaves with ties of business, kinship, patronage and duty. *Brothers in Arms* thus presents the lives of the first generation of the Le Moyne family as a window into the formation of empire within the French Atlantic World during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, allowing us to see it as it was experienced and lived by those who made it a reality on the ground.

RESUMÉ

Entre 1685 et 1745, la vie et la carrière des treize enfants de Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil et de Catherine Thierry Primot ont été profondément influencées par l'émergence d'un empire français dans le monde atlantique. Étant nés et ayant été éduqués dans la périphérie coloniale, les frères Le Moyne ont profité d'une période turbulente de formation impériale pour se réinventer au sein du monde atlantique français, s'imposant comme des figures importantes tant en métropole qu'en colonie. Prenant les armes au service de la Marine, ils ont saisi l'occasion de mettre à profit la mobilité qu'offrait cette institution et se sont rendus aux quatre coins du monde atlantique, interagissant avec tous les niveaux de sa société dynamique et multiculturelle et construisant ainsi un vaste réseau personnel qui reliait plusieurs enclaves coloniales par des liens d'affaires, de parenté, de patronage et de service. Cette dissertation présente donc la vie de la première génération de la famille Le Moyne comme une fenêtre sur la formation de l'empire au sein du monde atlantique français à la fin du XVIIe et au début du XVIIIe siècle, nous permettant de le voir tel qu'il a été perçu et vécu par ceux qui en ont fait une réalité sur le terrain.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACM	Archives départementales de la Charente-Maritime
AGI	Archivo General de Indias
ANOM	Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer
AN	Archives Nationales de France
BAnQ	Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec
CO	Colonial Office
DCB	Dictionary of Canadian Biography
DCNY	Documents Relative to the Colonial History of New York
HNOC	Historic New Orleans Collection
LAC	Library and Archives Canada
LHQ	Louisiana Historical Quarterly
PRDH	Programme de Recherche en Démographie Historique
RP	Registres paroissiaux
UdeM	Université de Montréal

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Introduction:

The Le Moyne Family and Empire in the French Atlantic World

On January 30th, 1685, Charles Le Moyne lay dying in his Montreal townhouse, likely still suffering from a bout of malaria he had contracted three months earlier on a campaign against the Seneca.¹ Over the last forty-four years, Le Moyne had scaled the social ladder in Canada. Arriving in 1641 with nothing to his name, he had literally worked for the clothes on his back as an *engagé* (indentured servant) for the Jesuits.² By 1685 he was amongst the richest men in the colony, with his family's estate—including *seigneuries*, properties, merchandise, shares, ships and debts valued at over 125,000 *livres*. Gathering his first-born son, also named Charles, his brother-in-law Jacques Le Ber and his neighbours Jacques Testard de la Marque and the notary Benigne Basset, Le Moyne dictated his last will and testament. According to the Custom of Paris, the Le Moyne estate was to be divided into two shares, one for Le Moyne's widow Catherine Thierry Primot and another to be split between their thirteen surviving children once they came of age. One year earlier, however, his heir Charles had relinquished his share in return for the exclusive right to the *seigneurie* of Longueuil. With eleven of his twelve remaining children still legally classed as minors, Le Moyne hence also used his will to reserve a *douaire préfixe* of 2000 *livres* for Catherine, to help protect her from any creditors who might come after the family's wealth. He also left 100 *livres* in alms for the local poor, and a further 300 *livres* to

¹ In September 1684, a plague struck the expedition led by Governor Antoine Lefebvre de la Barre against the Seneca, decimating the French forces. It is thought that this plague was malaria, contracted from mosquitos living in the stagnant waters near Lake Ontario. By the end of the campaign, Le Moyne had developed a fever and was brought home in the governor's personal canoe as his condition worsened. For more on La Barre's campaign and Le Moyne's part in it, see ANOM, C11A, V.6, f.308-313, « Mémoire de la Barre concernant son expedition au lac Ontario, » 1 octobre 1684.

² The *Journal des Jésuites* reported that the missionaries had paid Le Moyne 20 *écus* (60 *livres*) for his service and had "l'habilla & luy donna-t-on du linge honnestement." Henri-Raymond Casgrain ed., *Le Journal des Jesuites: publié d'après le manuscrit original conservé aux archives du Séminaire de Québec* (Québec: Chez Léger Brousseau, imprimeur-éditeur, 1871), p.9-10 —accessed 22/5/2020, <http://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/2022210?docref=4XhYfcuT1soMc9UaMsi0OQ>.

the local church so that they would continue to say prayers for his soul after his death. Within a week, Le Moyne had died and was buried in the Church of Notre-Dame de Montréal.³

Le Moyne's life had been profoundly shaped by the currents of an emerging French Atlantic World. Born on August 2nd, 1626, to Pierre Le Moyne and Judith Duchesne, innkeepers from Dieppe, Charles had grown up in one of France's principal gateways to the Atlantic Ocean. Over a century before he was born, Dieppe had emerged as a centre of France's transatlantic trade, with many mariners leaving the port to exploit the abundant dyewood of Brazil or the bountiful cod fisheries of Newfoundland. More recently, the port had become a central hub for trade with Canada, with *dieppois* merchants such as Pierre Chauvin de Tonnetuit and Guillaume de Caën outfitting vessels to the trading posts established in the Saint Lawrence Valley and Bay of Fundy.⁴ In 1627, the formation of the *Compagnie des Cent Associés* also initially attracted attention from many merchants and migrants in Dieppe, but La Rochelle gradually edged Dieppe out of the Canada trade over the next two decades.⁵ Even so, of all the regions in Normandy, the ocean-oriented *pays de Caux*—which included Rouen, Le Havre and Dieppe—furnished the most emigrants to the Canada and Acadia in the early seventeenth century, with over 2000 leaving Dieppe as *engagés* between 1654 and 1686.⁶ Working for his parents from a young age, Charles would therefore have been familiar with stories of the New World, gleaned from the mobile, maritime population that frequented their establishment.

³ "Testament de Charles Le Moyne," transcribed in Alex Jodoin and J. L. Vincent, *Histoire de Longueuil et de la famille de Longueuil* (Montréal: Imprimerie Gebhardt-Berthiaume, 1889), p.74-81.

⁴ John A. Dickinson, "La Normandie et la construction d'une Nouvelle France" *Annales de Normandie*, 58e année, no. 3-4, 2008, pp.59-67.

⁵ James Pritchard, "The Pattern of French Colonial Shipping to Canada before 1760," *Outre-Mers. Revue d'histoire* 63, no. 231 (1976): 189–210.

⁶ Leslie Choquette, *Frenchmen into Peasants Modernity and Tradition in the Peopling of French Canada* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), p.61-63, 98, 206-208.

It was events within France, however, that pushed Le Moyne to become part of this growing Atlantic community. In July 1639, the province of Normandy was violently shaken by the revolt of the Nu-Pieds. Waging a war against Spain since 1635, Louis XIII and Cardinal Richelieu had sought to raise taxes across France to fund the conflict. In Normandy, they imposed the infamous *gabelle*—a tax on salt—upon the previously exempt Cotentin peninsula. This sparked a violent protest in the town of Avranches, which resulted in the death of the tax collector Charles Le Poupinel at the hands of an angry mob. Soon, the rebellion spread across the province with uprisings in Caen, Saint Malo, Rouen, Bayeux and Dieppe. By November, the revolt had been brutally suppressed by crown troops, who ravaged the Norman countryside, causing lasting economic hardship for many Normans. As further punishment, the king also revoked several privileges from the region's principal towns and ports, causing more economic decline. It took many years for Normandy to entirely recover from this civil unrest, prompting many, including the young Le Moyne, to look for new economic opportunities elsewhere.⁷

Two years after the revolt, one such opportunity arose for Le Moyne. During the summer of 1641, Charles' uncle, Adrien Duchesne, returned to Dieppe to stand as the godfather at the baptism of his relative Catherine Duchesne. Over a decade earlier, Duchesne had migrated to Canada, where he earned a living as a barber-surgeon at the Quebec *habitation* and possessed a grant of land on what are now the Plains of Abraham.⁸ Duchesne also occasionally worked as an interpreter for the Jesuit Order, and was documented accompanying Fathers Paul Le Jeune and Jacques Buteux on their missions to the new

⁷ Madeleine Foisil, *La révolte des nu-pieds et les révoltes normandes de 1639* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1970).

⁸ Duchesne sold these lands to the eponymous Abraham Martin in 1645. Archange Godbout, "Les origines de la famille Lemoyne," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 1, no. 4 (1948): 533-540.

Algonquian community at Trois-Rivières.⁹ Most likely through his relationship with these missionaries, Duchesne was able to offer his nephew passage to Canada as an *engagé*, indenturing him to serve the Jesuits at their mission to the Wendat for four years.¹⁰ As an interpreter, Duchesne was well aware of the value colonial society placed on knowledge and familiarity with the Indigenous nations of North America in Canada. Waging an ongoing war against the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the colony was always in need of men with linguistic or cultural capital and rewarded them handsomely, offering them many chances at social ascension. Indenturing Le Moyne to the Jesuits, therefore, Duchesne likely hoped that his nephew would acquire competencies that would also prove useful once his contract was up. With few opportunities for work available in Dieppe, Le Moyne boarded the next ship bound for Quebec—outfitted by the newly formed *Société de Notre-Dame de Montréal*.¹¹

During his indenture in Wendake, Le Moyne proved an adept student and soon made a name for himself as a capable interpreter. Once Le Moyne's contract came to an end, his services were solicited by Governor Charles Huault de Montmagny, who offered him a position as a soldier and interpreter at the new settlement of Ville-Marie. Whilst most *engagés* returned to France after being freed from their contracts, Le Moyne took up the governor's offer and moved upriver to the frontlines of the ongoing conflict with the Haudenosaunee

⁹ Antonio Drolet, "Du Chesne, Adrien," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography (DCB)*, vol. 1, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed 22/5/2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/du_chesne_adrien_1E.html.

¹⁰ Some historians have maintained that Le Moyne was a *donné* for the Jesuit Order. According to the description of the institution of *donnés* given by Jean Côté, however, he could not have fulfilled this role, since he only served the order for four years and not his entire life. Indeed, the *Journal des Jésuites* mentions that Le Moyne and Nicolas Giffard served them "en qualité d'enfant," suggesting that they fulfilled a role that many cabin boys would across the French Atlantic World, being used to learn Indigenous languages quickly and serve as interpreters. Moreover, the Jesuits paid Le Moyne 20 *écus* for his service, which they gave to Duchesne on his behalf, further implying that his uncle had negotiated a limited indenture contract. For more see Jean Côté, "L'institution des donnés," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 15, no. 3 (1961) : 344-378; Casgrain ed., *Le Journal des Jésuites*, p.9.

¹¹ Marie-Claire Daveluy, "Chomedey de Maisonneuve, Paul de," in *DCB*, vol. 1, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed 29/05/2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/chomedey_de_maisonneuve_paul_de_1E.html.

Confederacy. Proving himself in battle on multiple occasions, Le Moyne forged a fierce reputation amongst colonists and officials alike in Ville-Marie and, within a few years, translated this into tangible rewards. By June 1654, he had secured a job, a house, and a plot of land. As the settlement's *garde-magasin*—or warehouse keeper—he learned the mechanics of its fur trade. His townhouse was also located on Rue Saint Paul, placing him at the heart of Ville-Marie's growing mercantile community. To this day, the plot of land he possessed outside of the town's walls is known as Pointe-Saint-Charles.¹²

Kinship greatly informed transatlantic migration in this period. Gradually, the Le Moyne family grew into a clan, enmeshed in complex and overlapping webs of kinship and alliance within Ville-Marie. Making the most of a brief ceasefire with the Haudenosaunee, Le Moyne married the teenaged Catherine Thierry Primot on May 28th, 1654. Born in Rouen to Guillaume Thierry and Elizabeth Messier in 1641, Catherine had been adopted by her relatives Antoine Primot and Martine Messier, who had brought her with them to Canada and treated her as their daughter, even making her their sole heir.¹³ Not long after the marriage, Le Moyne offered his new in-laws half of his land in Pointe-Saint-Charles, where they settled. Three years later, Le Moyne sold a nearby plot to their seventeen-year-old nephew, Michel Messier, who in turn married Charles' younger sister Anne the following February, further reinforcing the bonds between the Le Moyne and Messier families.¹⁴ Anne did not come to

¹² Jean-Jacques Lefebvre, "Le Moyne de Longueuil et de Châteauguay, Charles," in *DCB*, vol. 1, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed 14/1/2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/le_moyne_de_longueuil_et_de_chateauguay_charles_1E.html; Guy Frégault, *Pierre LeMoyne d'Iberville* (Montréal: Fides, 1968), p.28-29.

¹³ It is unclear why Catherine's birth parents gave her up to Antoine and Martine for adoption, but it is possible they were unable to care for her themselves, especially due to the economic hardships in Normandy in the early 1640s. For more on Catherine's origins, see Jodoin and Vincent, *Histoire de Longueuil*, p.12-14.

¹⁴ Claude Perrault, "Messier, Saint Michel, Michel" in *DCB*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/ Université Laval, 2003— accessed 29/5/2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/messier_michel_2E.html.

Canada alone, arriving with the two other Le Moyne siblings—Jacques and Jeanne.¹⁵ These two siblings were soon also married, forging new connections with the Godé and Le Ber families [Fig. I]. Over time, the family also developed close relationships with the Sulpicians—the *seigneurs* of Montreal—which afforded them further opportunities to secure prestigious municipal appointments as churchwardens and militia officers. Before long, the Le Moynes were one of the most influential families in Ville-Marie.¹⁶

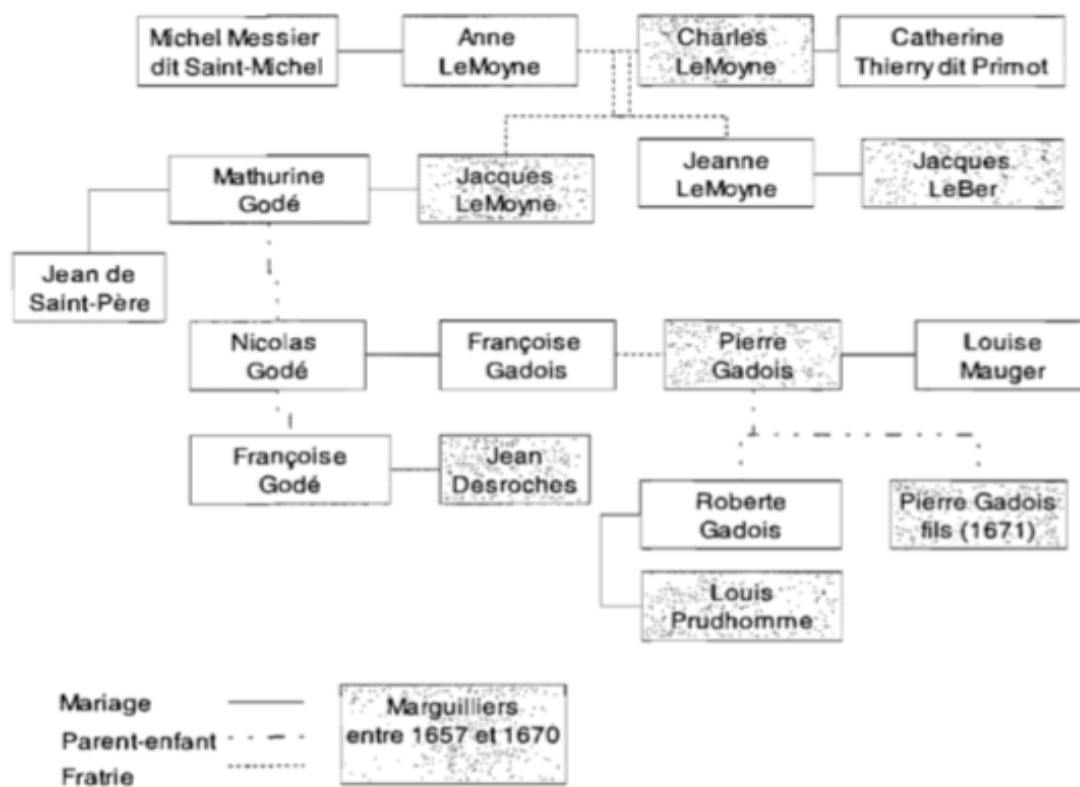


Fig. I : « Les réseaux de quelques familles anciennes à Montréal, » in Léon Robichaud, “Les réseaux d’influence à Montréal au XVIIe siècle: structure et exercice du pouvoir en milieu colonial” (PhD diss., Université de Montréal, 2008), p.72.

¹⁵ Louise Dechêne, *Habitants and Merchants in Seventeenth-Century Montreal* (Montreal, Que.: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1992), p.44.

¹⁶ Léon Robichaud, “Les réseaux d’influence à Montréal au XVIIe siècle: structure et exercice du pouvoir en milieu colonial” (PhD diss., Université de Montréal, 2008), p.73-81.

Of all Le Moyne's new connections, perhaps the most important was Jacques Le Ber. Together, the two men would forge a business empire, making their fortunes in the colony's fur trade. Arriving from Rouen in 1657, Le Ber married Jeanne Le Moyne in Ville-Marie on January 7th, 1658, allying himself with the growing Le Moyne clan.¹⁷ Within a few months of the wedding, Le Moyne and Le Ber entered into business together, pooling enough capital to jointly purchase a warehouse near Ville-Marie's market from their kinsman Nicolas Godé. Given the heightened tensions caused by the conflict with the Haudenosaunee, few merchants had yet set up shop in Ville-Marie, affording Le Moyne and Le Ber a chance to carve out a large share in the fur trade before anyone else.¹⁸ Eager to become the first to break out from the central market in Ville-Marie and dominate the western trade, in 1660 the brothers-in-law entered into business with the fur trader Médard des Groseilliers, agreeing to receive half of the 200,000 *livres* of pelts he brought back from the Great Lakes that summer. Transporting these wares to Quebec themselves, they quickly sold the cargo, amassing more than enough capital to strike out on their own.¹⁹

Over the next two decades, Le Moyne and Le Ber worked carefully to maintain their commercial dominance in Ville-Marie. Purchasing plots of land on the common ground in front of their townhouses, they were able to receive their furs directly from the Indigenous

¹⁷ Léo-Paul Desrosiers, "Le milieu où naît Jeanne Le Ber," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 16, no. 2. (Septembre 1962), p.157-158.

¹⁸ Dechêne, *Habitants and Merchants*, p.91.

¹⁹ Grace Lee Nute, *Caesars of the Wilderness: Médard Chouart, Sieur des Groseilliers and Pierre Esprit de Radisson, 1618-1710* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1978), p.67-69; Marc Le Ber, *Charles Le Moyne, Seigneur de Longueuil: Histoire d'une réussite commerciale* (Longueuil: Société historique du Marigot, 1992), p.6 ; Martin Fournier, *Pierre-Esprit Radisson, Merchant, Adventurer, 1636-1710* (Sillery, QC : Septentrion, 2002), p.97-98; Thomas Wien, "Le Pérou éphémère : termes d'échange et éclatement du commerce franco-amérindien, 1645-1670," in Sylvie Dépatie et al., *Vingt ans après, Habitants et marchands : Lectures de l'histoire des XVIIe et XVIII siècles canadiens* (Montréal : McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998): 160-188, p.173; Gilles Havard, *Histoire des Coureurs de Bois: Amérique du Nord, 1600-1840*, (Paris: Les Indes savantes, 2016), p.48-49; Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*, p.31.

traders who arrived in Ville-Marie for the regular market fairs. Le Moyne also rented nine stalls to local metalworkers, artisans and gunsmiths, such as Simon Guillory, who made tools and items to trade with these Indigenous visitors.²⁰ But whilst this was a good business, the brothers-in-law conducted a far more lucrative trade by taking their products directly to the Indigenous traders themselves. By 1664, they had established a network of trading posts at strategic points across the island of Montreal, which allowed them to intercept any canoes arriving at the Lachine rapids, Lac des Deux-Montagnes or the Châteauguay river and secure the best furs these traders had to offer before they arrived in Ville-Marie.²¹

By 1667, however, the truce concluded with the Haudenosaunee Confederacy began to threaten the Le Moyne-Le Ber business, for it encouraged many other petty traders to move west and compete with them over the direct trade with Indigenous traders.²² Adapting to this new dynamic, Le Moyne and Le Ber not only started sending out their own *engagés* to compete with these new traders but also outfitted these *coureurs de bois* with trade goods, ensuring themselves a cut of their profits. They also cut out middlemen wherever possible, re-investing their capital into a new warehouse in Quebec and several vessels to transport their wares up the Saint-Lawrence and across the Atlantic. Once they had built transatlantic connections with merchants in La Rochelle, they also tapped into the trade currents of the wider Atlantic World, diversifying their business portfolio by branching into both the cod fisheries of the North Atlantic and Antilles trade. As a result, despite fluctuations in the fur

²⁰ Roland Viau, "An Archipelago of Trade, 1650-1701," in Dany Fougères and Roderick MacLeod, *Montreal: The History of a North American City* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2018) V.1, p.120. Le Moyne also employed several other *engagés* and *domestiques* who were recorded living in his home in the 1666 and 1667 census records. PRDH, #95732, « Recensement, » [1666] and PRDH, #96687, « Recensement, » [1667]

²¹ For a detailed archeological perspective on one of the Le Moyne-Le Ber trading posts in Lachine, see Léon Robichaud and Alan Stewart, *Étude historique du site de la maison LeBer-LeMoyne* (Montréal: Remparts ; Le Ministère : Art Gestion ; Musée de Lachine, 1999). See also Dechêne, *Habitants and Merchants*, p.92.

²² Wien, "Le Pérou éphémère," p.172-175.

trade, the threat of outside competition and the impact of factionalism on their trading prospects, the fortunes made by Le Moyne and Le Ber proved to be some of the most stable in the colony, placing them amongst the richest men in Canada.²³

Meanwhile, Le Moyne also maintained his position as an interpreter. Whilst out hunting in July 1665, he had been captured by an Onondaga war party. Typically, in the tradition of the Iroquoian mourning war, male captives were tortured and executed, for they could not be as easily integrated into society as women and children.²⁴ But Le Moyne was spared execution and reportedly even torture, being returned to Quebec that autumn “without even one of his nails being torn off or any part of his body burnt.”²⁵ Most accounts attribute the sparing of Le Moyne’s life to the headman Garakontié, a staunch francophile and advocate of peace, but it was traditionally Haudenosaunee clan matrons who had the final say in who lived and who died.²⁶ One of the few colonists intimately familiar with Iroquoian customs and proficient in their languages, Le Moyne was as valuable to the Onondaga as he was to the French, for he could act as a broker with the Governor of New France. Adopting him into the Onondaga nation, the clan mothers hence inducted Le Moyne into the webs of kinship, clan and moiety that knit together the entire Haudenosaunee Confederacy. Given a place and role in society as *Akouessan* or “the Partridge” Le Moyne was from this moment expected to act as a bridge between his native and adoptive peoples, helping them work towards peace. By

²³ For the Le Moyne-Le Ber trading practices see Le Ber, *Charles Le Moyne*, p. 10-11, 13-20; Dechêne, *Habitants and Merchants*, p.26, 92, 116. See also Table 20, p.108-109. For the factional conflicts over the fur trade in New France in the 1670s, see Robichaud, “Les réseaux d’influence,” p.104-141.

²⁴ Daniel K. Richter, “War and Culture: The Iroquois Experience,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 40, no. 4 (1 October 1983): 528–59; Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), p.67-74.

²⁵ Jon Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010), p.119.

²⁶ Bruce G. Trigger, “Garakontié, Daniel,” in *DCB*, vol. 1, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 26/2/2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/garakontie_1E.html.

returning Le Moyne to Quebec, Garakontié compelled him to honour his new relatives and established him as the Onondaga's plenipotentiary with the French.

Almost immediately, Le Moyne's new connections with the Onondaga brought him into the imperial gaze. In 1663, Louis XIV had revoked the charter of the *Compagnie des Cent-Associés* and established New France as a royal colony. To consolidate his imperial authority, he sent Alexandre de Prouville de Tracy at the head of the *Régiment de Carignan Salières* first to the Caribbean and then to Canada, where the threat of arms was intended to bring the Haudenosaunee Confederacy to the negotiating table.²⁷ When the Mohawk refused to negotiate, Tracy and Governor Daniel de Rémy de Courcelle led two campaigns against the nation in 1666, in which Le Moyne commanded seventy men as the captain of the Ville-Marie militia.²⁸ Given his connections to the Onondaga, the central nation of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, Le Moyne may well also have played a role in negotiating—or at least interpreting for—the resulting peace between the French and the confederacy, officially declared in 1667. Either way, his service earned him the recognition of the colony's new imperial officials, especially the new Intendant Jean Talon. Indeed, hoping to solidify crown rule through the creation of a colonial nobility in Canada, Talon proposed Le Moyne as one of four colonists he deemed worthy of noble titles for their service “soit en réduisant ou disciplinant les sauvages, soit en se défendant contre leurs fréquentes insultes.”²⁹ Within a year, Le Moyne received his titles, becoming one of the first Canadian nobles.

²⁷ Jack Verney, *The Good Regiment: The Carignan-Salières Regiment in New France 1665-1668* (Montreal; Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991).

²⁸ UdeM, P0058 Collection Louis-François-Georges-Baby, P1/2, “De Courcelles. Commission à Charles Lemoyne de Longueuil pour commander la milice à Montréal, » 22 août 1667; UdeM P0058 Collection Louis-François-Georges-Baby, P2/2, “De Courcelles. Certificat attestant les services militaires de Charles Lemoyne de Longueuil,” 6 novembre 1672.

²⁹ “Lettres de noblesse pour le Sieur Le Moyne de Longueuil” in Jodoin and Vincent, *Histoire de Longueuil*, p.37-38.



Fig. II : “The Le Moyne Family Coat of Arms,” from LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, p.1-6, « Permission aux S^{rs} Lemoine de faire enregistrer en la Cour de Parlement et Cour des Aydes les lettres de Noblesse accordées aux mois de mars 1668 à Charles Lemoine de Longueuil, » [1717].

Ennoblement was a profoundly unfamiliar status for Le Moyne. With little other reference of how to “live nobly,” he seems to have turned to his native Normandy for inspiration, reinventing himself in the style of a metropolitan *seigneur* by assuming the title of “de Longueuil”—likely taken from the small town of the same name near Dieppe.³⁰ Since he owed his new status and rank to the opportunities he had been afforded in North America, however, Le Moyne was also sure to infuse his displays of nobility with New World imagery wherever possible. For his heraldry, he chose a fairly typical design, with his new shield-of-

³⁰ One historian suggests that “Longueuil” was a reference to the fact that if you strained your eyes, you could see Le Moyne’s new estates from Montreal. This seems rather unlikely, however, given that many of the other titles Le Moyne decided to give his sons were clearly inspired by towns in Normandy. Jodoin and Vincent, *Histoire de Longueuil*, p.39-40.

arms appearing red and blue, adorned with gold roses and a silver crescent moon and stars.³¹

But to support this design, Le Moyne chose to prominently feature three Indigenous figures—one rising from the crest holding aloft a spear and two acting as supporters for the coat-of-arms, both holding arrows and standing on what might be gilded tobacco leaves or even beaver pelts [Fig. II].³² With this, Le Moyne symbolically gestured to the ways in which his relationships with the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat had contributed to his family's newfound titles and status. Moreover, in consciously mirroring the coats-of-arms of both the *Compagnie des Indes occidentales* and the new royal province of Canada, Le Moyne also asserted his place amongst an emerging “noblesse atlantique,” whose social status and rank depended on their service to an emerging empire through diplomacy, warfare and trade.

Like many Atlantic nobles, however, Le Moyne soon found that whilst his claims to nobility were recognised within Canada, they proved quite tenuous beyond its limits.³³ But even colonial claims had to be consolidated. In 1673, therefore, Le Moyne acquired the *seigneurie* of Châteauguay, adding to lands he had accumulated since 1654 on the south shore of Montreal, Île Sainte-Hélène and Île Ronde. In 1676, these grants were incorporated into the fief of Longueuil, granting Le Moyne “tous droits de seigneurie et de justice haute, moyenne et basse” over a wide jurisdiction.³⁴ With these titles officially added to his portfolio, Le Moyne was able to grant his

³¹ A formal heraldic blazon would describe this shield-of-arms as “Azure three roses Or, and on a chief Gueules a crescent between two mullets Argent.”

³² Auguste Vachon, “Les armoires des Moyne de Longueuil et leurs variantes” *Héraldique au Canada* 41, no.1-4, (2007) pp.27-46.

³³ François-Joseph Ruggiu, “Une noblesse atlantique ? Le second ordre français de l’Ancien au Nouveau Monde,” *Outre-mers* 96, no. 362 (2009): 39–63. François-Joseph Ruggiu, “La noblesse du Canada aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles,” *Histoire, Économie et Société* 27, no.4 (Décembre 2008): 65-85, p.74-75; Lorraine Gadoury, *La noblesse de Nouvelle-France: familles et alliances*, (Ville Lasalle, Québec, Canada: Éditions Hurtubise HMH, 1991), p.18-20.

³⁴ “Titre de la seigneurie de Longueuil, Isle Sainte-Hélène et Iles Rondes,” transcribed in Jodoin and Vincent, *Histoire de Longueuil*, p.44-49. For the acquisition of these lands see p.20, 34-35. See also Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d’Iberville*, p.34.

eldest sons marks of noble status, bestowing upon them the titles of Longueuil, Sainte-Hélène, Maricourt, Châteauguay. For the others, Le Moyne improvised, creating new, empty titles echoed the names of Norman towns—Iberville, Bienville, Sérigny, Assigny. None of his sons, he hoped, would be deprived of noble status.³⁵

Growing up in Montreal, however, Le Moyne's children did not experience a particularly aristocratic lifestyle. By 1675, the original settlement of Ville-Marie had become a thriving trading post but was still far from being a major urban centre. Located at the edge of the Saint Lawrence Valley and the *pays d'en haut*, it served more as a crossroads between the French Atlantic World and the Indigenous world of the vast North American interior.³⁶ Around the town, several Indigenous villages—which would eventually become known as Kahnawake and La Montagne—had been founded following factional and religious upheavals within the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and fell within the orbit of Sulpician and Jesuit missionaries respectively.³⁷ As such, the settlement was frequented by a wide array of different people, including *habitants*, artisans, merchants, *voyageurs*, missionaries, nuns, Indigenous traders, warriors, *filles du roi*, nobles, *coureurs de bois* and soldiers; all navigated their way between the French and Indigenous worlds.³⁸ At the heart of it all, Le Moyne's household sat prominently, opposite the Place du Marché. There, the two worlds met. Even

³⁵ Guy Frégault suggests that the title of Iberville may have come from Joseph Duchesne d'Iberville, a cousin of Charles Le Moyne who was killed by the Haudenosaunee on October 25th, 1661, only a few months after Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville was born. Even so, it seems likely that, like his cousin, Duchesne may also have borrowed this title from his Norman homeland to give an illusion of noble status. Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*, p.39

³⁶ This notion of Montreal as a crossroads between two distinct worlds borrows from Michael Witgen, who has explored the meeting of a "Native New World" and a "French Atlantic World" in the Great Lakes region. Michael Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

³⁷ Jean-François Lozier, *Flesh Reborn: The Saint Lawrence Valley Mission Settlements through the Seventeenth Century*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2018).

³⁸ Brett Rushforth, "Insinuating Empire: Indians, Smugglers, and the Imperial Geography of Eighteenth-Century Montreal" in Jay Gitlin, Barbara Berglund, and Adam Arenson eds., *Frontier Cities: Encounters at the Crossroads of Empire* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), pp.49-65.

once he had become a *seigneur*, Le Moyne spent most of his time in town. Forgoing a leisurely, aristocratic lifestyle and profiting from colonial nobles' right to trade without forfeiting their status, he mainly conducted business. Most of his children thus came of age at the centre of a vibrant, multi-ethnic and multicultural trading community, raised as if they were the children of a colonial merchant, and not the scions of a new noble house.

Like most merchants' sons, the Le Moyne brothers received a rudimentary education before they turned fourteen, most likely from the Sulpician priest Gabriel Souart, who became a close friend of the family. Their sisters probably received some schooling from Marguerite Bourgeoys and the *Congrégation de Notre-Dame*, to whom Le Moyne leased land for a school in Pointe-Saint-Charles from 1668.³⁹ Evidence also suggests that some of the Le Moyne children may have been taught—in religious matters at least—alongside Indigenous students. The ten-year-old Joseph Le Moyne de Sérigny, for example, was confirmed with six Iroquoian catechists from the mission of La Montagne in June 1678.⁴⁰ As soon as they were old enough, the Le Moyne siblings began working for their father and uncle at their trading posts across Montreal, or on their ships that plied the Saint Lawrence River.⁴¹ The brothers learned the skills that would prove valuable in their later lives, becoming familiar with the Canadian landscape, basic accounting, negotiation techniques and seafaring. Guided by their father, many also became proficient in Indigenous languages and customs. Finally, with their

³⁹ Roger Magnuson, *Education in New France* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992). For boy's education see p.115-118. For girls, p.136-138.

⁴⁰ PRDH, #403639, « Confirmation, » Montréal, 19 juin 1678.

⁴¹ By the age of fourteen, Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville had already commanded the *Saint François-Xavier* and the *Sainte-Anne*, co-owned by Le Moyne and Le Ber, on voyages to Île Percé and had sailed to France with their business associate Jean-François Bourbon d'Hombourg. "Mémoire Succinct de la Naissance et des Services de Defunt Pierre Le Moyne, Ecuyer, seigneur d'Iberville, Ardillers, et autres lieux, chevalier de l'ordre de Saint-Louis, capitaine des vaisseaux du Roy," published in Léon Guérin, *Histoire Maritime de la France*, (Paris, 1851-1859), V. 4, p.469-477. For the Le Moyne-Le Ber owned ships, see J. F. Bosher, *Men and Ships in the Canada Trade, 1660-1760: A Biographical Dictionary* (Ottawa: National Historic Sites, Parks Service, Environment Canada, 1992), p. 184, 186, and for D'Hombourg, p.46.

family locked in factional conflict over the fur trade with the Governor of Montreal, François-Marie Perrot, the Le Moyne brothers also appear to have been involved in illegal trading, for one of the earliest documents to mention them is a 1680 court record accusing Le Moyne and Le Ber of outfitting *coureurs de bois*.⁴² By 1685, Le Moyne's older sons were deeply immersed in Canadian mercantile culture and ready to strike out on their own.

One exception was the eldest of Le Moyne's sons—Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil. Benefitting from a brief alliance with Governor Louis Buade de Frontenac, in 1673 Le Moyne had sent his then sixteen-year-old heir to Versailles to serve as page for the governor's cousin, Louis de Crevant, Maréchal de Humières.⁴³ Traditionally, such service allowed minor noble families a chance to forge strong patronage connections with greater houses, whilst educating their sons.⁴⁴ Longueuil thus glimpsed life as a metropolitan noble and witnessed up close the workings of patronage and clientage that operated in early modern France. By 1680, Longueuil was well established at Versailles, having married Claude-Élisabeth Souart d'Adoucourt—the niece of the Sulpician Gabriel Souart and lady-in-waiting to Élisabeth-Charlotte, Madame Palatine, the wife of the Duc d'Orléans.⁴⁵ One year later, he had also

⁴² This record stated that Le Moyne and his sons were outfitting *coureurs de bois* at his post on Île Saint Paul (now Île des Sœurs); ANOM, C11A, V.5, f.359-362, « Mémoire et preuves de la cause du désordre des coureurs de bois, » [1681]. For the disputes between Frontenac, Perrot and the Le Moyne family, see Robichaud "Les réseaux d'influence", p.107-126; Havard, *Histoire des Coureurs de Bois*, p.84-89.

⁴³ Céline Dupré, "Le Moyne de Longueuil, Charles, Baron de Longueuil (d. 1729)," in *DCB*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 11/2/2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/le_moyne_de_longueuil_charles_1729_2E.html; Robichaud "Les réseaux d'influence" p.122. On the Maréchal d'Humières, see Roger de Magnienville, *Le Maréchal d'Humières et le gouvernement de Compiègne (1648-1694): documents pour servir à l'histoire d'une ville de l'Ile-de-France sous le règne de Louis XIV*. (Paris: E. Plon, 1881).

⁴⁴ Mark Edward Motley, *Becoming a French Aristocrat: The Education of the Court Nobility, 1580-1715* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1990), p.20-22.

⁴⁵ Dupré, "Le Moyne de Longueuil, Charles" in *DCB*, vol. 2.

earned a commission as a lieutenant in the *Régiment de Saint-Laurent*, but returned to Canada before being sent to fight in Humières' campaigns in Flanders during the War of Reunions.⁴⁶

Longueuil's return marked a turning point for the Le Moyne family. Educated in the metropole—a place that was almost entirely foreign to his siblings before 1685—he wished to reinvigorate his family's status and assert their place amongst the new Atlantic nobility. After petitioning his father for the exclusive rights to the *seigneurie* of Longueuil, he soon began to build a European-styled château. There, he would live with his family as a colonial seigneur, eschewing much of his mercantile heritage.⁴⁷ He also lobbied for military appointments, perhaps hoping that the recent arrival of *troupes de la Marine* in Canada would provide new opportunities for the colonial elite to honour their noble vocation.⁴⁸ Longueuil's hopes were dashed, however, by a policy barring colonial subjects from holding military commissions until 1687. But after Le Moyne's death, Longueuil found a new way to fulfill his dynastic ambitions, asserting himself as the family's new patriarch and guiding his siblings from afar. In 1713, Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville, who was only five-years-old at his father's death, thanked his older brother for raising him alongside his own children, claiming that “je n'ai jamais eu de paire, c'est vous qui m'en avez servi.”⁴⁹ With Longueuil at the helm, the Le Moyne family charted a new course through the changing tides of the French Atlantic World.

Indeed, by the time of Le Moyne's death, the French Atlantic World had changed dramatically. In 1685, Louis XIV both revoked the Edict of Nantes and issued the Code Noir,

⁴⁶ UdeM, P58, P00058 Collection Louis-François-Georges-Baby, P2/4, (mf2564), “Ordre du Roi à Monsieur de St-Laurent d'établir M. De Longueuil en la charge de lieutenant de la compagnie de Villot, régiment d'infanterie,” St-Germain-en-Laye, 4 février 1680; ANOM, C11A, V.6, f.277v, « Lettre de la Barre au ministre, » 5 juin 1684.

⁴⁷ Louise Lemoine et al., *Le château fort de Longueuil, 1698-1810* (Longueuil : Société d'histoire de Longueuil, 1987).

⁴⁸ ANOM, C11A, V.7, f.97, « Lettre de Denonville au ministre, » 13 novembre 1685.

⁴⁹ “Lettre de Bienville à son frère, Louisiane, le 2 octobre 1713,” in Jodoin and Vincent, *Histoire de Longueuil*, p.122.

signaling his ambitions to consolidate his power and redefine the French Atlantic Empire.⁵⁰ Maturing into an increasingly imperial world, Le Moyne's offspring would seize many new opportunities to further their ambitions and status across the Atlantic World. Drawing on the titles, capital and expertise Le Moyne had left for them, the Le Moyne siblings negotiated a place for themselves within this emerging empire, exploiting its many strengths and weaknesses. In doing so, they traced new imperial geographies and reinforced older ones: many would venture far beyond their native Canada to Hudson Bay, Acadia, New York, New England, Louisiana, Martinique, Saint Domingue, Cuba, New Spain, Florida, Surinam, Guyana, the Mediterranean and western France. All the while, they remained intimately connected, pursuing collective family interests. Within a generation, the Le Moyne family would become truly "Atlantic," establishing a dynasty that spanned an ocean.

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What follows, is not a family history, but a history of empire told through a familial lens. Between 1685 and 1745, the lives and careers of Le Moyne's thirteen children were profoundly influenced by the emergence of a French Empire in the Atlantic World. Born and raised on the colonial periphery, the Le Moyne siblings leveraged a turbulent period of imperial formation to re-invent themselves within the French Atlantic World, establishing themselves as prominent authority figures in different French Atlantic locations. Embracing the mobility that came with service in the *Marine*, the Le Moyne brothers travelled to all corners of the Atlantic World. They interacted with royalty, merchants, Indigenous peoples, bureaucrats, buccaneers, soldiers and smugglers. They built an expansive personal network that linked several colonial enclaves through ties of business, kinship, patronage and duty. *Brothers in Arms* covers the late

⁵⁰ Kenneth J. Banks, *Chasing Empire across the Sea Communications and the State in the French Atlantic, 1713-1763* (Montreal; Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), p.27-28.

seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries: through the first creole generation of the Le Moyne family, we see an empire in the making, on the ground, as experienced and lived by its makers.

Many historians have tried to understand empire in the French Atlantic World. Given the fragmented nature of the field's literature, however, looking for a "French Empire" is often like peering through a kaleidoscope. Many decades ago, French historians pioneered the study of their nation's Atlantic empire. A difficult post-war decolonisation process, however, led many of these scholars towards less controversial subjects. A reluctance to address colonial history persists in France to this day.⁵¹ Historians in Canada, the United States and Haiti picked up the torch, interested in exploring the legacies of French colonialism within their respective nations. But over time, this further splintered the study of the French Empire. These histories tended to be national in vein, exploring only the relationships between their respective colonies and the metropole, and not those between the colonies.⁵² Even with the Atlantic turn, the historiography of the French Empire remains somewhat splintered. Whilst many historians have now embraced an "absolutely Atlantic" perspective—focusing on the movement of goods, ideas and peoples in and around the Atlantic basin—most works still tend to be centred on the place of a single colony within this dynamic space.⁵³ Overall, this has left the impression that the French Empire

⁵¹ Cécile Vidal, "The Reluctance of French Historians to Address Atlantic History," *Southern Quarterly* 43, no. 4 (2006): 153–89.

⁵² Catherine Desbarats and Allan Greer, "North America from the Top Down: Visions from New France," *Journal of Early American History* 5, no. 2 (2015): 109–136; Allan Greer, "National, Transnational, and Hypernational Historiographies: New France Meets Early American History," *The Canadian Historical Review* 91, no. 4 (December 2010): 695–724.

⁵³ For the phrase "absolutely Atlantic" see Christopher Hodson and Brett Rushforth, "Absolutely Atlantic: Colonialism and the Early Modern French State in Recent Historiography," *History Compass* 8, no. 1 (2010): 101–17. One notable recent work that bucks this trend is Cécile Vidal's *Caribbean New Orleans*, which explores slavery in Louisiana in the context of contemporary ideas about race and slavery circulating in the French Caribbean and the wider Atlantic World. Cécile Vidal, *Caribbean New Orleans: Empire, Race and the Making of a Slave Society*, (Williamsburg, Virginia: Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture; Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019).

was little more than a fragile collection of colonies, only tenuously connected to the metropole and one another.

Influential works by James Pritchard and Kenneth Banks entrenched this image of fragility in the imaginations of many historians of the Atlantic World. Amongst the first scholars to truly embrace an Atlantic perspective in their studies of the French Empire, Pritchard and Banks examined the extensive correspondence conducted between colonial officials and the *bureaux de la Marine* in Paris. Inspired by decades of revisionist scholarship on absolutist state formation in France, they also both attempted to evaluate the attempts of the French monarchy to achieve its economic, demographic and political ambitions within the Atlantic World. Though studying different periods, both came to similar conclusions that there was never a French “empire” at all. Instead, they suggested, “empire” (at least in the French context) was nothing more than a concept “chased” by officials at Versailles, but which proved ever “elusive.”⁵⁴

But in searching for “empire,” Pritchard and Banks were looking for something that fundamentally did not exist—a finished process. Ann Stoler has argued that empires are never finished, but are rather “imperial formations,” existing in a perpetual “state of becoming rather than being.”⁵⁵ Ill-defined and territorially ambiguous, these imperial formations depend entirely on the mobility and dislocation of their populations and their colonial agents, whose movements and interactions define the shifting limits of an imagined imperial space. It is these very characteristics that make it hard to find traces of “empire” when looking from the top-down, as imperialism did not solely manifest itself in policies or metropolitan initiatives but was also

⁵⁴ Banks, *Chasing Empire across the Sea* and James Pritchard, *In Search of Empire: The French in the Americas, 1670-1730*. (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004)

⁵⁵ A. L. Stoler, “On Degrees of Imperial Sovereignty,” *Public Culture* 18, no.1 (2006): pp.125-146; Ann Laura Stoler and Carole McGranahan, “Introduction: Refiguring Imperial Terrains,” in Ann Laura Stoler, Carole McGranahan, Peter C. Perdue eds., *Imperial Formations*, (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research press; Oxford: James Currey, 2007), pp.3-42.

evident in the actions of those on the ground. Indeed, Lauren Benton has argued that it was “agents in empire”—officials, merchants, mariners, soldiers—who knit together the patchwork fabric of imperial spaces by carrying concepts of law and sovereignty along the sea lanes that comprised them, creating a shared, but fundamentally incomplete and fragmented understanding of collective subject-hood.⁵⁶ Looking at the French Atlantic World from the naval ministry’s perspective, therefore, Pritchard and Banks were unable to look past these innate fractures and ambiguities to see that a French “empire” did indeed exist, but was fabricated as much by those within it, as those at the imperial centre.

Certain scholars have recently begun to reassess the contribution of “agents in empire” to imperial formation in the French Atlantic World. Alexandre Dubé, for example, has drawn attention to the inherent circum-Atlantic mobility in the careers of *Marine* officials. He argues that this mobility created personal and professional networks that served as channels that could be used to share knowledge and expertise between imperial enclaves or seek future promotions.⁵⁷ Likewise, William Brown has argued that from such administrative networks emerged a collective body of colonial knowledge or *science*, which allowed officials in the colonies and metropole alike to conceive of the empire as a common project and, importantly, a continual learning process.⁵⁸ Finally, Elisabeth Heijmans has underscored the role of individual agency, personal networks and strategies in the management of empire on the ground, drawing attention to the many ways in which the ambitions and interests of the company directors overseeing

⁵⁶ Lauren A. Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400-1900*, (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p.3, 8-9.

⁵⁷ Alexandre Dubé, “S’appropriier l’Atlantique: quelques réflexions autour de Chasing Empire across the Sea, de Kenneth Banks,” *French Colonial History* 6, no. 1 (2005): 33–44; Alexandre Dubé, “Making a Career out of the Atlantic: Louisiana’s Plume,” in Cécile Vidal, *Louisiana: Crossroads of the Atlantic World*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), pp.44-67.

⁵⁸ William A.S. Brown, “Learning to Colonize: State Knowledge, Expertise, and the Making of the First French Empire, 1661-1715” (Unpublished PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2016).

imperial interests in Ouidah and Pondicherry shaped these colonial ventures.⁵⁹ Taken together, these works present an image of an imperial space that, whilst in constant formation, was more cohesive than elusive, influenced as much by the mobility, connections and ambitions of its agents as by metropolitan policies and initiatives.

Brothers in Arms, therefore, seeks to explore precisely how the Le Moyne family contributed to the ongoing process of imperial formation in the French Atlantic World. The Le Moyne brothers were quintessential agents in empire, acting as privateers, company agents, naval officers, explorers, diplomats, colonisers and colonial officials across the French Atlantic World. Representing their monarch on the fringes of this imperial space—whether on land or at sea—they were each heavily implicated in the perpetual search for imperial sovereignty. Granted the authority to enforce and defend the monarch’s proprietary claims to territory or trading privileges through violence or diplomacy, the Le Moyne brothers imposed notions of law, subjecthood and geography onto the colonial landscape and shaped the societies that emerged, especially in the Lower Mississippi Valley. This dissertation will thus suggest that “agents in empire” like the Le Moyne brothers were, in many ways, the empire itself—authorised to establish French sovereignty in the distant corners of the Atlantic World.⁶⁰

But more than individual agents in empire, the Le Moyne brothers were part of an extensive, transatlantic kinship network. Indeed, it is no coincidence that all eleven of the Le Moyne brothers came to serve as imperial agents. Kinship was behind many of the threads of patronage and clientage that wove together the social fabric of French Atlantic society. Kin and in-laws helped advance the interests of relatives, providing opportunities to fulfil dynastic

⁵⁹ Elisabeth Heijmans, *The Agency of Empire: Connections and Strategies in French Overseas Expansion (1686-1746)* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2020).

⁶⁰ For the many ways agents of empire constructed imperial sovereignty in the early-modern Atlantic World, see Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty*.

ambitions for status, wealth and glory wherever possible.⁶¹ As the Le Moyne brothers entered the Atlantic World, therefore, they brought with them their kinsmen and allies and used their patronage connections to ensure that they would all have a chance at an imperial career. Over time, the brothers' constant mobility allowed them to forge wide-reaching relationships across the Atlantic World, whether through marriage, patronage, business, military service or even adoption by Indigenous communities. Meanwhile, their wives and sisters were the vital anchors of the family network. Proficiently managing their kinsmen's patronage relationships, alliances, finances and legal affairs from seaports across the Atlantic World, the Le Moyne women enabled their brothers and husbands to move around freely and fulfil their mutual family ambitions. Working together the Le Moyne family knit together multiple colonial enclaves into their own coherent, intimate space within the Atlantic World.

Historians of absolutist state formation have long identified kinship networks as the foundations upon which early modern France was built. Pioneering studies on patronage and clientage, for instance, have shown that the nascent absolutist regime was profoundly patrimonial, with royal power and authority often flowing along family lines.⁶² Meanwhile, institutional histories have highlighted the domination of the ministries that governed France by certain families or dynasties, such as the Colberts, the Pontchartrains and the Le Telliers.⁶³ Guy

⁶¹ Sharon Kettering, "Patronage and Kinship in Early Modern France," *French Historical Studies* 16, no. 2 (1989): 408–35.

⁶² Sharon Kettering, *Patrons, Brokers, and Clients in Seventeenth-Century France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); David Parker, *Class and State in Ancien Régime France: The Road to Modernity?* (London; New York: Routledge, 1996); Sarah Hanley, "Engendering the State: Family Formation and State Building in Early Modern France," *French Historical Studies* 16, no. 1 (1989): 4–27.

⁶³ For instance, Jean-Louis Bourgeon, *Les Colbert avant Colbert; destin d'une famille marchande*. (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1973); Daniel Dessert, "Le Lobby Colbert: Un Royaume, Ou Une Affaire de Famille?" *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 30, no. 6 (1975): 1303–36; Jacob Soll, *The Information Master Jean-Baptiste Colbert's Secret State Intelligence System* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009); John C. Rule and Ben S. Trotter, *A World of Paper: Louis XIV, Colbert de Torcy, and the Rise of the Information State* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014); Sara Chapman, *Private Ambition and Political Alliances: The Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain Family and Louis XIV's Government, 1650-1715* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press,

Rowlands has even suggested that Louis XIV's France should be considered a "dynastic state," since concerns about family status transcended the line between public and private. Indeed, he argues that Louis XIV was first and foremost concerned with strengthening the Bourbon dynasty in Europe and across the globe, waging many costly wars to ensure a worthy patrimony for his heirs. To achieve his goals, however, the monarch was obliged to work with his nobles. Like their sovereign, many of these nobles also held dynastic interests, perpetually hoping to enhance their family's position within French society through the accumulation of inheritable titles, honours and rewards. Offering such advancements in return for their loyal service, Rowlands argues, Louis XIV hence fulfilled his own dynastic ambitions by furthering those of his nobles, establishing a society where dynasticism was valued above all else and was an important driving force in the formation of an absolutist state.⁶⁴

Brothers in Arms attempts to extend this concept to the French Atlantic World, using the story of the Le Moyne family to shed some light on the place of dynastic ambitions in the formation of a French Empire. Whilst there is little existing work that makes these connections, it seems a thread worth pulling. François Joseph Ruggiu, for instance, has shown that dynastic concerns were especially heightened in the French Atlantic World after the emergence of a "noblesse atlantique" in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. This group of newly ennobled colonial families held a particularly ambiguous place in the French Empire. Many of their noble privileges—such as exemption from certain taxes—did not apply in the colonies,

2004); Charles Frostin, *Les Pontchartrain, ministres de Louis XIV: alliances et réseau d'influence sous l'ancien régime* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2006).

⁶⁴ Guy Rowlands, *The Dynastic State and the Army under Louis XIV: Royal Service and Private Interest, 1661-1701* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.13. Rowland's notion of such a collaboration between the crown and nobles draws heavily on many works concerning state formation in early-modern France. For a useful overview of this scholarship, see William Beik, "The Absolutism of Louis XIV as Social Collaboration," *Past & Present* 188, no. 1 (2005): 195–224.

whilst their titles were generally looked down upon in the metropole.⁶⁵ To protect their family's status, Ruggiu argues, many of these new colonial nobles elected to work alongside the empire, pursuing careers as imperial agents in the search for dynastic stability and prestige. The Le Moyne siblings were emblematic of this new Atlantic nobility, and their careers were perpetually defined by the desire to shore up their status by acquiring titles, land and honours across the Atlantic World. The Le Moyne family thus offer an interesting way to bring together scholarship on metropolitan and colonial nobilities to reimagine *ancien régime* France as not just a dynastic state, but a dynastic imperial formation.

Works by historians of the Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, and British Atlantic Worlds have also revealed that “empires” were not impersonal, monolithic entities, but latticeworks of personal networks bound by many different ties, including patronage, religious belief, social rank, ethnicity, shared collective identities and, of course, kinship.⁶⁶ Within recent years, however, few historians of the French Atlantic World have produced similar studies. Of course, the field has a tradition of studying merchant kin networks, pioneered by the likes of J. F.

⁶⁵ Ruggiu, “Une noblesse atlantique?” See also François-Joseph Ruggiu, “Extraction, Wealth and Industry: The Ideas of Noblesse and of Gentility in the English and French Atlantics (17th–18th Centuries),” *History of European Ideas* 34, no. 4 (1 December 2008): 444–55; Vincent Gourdon and François-Joseph Ruggiu, “Familles en situation coloniale,” *Annales de démographie historique* 122, no. 2 (2011): 5–39; François-Joseph Ruggiu, “The Kingdom of France and Its Overseas Nobilities,” *French History* 25, no. 3 (1 September 2011): 298–315.

⁶⁶ For a very select overview of a wealth of works studying networks in other European empires see: Xavier Lamikiz, *Trade and Trust in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World: Spanish Merchants and their Overseas Networks* (London: The Boydell Press, 2013); Marta V. Vicente, *Clothing the Spanish Empire: Families and the Calico Trade in the Early Modern Atlantic World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Ida Altman, *Transatlantic Ties in the Spanish Empire: Brihuega, Spain & Puebla, Mexico, 1560-1620* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation upon the Ocean Sea: Portugal's Atlantic Diaspora and the Crisis of the Spanish Empire, 1492-1640* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Susanah Shaw Romney, *New Netherland Connections: Intimate Networks and Atlantic Ties in Seventeenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Julia Adams, *The Familial State: Ruling Families and Merchant Capitalism in Early Modern Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005) Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560-1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) and David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

Bosher, but these were mostly limited to exploring networks linking France to Canada or the West Indies.⁶⁷ Recent works by Pierre Force, Jennifer L. Palmer and Paul Cheney have slowly reopened the door for this kind of research, highlighting the intimate connections between kinship networks and the processes of capitalism, migration and slavery in the French Caribbean.⁶⁸ Focused almost entirely on late-eighteenth-century Saint Domingue, however, their works leave much to be done in other regions and periods. Touching on Canada, Louisiana, the Caribbean, France and even beyond, *Brothers in Arms* thus seeks to take a broader, circum-Atlantic perspective on the interactions between family and empire in the French Atlantic World. Moreover, focusing on sixty particularly turbulent years—which included two different monarchs, a regency, several major financial crises, two global wars and a host of smaller colonial conflicts—it seeks to give a deeper insight into a hitherto understudied, yet crucial period of imperial formation, revealing the role of family networks and ambitions in creating and developing a nascent imperial space.

But, as the subtitle of this dissertation suggests, the Le Moyne family did not only operate within the parameters of a “French” Atlantic World. Throughout their careers, the Le Moyne siblings forged cross-cultural relationships with Indigenous nations in the Great Lakes and the Lower Mississippi Valley and trans-imperial connections with merchants in Spanish America,

⁶⁷ J. F. Bosher, *The Canada Merchants, 1713-1763* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1987); J. F. Bosher, “A Québec Merchant’s Trading Circles in France and Canada: Jean-André Lamaletie before 1763,” *Histoire Sociale/ Social History* 10, no.19, (1977); J. F. Bosher, “Research Note/ Note de Recherche: The Lyon and Bordeaux Connections of Emmanuel Le Borgne (c.1605-1681),” *Acadiensis*, XXIII, no. 1 (1993); J. F. Bosher, “Sept grands marchands catholiques français participant au commerce avec la Nouvelle-France (1660-1715),” *Revue d’histoire de l’Amérique française* 48, no. 1 (1994): 3–27. See also Dale Miquelon, *Dugard of Rouen: French Trade to Canada and the West Indies, 1729-1770*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1978); Kathryn Young, *Kin, Commerce, Community: Merchants in the Port of Quebec, 1717–1745* (New York: Peter Lang, 1995).

⁶⁸ Pierre Force, *Wealth and Disaster: Atlantic Migrations from a Pyrenean Town in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016); Jennifer L. Palmer, *Intimate Bonds: Family and Slavery in the French Atlantic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016); Paul Burton Cheney, *Cul de Sac: Patrimony, Capitalism, and Slavery in French Saint-Domingue* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017).

experiencing an Atlantic World that existed far beyond the sphere of French influence. To borrow terms used by historians of the Portuguese Empire, the Le Moyne network formed part of an “informal” or “shadow” empire—a borderless, stateless and multi-ethnic world that existed on the ambiguous periphery of the “formal” French Empire.⁶⁹ As Catía Antuñes has argued, the actors who inhabited these informal spaces had a considerable influence over the direction of “formal” imperial formation, for they could either choose to enact imperial sovereignty as agents of empire, or defy and challenge it, becoming “free agents” who resisted imperial influence through illegality, alliance with other powers or legal proceedings.⁷⁰ Imbued with imperial authority and able to transcend imperial boundaries, the Le Moynes were in a prime position to negotiate their own place within the Atlantic World. As a result, following their careers will demonstrate how those on the fringes of imperial influence were able to steer imperial formation in ways that suited their personal ambitions.

Of course, historians have long identified the “odd imperialism” inherent to the creation of empire in the French Atlantic World.⁷¹ Indeed, all early modern empire-building was a

⁶⁹ The notion of “informal empire” has long been established in the study of the Portuguese Empire in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans and provides a useful comparative tool of analysis for the French Empire. Generally speaking, both empires had limited physical presence in the vast colonial spaces they claimed and sought to build their presence through more fully developed relationships with the cultures they encountered in the pursuit of trade. George Winus, “The ‘Shadow Empire’ of Goa in the Bay of Bengal,” *Itinerario*, V.7 (1983); Malyn Newitt, “Formal and Informal Empire in the History of Portuguese Expansion,” *Portuguese Studies* 17 (2001): 1–21; Cátia Antunes, “Free Agents and Formal Institutions in the Portuguese Empire: Towards a Framework of Analysis,” *Portuguese Studies* 28, no. 2 (2012): 173–85.

⁷⁰ Antuñes, “Free Agents and Formal Institutions in the Portuguese Empire,” p. 181. On self-organised networks and their connections to the informal and formal structures of empire in the Early Modern Atlantic World see Cátia Antunes, Amélia Polónia eds., *Beyond Empires: Global, Self-Organizing, Cross-Imperial Networks, 1500-1800* (Boston: Brill 2016.); David Hancock, “Self-Organized Complexity and the Emergence of an Atlantic Market Economy, 1651-1815: The Case of Madeira,” in Peter A. Coclanis ed., *The Atlantic Economy during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Organization, Operation, Practice and Personnel* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2005), p.30-71.

⁷¹ “Odd imperialism” is a specific term used by Leslie Choquette, but this theme appears in many works, notably on New France. Leslie Choquette, “Centre and Periphery in French North America,” in Christine Daniels and Michael V Kennedy eds., *Negotiated Empires: Centers and Peripheries in the Americas, 1500-1820*, (New York: Routledge, 2002), p.193–206. For similar interpretations, see Gilles, Havard, *Empire et métissages : Indiens et Français dans le Pays d'en Haut, 1660-1715* (Sillery, Québec; Paris: Septentrion ; Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2003); Michael A. McDonnell, *Masters of Empire: Great Lakes Indians and the Making of America* (New York: Hill and

fundamentally a negotiated process—a continual dialogue between the ambitions of officials in the metropole and those in the colonies.⁷² In the French context, however, constant warfare and fiscal overextension meant that the metropolitan centre was often unable to impose itself on the colonial periphery. Those on the fringes of imperial authority—including *coureurs de bois*, Indigenous allies, *boucaniers*, and maroon communities—were thus able to profoundly influence the direction of imperial expansion, as officials at Versailles were frequently unable to oppose them. Whilst coming to serve as imperial agents, the Le Moyne siblings initially emerged out of this peripheral, colonial society and were familiar with the more relaxed dynamics between metropole and colony. Throughout their careers, therefore, they too continually pushed at and tested the limits of imperial influence, forcing those back at Versailles to play catch up if they wished to claim some semblance of imperial sovereignty.

More recently, Shannon Lee Dawdy has rebranded such phenomena as “rogue colonialism,” emphasising the place of corruption and personal interest in motivating “rogues” to drive imperial formation. Notably, Dawdy argues that both Pierre Le Moyne d’Iberville and Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville were “among the most roguish of early colonials” for the ways in which they made illicit profits from the establishment of both Louisiana and New Orleans.⁷³ But whilst Dawdy’s work convincingly outlines the experimental and haphazard nature of early modern colonial development, several scholars have since nuanced her view that “rogues” always operated in a manner diametrically

Wang, A Division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015); Robert Michael Morrissey, *Empire by Collaboration: Indians, Colonists and Government in Colonial Illinois Country* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015). See also Jordan Kellman, “Beyond Center and Periphery: New Currents in French and Francophone Atlantic Studies,” *Atlantic Studies*, 10:1, (2013): 1-11.

⁷² For a good overview of these negotiated relationships in most of the major European empires, see the collected essays in Daniels and Kennedy eds., *Negotiated Empires*.

⁷³ Shannon Lee Dawdy, *Building the Devil’s Empire French Colonial New Orleans* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), p.28.

opposed to imperial ambitions. Recently, Richard Weyhing, Sara Chapman and Guillaume Teasdale have all shown that various naval ministers tacitly supported the self-interested actions of other so called “rogues” —such as Antoine La Mothe de Cadillac, Pierre Le Sueur and Jean-Baptiste du Casse—as a way to enact their imperial ambitions at a time when financial crises and global warfare precluded any meaningful metropolitan actions.⁷⁴ Within the patrimonial political system of the French Atlantic World, therefore, “rogue colonialism” was simply “colonialism,” since the self-interestedness of imperial agents was not only expected but encouraged, so long as these private interests aligned with imperial desires. As this dissertation will show, however, as soon as these interests did not align, metropolitan officials attempted to bring their imperial agents in line, wielding any judicial or patrimonial power they could muster with varying degrees of success.

Whilst various members of the Le Moyne family have received attention from authors over the years, only two works have considered the family as a whole, and both were published over a century ago. In 1878, the French-Canadian novelist and historian Joseph Marmette published the first full account of the family’s exploits, entitled *Les Machabées de la Nouvelle-France*. Likening the Le Moynes to the biblical family, Marmette’s narrative built on the patriotic national histories of his era, glorifying their deeds as the triumphs of a French-Canadian nation in the face of a larger, more powerful British Empire.⁷⁵ Eleven years later,

⁷⁴ Guillaume Teasdale, *Fruits of Perseverance: the French Presence in the Detroit River Region, 1701-1815* (Montreal; Kingston; London; Chicago: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2019), Richard Weyhing, “The Straits of Empire: French Colonial Detroit and the Origins of the Fox Wars” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2012; Richard Weyhing, ““Gascon Exaggerations”: the Rise of Antoine Laumet (dit de Lamothe, Sieur de Cadillac), the Foundation of Colonial Detroit, and the Origins of the Fox Wars,” in Robert Englebert and Guillaume Teasdale eds., *French and Indians in the Heart of North America, 1630-1815* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2013), p.99; Sara Chapman, “Reluctant Expansionists: Louis XIV, the Ministers of Colonies and the Founding of Détroit,” in Julia Prest and Guy Rowlands eds., *The Third Reign of Louis XIV, c.1682-1715* (London & New York: Routledge, 2017) pp.40-49.

⁷⁵ Joseph Marmette, *Les Machabées de la Nouvelle-France : histoire d’une famille canadienne, 1641-1768* (Québec : Imprimerie de Léger Brousseau, 1878).

local historians Alex Jodoin and J. L. Vincent used the story of Charles Le Moyne and his most famous sons to foreground their detailed history of the newly-incorporated town of Longueuil, adding an angle of local pride to the patriotism and nationalism of their predecessor.⁷⁶ Both narratives situated the family's story firmly within North America, with little consideration of their place within a wider early-modern world.

By the twentieth century, these family histories gave way to biographies of the two most famous Le Moyne brothers—Iberville and Bienville. Attracting the attention of scholars in Canada, the United States and France, these two brothers were the subjects of many “Great Men” narratives, lauded as national heroes and founding fathers. On the Canadian side, Adam-Charles-Gustave Desmazures propelled Iberville to a quasi-mythical status in his 1890 biography, the first of its kind. Over the following half a century, at least six different biographies expanded this mythos, painting Iberville as a forward-thinking, pragmatic warrior and coloniser who single-handedly pushed the boundaries of the French Empire beyond the Saint Lawrence Valley and into the American midwest.⁷⁷ This nationalist mythologisation reached its peak in 1944 with Guy Frégault's *Iberville Le Conquérant*, which is still considered the definitive scholarly biography of Iberville's career, to the point that few have attempted to retread its steps.⁷⁸ Meanwhile, the Louisiana historian Grace E. King was the

⁷⁶ Jodoin and Vincent, *Histoire de Longueuil*.

⁷⁷ Adam Charles Gustave Desmazures, *Histoire du chevalier d'Iberville*, (Montréal: J.M. Valois libraire-éditeur, 1890); Charles B. Reed, *The First Great Canadian: the Story of Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, sieur d'Iberville* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co, 1910); Charles Germain Marie Bourel de la Roncière, *Une épopée canadienne* (Paris: La renaissance du livre, 1930); Pierre Daviault, *La grande aventure de Le Moyne d'Iberville* (Montréal: A. Lévesque, 1934); L. Le Jeune, *Le chevalier Pierre Le Moyne, sieur d'Iberville*, (Ottawa : Les Éditions de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1937); Nellis Maynard Crouse, *Lemoyne d'Iberville: Soldier of New France*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1954). For an overview of these biographies see David Camirand “Iberville et les historiens: Le parcours historiographique d'un héros de la Nouvelle-France” (Master's thesis, Université de Montréal, 2007).

⁷⁸ Guy Frégault's biography of Iberville was originally published as *Iberville Le Conquérant* in 1944. Throughout this dissertation, however, I will be making reference to the 1968 republication of this work, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*. Guy Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*. (Montréal: Fides, 1968).

first to document Bienville's life in 1892 and was soon followed by two French publications by M. G. Musset and Georges Oudard. Mostly ignoring his Canadian birth, all three accounts celebrated Bienville as the French "Father" of New Orleans and Louisiana, reaffirming the growing cultural connections between Louisiana and France emerging at the time to establish him as a shared cultural hero.⁷⁹

Few have attempted to revise these heroic narratives. In his 1969 entry in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Bernard Pothier called for a new account of Iberville's career situated within the emerging scholarship of the time, but his call was left unanswered for almost four decades. Indeed, it was not until the tricentennial of Iberville's death in 2006 that certain historians began to nuance the nationalist, heroic interpretations of Iberville's life, emphasising his case of *rapt de séduction* in 1686, the many accusations of fraud made against him and his use of violence and treachery to achieve his results.⁸⁰ But for the most part, these works have had little impact on the general impression of Iberville in Canada, who continues to capture the imagination of scholars, amateur historians and the public alike.⁸¹

In the United States, some scholars have similarly begun to question the legacies of Iberville and Bienville in Louisiana. Following in Dawdy's footsteps, many works have drawn attention to the "roguish" nature of the brothers' exploits in the Lower Mississippi Valley, especially in the build-up to the tricentennial celebrations in New Orleans in 2018, as authors embraced this characterisation to cast the city as "accidental," or created by self-

⁷⁹ Grace Elizabeth King, *Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville*. (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1892); Georges Oudard, *Bienville, le père de la Louisiane* (Toulouse: Didier, 1900); M. G. Musset, *J.-B. Le Moyne de Bienville* (Paris : Imprimerie nationale, 1902).

⁸⁰ Guy Giguère, *Honteux personnages de l'histoire du Québec: faits troublants sur nos élites et nos héros, de 1600 à 1900* (Montréal: Stanké, 2002); Bernard Andrès, "Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville (1706-2006) : trois siècles à hue et à dia," *Les Cahiers des dix*, no. 60 (2006): 79.

⁸¹ See for example, Claude Marc Bourget, "Lumières et réactions sur Le Moyne d'Iberville," *Égards*, no.11 (2006) ; Biz, "D'Iberville, un corsaire à la mesure de l'Amérique," *Revue Argument* 16 no.2 (2014).

interest.⁸² All of this has only created a new mythology, however, which places Iberville and Bienville amongst the many “rascals, rulers and reformers” to grace this proudly misfit region which has never fit snugly into French, Canadian or American historiographies.⁸³

Charting the lives of thirteen different Le Moyne children, their spouses, in-laws, allies, clients and associates more broadly across the Atlantic World is a challenging task. The lives of the most prominent Le Moyne siblings are especially well documented, for they left behind a wealth of official correspondence, notarial documentation, civil records, court cases and more which has been well preserved by archivists in Canada, the United States and France. Attempting to bring together this huge amount of documentation and information into a single narrative, however, means much is bound to be passed over or even lost. Given that many other scholars, historians and authors have already recounted the family’s exploits in Canada in detail, this dissertation thus privileges the lives of those siblings who ventured beyond the confines of the Saint Lawrence Valley and into the Atlantic World, bringing a more global perspective to what has otherwise been an exclusively North American story.

Whilst this does mean that the lives of those who stayed behind in Canada will receive less attention in this narrative, their lives are neither lost to history, nor entirely missing from this story. Moreover, due to a lack of surviving personal or private papers—besides a handful of letters written by Bienville to his brother and nephews between 1713 and 1755—it is also particularly difficult to reconstruct the intimate nature of the siblings’ personal relationships. Even so, this dissertation attempts to use other glimpses of their lives found in notarial, civil,

⁸² Richard Campanella, *Bienville’s Dilemma: A Historical Geography of New Orleans* (Lafayette: Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Louisiana, 2008); Lawrence N. Powell, *The Accidental City: Improvising New Orleans* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012); Dianne Guenin-Lelle, *The Story of French New Orleans: History of a Creole City* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2016).

⁸³ Walter G. Cowan and Jack B. McGuire, *Louisiana Governors: Rulers, Rascals, and Reformers* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2008).

church and judicial records to shed some light on the family relationships, highlighting how the siblings interacted with one another outside of their official capacities as agents in empire. It is through these kinds of records in particular that the lives of the Le Moyne women—including not only Marie-Anne and Catherine-Jeanne Le Moyne, but also many of the wives of the Le Moyne brothers—emerge and, wherever possible, this dissertation attempts to highlight their vital contributions to the Le Moyne family network, whether through the management of personal relationships, patronage, business or legal affairs.

Brothers in Arms follows a three-part narrative. Beginning with the emergence of the Le Moyne family onto the world stage, the first two chapters follow the attempts of the Le Moyne brothers to build upon their father's legacy and launch careers which could take them beyond Canada. First, *Chapter I: Fur, Kin and Country* documents how the brothers exploited the many connections between commerce and warfare in the early-modern Atlantic to find their way into official military careers and serve the crown as privateers in Hudson Bay and Newfoundland at the time of the War of the League of Augsburg. Then, *Chapter II: Foreign Relations* explores the family's reputation with the Indigenous nations of North America, showing how they were able to benefit from their longstanding fictive kinship relationships with the Haudenosaunee Confederacy to forge peacetime careers as diplomatic agents, even travelling as far as the Lower Mississippi Valley. By the turn of the eighteenth century, their service on the front lines of France's military and diplomatic offensives had earned the brothers international renown, granting them many new opportunities.

The second section of this dissertation charts the rise of the Le Moyne family in the Atlantic World, exploring how they used these reputations to earn the trust of the naval minister and pursue their ambitions for riches, estates and glory. *Chapter III: Thicker than Water* traces the

activities of the Le Moyne family across the Atlantic World, as they took advantage of the War of the Spanish Succession to build an informal empire where they could freely pursue their interests. At its peak, this network actively exploited the weaknesses of the French crown for its own benefit, culminating in the Nevis Affair, the subject of *Chapter IV: A Family Affair*. This chapter not only explores how Iberville used his network to defraud the French crown of thousands of *livres* during his privateering campaign, but also the inability of the naval ministry to prosecute the main perpetrators of the fraud, shedding light on the weaknesses of an empire embroiled in a global conflict. Ultimately though, this betrayal of trust cast a long shadow on the Le Moyne family, bringing about their fall from grace.

The final chapters of this dissertation follow the attempts of the remaining members of the Le Moyne family to step out from this shadow and renegotiate their position in the French Atlantic World. Focusing entirely on Bienville, *Chapter V: A House in New Orleans* documents his attempts to establish himself as a colonial noble in New Orleans, blending conceptions of nobility from across the empire to create a patrimony for himself in Louisiana whilst defying the commercial objectives of the *Compagnie des Indes*. Finally, *Chapter VI: Empire of the Sons* takes a broader perspective, comparing the attempts of the last of the Le Moyne brothers—Longueuil, Sérigny, Bienville and Châteauguay—to re-invent themselves as valuable imperial officials, each with varying degrees of success. Negotiating their place within a patrimonial system, each of the brothers played the game of trans-Atlantic politics, relying on the favour of the crown and the minister for their rehabilitation

A Note on Sources and Language

Throughout this thesis, the sources used will be kept in the original French, complete with their author's errors and linguistic oddities. Receiving little formal education, the Le

Moyne brothers tended to write phonetically. The spellings of words could also change within a single document [Fig. III]. These errors, however, are a telling indication that the letter was penned by a Le Moyne brother. Later in their careers, the brothers dictated their thoughts to various clerks and *commis*, and the orthography of these documents tends to instead reflect the education of these writers more than the brothers'. Either way, the brothers' use of language serves to emphasise the unique position of the colonial-born, mercantile Le Moyne family within traditionally metropolitan, noble institutions and has thus been preserved to colour this dissertation with their individual personalities.

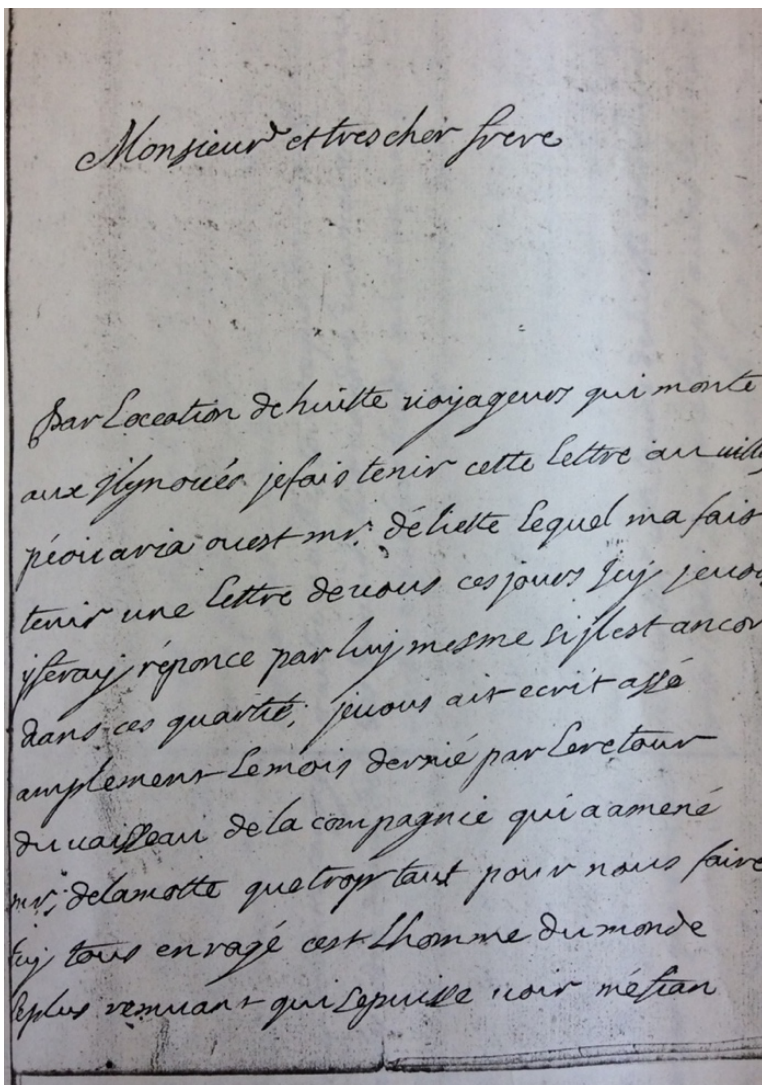


Fig. III : “Lettre de Bienville à Longueuil, 20 novembre 1713” LAC, MG18, V.2, p.13-19a.

Note the phonetic spellings of “huit” [huitte] “Illinois,” [ilynoués] “réponse,” [réponce] “encore” [ancor] and “dernier” [dernié].

Chapter I
Fur, Kin and Country:
Enterprise, Ambition and Warfare in the North Atlantic, 1686-1698

Early on June 21st, 1686, Jacques Le Moyne de Sainte-Hélène, Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville and Paul Le Moyne de Maricourt vaulted the palisades of Moose Fort, a Hudson's Bay Company outpost on James Bay, swords in hand. Followed by a few Canadians, the brothers crept through the fort, capturing several cannons and unlocking the sally port to the rear. Moments later, thirty French *troupes de la Marine* and sixty Canadians battered down the fort's front gates, led by their commander Pierre de Troyes. Taken by surprise, the small English garrison scrambled to repel the assault, still dressed in their nightshirts. Retreating to a wooden redoubt, they fired upon their attackers but, realising they were vastly outnumbered and outgunned, soon demanded quarter. One English artilleryman nevertheless seized this chance to turn his cannon on his enemies. He was felled by a crack-shot from Sainte-Hélène before he could unleash his devastating salvo. Inspired by their comrade's sacrifice, the English garrison rallied and began shooting at the French and Canadians as they attempted to bring their battering ram to bear on the door of the redoubt. Braving a withering fusillade, the French and Canadians managed to shatter the door but failed to take it clean off its hinges. Even so, Iberville charged through the breach without hesitation, brandishing his sword and pistol. Once he was inside, however, the Englishmen forced the door shut behind him. Trapped, Iberville fired blindly, injuring a few of his assailants before his compatriots broke down the door and burst into the redoubt. At this, the English promptly surrendered. After less than half an hour of frantic fighting, Moose Fort was in French and Canadian hands.¹

¹ For complete narratives of this expedition see Pierre de Troyes "Journal of the Chevalier de Troyes," and Gédéon de Catalogne, "Gédéon de Catalogne's Account of the Expedition," translated and published in W. A Kenyon, J. R Turnbull, and Pierre Troyes, *The Battle for James Bay 1686* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1971), p.40-88 and

Over the next few weeks, the Le Moyne brothers led three more successful assaults across James Bay, capturing the English trading posts of Fort Albany and Charles Fort and a ship named the *Craven*. In total, their campaign cost the Hudson's Bay Company upwards of £50,000 in damages and losses. These decisive victories earned the Le Moyne brothers great renown in both Canada and France, effectively launching their military careers and setting in motion the expansion of the Le Moyne family across the French Atlantic World. But, in June 1686, Sainte-Hélène, Iberville and Maricourt did not hold commissions in the *troupes de la Marine*, nor was a war being waged between France and England. Denied a traditional path to military service, the brothers improvised and took any opportunity they could to pursue glory, riches and renown.

The last decades of the seventeenth century offered many occasions for such improvisation. Based in Canada, the Le Moyne brothers became embroiled in violent mercantile disputes over the control of the Hudson Bay watershed as well as the debut of inter-imperial warfare in North America, known as the War of the League of Augsburg (1688-1697). Meanwhile, across the Atlantic, the French navy was undergoing a drastic transformation as it tried to compete with the combined maritime might of the English and the Dutch. Experiencing issues of manpower and financing, the *ministère de la Marine* encouraged private enterprise and privateering across the French Atlantic World, opening up a myriad of opportunities for those willing to combine warfare and profit. This chapter explores how the Le Moyne brothers—especially Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville—leveraged these new opportunities, fashioning themselves into indispensable agents of inter-imperial competition over the North Atlantic.

p.93-99. See also Pierre-François-Xavier de Charlevoix, *Histoire et description générale de la Nouvelle France avec le journal historique d'un voyage fait par ordre du roi dans l'Amérique septentrionale* (Paris: Chez Nyon fils., 1999), Livre XI, p.505-529; Guy Frégault, *Pierre LeMoyne d'Iberville*. (Montréal: Fides, 1968), p.66-76; Nellis M. Crouse *Le Moyne d'Iberville: Soldier of New France*, (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1954), p.20-39; Edward H. Borins, "La Compagnie du Nord, 1682-1700," (Master's thesis, McGill University, 1968), p.105.

**“He durst not Come...if hee had not had a Commission from the King of France:”
Opportunity and Ambition in the James Bay Expedition**

On December 9th, 1687, Hugh Verner, the former factor at Moose Fort, recounted the capture of his outpost and his own captivity to his superiors at the Hudson’s Bay Company in London. His report stated that he had met on several occasions with Sainte-Hélène and Iberville, who had taken over command of the outpost after their victory in August 1686. On each occasion, Verner reported, he had confronted the brothers about the illegitimacy of their actions in James Bay, demanding “how durst they come and assault us there being noe Ware betwixt England and France” and “how they could answeere the affront they had done the King of England in burneing and wasting his Country with fire and sword.” Mainly, the brothers left Verner’s questions unanswered, but his stubborn persistence finally got a rise out of Iberville. Laughing at Verner’s complaints, Iberville allegedly quipped that “the King of England would not Quarrell with his Brother the King of French for such a Small trifle” and then, pointing to his throat, boasted that “he durst not Come to assault us if hee had not had a Commission from the King of France, which commission if he wanted he could expect nothing but hanging.”²

Iberville was not wrong. Ever since November 1685, ambassadors at Versailles and Whitehall had been working towards a Treaty of Neutrality between France and England in an attempt to safeguard their respective North American colonies should war break out in Europe. On February 7th, 1686, Louis XIV had thus published his “Projet du traité de Neutralité,” which, amongst other articles, called for “la punition de ceux qui contreviendront aux deffenses qui seront fait d’Armer en guerre sans commission.”³ Whilst certain accounts of the James Bay expedition listed Sainte-Hélène and Iberville as *lieutenant* and *lieutenant en second* respectively,

² “Hugh Verner’s Report, 9th December 1687,” in Kenyon and Turnbull, *The Battle for James Bay*, p.102-103.

³ AM, B2, V.56, f.17-19v « Projet du traité de Neutralité à conclure entre les sujets du Roy de France et d’Angleterre, » 7 février 1686.

neither actually held any such military commission, for the ranks of *troupes de la Marine* were not formally opened to colonial-born subjects until 1687.⁴ Instead, the brothers were employed by the *Compagnie du Nord*, a private fur-trading outfit that sponsored the entire expedition, to serve as the *commandants* of the “habitants detachés pour le Service du Roy et de la compagnie intéressée au commerce de la Baye du Nord.” On the company’s orders, they were to “maintenir les peuples dans une bonne discipline, et de réprimer les désordres qui se commettent par les vagabonds.” Most importantly, however, they were to arrest Pierre Esprit de Radisson and bring him back to Quebec in chains “pour obtenir la grace du Roy.”⁵

Formed in 1682, the *Compagnie du Nord* was an association of merchants based in Quebec, Montreal and France with mutual interests in the lucrative *castor gras* (coat beaver) of Hudson Bay.⁶ Of course, such interests had brought them into direct competition with the Hudson’s Bay Company, who claimed the region by a charter issued by Charles II in 1670. In 1682, the *Compagnie du Nord* sought to challenge this monopoly by hiring Pierre Esprit Radisson to establish a trading post on the Nelson River, which they named Fort Bourbon. But two years later, angry at his treatment by the French, Radisson betrayed his employers, handing over the outpost and its wares to the English in return for company stock and a handsome salary.⁷

⁴ For references to the brothers as *lieutenants* see ANOM, C11A, V.8, f.26v, « Instructions de Denonville au chevalier de Troyes sur ce qu’il aura à faire “pour l’établissement et sûreté des postes à occuper pour la Compagnie du Nord » à la baie d’Hudson, » [1685] and De Troyes, “Journal”, p.40. These mentions have been repeated by subsequent historians, for instance in Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d’Iberville*, p.67. For the changing military situation in Canada in 1686-1687 see Jay Cassel, *The Troupes de La Marine in Canada, 1683-1760: Men and Material* (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 1987), p.105.

⁵ ANOM, E, 364, « Sainte-hélène et d’Iberville commandant les habitants détachés pour le service du Roi de la compagnie intéressée au commerce de la baie du Nord, au Canada 1786 [sic], » 12 juin 1686 [original 12 février].

⁶ *Castor gras* or “coat beaver” were pelts were worn by Indigenous peoples, whose natural body oils exposed the soft felt as they were worn. This made it easier for European hat manufacturers to work with the material, which in turn made the furs more lucrative. In the cold climate of the Hudson and James Bays, the local Indigenous peoples wore their pelts for long periods of time, making *castor gras* particularly abundant. Daniel Francis and Toby Elaine Morantz, *Partners in Furs: A History of the Fur Trade in Eastern James Bay, 1600-1870*, (Montréal, McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1983), p.8-9

⁷ For a detailed account of Radisson’s activities in Hudson Bay between 1682 and 1684, see Chapters 9 and 10 in Martin Fournier, *Pierre-Esprit Radisson, Merchant, Adventurer, 1636-1710* (Sillery, QC: Septentrion, 2002).

Furious, the directors of the *Compagnie du Nord* responded by dispatching Claude de Bermen de la Martinière to recover the fort in July 1684. By the time he arrived, however, the English had destroyed the post, stolen over 200,000 *livres* of merchandise, and constructed Fort Hayes and York Factory on either side of the Nelson River.⁸ With little other recourse the company sent two of its directors, Philip Gaultier de Comporté and Pierre Soumande Delorme, to France in February 1685 to request a charter similar to that held by the Hudson's Bay Company, which they hoped might grant them a similar "droit de reprezailles...en Cas que les dits Anglois Eussent commencé de faire rupture de la paix qui est Entre Nous et Eux."⁹ On May 20th, 1685, Louis XIV responded favourably, offering the *Compagnie du Nord* a *contrat de concession* which entitled them to "la propriété de la Rivière de bourbon dit Nelson" for thirty years.¹⁰

For well over a century, companies and corporations had played important roles in extending French claims to sovereignty overseas, providing the judicial, martial and financial apparatus to manage colonies on the ground. In return, these companies received certain protections and privileges from the crown and held the right to defend these against others in metropolitan courts.¹¹ On October 29th, 1685, therefore, the *Compagnie du Nord* registered their charter in Quebec, confident that the *ministre de la Marine*, Jean-Baptiste Colbert de Seignelay, would support them in defending their new privileges against the English. Assembling several

⁸ Borins, "Compagnie du Nord", p.77-87.

⁹ "Procès verbale de Délibération de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson nommant deux de ses membres pour la représenter en France," cited in Borins, "Compagnie du Nord," p.88.

¹⁰ ANOM, C11A, V.7, f.254, « Contrat de Concession pour le Baye d'Hudson, » [1685].

¹¹ On commercial companies and French sovereignty in Canada, see Helen Dewar, "Government by Trading Company?: The Corporate Legal Status of the Company of New France and Colonial Governance," *Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos*. 14 June 2018; Helen Dewar, "Souveraineté dans les colonies, souveraineté en métropole : le rôle de la Nouvelle-France dans la consolidation de l'autorité maritime en France, 1620-1628," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 64, no. 3-4 (2011): 63-92 and Helen Dewar, "'Y Establiir Nostre Auctorite': Assertions of Imperial Sovereignty through Proprietorships and Chartered Companies in New France, 1598-1663" (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2014). For a comparative overview, see L. H. Roper and Bertrand Van Ruymbeke, *Constructing Early Modern Empires: Proprietary Ventures in the Atlantic World, 1500-1750* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007).

“Eclairez” in Quebec that November, they discussed their options, debating whether it would be better to re-capture Fort Bourbon by land or by sea. In the end, they settled on the latter and filed a request for a warship with the minister. Framing their petition carefully, the directors purposefully evoked the language of their new charter, defending their recent seizure of a cache of English furs under the “droit de represaille” and insisting that the royal vessel would only be used against the “pyrattes anglois et renegats françois” who had seized Fort Bourbon.¹² Appealing to maritime law, therefore, the directors sought to prove the legitimacy of their forthcoming venture, presenting it as a lawful extension of French jurisdiction over the Nelson River to bring the “piratical” Hudson Bay Company to justice.¹³

Across the Atlantic, however, Louis XIV still privileged a policy of peaceful relations with the English. In his *Projet*, the king proposed a diplomatic solution to the Nelson River problem, suggesting that it become “commun aux deux nations sans prejudice des droits que l’une et l’autre y pretend respectivement.”¹⁴ With this peaceful compromise in mind, Seignelay ignored the bellicose requests the *Compagnie du Nord* had sent the previous November and instead sent the new Intendant, Jean Bochart de Champigny, to Canada with orders to instruct the company to “faire cesser toutes sortes d’hostilité” in Hudson Bay.¹⁵ Written in May 1686, however, these instructions arrived in Quebec long after Iberville and Sainte-Hélène had captured the James Bay posts. Indeed, believing that the forthcoming neutrality might preclude

¹² ANOM, C11A, V.7, f.178-186v, « Mémoire envoyé par Denonville concernant l’état présent du Canada et les mesures que l’on peut prendre pour la sûreté du pays, » 12 novembre 1685; ANOM, C11A, V.7, f.262-263, « Mémoire adressé à Seignelay par les membres de la Compagnie du Nord, » 10 novembre 1685; Borins, “Compagnie du Nord,” p.93-94.

¹³ For more the right of reprisal and similar ambiguous appeals to maritime law in oceanic spaces, see N. A. M. Rodger, “The Law and Language of Private Naval Warfare,” *Mariners Mirror* 100, no. 1 (2014): 5–16, p.7; Lauren Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400-1900* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 130-131.

¹⁴ « Projet du traité de Neutralité, » 7 février 1686.

¹⁵ ANOM, B, V.12, f. 7-21, « Instruction que le Roy veut être remise en mains du S^r de Champigny, » Versailles, 31 mai 1686; ANOM, B, V.12, f.27-41, « Mémoire du Roy au S^r Marquis de Denonville, » Versailles, 31 mai 1686.

them from reacquiring Fort Bourbon, the *Compagnie du Nord* refused to wait for the minister to send them a ship, having already declared themselves "dans l'Intention de s'efforcer de les prendre par terre."¹⁶ On February 12th, therefore—only five days after Louis XIV issued his *Projet*—the directors gave their orders for the summer's venture to Sainte-Hélène and Iberville.¹⁷

Since 1682, the Le Moyne family had been intimately involved in the affairs of the *Compagnie du Nord*. Both Charles Le Moyne and Jacques Le Ber had been amongst its founding directors. By his death in February 1685, Le Moyne had invested over 4400 *livres* in the company. Le Ber had invested at least 21,357 *livres* by 1691.¹⁸ On behalf of her family, Catherine Thierry Primot maintained her late husband's investments through a financial partnership with Antoine Pascaud—valued at 8456 *livres* in 1687—until her own death in 1690.¹⁹ Perhaps to protect this family capital, Iberville seems to have taken over his father's position after his death, attending the company's assembly of "Eclairez" in November 1685 and appearing as one of the twelve signatories on the letter subsequently sent to Seignelay.²⁰ Iberville had been trained since his youth in the more maritime aspects of his father's trade, and may even have suggested himself as the captain of the royal vessel the directors requested.²¹ Only two years earlier, Governor La Barre had unsuccessfully recommended Iberville for a position as a naval *enseigne*, based on his reputation as a capable mariner who "entend fort bien La Mer" and

¹⁶ « Mémoire adressé à Seignelay, » 10 novembre 1685.

¹⁷ « Sainte-hélène et d'Iberville commandant les habitants détachés pour le service du Roi, » 12 février 1686

¹⁸ No records exist concerning Le Ber's investments prior to 1691. Borins, "Compagnie du Nord," p.191

¹⁹ By the time of Catherine's death in 1690, this amount invested had fallen slightly to 8,193 *livres*. Louise Dechêne, *Habitants and Merchants in Seventeenth-Century Montreal* (Montreal, Que.: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), pp.114-115.

²⁰ The twelve signatories were: Aubert de La Chesnaye, Comporté, Le Ber, Chanjon, Pachot, Migeon de Branssat, Gobin, Gitton, D'Iberville, Catgnon, Hazeur and Bouthier. « Mémoire adressé à Seignelay » 10 novembre 1685.

²¹ According to one *mémoire*, as a teenager Iberville frequently sailed his father's vessels in the Saint Lawrence, making voyages between Quebec and Percé and even travelled across the Atlantic to France on at least one occasion. "Mémoire Succinct de la Naissance et des Services de Defunt Pierre Le Moyne, Ecuyer, seigneur d'Iberville, Ardillers, et autres lieux, chevalier de l'ordre de Saint-Louis, capitaine des vaisseaux du Roy," published in Léon Guérin, *Histoire Maritime de la France* (Paris, 1851-1859), V. 4, p.469-477; Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*, p. 43-45.

“sçait cette rivière admirablement.”²² More likely, however, was that Jacques Le Ber had a significant influence over the appointments of his nephews. Indeed, in February 1686, he had been tasked with selecting the *commandants* for the new company outpost at Abitibi, suggesting that he may also have had a say in the nomination of the expedition’s other commanders.²³

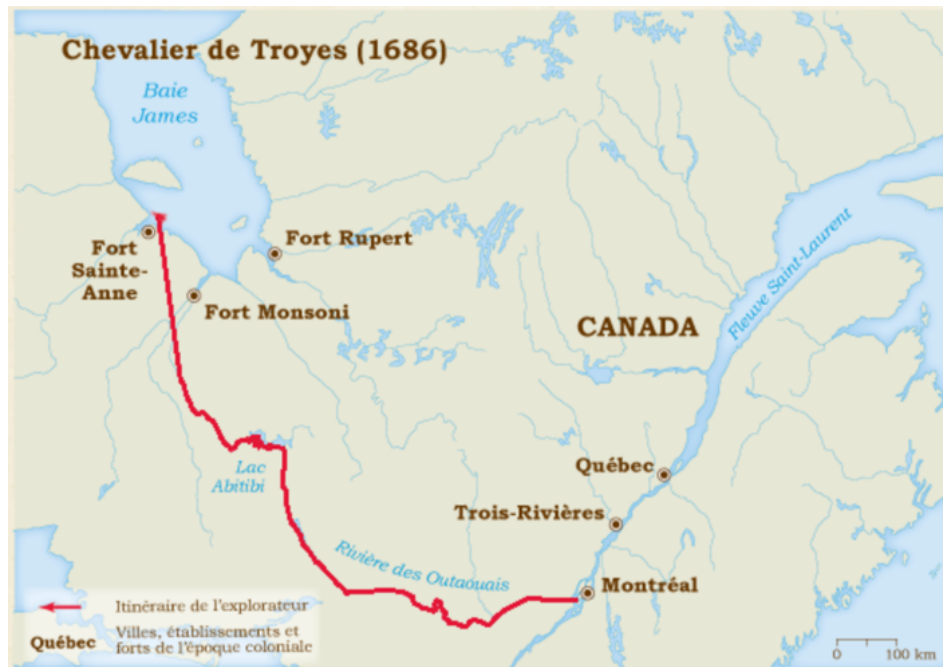


Fig. 1.1: “Route of Chevalier de Troyes (1686).” Map. Virtual Museum of New France, Canadian Museum of History. <https://www.historymuseum.ca/virtual-museum-of-new-france/the-explorers/pierre-de-troyes-1686/>.

Even so, the Le Moyne brothers brought with them many skills that the *Compagnie du Nord* could not ignore. Both were likely already familiar with many of the men under their command, having outfitted traders and *coureurs de bois* alongside their father and uncle since at least 1680.²⁴ In February 1686, Iberville, in his role as a company director, even took an active

²² ANOM, C11A, V.6, f.134-144v, « Lettre de la Barre au ministre, » 4 novembre 1683.

²³ ANOM, C11A, V.8, f.265v, « Instructions de Denonville au chevalier de Troyes sur ce qu’il aura à faire “pour l’établissement et sûreté des postes à occuper pour la Compagnie du Nord” à la baie d’Hudson, » 12 février 1686.

²⁴ ANOM, C11A, V.5, f.359-362, « Mémoire et preuves de la cause du désordre des coureurs de bois, » [1681]. It seems that Sainte-Hélène had even branched out on his own, being called before the *Conseil Souverain* for questioning on his personal involvement in supplying illegal fur traders in 1681. BaNQ, TP1, S28, P2459, « Ordre d’assigner à comparaître les sieurs Migeon, Lebert, [...] de Sainte-Hélène [...] dans un procès contre les coureurs des bois, ceux qui les équiper, les cachent et les protègent, » 26 avril 1681.

role in recruiting men for the campaign, contracting a sailor, Jean Glevan, on the company's behalf.²⁵ Moreover, as some of the company's youngest directors, Iberville and Sainte-Hélène could keep up with the taxing overland expedition [Fig. 1.1] where others could not, allowing them to act as company managers and ensure "la Regie entiere des affaires de la comp^e."²⁶ Finally, the practical education that the brothers had received working for their father and uncle put them in an excellent position to lead men on the difficult trek north, and on several occasions they would be lauded for their skill in canoes or with muskets.²⁷ Well-connected, well-trained and well-prepared, Sainte-Hélène and Iberville were ideal leaders for the company's expedition.

For the brothers, the company's venture offered a rare opportunity to fulfil their own ambitions for martial glory. In France, young nobles had long used military service as a way to perform their masculinity and "notoriety," but in Canada, the scions of the colonial nobility had been denied this professional outlet, and were forced to rely on volunteering.²⁸ Before 1687, Canada's young noblemen hence existed in a state of "armed idleness" and many ran amuck in the towns, hassling other colonists with often illegal and frequently violent acts.²⁹ Sainte-Hélène, for example, was briefly arrested for dueling with the former Governor of Montreal, François-Marie Perrot, in 1684, though the exact reasons behind their dispute are unclear.³⁰ Given that

²⁵ LAC, MG8-A23, V.113, p.36-41 [transcription], « Engagement de Jean Glevan par Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville pour le compte de la Compagnie du Nord, » 12 février 1686.

²⁶ « Instructions de Denonville au chevalier de Troyes, » 12 février 1686.

²⁷ De Troyes, "Journal," p.45, 70; Catalogne, "Account of the Expedition," p.95.

²⁸ Robert A. Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France* (Cary, N.C.: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1993), p.21; Jonathan Dewald, *Aristocratic Experience and the Origins of Modern Culture: France, 1570-1715* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p.20, 50. On military volunteering in New France, see Louise Dechêne, *Le Peuple, l'État et la Guerre au Canada sous le Régime français* (Montréal: Boréal, 2008).

²⁹ For instance, Le Gardeur and d'Ailleboust, were accused of dressing as Indigenous people and stealing money from people in Montreal at knife and gunpoint. Louise Dechêne, *Habitants and Merchants*, p.217.

³⁰ It is likely that the duel was prompted was by the factional conflict between the Le Moyne family and Perrot which had dominated politics in Montreal in the 1670s. ANOM, C11A, V.6, f.385, « Lettre de l'intendant de Meulles au ministre, » 12 juillet 1684. On the factional conflict between the Le Moyne family and Perrot, see Léon Robichaud, "Les réseaux d'influence à Montréal au XVIIe siècle: structure et exercice du pouvoir en milieu colonial" (PhD diss., Université de Montréal, 2008), p.108-126. On the duel between Perrot and Saint-Hélène see

even gubernatorial patronage and attendance at court had failed to secure their advancement, the Le Moyne brothers may thus have seen service in the *Compagnie du Nord*'s private military venture as the best option to prove themselves in battle against France's oldest enemy. Indeed, so eager were they for glory that once at Moose Fort, Iberville and Sainte-Hélène literally leapt at chance to fight the English,³¹ vaulting the fort's palisade followed by several other young and equally ambitious Canadian nobles, including their brother Maricourt, cousin Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Martigny and close friend Zacharie Robutel de la Noue.³²

But such violence was only made possible by the illusion of legitimacy Governor Jacques-René de Brisay de Denonville gave to the campaign. Oblivious to the recent changes in policy in France, Denonville instead relied on the royal instructions he had received on his appointment in August 1685, which had called upon him to aid the *Compagnie du Nord* whenever possible and ensure "l'exclusion des Anglois" from Hudson Bay.³³ On February 12th, 1686, therefore, the governor pledged royal support for the company's expedition, detaching thirty *troupes de la Marine* under the command of Chevalier Pierre de Troyes "pour voir ce qu'il aura faire de plus avantageux po[ur] le service du Roy, et pour le bien des interessez a qui le

Aegidius Fauteaux, *Le Duel au Canada* (Montréal: Éditions du Zodiaque, 1934) p.18-21, accessed on 13/5/2017 at: <http://collections.banq.qc.ca/bitstream/52327/2022971/1/411439.pdf>.

³¹ In his journal, De Troyes recorded that "Sainte-Hélène came to ask me if he could leap over the palisade. I replied that when one gave orders to attack and capture a place it didn't matter how one entered it, provided that one became master of it. He took me literally, and a moment later, climbed over the palisade, sword in hand, followed by Iberville, Maricourt, La Noue and Allemand, and five or six others." See De Troyes, "Journal," p.68.

³² Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Martigny was the third child and eldest surviving son of Jacques Le Moyne and Mathurine Godé. He inherited his father's noble estate of La Trinité in 1690. Bernard Pothier, "Le Moyne de Martigny et de la Trinité, Jean-Baptiste" in *DCB*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/ Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 18/11/2019, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/le_moyne_de_martigny_et_de_la_trinite_jean_baptiste_2E.html. Zacharie Robutel de la Noue was the son of Claude Robutel, who had commanded the eighth *escouade* of the Montreal militia, in which both Jacques Le Ber and Charles Le Moyne had served. In 1689, he married Catherine Le Moyne de Sainte-Hélène, becoming Sainte-Hélène's son-in-law. In 1706, he then purchased the seigneurie of Châteauguay from the Le Moyne brothers. Robichaud, « Les réseaux d'influence à Montréal au XVII^e siècle, », p.76; Nive Voisine, "Robutel de la Noue, Zacharie," in *DCB*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 18/11/ 2019, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/robutel_de_la_noue_zacharie_2E.html.

³³ ANOM, E, 119, « Instruction que le Roy veut être remise entre les mains du S^r Marquis de Denonville choisi par Sa Majesté pour gouverneur et son lieutenant général en la Nouvelle France, » [1685].

Roy a fait don de la Baye.”³⁴ To his mind, this detachment was merely intended to enforce royal will and explicitly ordered De Troyes to arrest Radisson and his accomplices and bring them to Quebec “comme deserteurs pour estre punis suivant la rigueur des ordonnances.”³⁵ Moreover, Denonville urged De Troyes to ensure “la bonne Intelligence et Union” with Sainte-Hélène and Iberville, whom he described as “fort honnestes gens qui n’ont en recommandation que leur honneur et le service du Roy.”³⁶ For the brothers, such a recommendation may have been seen as tantamount to a commission, especially since both Denonville and De Troyes referred to them with military ranks in their reports, perhaps in an attempt to make sense of the campaign’s unique, informal chain of command.³⁷ No wonder Iberville felt bold enough to mock Verner’s protests, confident that he enjoyed the full support of the Governor of New France.

In all other respects, however, the James Bay venture was a private affair. All expenses—including the soldiers’ salaries, equipment and clothing—were footed by the *Compagnie du Nord*, at a total cost of 68,587 *livres* 10 *sols*. Drawn from different companies, it is likely that the thirty soldiers were all volunteers, representing those foolhardy enough to take part in the arduous expedition in return for extra pay.³⁸ Likewise, the seventy Canadian recruits were paid between 20 and 30 *sols* each day, the average wage for a professional voyageur, whilst those with useful vocational skills received extra bonuses (*gratifications*).³⁹ Most importantly,

³⁴ ANOM, C11A, V.8, f.6-20v, « Lettre de Denonville au ministre, » 8 mai 1686.

³⁵ ANOM, C11A, V.8, f.100-100v, « Ordonnance du gouverneur général Denonville nommant le chevalier de Troyes commandant d’une expédition à la baie d’Hudson, » 12 février 1686.

³⁶ ANOM, C11A, V.8, f.262-267v, « Instructions de Denonville au chevalier de Troyes sur ce qu’il aura à faire “pour l’établissement et sûreté des postes à occuper pour la Compagnie du Nord” à la baie d’Hudson, » 12 février, 1686.

³⁷ De Troyes, “Journal,” p.40, 47, 48; « Instructions de Denonville au chevalier de Troyes, » 12 février, 1686.

³⁸ ANOM, C11A, V.8, f.278-282, « Etat de la Depense et frais généraux fait par la compagnie du Nord, » 1 mars 1686; Borins, “Compagnie du Nord,” p.104.

³⁹ Dechêne notes that *voyageurs* generally received between 300 and 400 *livres* for trips lasting between twelve and eighteen months, or roughly 30 *livres* per month, or 20 *sols* per day. Dechêne, *Habitants and Merchants*, p.123. For more on these men, see Gilles Havard, *Histoire des Coureurs de Bois: Amérique du Nord, 1600-1840*, (Paris: Les Indes savantes, 2016), p.178-179.

however, each recruit was also entitled to a potential bounty of 50 *pistolles* for Radisson's arrest and was promised a share of any prizes taken at the English outpost.⁴⁰ Each man, therefore, was motivated in large part by profit, a trait Louise Dechêne has shown was common amongst the many volunteers who fought in the military campaigns of seventeenth-century New France.⁴¹

Greed, however, made men unruly. In November 1686 the *Compagnie du Nord* complained that their expedition had yielded few prizes, since "tout a Esté quasi dissipé au proffit des dits coureurs de bois."⁴² Whilst this could imply that Sainte-Hélène and Iberville had lost control of the "vagabonds" under their command, it seems more likely that this pillage had been orchestrated by the brothers as a way of motivating their men on campaign. Both André Corvisier and Hervé Dré villon have argued that the era's best military leaders were not always those with the most talent, but those who could ask the most from the men under their command. Victory often depended on the mutual confidence between a commander and his subordinates and, as a result, bonds of patronage wove together the French military as officers promised their men glory and advancement.⁴³ Working for the *Compagnie du Nord*, the Le Moyne brothers could not offer their men military promotions, but they could ensure that they received their

⁴⁰ Each Canadian was recruited individually by various directors, especially François Pachot, François Hazeur and Philippe de Comporté. LAC, MG8-A23, V.113, p.30-34 [transcription], «Traité d'engagement de Nicolas Pré armurier de Québec, à Philippe Gaultier de Comporté, François Pachot et François Hazeur..., » 12 février 1686; LAC, MG8-A23, V.113, p.42-51 [transcription], «Traité et engagement de Jacques Meneux ou Meneu dit Châteauneuf, chirurgien, de Batiscan, à François Pachot et François Hazeur..., » 13 février 1686; LAC, MG8-A23, V.113, p.48-51 [transcription], « Traité et engagement de Joseph Guyon de Rounroy, charpentier de navire et navigateur, de Québec, à François Pachot et François Hazeur..., » 16 février 1686; LAC, MG8-A23, V.113, p.51-55 [transcription], « Déclaration par François Pachot et François Hazeur...et Jacques Meneux ou Meneu dit Châteauneuf chirurgien..., » 20 février 1686; LAC, MG8-A23, V.113, p.56-59 [transcription], « Traité et convention entre François Hazeur et François Pachot...et Pierre Heve, canonnier et navigateur..., » 12 février 1686; LAC, MG8-A23, V.113, p.56-59 [transcription], «Traité et convention entre François Pachot et François Hazeur...et Jean Havey dit le Flamand Donquerque, matelot et canoteur..., » 27 février 1686.

⁴¹ Louise Dechêne, *Le Peuple, l'État et la Guerre*, p.201-209.

⁴² ANOM, C11A, V.8, f.67-68v, « Lettre adressé au ministre par les membres de la Compagnie du Nord, » 6 novembre 1686.

⁴³ André Corvisier, "Clientèles et fidélités dans l'armée française aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles," in Yves Durand ed., *Hommage à Roland Mousnier: clientèles et fidélités en Europe à l'époque moderne* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1981), p.230-1; Hervé Dré villon, *L'impôt du sang: le métier des armes sous Louis XIV* (Paris: Tallandier, 2005), p.84, 90-95.

share of the prizes. This perhaps explains why the brothers targeted the more vulnerable James Bay posts once it became clear that they would not reach Fort Bourbon by land, in an attempt to satisfy the ambitions of their employers and employees in one fell swoop. But in the end, it was the employees who were most satisfied. Overall, the *Compagnie du Nord* made 20,000 *livres* of profit from the expedition, less than a tenth of what they had lost to Radisson four years earlier. Meanwhile, Radisson himself escaped to London, becoming a naturalised Englishman.⁴⁴

With this failure, however, Iberville had an excuse to continue fighting in Hudson Bay. Lacking the necessary supplies to hold on to the James Bay posts, he left for Quebec at the end of the summer, assigning a dozen men to guard the captured posts in his absence.⁴⁵ Arriving on October 31st, Iberville presented himself to Denonville, who immediately wrote to inform Seignelay that the young Canadian was “fort resolu de retourner A la Baye et de donner tous ses Soins pour l’Etablissement de ce commerce qui ne se peut soutenir que par mer.”⁴⁶ Whilst the *Compagnie du Nord* had been useful for launching his career, only Denonville’s support could earn Iberville a proper naval commission. Positioning himself as the governor’s client and the champion of the *Compagnie du Nord*’s interests in Hudson Bay, Iberville thus began negotiating overlapping webs of patronage to create new opportunities for himself and his kinsmen.

“Un très sage Garçon Entreprenant...capable de reussir en ses entreprises: ” Politics, Patronage and Private Warfare

On November 16th, 1686, the Treaty of Whitehall, or Treaty of Neutrality, was signed. After receiving word of the victories in James Bay, French diplomats had hurriedly ratified the treaty to ensure that the captured posts remained in French hands once the *status quo ante* took

⁴⁴ Grace Lee Nute, “Radisson, Pierre Esprit,” in *DCB*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 20/11/2019, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/radisson_pierre_esprit_2E.html.

⁴⁵ Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d’Iberville*, p.79.

⁴⁶ « Lettre de Denonville, » 31 octobre 1687.

effect.⁴⁷ The *Compagnie du Nord*, however, did not want to keep these posts, which were difficult to resupply by land, and longed to re-capture Fort Bourbon. They put their hopes for this in Denonville, who they believed would protect their interests in Hudson Bay.⁴⁸ But whilst Denonville was also frustrated by the Treaty of Neutrality, it was because he believed that the English were “nos plus dangereux ennemy et dautant plus quil nous font tout le mal qu’ils nous peuvent faire, et que nous ne leurs en pouvons faire aucun.”⁴⁹ For the governor, the conflict in Hudson Bay was not simply a commercial affair, but a battle for the future of North America. With so much at stake, he was unconvinced that the *Compagnie du Nord* alone could further his ambitions. In Iberville, however, he saw an ambition that could make him a useful asset in the coming conflict. In late 1687, therefore, Denonville sent Iberville to represent the company before the minister, recommending him to Seignelay as a “très sage Garçon Entreprenant qui scait ce qu’il fait” and “capable de reussir en ses entreprises.”⁵⁰

In 1685 Denonville had already attempted to position himself as a patron of the Le Moyne family, having recommended Longueuil, albeit unsuccessfully, for an appointment conducting the military reviews in Montreal. After the family’s successes in James Bay, however, his efforts became even more concerted. In November 1686, Denonville and Champigny signed a blank *brevet* enrolling Joseph Le Moyne de Sérigny in the prestigious academy of the *gardes de la marine* in Rochefort—only the fourth Canadian-born cadet to be

⁴⁷ England and Wales et al., *Traite de neutralité*, p.4; Borins, “Compagnie du Nord,” p.107.

⁴⁸ ANOM, C11A, V.8, f.268-271, « Lettre des membres de la Compagnie du Nord à l’intendant général du commerce de France, » Québec, 6 novembre, 1686.

⁴⁹ ANOM, C11A, V.9, f. 123, « Mémoire de l’état présent des affaires de Canada, » 27 octobre 1687. On Denonville and the Treaty of Neutrality, see Salvatore Chiporo, “An Amicable Correspondence Between Us: Dongan, Denonville, and the Treaty of Neutrality in America, 1686” (Master’s thesis., McGill University, 2017).

⁵⁰ ANOM, C11A, V.8, f.129-159, « Lettre de Denonville au ministre, » 10 novembre 1686; ANOM, C11A, V.8, f.129-159, « Lettre de Denonville au ministre, » 10 novembre 1686; ANOM, C11A, V.9, f.148, « Résumé d’une lettre de Denonville, » 30 octobre 1687.

admitted.⁵¹ Then, in 1687, Denonville promoted Sainte-Hélène and Longueuil as two of the first colonial-born lieutenants in the *troupes de la Marine*, offering them the command of a detachment and battalion respectively in his campaign against the Seneca.⁵² Iberville, however, received no such graces from the governor and was even tasked with petitioning for his brothers' promotions whilst at Versailles. But far from a snub, Denonville's reluctance to promote Iberville seems to have been a strategic decision. Article XII of the Treaty of Whitehall expressly forbade arming vessels for war, meaning that an officer's commission would have made Iberville's presence in Hudson Bay politically fraught.⁵³ Instead, Denonville chose to "recompenser cette action de quelque chose qui put donner de l'Emulation", showing his tacit support for Iberville's service by advancing his family's dynastic interests—a common strategy used by officers when they were unable to promote a deserving individual.⁵⁴ In this way, Denonville showed his support for his new client but kept him as a deniable asset who could further imperial ambitions in Hudson Bay whilst France and England remained at peace.

Integral to the schemes of Denonville and the *Compagnie du Nord*, Iberville enjoyed considerable patronage and protection in his early career. Nowhere is this more evident than

⁵¹ ANOM, C11A, V.7, f.86-106v, « Lettre de Denonville au ministre, », 13 novembre 1685; ANOM, C11A, V.8, f.129-159, « Lettre de Denonville au ministre, », 10 novembre 1686; ANOM, C11A, V.8, f.250-251, « Lettre de l'intendant Champigny au ministre, » 16 novembre 1686. On the *gardes de la Marine* as a form of gubernatorial patronage in Canada see Christopher John Russ, "Les Troupes de La Marine, 1683-1713" (Master's thesis, McGill University, 1971), p.115-116, 129-130.

⁵² Louis Henry Baugy and Mathaniel Shurtleff Olds, *Journal of the Expedition of Marquis de Denonville against the Iroquois: 1687* (Rochester, N.Y.: Rochester Historical Society, 1930) and Jean-François Lozier, *Flesh Reborn: The Saint Lawrence Valley Mission Settlements through the Seventeenth Century*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2018), p.213.

⁵³ Article XII stated that "les Capitaines de Vaisseaux [...] & à tous leurs Sujets qui équiperont des Vaisseaux à leur dépens; comme aussi aux Privilégiez & aux Compagnies, de faire aucun tort out dommage à ceux de l'autre nation"; England and Wales et al., *Traite de neutralité*, p.8.

⁵⁴ ANOM, C11A, V.9, f.148, « Résumé d'un lettre de Denonville, » Québec, 30 octobre 1687. For more on patronage and reward in the French military see Guy Rowlands, *The Dynastic State and the Army under Louis XIV: Royal Service and Private Interest, 1661-1701* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Dewald, *Aristocratic Experience* and Jay M. Smith, *The Culture of Merit: Nobility, Royal Service, and the Making of Absolute Monarchy in France, 1600-1789* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996).

during his trial for the *rapt de séduction* of Jeanne-Geneviève Picoté de Belestre. In May 1686, the pregnant Jeanne-Geneviève charged Iberville with bedding her under the false promise of marriage, hoping to either force him to honour his word or assume financial responsibility for the resulting child.⁵⁵ Whilst some have claimed that these charges were the reason Iberville eagerly joined the James Bay expedition, his appointment in February suggests otherwise.⁵⁶ Regardless, in his absence, several men with interests in the *Compagnie du Nord* intervened in the proceedings to protect Iberville and prevent any delays to their expedition. The first was Jean-Baptiste Migeon de Branssat, a judge at the bailiff's court of Montreal and a company director with investments of 5,459 *livres*. Honouring his friendship with Jeanne-Geneviève's late father, Branssat took her testimony and filed her lawsuit, but as soon as Longueuil and the Chevalier de Callières submitted papers declaring Iberville's absence, transferred the case to the *Conseil Souverain* so as not to impede the *Compagnie du Nord* or suffer their wrath.⁵⁷

Branssat knew that at the *Conseil Souverain*, Iberville's case would be dealt with by several men heavily invested in the *Compagnie du Nord*. Amongst those hearing Iberville's case were Denonville, Champigny, Louis Rouer de Villeray, an *agent de la Ferme*, from whom the company had rented the Tadoussac domain, Charles Denys de Vitré, a business partner of company director Denis Riverin, and François-Madeleine-Fortuné Ruelle d'Auteuil, the colony's

⁵⁵ The child, also named Jeanne-Geneviève, was baptised on June 21st, 1686; PRDH, #40802, « Baptême de Jeanne-Geneviève Dyberville, » 21 juin 1686.

⁵⁶ Guy Giguère, *Honteux personnages de l'histoire du Québec: faits troublants sur nos élites et nos héros, de 1600 à 1900* (Montréal: Stanké, 2002), p.48-51.

⁵⁷ BAnQ, TP1,S28, P3613, « Arrêt ordonnant qu'il sera informé de l'accusation portée contre Pierre Lemoine (Lemoyne) sieur d'Iberville par demoiselle Jeanne Geneviève Picotté de Bellestre, laquelle l'accuse de l'avoir séduit et mise enceinte; défense au dit sieur d'Iberville de sortir du pays sous peine d'être atteint et convaincu du dit cas et commission au lieutenant général des Trois-Rivières pour faire enquête dans cette affaire, » 6 novembre 1687; Borins "Compagnie du Nord," p.191-2; Robichaud, "Les réseaux d'influence," p.180. Éric Wenzel has recently shown that in Canada, those accused of *rapt de séduction* were rarely punished to the full extent of the law. Éric Wenzel, "Les magistrats de Nouvelle-France et le rapt de séduction : juger en droit ou juger en conscience ?," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 73, no. 3 (2020): 57–77.

procureur general (attorney general) and stepfather to Marie-Thérèse Pollet de la Combe, the woman for whom Iberville had spurned Jeanne-Geneviève and attempted to marry in June 1688.⁵⁸ To protect the expedition, the councillors ordered Iberville to be tried on his return, forbidding him from leaving the colony on the penalty of arrest and conviction.⁵⁹ Once he returned, however, Denonville sent Iberville directly to Versailles so he might elude arrest in Quebec. Consequently, Iberville only stood trial on October 22nd, 1688, and not even in person, for the *Compagnie du Nord* appointed Denis Riverin to represent him, allowing Iberville to return to Hudson Bay. Riverin found the assembled *Conseil Souverain* quite receptive, for while it lacked Auteuil it had gained Charles Le Gardeur de Tilly—a relative of Iberville’s fiancée—and Bermen de la Martinière, commander of the company’s 1684 expedition.⁶⁰ To succeed in a *rapt de séduction* case, Riverin had to definitively contest Iberville’s paternity, which often involved smearing the virtue of the accuser. His investigation into Jeanne-Geneviève’s past, however, proved fruitless. As a result, the council found Iberville guilty and condemned him to take full custody of the child, also named Jeanne-Geneviève, until she was fifteen. Beyond her baptismal record though, little further trace of young Jeanne-Geneviève survives, suggesting she

⁵⁸ Jeanne-Geneviève’s representative Jacques Malleray de La Mollerie would object to the marriage of Iberville and Marie-Thérèse on her behalf. BAnQ, CN301, S114, « Déclaration de l’opposition faire par Jacques Malleray de Lamollerie écuyer de la ville de Montréal, au mariage de Pierre Lemoyne-Dhiberville écuyer et de Marie de Lacombe », 27 juin 1688. For biographies of the various sovereign councillors see Bernard Weilbrenner, “Rouer de Villeray, Louis,” in *DCB*, vol. 1, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 23/5/2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/rouer_de_villeray_louis_1E.html; A. J. E. Lunn, “Denys de Vitre, Charles”, in *DCB*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 23/5/2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/denys_de_vitre_charles_2E.html; Marine Leland, “Ruelle d’Auteuil, François-Madeleine-Fortuné,” in *DCB*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed May 23, 2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/ruelle_d_auteuil_de_monceaux_francois_madeleine_fortune_2E.html. See also Borins “Compagnie du Nord”, p.100.

⁵⁹ BAnQ, TP1, S28, P3613, « Arrêt ordonnant qu’il sera informé de l’accusation portée contre Pierre Lemoine (Lemoyne) sieur d’Iberville par demoiselle Jeanne Geneviève Picotté de Bellestre, » 6 novembre 1687.

⁶⁰ Jean Hamelin, “LeGardeur de Tilly, Charles,” in *DCB*, vol. 1, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 23/5/2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/legardeur_de_tilly_charles_1E.html; Edward H. Borins, “Bermen de la Martinière, Claude de,” in *DCB*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 23/5/2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/bermen_de_la_martiniere_claude_de_2E.html.

may never have reached this age. Even so, through the intervention of his allies, Iberville escaped both a forced marriage and the technically legal, but rarely enforced, death penalty, allowing him to continue his ventures in Hudson Bay.⁶¹

Meanwhile, in March 1688, Iberville arrived in France to find that attitudes towards Hudson Bay were changing. In England, the fear of a male, Catholic heir to King James II had sparked a succession crisis that would eventually lead to the Glorious Revolution. Louis XIV had thus instructed his ambassadors to exploit the English instability and conclude an agreement that would allow France to both keep the James Bay posts and reacquire Fort Bourbon.⁶² In this context, Iberville's petition for a ship to collect the furs seized in James Bay was well received. The king elected to personally lease him a royal vessel, the *Soleil d'Afrique*, and finance the entire expedition.⁶³ Once the War of the League of Augsburg began in September 1688, such leases became more common, particularly after William of Orange, the Stadtholder of the Dutch Republic, was crowned the King of England, Scotland and Ireland, pitting France against the combined might of the Dutch and English navies. At the start of the war, Louis XIV personally leased his *vaisseaux du roi* to Dunkirk privateers to prey on his rival's shipping in the English Channel. As the war intensified, he would encourage more privateering, even suspending his traditional claim to one-third of all prizes taken. Soon, speculation on the royal vessels became popular activity at court, gradually leading France to embrace private naval enterprise.⁶⁴

⁶¹ BAnQ, TP1, S28, P3660, « Communication au procureur général des informations, interrogatoires et autres pièces du procès contre Pierre Lemoine (Lemoyne) sieur d'Iberville, 21 juin 1688, » [1688]. For more on *rapt de séduction* trials in France see Rachel G. Fuchs, *Contested Paternity: Constructing Families in Modern France*, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2008), p.17-25.

⁶² AM, B2, V.60, f.80-96, « Mémoire du Roy pour servir d'Instruction aux S^{rs} Barillon & de Bonrepas, » Versailles, 4 mai 1687; Donald G. Pilgrim, "France and New France: Two Perspectives on Colonial Security," *The Canadian Historical Review*, Volume 55, Number 4, (December 1974), pp.381-407, p.406.

⁶³ ANOM, B, V.15, f.17-23v, « Mémoire du Roy aux S^{rs} Marquis de Denonville et de Champigny, » 8 mars, 1688.

⁶⁴ J. S. Bromley, "The Loan of French Naval Vessels to Privateering Enterprises, 1688-1713," in J. S. Bromley, *Corsairs and navies, 1660-1760* (London; Ronceverte, WV, U.S.A.: Hambledon Press, 1987), p.187-189; Geoffrey

In March 1688, however, a fragile peace still reigned between France and England. Adhering to the Treaty of Neutrality, Seignelay informed Iberville that the *Soleil d'Afrique* was intended only to collect the furs he had captured two years earlier and not for an assault on Fort Bourbon. Consequently, the minister refused to equip the ship with cannons and insisted that it be captained by company director Pierre Delorme instead of Iberville himself. On March 1st, however, Seignelay officially granted Iberville the authority “pour commander dans tous les postes du nord sous les ordres du sieur marquis de Denonville.”⁶⁵ This commission was intended to enable Iberville to extend French claims to sovereignty in the region. Once in Hudson Bay, however, he seems to have taken it as tacit permission to continue his fight against the English. On September 21st, therefore, he sent Delorme back to La Rochelle with the captured furs and a letter requesting one hundred men for an attack on Fort Bourbon.⁶⁶

As chance would have it, Iberville did not have to wait for a response. That same day, two English ships—the *Churchill* and the *Yonge*—arrived in James Bay, intent on recapturing the outposts lost in 1686. With eighty-five men, the English outnumbered Iberville’s small troupe of sixteen Canadians, but the Hudson’s Bay Company’s ad hoc hiring process often meant that their recruits varied greatly in quality and tended to be ill-disciplined.⁶⁷ In contrast, Iberville had taken a personal hand in recruiting his men, hiring those he believed “iroient à la part avec bien du Plaisir.”⁶⁸ Blurring the lines of kinship, patronage and employment, he had brought with him his younger brothers Maricourt and Louis Le Moyne de Châteauguay, his cousin Martigny, a

Symcox, *The Crisis of French Sea Power, 1688-1697: From the Guerre D'escadre to the Guerre de Course* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1974), p.75-78.

⁶⁵ « Ordre du roi du 1 mars 1689, » cited in Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*, p.104.

⁶⁶ ANOM, C11A, V.10, f.146-147, « Copie d'une lettre de Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, » Île de Charleston, 21 septembre 1688.

⁶⁷ Scott P. Stephen, *Masters and Servants: The Hudson's Bay Company and its North American Workforce, 1668-1786* (Edmonton, Alberta: University of Alberta Press, 2019), p.71-105.

⁶⁸ « Copie d'une lettre de Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, » 21 septembre 1688.

handful of Canadian volunteers, several veterans of the 1686 campaign and four *engagés* from La Rochelle.⁶⁹ As Louise Dechêne has shown, such personalised recruitment fostered loyalty and obedience, allowing Canadian partisan leaders to overcome the difficulties posed by frontier warfare.⁷⁰ Over the winter Iberville and his men continually harassed the English, preventing them from hunting and making their lives unbearable. By the spring they had captured several men and caused an outbreak of scurvy, which claimed the lives of twenty-five more. Cold, hungry and miserable, the English officers surrendered to Iberville. Giving up the *Churchill* and their men as prisoners, they convinced him to grant them safe passage to England and pay their salaries for the winter. Overall, Iberville's campaign cost the Hudson's Bay Company close to £10,000—enough to mean that the 1690 dividend was the last paid for almost two decades.⁷¹

On August 15th, 1689, Sainte-Hélène arrived in James Bay with reinforcements sent by the *Compagnie du Nord*. Before leaving Quebec, Sainte-Hélène had learned of the declaration of war in Europe and broke this news to his younger brothers.⁷² Whilst commercial in nature, Iberville's skirmishes with the Hudson's Bay Company men over the winter of 1688-9 were amongst the first North American engagements in the War of the League of Augsburg. Returning to Quebec and then France, Iberville found that the declaration of war had dramatically changed

⁶⁹ Amongst the other twelve men were Canadian merchant François de Chavigny de la Chevrotière, French officer Louis de La Porte de Louvigny and four indentured recruits, Gillebert Vautat, Jacques Villier, Michel Philipeau and Jacques Boismoreau. The names of the other men are unknown. For more details about these men see Jean-Jacques Lefebvre, "Chavigny La Chevrotière, François de" in *DCB*, V. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed 6/4/ 2017 at http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/chavigny_lachevrotiere_francois_de_2E.html; Yves F. Zolwany, "La Porte de Louvigny, Louis de," in *DCB*, V. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed April 4/4 2017 at http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/la_porte_de_louvigny_louis_de_2E.html; ACM, 3^E, 1809, f.46v, « Engagement pour 3 années de Gillebert Vautat, chirurgien, », 10-16 mars 1688; ACM, 3^E, 1809, f.61, « Engagement pour 3 années de Jacques Villier, maître arquebusier, » 31 mars 1688; ACM, 3^E, 1809, f.65-65v, « Engagement pour 3 années de Michel Philipeau, taillandier, » 3 avril 1688; ACM, 3^E, 1809, f.71v-72, « Engagement pour 3 années de Jacques Boismoreau, garçon chirurgien, » 12 avril 1688.

⁷⁰ Dechêne, *Le Peuple, L'État et la Guerre*, p.174.

⁷¹ Borins, "Compagnie du Nord," p.113, 121.

⁷² In June 1689, Sainte-Hélène crossed paths with Baron Lahontan on the Outaouais River and informed him of the outbreak of war in Europe. Louis Armand de Lom d'Arce Lahontan, Réal Ouellet, and Alain Beaulieu, "Lettre XVII," in *Œuvres complètes*, (Montréal (Québec): Presses de l'Univ. de Montréal, 1990), V1, p.438.

attitudes towards Hudson Bay. Indeed, no longer needing to abide by the Treaty of Neutrality, Denonville was finally able to recommend Iberville for a commission and promised that he would inform Seignelay of his “bonne conduite et...savoir faire.”⁷³ Within a few months, however, Denonville was recalled to France for his failures against the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. But even in France, he continued to support Iberville, convincing Seignelay that:

il seroit bien utile au service du Roy, que led^t S^r d'Iberville euse quelque degré d'honneur dans la marine pour servir d'émulation aux Canadiens qui s'adonnerent a la mer, un brevet de Lieutenant de Vaisseau feroit des merveilles. C'est un tres Joly homme et tres capable de se rendre habile et de servir utilement.⁷⁴

Iberville had lost a local patron, but his relationship with the governor had opened up new avenues for advancement. In 1690, Iberville finally received a commission as a *lieutenant de vaisseau*. As the war intensified, this rank offered Iberville the chance to break away from the colonial patronage networks he had once relied upon. He would find new metropolitan patrons and make a name for himself as a privateer across the Atlantic World.

“Nous viendrons à bout de nos desseins ou y périrons: ” *La Course Royale*

“Nous viendrons à bout de nos desseins” Iberville pledged to the directors of the *Compagnie du Nord* in November 1689, “ou y périrons.”⁷⁵ With the advent of the War of the League of Augsburg, Iberville had become more confident that he would find support for the company’s attempts to recapture Fort Bourbon; the conflict with the English in Hudson Bay was now part of a wider inter-imperial struggle for North America. Indeed, in July 1690, Seignelay instructed the newly re-appointed Governor Louis Buade de Frontenac and Intendant Champigny

⁷³ “Mémoire Succinct,” in Guérin, *Histoire Maritime*, V.4, p.471-2.

⁷⁴ ANOM, C11A, V.10, f.338-342v, « Résumé de lettres et mémoires de Frontenac, Denonville, Champigny et autres, » [1689]. See other mentions in ANOM, C11A, V.11, p.263-278 [transcript], « Mémoire de M. de Denonville concernant le Canada, » janvier 1690 and ANOM, C11A V.11, p.314-342 [transcript], « Mémoire de M. de Denonville au marquis de Seignelay concernant le Canada, » [1690].

⁷⁵ « Copie d’une lettre du S^r Diberville, » 17 novembre 1689.

to “profitter des dispositions des interessez en la *Compagnie du Nord* pour le dessein qu’ils ont formé de faire attaquer [sic] fort de Nelson par le S^r d’Iberville.”⁷⁶ Two steps ahead, they had already renewed Iberville’s commission as *commandant* of Hudson Bay and formally appointed Maricourt as his second-in-command, extending their jurisdiction over all outposts and vessels in the bay.⁷⁷ Mere days before the instructions arrived, Iberville and Simon-Pierre Denys de Bonaventure had set sail for the Nelson River with eighty men. Finding the English awaiting them with considerable forces, however, they had been forced to retreat, returning to the Gulf of Saint Lawrence to find that Sir William Phipps had laid siege to Quebec in their absence.⁷⁸ Bonaventure and Maricourt thus returned home to lend support to the Canadian forces, whilst Iberville headed for France to solicit further royal aid in Hudson Bay.

Much had changed at Versailles since Iberville’s last visit. In November 1690, Seignelay had passed away. His office was quickly taken over by Louis Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain who, together with his son Jérôme, reformed the *bureaux de la Marine*. Some have argued that with these reforms, the Pontchartrains intended to “purge” the naval administration of Colbertists and replace them with their own clients. Sara Chapman, however, has argued that the Pontchartrains actually created a “hybrid” patrimonial system, where they both co-opted and gradually replaced any remaining Colbertists.⁷⁹ Beyond the *bureaux*, this system extended into the naval officer corps. After the expulsion of many competent Huguenot mariners from the *Marine* in 1685, the

⁷⁶ ANOM, B, V.15, f.85-98v, « Instruction pour le Sieur Comte de Frontenac, », 7 juin 1689; ANOM, C11A, V.10, f.217-224v, « Lettre de Frontenac au ministre, » 15 novembre 1689.

⁷⁷ “Mémoire Succint,” in Guérin, *Histoire maritime*, V.4, p.472; ANOM, C11A, V.11, f.41-79v, « Relation de ce qui s’est passé de plus considérable en Canada depuis le départ de la frégate La Fleur de May le 27 novembre 1690 jusqu’au départ de 91, » [1691]; McCord Museum, M499, “Commission by Louis de Buade, comte de Frontenac, naming Le Moyne de Maricourt as a replacement of Le Moyne d’Iberville, May 15 1690, ” [1690] —, accessed 17/4/2020 at <http://collections.musee-mccord.qc.ca/en/collection/artifacts/M499>.

⁷⁸ ANOM, C11A, V.15, f.121-126, « Mémoire du Roy aux Sieurs Comte de Frontenac et de Champigny, », 14 juillet 1690; Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d’Iberville*, 105-106; Borins, “Compagnie du Nord,” p.121.

⁷⁹ Sara E. Chapman, *Private Ambition and Political Alliances: The Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain Family and Louis XIV’s Government, 1650-1715* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2004), p.115-116.

officer corps had been opened to men of all backgrounds, attracting many *hommes nouveaux* — ambitious, newly-ennobled young men who, like Iberville, saw the navy as a path to advancement. Acting as brokers for their ambitions, the Pontchartrains took many of these new officers under their wing to expand their influence across all echelons of the *Marine*.⁸⁰

During the War of the League of Augsburg, these new clients played important roles in France's naval strategy. After September 1688, the navy increasingly embraced “la course royale,” employing private entrepreneurs, *corsaires*, *boucaniers* and merchant companies to combat the English and Dutch across the Atlantic World and defend France's overseas empire. Whilst this was successful in the short term, James Pritchard has argued that a focus on the European theatre afforded these “surrogates of the state” too much freedom elsewhere, which disproportionately influenced the war in North America.⁸¹ Chapman, however, has argued that the influence of naval officials over the colonial theatre was not as elusive as Pritchard assumes. Instead of giving into these “surrogates of the state,” she argues, Pontchartrain in fact managed the direction of the war through many “naval free agents”—entrepreneurs, royal agents, pirates and diplomats—he had cultivated amongst the new cohorts of naval officers.⁸²

One key example Chapman gives is Jean-Baptiste Du Casse, renowned *flibustier* and Governor of Saint Domingue. Though afforded great autonomy as a governor, privateer and director of the *Compagnie de l'Asiento*, he was also kept under the minister's thumb through the marriage of his only daughter into the Pontchartrain clan.⁸³ Whilst Du Casse is perhaps an exceptional case, J. S. Bromley has shown that, during Pontchartrain's tenure, many other former

⁸⁰ Chapman, *Private Ambition*, p.129-130; Marie-Christine Varachaud, Michel Vergé-Franceschi, and André Zysberg, “Qui étaient les capitaines de vaisseau du Roi-Soleil ?” *Revue Historique* 287, no. 2 (582) (1992): 311–38, p.321-6.

⁸¹ Pritchard, *In Search of Empire*, p.302.

⁸² Chapman, *Private Ambition*, p.137-138.

⁸³ Chapman, *Private Ambition*, p.138-139.

pirates, corsairs and privateers were similarly inducted into the navy not just as a reward for their service—for which a medal or pension might have sufficed—but to ensure their obedience and to influence their otherwise uncontrollable private actions.⁸⁴ Making the leap from private enterprise to naval service in early 1690, Iberville followed in the footsteps of these other officers, co-opted by Pontchartrain as a “free agent”, so that the minister could use his experience and expertise to assert his own influence over the conflict in Hudson Bay.

Once Iberville received his commission, Pontchartrain appointed him as the commander-in-chief of an entirely crown-funded expedition to Hudson Bay. He also promised Iberville that “si vous pouvez chasser les Anglois de ce fort et des autres lieux qu’ils occupent dans cette Baye, Sa Maté aura esgard a un service aussy important.”⁸⁵ For the campaign, the king leased Iberville the *Hazardeux*, captained by the French officer Du Tast, but allowed Iberville to recruit his other men, which included Delorme and his younger brother Sérigny, who was now a qualified *garde marine*. All costs for this campaign were to be assumed by the royal coffers, and the *Compagnie du Nord* was only expected to pay the expenses incurred between Quebec and Hudson Bay.⁸⁶ Compared to the lease of the *Soleil d’Afrique* a year earlier, the fact that the king leased of the *Hazardeux* directly to Iberville—a commissioned officer—and not to the *Compagnie du Nord*, marked a turning point in the conflict in Hudson Bay—capturing Fort Bourbon was no longer just a commercial affair, but a matter of national importance.

Plagued by sabotage, infighting and delays, Iberville’s first foray into *la course royale* was an abject failure; he arrived at Quebec too late to undertake the planned expedition.⁸⁷ In

⁸⁴ Bromley, “The Loan of French Naval Vessels,” p.191-192.

⁸⁵ ANOM, B, V.16, f.59, « Lettre du Ministre au Sieur d’Iberville, » Paris, 7 avril, 1691.

⁸⁶ ANOM, B, V.16, f. 40-42v, « Mémoire du Roy au S^r Comte de Frontenac touchant l’Acadie et l’attaque du fort de Nelson dans la Baye du Nord, » Au camp devant Mons, 7 avril 1691.

⁸⁷ ANOM, C11A, V.11, f. 41-79v, « Relation de ce qui s’est passé de plus considérable en Canada depuis le départ de la frégate La Fleur de May le 27 novembre 1690 jusqu’au départ de 91, » [novembre 1690] ; ANOM, C11A,

1692, Pontchartrain decided to try again, negotiating the lease of the *Poly* and the *Envieux* to Iberville and Bonaventure for their mission. Once again, however, supply issues and poor weather caused delays, and the ships arrived too late to depart for Hudson Bay.⁸⁸ Rather than waste their potential, Frontenac instead redeployed Iberville and Bonaventure to Acadia, ordering them to support the parallel campaigns their Abenaki allies were waging against the English in present-day Maine. Meeting with the Abenaki at Mont Desert, Iberville and Bonaventure planned to destroy the newly rebuilt Fort Pemaquid, but arrived to find that the English garrison had been forewarned of the impending attack and had called for reinforcements.⁸⁹ Facing an entrenched enemy and two warships, Iberville refused to attack the fort, which greatly angered the assembled Abenaki, who were concerned about its growing influence in their territory. Instead, Iberville planned to catch Boston unawares but arrived to find that the city was also on high alert. Admitting defeat, Iberville returned to France, but not before capturing a Dutch, a Spanish, and an English ship on the king's behalf.⁹⁰

On both sides of the Atlantic, these failures shook confidence in Iberville. Both Frontenac and Pontchartrain feared that his repeated failure to attack Fort Bourbon had strengthened the English position in Hudson Bay, whilst his inaction at Pemaquid had threatened France's fragile

V.11, f. 233-247, « Frontenac au ministre État général des affaires de la colonie, » Québec, 20 octobre 1691; Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*, p.109-110.

⁸⁸ ANOM, C11A, V.12, f. 106-107, « Lettre d'Iberville à M. ? , » 22 septembre, 1692; ANOM, C11A, V.12, f. 108-109, « Lettre d'Iberville au ministre, » 22 septembre 1692; ANOM, C11D, V.2, f. 201-207, « Extrait de Dépouillement du Journal de la Navigation du vaisseau du Roy "Le Poly" commandé par M^r d'Iberville de son voyage en Canadas année 1692, » [1692].

⁸⁹ Jeffers Lennox, *Homelands and Empires: Indigenous Spaces, Imperial Fictions, and Competition for Territory in Northeastern North America, 1690-1763*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), p.20-21; Kenneth M. Morrison, *The Embattled Northeast: The Elusive Ideal of Alliance in Abenaki-Euramerican Relations*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), p.126-127.

⁹⁰ ANOM, C11A, V.12, f.104-105v, « Instructions de Frontenac à d'Iberville et Bonaventure, » 12 septembre 1692; AM, B4, V.14, f.203-231v, « Journal du Voyage de Canada de l'année Mil six cents quatre vint douze dans le Poly accompagné de l'Envieux et une flutte du Roy escortans les six vaisseaux marchands, » 14 janvier 1693; ANOM, C11A, V.12, f.110-113v, « Lettre d'Iberville au ministre, », 16 décembre 1692; ANOM, C11A, V.12, f. 72-83v, « Lettre de Champigny au ministre, » 5 octobre 1692; Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*, p.110-118.

relationship with the Wabanaki Confederacy.⁹¹ But before either could act on their complaints, bigger problems struck the French war effort. In May and June 1692, the disastrous Battles of Barfleur and La Hogue dealt a severe blow to the French navy. Geoffrey Symcox has argued that as a result of this “crisis of French sea power,” Pontchartrain was forced to abandon notions of French naval superiority and embrace private enterprise more wholeheartedly, beginning the navy’s transition from the traditional strategy of fleet battles (*guerre d’escadre*) to commerce raiding (*guerre de course*).⁹² Other historians, however, have since shown that the number of commissioned naval officers actually increased after 1692, suggesting that Pontchartrain did not entirely hand over the direction of the war to private enterprise.⁹³ Indeed, the minister found a comprise, and instead began to work more closely with his clients amongst the naval officers, offering them new opportunities to conduct private ventures on behalf of the crown. In February 1693, therefore, despite his past failures, Iberville was promoted to *capitaine de frégate*, and appointed to command another expedition to Fort Bourbon.

It does not seem that Pontchartrain was directly responsible for this appointment, however. Writing to Jean-Baptiste de Lagny, the navy’s director of commerce, Iberville expressed his “veritable joye que vous ne l’ayez pas abandonné de nostre credit aupres de monsieur de Pontchartrain”, implying that Lagny may well have had a role to play in his promotion.⁹⁴ Elsewhere, Iberville’s commission also cited the influence of Frontenac and Champigny and “les assurances qu’ils ont continué de donner à Sa Majesté”.⁹⁵ Pontchartrain

⁹¹ ANOM, C11A, V.12, f.49, “Lettre du Frontenac au Ministre, » 11 novembre 1692; ANOM, B, V.16, f.179-182, « Lettre du Ministre à Monsieur le Comte de Frontenac, » Versailles, 14 février, 1693. As a result of Iberville’s inaction, the navy spent considerable funds on gifts for the nations of the Wabanaki Confederacy, in an ultimately futile attempt to win back their allies. Morrison, *The Embattled Northeast*, p.127-128.

⁹² Symcox, *Crisis of French Sea Power*, p.3-8, 43.

⁹³ Chapman, *Private Ambition*, p.129-130; Varachaud et al., “Qui étaient les capitaines de vaisseau?”, p.326.

⁹⁴ ANOM, C11A, V.12, f.300-305v, « Lettre d’Iberville à (Lagny?), » 3 février 1693.

⁹⁵ « Mémoire pour servir d’instruction au S^r d’Iberville..., » 28 mars 1693.

even openly complained about the meddling of these officials in Iberville's career, informing Frontenac that "Sa Majesté ne l'ayant avancé dans la Marine comme Elle a fait prematurement, que sur les assurances qui ont esté données par ledit S^r de Frontenac."⁹⁶ Indeed, whilst Pontchartrain desired complete control over his agents, Chapman has shown that the autonomy of naval officers and their horizontal connections to other local, regional, and courtly patron-client networks often made this difficult.⁹⁷ Lagny, Frontenac and Champigny each offered Iberville alternative avenues to royal patronage, which challenged Pontchartrain's influence and forced him to appeal to the officers' personal interests. As Iberville prepared for his next campaign, therefore, the minister pledged to give him "tout ce qu'il a demandé."⁹⁸

By playing off his colonial and metropolitan patrons against one another, Iberville put himself in a strong position to negotiate his privateering contracts. Leveraging the minister's favour, he attempted to extend his own patronage power by recommending several of his kinsmen and allies for commissions and positions of command in his upcoming campaign. Traditionally, this was the king's prerogative as the lessor of the *vaisseaux du roi*, but with the rise in the number of ventures, the monarch had increasingly chosen to leave this task to his capable commanders.⁹⁹ Advising Pontchartrain that he needed twice the standard number of officers, Iberville recommended Delorme, Sérigny and a *garde marine* Du Tast as capable navigators. He also opportunistically requested commissions in the *gardes marine* for his younger brothers, the seventeen-year-old Châteauguay and the thirteen-year-old Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville, lying about their ages so that they might be allowed to enroll.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ ANOM, B, V.16, f.249v-252v, « Mémoire au S^r Comte de Frontenac pour l'attaque du fort Nelson, » [1693].

⁹⁷ Chapman, *Private Ambition*, p.130.

⁹⁸ « Mémoire au S^r Comte de Frontenac pour l'attaque du fort Nelson, » [1693].

⁹⁹ Bromley, "The Loan of French Naval Vessels," p.191.

¹⁰⁰ Born in January 1676, Louis le Moyne de Châteauguay, was only seventeen years old, one year too young to enrol in the *gardes de la Marine*. Iberville did not mention the age of his other brother, lying by omission, but it could only have been the thirteen-year-old Jean-Baptiste de Bienville, who had assumed this title in 1691 after the

Pontchartrain saw through this ruse, however, and denied the requests. Finally, likely at the behest of his fiancée, Marie-Thérèse La Combe de Pocatière, Iberville also recommended her second cousin Le Gardeur de Tilly as his *lieutenant* and her uncle François Juchereau de Vaulezar as his *enseigne*.¹⁰¹ Wielding her influence over her future husband, Marie-Thérèse thus brokered a triple alliance between the Le Gardeurs, Juchereaus and Le Moynes that would last for years to come.¹⁰²

Once again, Iberville's arrived in Quebec too late to undertake his expedition, having been delayed by his escort duties and by strong Atlantic headwinds. Making the most of this missed opportunity, Iberville proposed raiding the lucrative Newfoundland fisheries—an idea he had been formulating for several years—claiming that it would avoid wasting the king's investment. Frontenac rejected this idea, however, for he was unwilling to trust Iberville's limited experience in this unfamiliar territory.¹⁰³ All that Iberville had to show for his campaign,

death of François de Bienville. Iberville's other younger brothers were too young or already commissioned. The young Bienville would under Iberville in his campaign of 1696-7 without any official commission but would prove himself adept at naval combat. « Lettre d'Iberville à (Lagny?), » 3 février 1693; PRDH, #40377, « Baptême de Louis LeMoyne, » 04/01/1676; PRDH, #40563, « Baptême de Jean Baptiste Lemoyne, », 23/02/1680. See also Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*, p.119.

¹⁰¹ Mentioned only as Le Gardeur de Tilly it is most likely that this was the same son of Charles Le Gardeur de Tilly who had been admitted as a cadet in the *gardes de la Marine* in 1687, the year after Sérigny. His mother, Geneviève Juchereau, was the niece of Marie-Anne de Saint-Denis de Juchereau, Marie-Thérèse de la Combe de Pocatière's mother, making him her second cousin. Meanwhile François Juchereau de Vaulezar was the younger brother of Marie-Anne and therefore Marie-Thérèse's uncle. Vaulezar had already petitioned for the position of *enseigne* himself, but it was likely Iberville's influence that proved more persuasive. ANOM, B, V.16, f. 229, « Liste des officiers et gardes de la Marine choisis par le Roy pour servir sur l'Indiscret, que Sa Majesté fait presentment armer au port de Rochefort pour aller en Canada, » Versailles, le 24 mars 1693; « Lettre d'Iberville à (Lagny?), » 3 février 1693; Pierre-Georges Roy ed., «François Juchereau de Vaulezard,» in *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques* Vol. XXXII, No.9 Levis, Septembre 1926.

¹⁰² Iberville and Marie-Thérèse had intended to wed in 1688 but their nuptials were delayed until October 1693 by Iberville's trial and his repeated absences from Quebec. BAnQ, P1000, S3, D2727, 22-28, « Contrat de mariage Mr D'hiberville et Madelle pollet delacombe, » 8 octobre 1693. On women as brokers in patron-client networks see Sara Chapman, "Patronage as Family Economy: The Role of Women in the Patron-Client Network of the Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain Family, 1670-1715," *French Historical Studies* 24, no. 1 (21 December 2001),p.24; Sharon Kettering, "The Patronage Power of Early Modern French Noblewomen," *The Historical Journal* 32, no. 4 (1989): 817-41, p.837.

¹⁰³ ANOM, C11A, V.12, f.312-314, « Lettre d'Iberville [M. Iberville de Bellestre], » 16 octobre 1693; ANOM C11A, V.125, f.176-176v, « Copie d'une lettre (de Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville?) touchant un projet d'entreprise contre les établissements anglais de Terre-Neuve, » 24 février, 1693; Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville* p.121-122.

therefore, was the capture of an English ship carrying twelve tons of Virginia tobacco from Boston to London.¹⁰⁴ To make matters worse, whilst the expedition had stalled in Quebec, the last French outpost in James Bay, Fort Sainte Anne (formerly Fort Albany), was captured by English, entirely expelling the *Compagnie du Nord* from Hudson Bay.¹⁰⁵

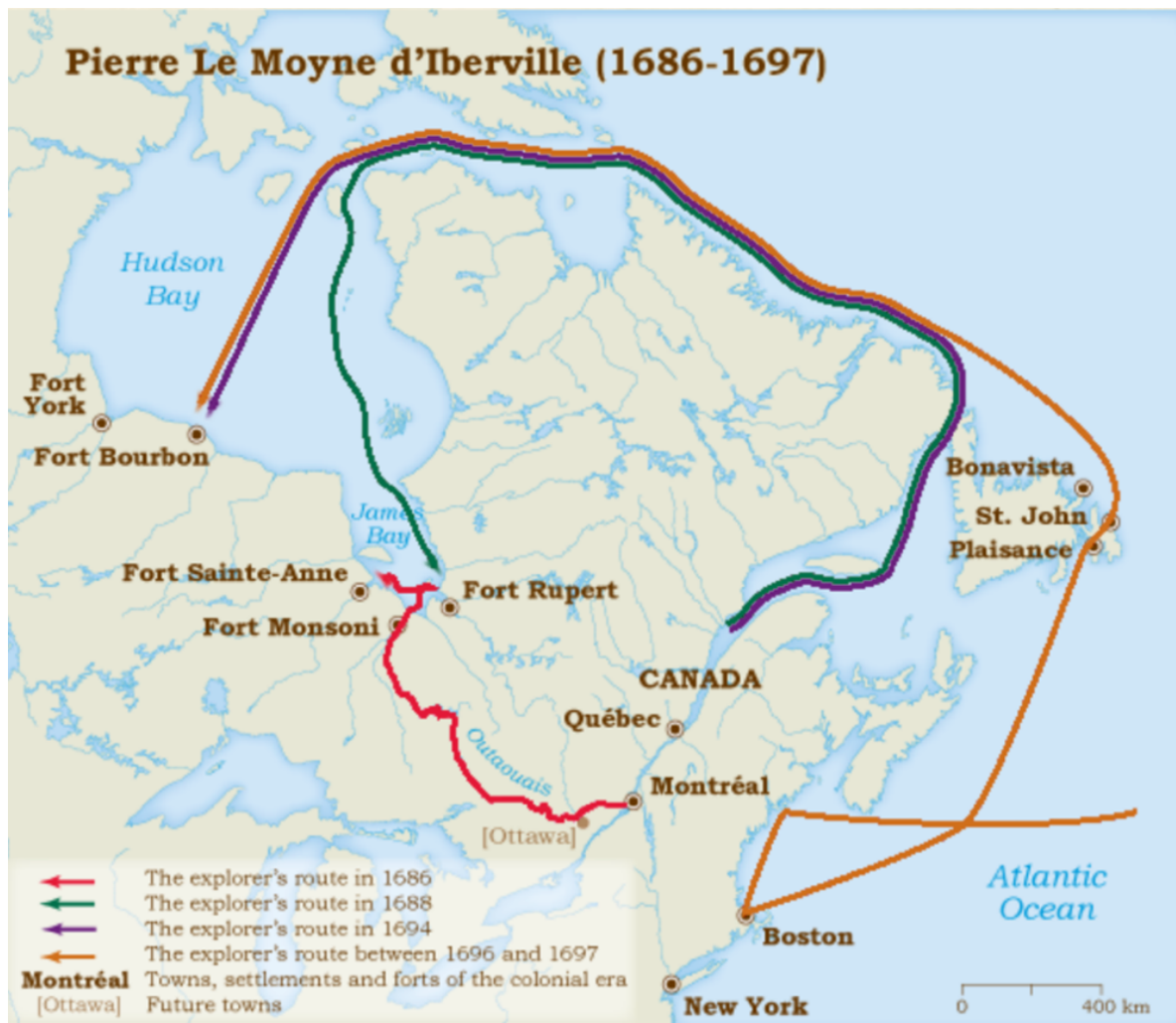


Fig. 1.2 : “Routes of Pierre Le Moyne d’Iberville (1686-1697).”
Map. Virtual Museum of New France, Canadian Museum of History. <https://www.historymuseum.ca/virtual-museum-of-new-france/the-explorers/pierre-le-moyne-diberville-1686-1702/>

¹⁰⁴ Captured 450 leagues of the coast of France, this vessel and its contents were sold in Quebec. It is unclear how much the prize was worth, but Iberville mentioned it carried twenty-four “pipes de tabac,” which was roughly 12 tons. ANOM, C11A, V.12, f.251, « Lettre de Champigny au ministre, » 12 août 1693; « Lettre d’Iberville, » 16 octobre 1693. Pritchard provides a useful explanation of various naval measurements, which was used to calculate this amount. Pritchard, *In Search of Empire*, p.xxiv.

¹⁰⁵ ANOM, C11A, V. 12, f. 250-252v, « Lettre de Champigny, » 12 août 1693; Borins, “Compagnie du Nord”, p.133

For Frontenac, this was the final straw. Writing to Lagny, he accused Iberville of insubordination, arguing that he had failed to assault Fort Pemaquid in 1692 because he cared more for the passengers he had aboard, including his sister, than his mission.¹⁰⁶ Branding Iberville as “un homme qui se vante beaucoup, qui creve de presumption, et qui a beaucoup plus en vue ses interests et son commerce que le service du Roy,” Frontenac also suggested that he had deliberately delayed his voyage to Hudson Bay so that he could pillage Newfoundland instead. Elsewhere, the governor made other highly personal attacks that hinted at the return of the factionalism that had dominated his previous tenure. Indeed, he made insinuations about Iberville’s new bride, drawing attention to the fact that the couple had kept their wedding a secret, possibly because Marie-Thérèse was already pregnant.¹⁰⁷ Much of this hostility may have stemmed from the re-emerging feud between Frontenac and Marie-Thérèse’s step-father, Ruelle d’Auteuil, which came to a head during the infamous *affaire du Tartuffe* in 1694.¹⁰⁸ More likely, however, was that the governor was frustrated at his inability to exert his influence over Iberville, and by extension, the war in Hudson Bay. Only four years earlier, Frontenac had been the first to recommend Iberville to Pontchartrain. But in the metropole, Iberville had found new, more powerful patrons such as Lagny, sidelining the governor. His frustration might explain why

¹⁰⁶ Whilst little evidence substantiates Frontenac’s claim, it is entirely likely that Iberville transported his family members between France and Canada on his frequent voyages. Indeed in 1692 he transported cannons to Canada on behalf of his older Longueuil, and in 1694 his son was born on the Grand Banks as he transported his wife Marie-Thérèse back to the colony. ANOM, C11A, V.12, f.225-238, « Lettre de Frontenac au ministre, » 25 octobre 1693.

¹⁰⁷ “Il est icy fort amoureux de la belle fille du fermier general que plusieurs croyent quil a epousee quoyquils en fassent de grands misteres” « Frontenac à Lagny, », 25 octobre 1693. The couple married on October 8th, 1693, after five years of courtship. Marie-Thérèse gave birth to their first son, Pierre-Louis-Joseph on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland just over eight months later on June 22nd, 1694, suggesting she may already have been pregnant at their wedding. See L. Le Jeune, *Le chevalier Pierre Le Moyne, sieur d’Iberville*, (Ottawa : Les Éditions de l’Université d’Ottawa, 1937), p.249.

¹⁰⁸ The *affaire du Tartuffe* was a dispute over the performance of Molière’s anticlerical play *Tartuffe* in Quebec. It pitted Governor Frontenac, who supported the play, against Bishop Saint-Vallier, who wanted it banned. Ruelle d’Auteuil sided with the bishop, imprisoning Jacques Mareuil, an officer who intended to put on the play, angering Frontenac. See W. J. Eccles, *Frontenac, the Courtier Governor*. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1959), p.295-308 and Robichaud, “Les réseaux d’influence,” p.249-257.

Frontenac chose to recommend a new client, Bonaventure, for the Hudson Bay enterprise over Iberville, suggesting that “si lun est cap^{nc} de fregate lautre meriteroit de lestre dun gros vaisseau, cependant on a beaucoup prosne lun qui nest quun babillard et un petit presumptueux et taché a desservir l’autre.”¹⁰⁹ With his patronage of Iberville having backfired, the governor sought to undermine him at any opportunity.

Many of Frontenac’s remarks struck a chord at the *bureaux de la Marine*. Assessing Iberville’s report, one naval clerk agreed with the governor’s evaluation that he had deliberately delayed the expedition, to “Eluder ce Voyage, que d’Iberville n’a plus envie de faire depuis qu’on l’a mis dans la marine.”¹¹⁰ Meanwhile, an anonymous *mémoire* echoed the governor’s sentiments about Iberville’s new priorities, noting that the officer had become “un peu esloigné depuis que Sa Majesté l’a mis dans la Marine” and distracted “par d’autres veues, et par l’esperance de s’avancer dans d’autres employs de la Marine.” Even so, the author of the *mémoire* concluded that if the crown wished to undertake another expedition to Fort Bourbon “on estime pas qu’on puisse employer d’autre que le S^r D’Iberville.”¹¹¹ Indeed, through a careful negotiation of colonial and metropolitan patronage networks, Iberville had established himself as an indispensable agent in the *guerre de course* and the only person capable of bringing together the men, capital and resources necessary to assert French sovereignty in Hudson Bay. As the war progressed in both Europe and North America, he became even more integral to furthering imperial interests in the Northern Atlantic, affording him more opportunities to pursue his own interests, with or without the support of the *Compagnie du Nord*.

¹⁰⁹ « Frontenac à Lagny, » 25 octobre 1693.

¹¹⁰ ANOM, C11A, V.12, f. 310-11, « Observations sur la lettre du S^r d’Iberville du 16 décembre 1693, » [1694].

¹¹¹ This *mémoire* may also have been a summary of Frontenac’s own thoughts addressed to Pontchartrain; ANOM, C11A, V.12, f. 390-393, « Mémoire pour servir au projet des envois à faire, » [1693].

“Tant par mer que par terre:” Buccaneering in the North Atlantic

On July 23rd, 1694, Quebec buzzed with excitement as Iberville and Sérigny returned at the helm of two royal frigates, the *Poly* and the *Salamandre*. Word had spread that the brothers wished to employ over one hundred men for an expedition they were convinced would finally recapture Fort Bourbon. Keen to attract the best men to their venture, the brothers met with Intendant Champigny to discuss a series of articles of employment for their potential recruits. Published on August 8th, these conventions outlined fourteen separate agreements concerning terms of employment, remuneration and even behaviour on campaign. According to the agreement, each recruit would receive all necessary provisions and equipment for the campaign, for which they would be paid an advance of forty *livres*. In return for their service, each recruit would be entitled to a share in “la moitié de toutes les prises qui seront fait tant par mer que par terre depuis le depart de Quebec.”¹¹² On top of this, they would also be given a stake in half of all of fur trading profits in Hudson Bay until July 1697 and would be permitted to hunt, trap and sell their own wares, including their muskets, before they left. Finally, after the campaign, each man would also be offered the chance to enlist in Fort Bourbon’s new garrison, putting them on the royal payroll. With such generous terms on offer, 104 Canadians and six Kahnawake Mohawk signed up, eager to fight for the riches of Hudson Bay.

Interestingly, the *Compagnie du Nord* was not mentioned in this agreement. By 1694, the company had spent over 265,000 *livres* on four failed expeditions and had seen no returns on their significant investment.¹¹³ After a series of crop failures struck France in 1693, the naval ministry was no longer able to prop up the company, or even maintain an effective standing fleet.

¹¹² ANOM, C11A, V.13, f.113-114v, « Conventions que Mess^{rs} d’iberville et de Cerigny font avec les Canadiens qui s’engagent a aller avec Eux pour prendre les postes que les Anglois ont dans la baye du nord, » 8 août 1694.

¹¹³ Borins, "Compagnie du Nord," p.147.

Indeed, with his fleet in disarray, Pontchartrain decided to cease all shipbuilding and divert any remaining naval finances to coastal defences. Instead of letting the remaining royal ships to lie dormant, however, he also offered further inducements to willing privateers. From October 1694, Louis XIV pledged to provide all the equipment and provisions for any approved privateering venture and cover all expenses—including supplies, damages, and even losses—for anyone who leased a *vaisseau du roi*. In return, he expected only the *cinquième* on any prizes taken after adjudication fees and the Admiral's *dixième*. Essentially, by the end of 1694, the crown committed to finance any willing privateer or *armateur*, putting France's fleet in the hands of ambitious entrepreneurs.¹¹⁴

In March 1694, the tides had already begun to turn. As Iberville returned to France, Pontchartrain solicited him to finance his own private campaign to capture Fort Bourbon. Confident that the monarch would eagerly sponsor such a venture, the minister even promised Iberville “la possession de prise” before he had consulted the king. Seizing this opportunity, Iberville entered into business with his brother Sérigny and their cousin Jacques Le Ber de Senneville—who worked in La Rochelle as his father's business agent—amassing 60,000 *livres* of capital for the new venture within a matter of days.¹¹⁵ Iberville then concluded a *traité* with Louis XIV in line with those issued from October: Iberville would pay for both the advances of the officers, soldiers and their supplies, whilst the monarch would provide the ships and all the necessary equipment. At Pontchartrain's behest, the king also relinquished his rights to the expeditions' prizes, even the *cinquième*. If the expedition doubled its investment, however, Iberville agreed to hand over Fort Bourbon to the *Compagnie du Nord*. If he only broke even or made a loss though, the king agreed to grant Iberville a monopoly over the Hudson Bay trade

¹¹⁴ Symcox, *Crisis of French Sea Power*, p.147, 159, 174-5.

¹¹⁵ AM, B4, V.15, f.389-390, « Iberville au ministre, » [1694].

until 1697 to recoup his losses.¹¹⁶ For all intents and purposes, Louis XIV underwrote Iberville's expedition so that Fort Bourbon might finally return to French hands.

Recently, historians have challenged notions that privateering was simply the use of non-state actors by states to further their political objectives through private violence. Brian Mabee has argued that in the political economy of the Atlantic World, the division between "public" and "private" violence was not quite so stark, since imperial conflicts often concerned the protection of commercial privileges and monopolies. Moreover, in the context of *la course royale*, the line between "state" and "non-state" actors was especially blurry, since commissioned officers, private companies and entrepreneurs were encouraged to use their personal finances to fund predatory activity against the nation's enemies. As such, privateering campaigns were full of overlapping and often conflicting ambitions, as all actors involved attempted to negotiate this ambiguity in pursuit of their own interests.¹¹⁷ In August 1694, the actions of Iberville, Sérigny and Senneville exemplified this. Though the venture was primarily intended to unite the interests of the *Compagnie du Nord* and the *Marine*, the Le Moyne-Le Ber syndicate sought to use their royal commissions to assert their own claims to the Hudson Bay trade wherever possible, even at the expense of their sponsors and patrons.

Much of this was possible because, in 1694, the *Compagnie du Nord* was in no position to contest the Le Moyne-Le Ber syndicate. Since 1682, the company had only made a total profit of 60,000 *livres* and was operating at a loss of almost 658,000 *livres*. Disputes over these financial

¹¹⁶ ANOM, B, V.17, f.55-57v, « Articles & Conditions que le Roy a accordez au S^r d'Iberville cap^{ne} de fregatte legère pour l'entreprise de la Baye d'Hudson, » 18 novembre 1695.

¹¹⁷ See Bryan Mabee, "Pirates, Privateers and the Political Economy of Private Violence," *Global Change, Peace & Security* 21, no. 2 (2009): 139–52. See also the many articles in Alejandro Colás and Bryan Mabee eds., *Mercenaries, Pirates, Bandits and Empires* (London: Hurst & Company, 2010) which challenge Janice E. Thomson's work *Mercenaries, Pirates and Sovereigns: State-building and Extraterritorial Violence in Early Modern Europe*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994). Of particular note is the article by Halvard Leira and Benjamin De Carvalho, "Privateers of the North Sea: At World's End- French Privateers in Northern Waters," (p.55-83) which discusses contemporary French privateering in the North Sea.

woes had driven a wedge between the French and Canadian directors, who continually bickered over the company's management. Iberville, Sérigny and Senneville were sure to exploit these weaknesses for their advantage. Ignoring royal orders to inform the company of their plans, they departed France in secret, leaving the French directors "n'ayant pas une connoissance du traité fait par le Roy pour l'entreprise dud. S^r d'Iberville."¹¹⁸ When Champigny assembled the directors in Quebec, therefore, Villeray—the proxy for the French directors—was forced to decline investment on their behalf, since their response would take too long to arrive from the metropole. Unable to muster any significant capital on their own, the Canadian directors soon followed suit but suggested that they might be in a position to oversee the Hudson Bay trade by 1697 if their fortunes improved. With the *Compagnie du Nord* refusing to finance the expedition, it seemed that the Le Moyne-Le Ber syndicate had gained complete control over its direction.

Champigny, however, insisted on honouring the king's instructions. He ordered Iberville, Sérigny and Senneville to permit the *Compagnie du Nord* to make a small investment so that they could follow the developments of the expedition more closely, which would put them in a better position to achieve the proposed handover. Iberville challenged this ruling, arguing that:

il ne pouvoit entrer dans aucune société avec une comp^e a cause des embarras qui arrivent par le nombre des associez mais que pour faire plaisir a ceux qui de lad. assemblée voudroient estre de son entreprise, ils pouvoient choisir un d'Eux avec lequel il s'accorderoit pour y entrer de quelque pars.¹¹⁹

Unwilling to lose his newfound independence—especially since company oversight had repeatedly contributed to his previous failures—Iberville proposed reducing the Canadian directors to a single voice. To further increase his control over the expedition, Iberville also made efforts to reduce the amount of capital the directors could muster. On behalf of his uncle

¹¹⁸ ANOM, C11A, V.13, f. 99-101v, « Procès-verbal sur l'Entreprise du S^r d'Iberville », 26 octobre 1694.

¹¹⁹ « Procès-verbal sur l'Entreprise du S^r d'Iberville, » 26 octobre 1694.

Le Ber—the company’s third-largest investor—he declared that he “ne vouloit pas entrer presentement dans lad. entreprise reservant ses pretensions en 1697.” He then declined on behalf of the “succession du feu S^r Lemoyne,” stating that his siblings would likewise withdraw their interests until the later date. Having loaned Iberville 6000 *livres*, however, the Le Moyne siblings were very much implicated in the campaign’s financing. It is also probable that Le Ber had likewise invested through his son and agent Senneville.¹²⁰ Without these two significant sources of capital, the remaining Canadian directors could only amass a total of 15,000 *livres* between them, effectively granting the Le Moyne-Le Ber syndicate the controlling share in the venture. Manipulating the company’s weaknesses and their family networks, Iberville, Sérigny and Senneville effectively usurped the *Compagnie du Nord*’s privileges over Hudson Bay, ensuring themselves a monopoly over the region’s trade until at least 1697.¹²¹

Free from the financial restraints imposed by the company, Iberville and Sérigny could offer any terms of employment they saw fit. Rather than offering fixed-term employment contracts and salaries like the *Compagnie du Nord*, the brothers took a personal hand in their recruitment, promising their men rewards that they hoped would forge the same bonds of loyalty, camaraderie and martial brotherhood that had brought them victory in James Bay. Indeed, the *conventions* drawn up between the Le Moyne brothers and their recruits on August 8th consciously resembled a *chasse-partie*—the articles of agreement traditionally drawn up by *flibustiers* and *boucaniers* in the French Antilles, who were often known as the *frères de la côte*.¹²² Whilst such documents were common knowledge among the mariners of the French Atlantic, the brothers’ *conventions* are one of the most notable instances of its transmission from

¹²⁰ « Procès-verbal sur l’Entreprise du S^r d’Iberville, » 26 octobre 1694.

¹²¹ Borins, "Compagnie du Nord" p.146-147.

¹²² Benerson Little, *The Buccaneer’s Realm: Pirate Life on the Spanish Main, 1674-1688* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2007), p.53-55.

the Caribbean to Canada.¹²³ It is possible that the brothers may have been inspired by Sérigny's service as an *enseigne* on the *Émerillon* in 1688 and 1689, where he had served under Du Casse against the Dutch at Berbiche and Fort Zeelandia and the English at St. Christopher.¹²⁴ On these two campaigns, Sérigny likely rubbed shoulders with many *flibustiers*, such as the 120 deployed during Du Casse's assault on Fort Charles, and may have learned about their customs first hand.¹²⁵ Five years later, therefore, when presented the chance lead their own campaign, he perhaps convinced Iberville to offer their Canadian recruits a similar contract to the *chasse-partie*, codifying the promises of riches and reward they had relied on in the past.

Traditionally, a *chasse-partie* denoted the party's intended target, its conduct, the provision of equipment and, most importantly, the shares for each member, which were only paid in the event of profit.¹²⁶ Iberville and Sérigny steeped their *conventions* in the language and customs of this maritime tradition, offering their recruits a share in the prizes, expecting them to provide their own muskets, powder horns and clothes and agreeing, in the event of their death to pass their shares on to a named inheritor. In many ways, however, the *conventions* deliberately differed from the Caribbean custom. In their document, the brothers included elements common to the Canadian fur trade, perhaps to make the agreement more comprehensible and appealing to their Canadian recruits. Instead of operating on a "no prey, no pay" system like the Caribbean *flibustiers*, the brothers safeguarded their recruits' shares with a slice of the Hudson Bay trade if

¹²³ In the War of the Spanish Succession, the *charte-partie*, a slightly different agreement made between a privateer and an *armateur*, would become popular in French Newfoundland. At least twenty-eight examples can be found in the colony's notarial records between 1705-1712. See LAC, MG1, G3, Notariat de Terre-Neuve.

¹²⁴ For Sérigny's service under Du Casse see BAnQ, P100, S3, D2727, f.56-59, « États de Service, Joseph Le Moyne de Sérigny, » [1714?].

¹²⁵ Interestingly one of these *flibustiers* was William Kidd, who began his career serving under the French banner. David Marley, *Wars of the Americas: A Chronology of Armed Conflict in the Western Hemisphere, 1492 to the Present, V.1 "Discovery and Conquest to High Tide of Empire."* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2008), p.311-314.

¹²⁶ Benerson Little's annex of articles typical to many *chasse-parties* provides an interesting comparison to Iberville and Sérigny's *conventions*. "Appendix A: The Chasse-Partie," in Little, *The Buccaneer's Realm*, p.223-229.

the initial loot was not adequate. Moreover, inspired by contemporary *voyageur* contracts, the men were also allowed to hunt, trap and trade on their own account.¹²⁷ Bringing together their experiences from across the French Atlantic, Iberville and Sérigny thus created a novel, hybrid contract that tapped into the pervasive connection between profit and violence in the French Empire, mobilising skilled men in service of their own interests and imperial ambitions.

Such was the enthusiasm for the brothers' generous *conventions* that, much to his chagrin, Frontenac cancelled his planned expedition to Fort Frontenac that year, citing a lack of available manpower.¹²⁸ Once again recruiting amongst their kinsmen and allies, the brothers brought with them their younger brother Châteauguay, cousin Martigny, close associates Gabriel Testard de La Forest and Du Tast, as well as Iberville's in-law Le Gardeur de Tilly and several of his brothers, including Joseph-Augustin Le Gardeur de Caumont.¹²⁹ We can also assume the young Bienville may well have participated, as well as other veterans of service under Iberville. Whether bound by blood or not, most of the Canadians who joined the Le Moyne-Le Ber expedition sought promotion or profit. Indeed, Father Marest, the expedition's chaplain, recorded that many pledged to donate some of their future prizes to the shrine of Saint Anne on their return as thanks for their deliverance from stormy seas on the voyage through the Hudson Strait, suggesting an understanding of the high risks and high rewards at stake.¹³⁰

¹²⁷ ANOM, C11A, V.13, f.113-114v, « Conventions que Messieurs d'Iberville et Sérigny font avec les Canadiens qui s'engagent à aller avec eux pour prendre les postes que les Anglais ont à la baie d'Hudson, » Québec, 8 août, 1694; Dechêne, *Habitants and Merchants*, p.123-124.

¹²⁸ ANOM, C11A, V.13, f.4-27v, « Lettre de Frontenac et Champigny au ministre, » Québec, 5 novembre 1694

¹²⁹ All these names are either mentioned in the account of the chaplain Father Gabriel Marest or Iberville's official report of the expedition. "Letter from Father Marest, Missionary of the Company of Jesus to Father de Lamberville of the Company of Jesus, Overseer of the Missions of Canada," published in Joseph Burr Tyrrell et al., *Documents Relating to the Early History of Hudson Bay* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1931) and ANOM, C11A, V.13, f. 391-394v, « Relation de l'expédition et prise du fort Nilson, » 13 octobre 1695.

¹³⁰ "Letter from Father Marest," p.134.

It is less certain why six Kahnawake Mohawk signed up. Since 1687, the Le Moyne brothers had been repeatedly called upon to use their family's relationships with Kahnawake to steer the community's parallel wars against the English and Haudenosaunee.¹³¹ In 1690, Sainte-Hélène and Iberville had led the French and Canadian contingent on a successful intercultural raid against Schenectady, one of the first of its kind in North America.¹³² It is possible that this victory convinced several Mohawk to join Iberville four years later, believing that he could also offer them glory in Hudson Bay. Another possibility is that the expedition presented an opportunity for the men to engage in traditional long-distance patterns of hunting and warfare without threatening their relationships with the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. Many Kahnawake Iroquois were reluctant to fight their estranged Haudenosaunee kin, but still sought outlets for violence or material gain.¹³³ A venture to Hudson Bay may have offered these Mohawk a way to achieve their personal ambitions without being forced to engage their distant kinsmen in battle. Over a century later, many Kahnawake Mohawk would sign similar contracts with the Northwest Company, hiring themselves out as trappers and fighters during the "fur trade wars" in order to earn renown and rewards at a time when a changing economic and political climate had reduced opportunities for such activities near Montreal.¹³⁴ Whatever the case, whether French, Canadian or Mohawk, Iberville's recruits all shared similar ambitions for glory, material gain and recognition in their home communities, binding them together in pursuit of a common goal.

¹³¹ Chapter II will discuss the Le Moyne family's relationships with Kahnawake in more depth. For "parallel warfare," see D. Peter MacLeod, *The Canadian Iroquois and the Seven Years' War* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2012).

¹³² On the significance of the Schenectady raid, see Thomas E. Burke, *Mohawk Frontier: The Dutch Community of Schenectady, New York, 1661-1710* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), p.105-108; Frégault, *Le Moyne d'Iberville* p.93-101; Dechêne, *Le Peuple, L'État et la Guerre* p.205, W. J. Eccles, *Frontenac, the Courtier Governor*. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1959), p.224-5.

¹³³ Lozier, *Flesh Reborn*, p.211-221

¹³⁴ Nicole St-Onge, "He was neither a soldier nor a slave: he was under the control of no man': Kahnawake Mohawks in the Northwest Fur Trade, 1790-1850," *Canadian Journal of History* 51, no. 1 (2016): 1-32 and Jean Barman, *Iroquois in the West*, (Montreal; Kingston; London; Chicago: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019).

On October 14th, York Factory fell after a three-week siege. When Iberville, Sérigny and their men entered the fort, however, they were disappointed to find it almost completely empty. Perhaps alerted to the French preparations, two Hudson's Bay Company ships had retrieved all the fort's furs in August, leaving behind only a years' worth of supplies, valued at around 130,000 *livres*. Iberville would later claim that since this amount did not surpass his investment, he did not have to pay his crews.¹³⁵ All was not lost for the men, however. The following spring, hundreds of Indigenous traders arrived at Fort Bourbon, bringing an estimated 45,000 pounds of furs with them for trade.¹³⁶ Granted a monopoly over the fur trade to recoup his investment, Iberville was entitled to collect these furs and sell them in La Rochelle on his return. Historians disagree on the exact figures, but it seems that he sold his cargo for between 125 and 160,000 *livres*, making a net profit of between 30 and 60,000 *livres*.¹³⁷ Moreover, Iberville did not owe the king his share and could continue to reap the profits from this trade until 1697. As agreed in their contracts, his men split the other half of these profits, probably earning somewhere between 150-300 *livres* each alongside any profits they had made trading on their own account.¹³⁸ By leveraging his position to broker a favorable agreement with both the king and his men, Iberville had ensured that, despite an apparently paltry prize, everyone had profited in some way.

Unfortunately, however, the expedition claimed the life of Louis Le Moyne Châteauguay. In his reports, Iberville recalled, rather coldly, that "mon frère Chateaugué...y fut tué d'un coup

¹³⁵ « Relation de l'expédition et prise du fort Nilson, » 13 octobre 1695; Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville* p.133.

¹³⁶ Iberville initially estimated that he had collected about 45,000 pounds of furs, but the official count at La Rochelle tallied 51,997 pounds. Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*, p.134.

¹³⁷ According to Frégault, Iberville sold the furs in La Rochelle for 125-135,000 *livres*, bringing him a net profit of 25-30,000 *livres*. Borins, however, suggests that Iberville sold the entire cargo for 160,000 *livres*, earning him up to 60,000 *livres*, and possibly even more as he was exempt from paying the *droit du quart* normally owed by the *Compagnie du Nord*. Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*, p.134; Borins, "Compagnie du Nord," p.150-1.

¹³⁸ Depending on the value used for the net profit, dividing the remaining between the 110 volunteers, leaves a profit per person of 136 or 272 *livres*. Since some men died over the winter, estimates of 150-300 *livres* seem reasonable.

de mousquet.”¹³⁹ But, in one of the few glimpses of an emotional, rather than purely military or financial relationship between the Le Moyne brothers, the chaplain Father Marest noted that:

Tant de tristes nouvelles n’abattirent pas le courage de M. d’Iberville: il estoit extraordinairement touché de la mort de son frère, qu’il avoit toûjours aimé tendrement. Il en fit un sacrifice à Dieu, dans lequel il vouloit mettre toute sa confiance. Prévoyant que le moindre signe d’inquiétude qui paroistroit sur son visage, jetteroit tout le monde dans la consternation; il se soûtint toûjours avec une fermeté merveilleuse, mettant tout le monde en action, agissant lui-mesme & donnant ses ordres avec autant de présence d’esprit que jamais.¹⁴⁰

This heartfelt account puts another perspective on Iberville’s continued patronage of Sérigny, Châteauguay and Bienville throughout these years. Iberville was certainly close with his younger siblings. Only a few months earlier, off the shores of Newfoundland, his wife Marie-Thérèse had given birth to his firstborn child, whom Iberville named Pierre-Louis-Joseph, likely in honour of the two brothers who accompanied him to Hudson Bay.¹⁴¹ Sharon Kettering has argued that family connections were often indistinguishable from clientage but, in this moment of tenderness after Châteauguay’s death, we can peek behind the veil of personal interest to see genuine fraternal love. Employing one’s sibling could bring as much risk as a reward, especially as the tragic demise of his brother threatened to destabilise Iberville’s entire expedition. But despite these risks, Iberville would continue to bring his kinsmen into active service, offering them a rare chance for a successful military career.

In October 1695, Iberville returned to France and immediately travelled to meet with Pontchartrain. Whilst he likely wished to recount his recent voyage to the minister, Iberville also sought to capitalise on his success to propose his long-anticipated venture against the English cod fisheries in Newfoundland. Ever since 1691, Plaisance had been defended almost entirely by

¹³⁹ « Relation de l’expédition et prise du fort Nilson, » 13 octobre 1695.

¹⁴⁰ “Letter from Father Marest,” p.137.

¹⁴¹ Sérigny also stood as Pierre-Louis-Joseph’s godfather. PRDH, #61096, « Baptême de Pierre Louis Joseph d’Iberville, » 22 juin 1694.

what Pritchard describes as a "commercial-military alliance" of naval officers and merchants from Nantes, St. Malo, Bayonne and St. Jean de Luz. Pontchartrain was therefore already open to such a proposition, but Iberville found that the minister had already been approached by the Governor of Plaisance, Jacques-François de Monbeton Brouillan, who had proposed a naval campaign against St. John's backed by the St. Malo merchant and *armateur* Noël Danican de l'Espine.¹⁴² Evaluating both proposals, Pontchartrain deemed that Iberville's plan to attack the English by land was "plus certaine pour l'esperence de la destruction des habitations des anglois" especially since the *malouins* under L'Espine-Danican's were "pas assez forts avec leurs seules vaisseaux." Complimenting the weaknesses in each proposal, the minister joined the two ventures, tasking L'Espine-Danican with outfitting a fleet of six frigates for Brouillan, and Iberville with recruiting an army for the overland assault.¹⁴³

With his venture accepted, Iberville found himself one of three key "free agents" mobilised by Pontchartrain in the Americas in 1696. After the French defeat at Namur, Pontchartrain needed to reverse France's poor fortunes and give their diplomats a better hand at the rapidly approaching negotiation table. He thus began pouring more funding into ambitious privateering expeditions. In the Antilles, he accepted the Baron de Pointis' proposal to plunder the Spanish Main and, in an arrangement similar to the Newfoundland campaign, granted him soldiers and seven ships to be joined to up to 1,200 *boucaniers* led by Du Casse. Despite manpower shortages and threats of mutiny, they sacked Cartagena in 1697, taking loot estimated in the tens of millions of *livres*, and effectively knocked Spain out of the war.¹⁴⁴ Fearing another

¹⁴² James Pritchard, "'Le Profit et La Gloire': The French Navy's Alliance with Private Enterprise in the Defense of Newfoundland, 1691-1697," *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 15, no. 2 (10 October 1999):161-175, p.163-8.

¹⁴³ ANOM, C11D, V.3, f.14-15v, « Mémoire sur l'Acadie, Terreneuve et Baye d'Hudson, » [1696].

¹⁴⁴ James S. Pritchard, "The French West Indies During the Nine Years' War, 1688-1697: A Review and Reappraisal," *French Colonial History* 2, no. 1 (2002): 45-59, p.54-56; Philip P. Boucher, *France and the American Tropics to 1700: Tropics of Discontent?* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), p.223-224; Jon Latimer, *Buccaneers of the Caribbean: How Piracy Forged an Empire* (Cambridge, US: Harvard University Press,

invasion of Canada, the minister also leased seventeen ships to the Marquis of Nesmond, a *lieutenant général de la Marine* and an investor in many privateering campaigns, to support the Newfoundland campaign and raze the coasts of New England and New York. Unable to contend with St. John's formidable defences, however, Nesmond failed at his first hurdle and quickly returned to France.¹⁴⁵ Even so, by playing on his agents' ambitions for prestige and plunder, Pontchartrain made sure he could guide the last years of the war from the *bureaux de la Marine*.

On April 4th, 1696, Pontchartrain sent Iberville instructions for two separate expeditions. Before allowing Iberville to pursue his ambitions in Newfoundland, the minister ordered him to take part in the conflict in Acadia, where the war had been going very badly. After 1692, a wave of epidemics had caused many in the Wabanaki Confederacy to agree to ceasefires with the English. Building a large new bastion—Fort William Henry—at Pemaquid, the English had also worked to undermine the French ability to provide gifts through the fur trade, further threatening the already tenuous alliance.¹⁴⁶ Asserting his control over the conflict, Pontchartrain thus assigned his own “free agent” to integrate the local conflict into the wider imperial war, promising Iberville the *Envieux* and the *Profond* for the Newfoundland campaign if he first destroyed Fort William Henry. To achieve this, Iberville was to deliver supplies sent by the *Compagnie d'Acadie* to Governor Joseph Robineau de Villebon at Pentagouet, who was to use them to muster Wabanaki support for another campaign. If this was successful, Iberville was then to transport the warriors along with twenty soldiers led by Claude-Sébastien de Villieu and Jacques Testard de Montigny to seize the English fort.¹⁴⁷

2009), p.272-278; James Pritchard, *In Search of Empire: The French in the Americas, 1670-1730*. (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.332-33.

¹⁴⁵ Pritchard, *In Search of Empire*, p.352-353.

¹⁴⁶ Morrison, *The Embattled Northeast*, p.138-140.

¹⁴⁷ ANOM, B, V.16, f.33-36v, « Mémoire pour servir d'Instruction au Sieur d'Iberville, Commandant les Vaisseaux du Roy l'Envieux et le Profond, », Versailles, 28 mars, 1696; Pritchard, *In Search of Empire*, p.345.

Meticulously thought out, Pontchartrain's instructions provided for every possible outcome on this campaign, ensuring that Iberville could not shirk his duty in pursuit of his own desires. Appealing to his client's interests, the minister promised that if he were victorious, Iberville could take Villieu, Montigny, their soldiers and any willing Abenaki warriors with him to Newfoundland. At Plaisance, Brouillan would provide Iberville with a further one hundred men, whom he would command "en chef pour tout ce qui sera a faire pour l'attaque par terre." Working closely with Brouillan's fleet, he was to lead these men to destroy all English posts "de maniere qu'il ne plus rien subsister."¹⁴⁸ Given the success of Iberville's campaign against Fort Bourbon, Pontchartrain also permitted Iberville to recruit eighty Canadians "accoutumez à la course et la guerre dans les bois", whom he trusted Iberville would be able to find "sans inquietude."¹⁴⁹ Finally, the minister gave Iberville almost free licence in his selection of officers, and Iberville chose Du Tast, now an *enseigne*, Bienville, and Pierre Dugué de Boisbriand, a close associate of the Le Moyne family and a competent sailor who later captained the *Profond*.¹⁵⁰ Balancing personal and imperial interests, Pontchartrain provided everything Iberville might need to successfully accomplish French goals in the Northern Atlantic.

Before they arrived at Pentagouet, Iberville and Bonaventure were attacked by the *Newport* and the *Sorlings* but were able to repel the English and capture the *Newport*.¹⁵¹ That

¹⁴⁸ ANOM, B, V.19, f.50v-52v, « Mémoire pour servir d'Instruction au S^r d'Iberville Capitaine de fregate legere sur les entreprises de Terre-neuve, », Versailles, 31 mars 1696.

¹⁴⁹ ANOM, B, V.19, f.48v-50, « Lettre du Ministre au S^r de Frontenac, » Versailles le 31 mars 1696; ANOM, B, V.19, f.63-64, « Lettre du Ministre au S^r d'Iberville, » Versailles 4 avril, 1696.

¹⁵⁰ Dugué's biographer claims he was a cousin of the Le Moyne family, but this appears to be due to confusion surrounding the maiden name of his mother, Marie Moyen and his close relationships with the Le Moyne siblings. W. Stanford Reid, "Dugué de Boisbriand, Pierre," in *DCB*, V. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 8/5/2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/dugue_de_boisbriand_pierre_2E.html. Marie Moyen was, however, godmother to Pierre Le Ber and François-Marie Le Moyne. PRDH, #39999, « Baptême de Pierre LeBer, » 11/08/1669; PRDH, #40057, « Baptême de François Marie LeMoyne, », 5/10/1670. Dugué's father, Michel Sidrac-Dugué also sold the *seigneurie* of Senneville to Le Ber. Robichaud, "Les réseaux d'influence," p.94.

¹⁵¹ Jean Baudoin, "Journal du Voyage que j'ay fait avec M. D'Iberville, Capitain de Frégate, de France en l'acadie et de l'acadie en l'isle de terre-neuve," published in Alan F Williams, *Father Baudoin's War: D'Iberville's Campaigns in Acadia and Newfoundland, 1696, 1697* (St. John's: Department of Geography, Memorial University of

night, Iberville feasted with 300 Abenaki and Penobscot warriors, whilst Villebon distributed the supplies they had brought from France. Later, Iberville boasted to Pontchartrain that during the feast he convinced over 250 warriors to join him “avec Plaisir” the next day, likely as an attempt to further his family’s existing reputation for leading Indigenous troops into battle.¹⁵² But without kinship connections to these nations, Iberville’s actual influence was very limited, especially compared to that of the Baron de Saint-Castin, who was also present.¹⁵³ More likely, the warriors had already decided to attack Pemaquid, especially after the English Commander Pasco Chubb had murdered two Kennebec headmen during a peace treaty at the fort several months earlier. Indeed, during the siege, Iberville used the warriors’ anger to force Chubb to surrender, threatening that if the French breached the fort, “je ne serois pas maistre des sauvages dans ce temps.”¹⁵⁴ At this, the English capitulated, provided they would remain unharmed. With little actual control over the warriors, however, Iberville tasked Saint-Castin with protecting the prisoners, which angered many of those who were eager for revenge.¹⁵⁵ By August 17th, the fort had been demolished, and Iberville departed three days later, setting sail for Newfoundland. After cruising the Grand Banks and capturing three fishing boats, one of which he ransomed for 1,800 *livres*, he arrived in Newfoundland on September 12th.¹⁵⁶

Newfoundland, 1987), pp.173-191, p.173 ; ANOM, C11A, V.14, f.182-193, « Lettre de Champigny au ministre, », 18 août 1696; « Lettre d’Iberville au ministre, », Plaisance, 24 septembre 1696; Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d’Iberville*, p.140; Williams, *Father Baudoin’s War*, p.17.

¹⁵² « Lettre d’Iberville, » 24 septembre 1696 ; Baudoin, “Journal,” p.174. This reputation will be explored in more detail in Chapter II.

¹⁵³ Georges Cerbelaud Salagnac, “Abbadie de Saint-Castin, Jean-Vincent, Baron de Saint-Castin,” in *DCB*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 8/5/2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/abbadie_de_saint_castin_jean_vincent_d_2E.html.

¹⁵⁴ « Lettre d’Iberville au ministre, » 24 septembre 1696.

¹⁵⁵ Morrison, *The Embattled Northeast*, p. 140-141.

¹⁵⁶ Baudoin, “Journal,” p.174-175; « Lettre d’Iberville au ministre, », 24 septembre 1696; Williams, *Father Baudoin’s War* p. 20-24; Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d’Iberville*, p.143-6.

Meanwhile, Iberville dispatched the *Wesp* to Quebec to recruit his Canadian army.¹⁵⁷ Hoping to attract men “propre pour la guerre dyver et de bois” Iberville tasked Maricourt and his stepfather Ruelle d’Auteuil in Quebec with recruiting eighty suitable men “au Candissions ordinaire sans que ses auffissiers perde leurs employs et paye.”¹⁵⁸ Once again, the *conditions* Iberville offered resembled a *chasse-partie*, and were very similar to his earlier *conventions*, albeit with the notable exception that the king would not pay the recruits if no prizes were taken. In this way, the expedition was closer to the “no prey, no pay” system used by the *boucaniers*, but the vulnerable fisheries offered a lucrative enough target to attract many willing recruits. Indeed, each man stood to earn a share in half of the expedition’s share of the *partage général*—valued at the equivalent to that of one of the ships in the French fleet bound for Newfoundland. With considerable profits on the line, Iberville thus further borrowed from the *boucaniers*, including clauses on behaviour in which any “fais néants” or “parresseux,” as well as the first man to refuse orders or be accused of “friponnerie,” risked having their shares taken away.¹⁵⁹

Before recruitment could begin, however, Iberville again found himself competing over manpower with Frontenac. Having cancelled his 1694 expedition due to the popularity of Iberville’s *conventions*, this time the governor took the initiative and led 2150 men—including eight hundred militia and fifty volunteers—against the Onondaga in July.¹⁶⁰ By the time the expedition returned, Frontenac claimed that it was too late for Iberville to assemble the eighty

¹⁵⁷ « Lettre d’Iberville au ministre, » 24 septembre 1696. Frégault suggests that Maricourt was aboard the *Wesp*, but this is not substantiated by other evidence. Maricourt also participated in Frontenac’s expedition against the Onondaga in July, making this even more improbable. Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d’Iberville*, p.139.

¹⁵⁸ AM, B4, V.17, f.317-318v, « Mémoires Projet du S^r d’Hiberville pour terre-neuve et la Baye du Nort, 1696, » [1696].

¹⁵⁹ ANOM, C11C, V.2, f.115-115v, « Conditions que M. d’Iberville fait avec les hommes qui s’engagent pour les entreprises qu’il va faire sur Terre Neuve, » 15 septembre 1696; ANOM, C11C, V.2, f.94-95v, « Mémoire sur l’entreprise de Terre Neuve, », 1696. For a comparison to the “custom of the coast” employed by buccaneers see Little, *The Buccaneer’s Realm*, p.54, 227-228.

¹⁶⁰ There were also 800 soldiers and 500 Indigenous allies. Dechêne, *Le Peuple, L’État et la Guerre*, p.476-477.

men he required. Instead, the Governor offered him the choice of thirty Canadians alongside a detachment of fifty *troupes de la Marine*, under the command of Nicolas de Muy.¹⁶¹ According to Iberville, however, manpower was never the issue, for he boasted that “plus de trois cent estant venus s’offrir pour me venir joindre.”¹⁶² It is more likely, therefore, that Frontenac felt his own influence over Canada’s military manpower threatened by Iberville’s growing reputation amongst the volunteers and sought to limit it to assert his own gubernatorial authority. Indeed, even though Iberville’s boast to Pontchartrain may have exaggerated the number of men interested in his expedition to enhance his reputation as a useful agent, the *conditions* he offered were certainly more appealing than unpaid militia service or even volunteering. Asserting his martial prerogatives, Frontenac denied Iberville the chance to recruit the men he wanted, and instead emphasised his own contribution to the Newfoundland campaign, dispatching the regular soldiers with orders to answer only to Governor Brouillan.

Meanwhile, in Newfoundland, tensions flared between Iberville and Brouillan. In April, Pontchartrain had explicitly instructed Brouillan to give Iberville “tous les egards et tout la consideration possible” and defer to him in the leadership of the overland campaign.¹⁶³ Like Frontenac, however, Brouillan seems to have resented the affront Iberville—as a junior officer, a Canadian and a privateer—posed to his authority over the campaign. Given the degree of private enterprise involved, Brouillan actually had very little tangible influence over its direction and thus sought royal recognition by asserting his authority wherever possible. Three days before Iberville arrived in Plaisance, therefore, Brouillan set out to capture St. John’s with the *malouin*

¹⁶¹ Dechêne, *Le Peuple, L’État et la Guerre*, p.170; « Relation de ce qui s’est passé de plus remarquable au Canada depuis le départ des vaisseaux en 1695 jusqu’au début de novembre 1696 », Novembre 1696; ANOM, C11A, V.14, f.250-253v, « Lettre d’Iberville au ministre, » 26 octobre 1696 ; Williams, *Father Baudoin’s War*, p.30.

¹⁶² Dechêne, *Le Peuple*, p.170; ANOM, C11A, V.14, f.250-253v, « Lettre d’Iberville au ministre, », 26 octobre 1696.

¹⁶³ ANOM, B, V.19, f.49, « Mémoire pour servir d’instruction au S^r Du Brouillan, » 4 avril 1696; ANOM, B, V.19, f.57 « Lettre à M. Brouillan, » 18 avril 1696.

fleet. When his mission failed, Brouillan blamed his defeat both on the *malouins*—some of whom he court-martialled—and on Iberville, whom he accused of having fabricated a delay “pour éviter destre sous ses ordres.” Retreating to Plaisance, Brouillan then began planning another campaign against St. John’s, ignoring Iberville’s intentions to spend the winter attacking undefended villages on the northern coast by land. Taking command of the newly arrived Canadian contingent, the governor informed Iberville that he would only be allowed to lead these men if he joined the expedition to St. John’s. Believing such an expedition would only end in disaster, Iberville decided it would be better to preserve his reputation and abandon the campaign, preparing to set sail for France.¹⁶⁴

At this, Iberville’s Canadian recruits purportedly threatened a mutiny. According to Father Jean Baudoin, the expedition’s Sulpician chaplain, they refused to serve under anyone but Iberville, “disant toujours qu’ils n’estaient pas venues que pour luy.”¹⁶⁵ Originally written for Pontchartrain, Father Baudoin’s journal has since informed many narratives of this campaign, including the famous account of Father Charlevoix. Adding his own literary flair to Baudouin’s more balanced narrative, Charlevoix turned this moment into a defining point in Iberville’s career, casting him as “l’Idole de ses Compatriotes,” and comparing his men to “la dixième Légion, qui ne combattoit que sous la conduite de César, & à la tête de laquelle César étoit invincible.”¹⁶⁶ Behind this heroic rendition of events, however, Charlevoix obscured a much more mundane reality. On multiple occasions, Baudoin noted that the Canadians saw Iberville less as a charismatic leader, and more as a paymaster “aux frais duquel ils estaient, et dont ils avaient reçu de l’argent.” In leaving them to Brouillan, Iberville was violating the contract they

¹⁶⁴ « Lettre d’Iberville au ministre, » 26 octobre 1696 ; Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d’Iberville*, p.151-153.

¹⁶⁵ Baudoin, “Journal,” p.176.

¹⁶⁶ Charlevoix, *Histoire et description*, Livre XVI, p. 189.

had signed with him, and thus the men likely sought to force him to live up to his obligations. Accordingly, when Brouillain sent word that he would give up his share of the loot to the Canadians if they joined the campaign, Iberville had to agree. It was essential to honour his contract with the men, even if this meant swallowing his pride and serving under Brouillan's orders. "J'aurois au moins eu" admitted Baudouin to Pontchartrain, "autant de peine que le sieur d'Iberville à consentir à tout ce qu'il a accordé au sieur de Brouillant."¹⁶⁷

Indeed, Brouillan took Iberville's acquiescence to mean that he had full command over the expedition. Over the next few weeks, he took every opportunity to belittle the privateer throughout the campaign, ignoring his advice, threatening to kill any Canadian who refused to obey his orders and reducing their share in the loot by half. Even Baudoin, who professed to be "un amy de ces deux messieurs," found the Governor's actions too severe, especially since "nous boirons tous au mesme verre."¹⁶⁸ With his men on the brink of another mutiny, Iberville had little other recourse than to appeal to Pontchartrain to mediate in the disputes. Writing to the minister, he attempted to evoke sympathy for the difficult situation he was in, admitting that "que j'eu beaucoup de peine a me vaincre n'étant pas naturel a un homme de guerre de se voir traité de la sorte les ordres du Roy à la main, a la teste de gens qui n'avoient nullement envie de servir avec luy."¹⁶⁹ Once St. John's fell on November 30th, Iberville's appeals became even more desperate. Whilst his men had fought hard in the siege, Brouillan went back on all his promises and seized all the loot for himself, undermining the pledges Iberville had been forced to make to convince his men to participate in the campaign at all. Playing upon his reputation, Iberville hence claimed to Pontchartrain that Brouillan was simply "jaloux de me voir icy en estat de faire ce que j'avois

¹⁶⁷ Baudoin, "Journal," p.176; Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*, p.153.

¹⁶⁸ Baudoin, "Journal," p.176-177.

¹⁶⁹ ANOM, C11A, V.15, f.172v, « Lettre d'Iberville au ministre, » Plaisance, 5 juillet 1697.

promis a vostre grandeur." He then implored his patron to help him keep his promises to his men, assuring the minister that "mes gens et moy a[v]ons eu la meilleur part dans la prise de cette place" and calling on the court to "nous en [faire] justice" in the final distribution of the prizes.¹⁷⁰

Pontchartrain's response took months to arrive. As he waited, therefore, Iberville turned back to his original mission. On December 2nd, he left St. John's with a force of Canadians, *troupes de la Marine* and Abenaki warriors and spent the winter ravaging the local fishing villages of the Avalon Peninsula, raiding, pillaging and taking prisoners at will. By March 1697, his army had destroyed a total of twenty-three villages and captured 1,308 prisoners, 218 fishing boats and 116,200 codfish.¹⁷¹ Once again, Iberville's victories had been heavily reliant on his entourage of trusted officers, upon whom he could count to lead small partisan raids across the rugged coastal terrain. Of these, his close friends Montigny and Dugué de Boisbriand played the most significant roles, but his younger brother Bienville also seems to have played a small part in the campaign's leadership. Amongst the men was also Iberville's new brother-in-law Pierre Payen de Noyan, who had married Catherine-Jeanne Le Moyne in December 1694. Before arriving in Newfoundland, Noyan had served alongside Maricourt on the campaign against the Onondaga and was likely part of the cohort dispatched by Frontenac. Fighting alongside his brothers-in-law, Noyan proved himself on the campaign, earning himself a place in Iberville's inner circle throughout his subsequent ventures.¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰ « Lettre d'Iberville au ministre, » Plaisance, 5 juillet 1697.

¹⁷¹ For primary narratives of the French campaigns on Newfoundland see Baudoin, "Journal", p.177-191; ANOM, C11A, V.25, f.116-121, « Journal de l'expédition de Jacques Testard de Montigny contre les établissements anglais de Terre-Neuve, » mars 1705. For secondary accounts see Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*, p.158-162; Williams, *Father Baudoin's War*, p.58-72, 80.

¹⁷² BAnQ, P1000, S3, D1605, « Acte de mariage de Pierre Payen de Noyan et Catherine-Jeanne Lemoyne, » 8 décembre 1694; David Lee, "Payen de Noyan, Pierre," in *DCB*, V. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 8/5/2017 at http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/payen_de_noyan_pierre_2E.html.

Back in France, preparations were underway for another expedition to Hudson Bay. In May 1696, the king had ordered the *Compagnie du Nord* to take over at Fort Bourbon, but they had refused, allegedly due to “la crainte qu’ils ont eu d’Entrer en discution avec ledit S^r d’Iberville.” Instead, they sent Mathieu-François Martin De Lino, to Versailles to petition to have their interest in Iberville’s enterprise extended until 1699.¹⁷³ Whilst at Versailles, however, Martin De Lino learned from Sérigny that the English had recaptured the Fort Bourbon and taken its garrison prisoner to London.¹⁷⁴ Immediately he offered to finance a new expedition to seize the fort, but with the war drawing to a close, Pontchartrain was afraid to rely on a commercial enterprise for such a crucial mission. Taking charge, the minister arranged royal financing for the expedition and appointed Iberville as its commander, relying on the “experience et valeur” of his free agent. By March 1697, he had assembled a fleet comprised of the *Pélican*, the *Palmier*, the *Wesp* and the *Profond*, which he ordered Sérigny to deliver to Iberville in Plaisance. From here, Iberville was to patrol the Grand Banks, deliver supplies to Acadia and then recapture Fort Bourbon, a task Pontchartrain believed would prove no more difficult than in 1694.¹⁷⁵

On this occasion, Iberville and Sérigny were not private contractors, but Pontchartrain still deferred to their judgment and granted them anything and anyone they might need to capture Fort Bourbon before the war’s end. In addition to those already in his employ, Iberville employed his kinsmen and allies Tilly, Vaulezar and Denis-Joseph Juchereau de la Ferté as

¹⁷³ ANOM, B, V.19, f.110-11v, « Arrest du Conseil qui ordonne que faute par la comp^{ie} du Nord d’accepter le Fort Bourbon prise par le S^r d’Iberville il y sera pourveu par Sa Ma^{te} sur les offres dud^t S^r d’Iberville, », [Mai 1696]; ANOM, C11A, V.14, f.119-129, « Lettre de Frontenac et Champigny au ministre, », Québec, 26 octobre 1696; ANOM, C11A, V.15, f.86-88, « Déclaration des membres de la Compagnie du Nord refusant l’offre du roi de les remettre en possession du fort Bourbon, » 13 octobre 1687.

¹⁷⁴ ANOM, B, V.19, f.64v, « Mémoire Instruction pour le S^r de Serigny Lieutenant entretenu en la Marine Commandant les Vaisseaux destinez pour la Baye du Nord, » [1696]; BN, Clairambault, V.875, f.2-3, « Cérigny au ministre, » 29 octobre 1696 ; Borins, "Compagnie du Nord" p.155.

¹⁷⁵ ANOM, B, V.19, f.185-191v, « Instruction pour le S^r d’Iberville Cap^e de fregatte choisy pour commander les V^x Le Pelican, Le Palmier, Le Wesp et le Proffond, » Versailles, le 9 mars 1697; ANOM, B, V.19, f.192-193v, « Instruction pour le S^r de Serigny Lieutenant de V^{au} commandant les Vaisseaux que Sa Ma^{te} envoie à Plaisance, ».

officers.¹⁷⁶ Martigny and La Forest were also ransomed from English captivity and given commissions. Finally, Pontchartrain permitted Iberville to retain any of the men he had taken with him to Newfoundland, who would be paid from the royal treasury. Iberville selected twenty-two soldiers and thirty-one Canadians—amongst whom were Noyan and Le Gardeur de Caumont—transferring their employment to the royal accounts. With the royal treasury footing the bill, however, Iberville and Sérigny had no claim to any of the profits and were instructed to “empescher apres la prise du Fort Bourbon le pillage” and take detailed inventories under the watchful eyes of the royal clerk Claude-Charles Le Roy Bacqueville de la Potherie.¹⁷⁷

On July 8th, the brothers departed for Hudson Bay, forgoing the trip to Acadia due to poor weather and the onset of scurvy. Braving rough seas and icebergs they arrived on August 21st, only to be scattered by dense fog. Lost in the mist, Dugué was attacked by three English ships—the *Hampshire*, *Dering* and *Hudson Bay*—losing four men and suffering fourteen casualties. On September 4th, Iberville arrived alone before York Factory in the *Pélican*, where he too encountered the small English fleet. For nine hours, Iberville fended off the three ships, preventing them from reinforcing the fort. Seventeen of his men were wounded during the battle, including Bienville, who suffered a severe blow to the head whilst commanding the rear battery. That night, however, the *Pélican* was shipwrecked by a terrible storm and eighteen more men lost their lives in the freezing waters as they were forced to abandon ship.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ La Ferté was Marie-Thérèse de la Combe Pocatière's first cousin, once removed. ANOM, B, V.19, f.127, « Liste des offi^{rs} choisis po^r servir sur les V^x cy apres que l'on arme à Rochefort, » Versailles, 14 janvier 1697; ANOM, B, V.19, f.136-136v, « Liste des offi^{rs} de Marine choisis po^r servir sur les V^x cy apres que le Roy fait armer à Rochefort, » Versailles, le 5 février 1697.

¹⁷⁷ « Instruction pour le S^r d'Iberville, » 9 mars 1697; « Lettre d'Iberville au ministre, » 5 juillet 1697; Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*, p.166 ; Lee, “Payen de Noyan, Pierre,” and Claude-Charles Bacqueville Le Roy de La Potherie, “Letters of La Potherie to Monseigneur The Duke of Orleans, Regent of the Kingdom,” published in Tyrrell et al., *Documents Relating to the History of Hudson Bay*, p.218; ANOM, B, V.20, f.25, « Lettre du Ministre à Monsieur Bégon, » 12 février 1698.

¹⁷⁸ « M^r d'Hierville [au Ministre], » 8 octobre 1697 and AM, B4, V.18, f.109-124, « Le Roy de la Potherie au ministre, » Au fort de Bourbon, 8 septembre 1697.

After a few days of skirmishing with the English outside the fort, Iberville was finally reinforced by the rest of the battered French fleet. On September 11th, he sent his cousin Martigny to demand the return of the French prisoners held at York Factory, but the commander, Henry Bayley, refused, thinking Iberville had died in the *Pélican*'s shipwreck. The French began bombarding the fort the following day, forcing Bayley to capitulate by the 13th, only one week before peace was concluded in Europe. In total, the French took fifty-two prisoners, seventeen of whom were from the *Hudson Bay*, which had also been shipwrecked in the storm. La Potherie tallied the king's prizes of 20,000 pelts, which were transported back to France on the captured *Albemarle*. On September 24th, Iberville departed with the *Profond* and the *Wesp* leaving Sérigny to await the repair of the *Palmier* and Martigny to govern the re-established Fort Bourbon.¹⁷⁹

Though victorious, Iberville and his men had seen few tangible rewards for their service. On his return to France, Iberville thus petitioned "Samagesté" to be "favorisé de ses grasses" and opportunistically requested his nomination as the new Governor of Plaisance and a commission as *capitaine de vaisseau*.¹⁸⁰ After the Newfoundland campaign, Brouillan had retired to France, and Iberville likely coveted his position so that he could oversee his many interests in the North Atlantic. No naval minister had yet appointed a colonial-born governor, however, and Pontchartrain ignored Iberville's requests.¹⁸¹ Changing tack, Iberville instead suggested a complete overhaul of the expedition's financing, hoping to secure himself a share in its profits. Knowing that the royal treasury had been depleted by the recent conflict, he proposed a mutually beneficial plan that would effectively revert the crown-sponsored expedition to an arrangement

¹⁷⁹ « M^r d'Hierville [au Ministre], » 8 octobre 1697 ; « Le Roy de la Potherie au ministre, » 8 septembre 1697 ; Fregault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville* p.175.

¹⁸⁰ BN, MF, V.881, f.157-157v, « Iberville au ministre, », Rochefort, 30 novembre 1697.

¹⁸¹ Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*, p.180, 183. Chapter VI will discuss colonial-born governors in the French Atlantic World more fully.

more akin to the *traité* of 1694. First, Iberville offered to pay the salaries of the men left at Fort Bourbon from June until their return to Quebec. Then, he requested that the crown reimburse him for the prizes he had been forced to abandon at Plaisance with the furs captured at York Factory. Finally, he petitioned for the extension of his fur-trading monopoly to at least 1699, excluding the *Compagnie du Nord* for another two years. In April 1698, the king agreed to these new terms, permitting Iberville to sell the furs captured at York Factory for 42,751 *livres* and continue his trade in Hudson Bay.¹⁸²

In June 1699, however, during the negotiations for the Treaty of Ryswick, Pontchartrain suggested a *status quo ante bellum* in Hudson Bay. Believing Fort Bourbon was too poorly situated to be maintained from Canada without considerable expense, he intended to exchange it for the James Bay posts and ordered Sérigny to hand Fort Bourbon back to the English.¹⁸³ But the minister's commands were never carried out. Believing that they still possessed their monopoly, the Le Moyne brothers sold their rights to the Hudson Bay trade to Jean Gitton and Martin Desgarnières, merchants in La Rochelle and Lyon respectively, for 16,000 *livres* each in October 1699.¹⁸⁴ Once the Le Moyne monopoly officially ended a year later, the Canadian directors of the *Compagnie du Nord*—who had wanted to operate Fort Bourbon without their French colleagues—came to the same conclusions as Pontchartrain and turned their attentions to James Bay. On the brink of bankruptcy, however, they would not be able to maintain these posts either, which prompted the king to revoke their charter and transfer their rights to a new

¹⁸² ANOM, B, V.20, f.65v-66, « Offres que fait au Roy le S^r d'Iberville Cap^{ne} de fregatte legere pour le commerce de la Baye d'Hudson, » [1697]; ANOM, B, V.21, f.122, « Estat des castors apportez du fort de la Baye d'Hudson pris par le S^r d'Iberville [...] et livrez a l'Agent des fermiers du Domaine d'Occident a la Rochelle depuis le 25 mars jusqu'au 12 avril 1698, » [1698].

¹⁸³ ANOM, B, V.20, f.65-66, « Lettre du Ministre à Monsieur Iberville, », Versailles, 7 mai 1698; ANOM, B, V.20, f.72-73, «Mémoire du Roy à Frontenac et Champigny, », Versailles, 21 mai 1698; ANOM, B, V.20, f.262, « Ordre au S^r de Sérigny de remettre aux Anglois le fort de Bourbon, » Versailles, 17 juin 1699.

¹⁸⁴ J. F. Boshier, *Men and Ships in the Canada Trade, 1660-1760: A Biographical Dictionary* (Ottawa: National Historic Sites, Parks Service, Environment Canada, 1992), p.71.

association of ninety-four colonists, known as the *Compagnie de la Colonie*. In October 1700 these investors, including Longueuil, bought out the *Compagnie du Nord*, and the directors transferred their interests to the new enterprise.¹⁸⁵

After over a decade of drama and violence, Iberville had fulfilled his ambitions for glory, riches and renown. During the War of the League of Augsburg, the French navy increasingly employed private enterprise to fight its inter-imperial conflicts across the Atlantic World, granting certain privileges and incentives to those willing to protect imperial interests overseas. Taking advantage of this shift in naval policy, Iberville built a reputation as an indispensable and autonomous “free agent,” able to mobilise the necessary capital, manpower and military force to defend and advance imperial ambitions in the North Atlantic. Making the most of this reputation, however, Iberville was also able to pursue his own interests, exploiting the patronage of officials on both sides of the Atlantic to earn promotions and profits. Such was his skill in manipulating the unique political, economic and military climate of the late seventeenth century that he was soon able to surpass his colonial station, opening up further career opportunities in the metropole. Indeed, Iberville did not return to Canada after 1697, and instead established his family, household and business in La Rochelle and used his riches to purchase venal commissions, titles and estates across the French Atlantic World. Even so, his ambitions were far from sated, driving him to new ventures.

¹⁸⁵ For more on the collapse of the *Compagnie du Nord* see Borins, "Compagnie du Nord", p.165-180 and Guy Frégault, *Le XVIIe Siècle Canadien*, (Montréal: Éditions HMH, 1968), p.248-251. Longueuil's involvement in the *Compagnie de la Colonie* will be treated in more detail in Chapter III.

Chapter II

Foreign Relations:

Fictive Kinship, Diplomacy and Service, 1698-1713

On May 23rd, 1694, the Onondaga headman Teganissorens met with Governor Frontenac in Quebec. Bedecked in lavish attire gifted to him by the Governor of New York, he called for peace between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the French and the English. In a lengthy speech, Teganissorens beseeched Frontenac to end the butchery between their peoples and put aside thoughts of the dead to preserve those who still lived. Offering the Governor ten wampum strings, he metaphorically cleared the “path of peace” between the two nations, so that there might be continued negotiations between them.¹ With his third string Teganissorens proposed populating this “path of peace,” declaring:

Onontio pere des iroquois, c’est à vous qui nous parlons, nous vous presentons ce collier pour vous faire savoir que nous avons adopté les S^{rs} de Longueil et de Maricour a la place de feu M^r le moine leur pere pour nos enfans, et M^r Leber pour notre frere, nous les prions d’etre dans les memes sentiments pour nous qu’avoit leur pere et porter toujours Onontio a la paix, ils n’auront rien a craindre lorsqu’ils viendront ches nous et ils seront bienvenus quand ils seront envoyés de sa part.²

With this announcement, Teganissorens informed the governor that the Onondaga had “requickened” Charles Le Moyne. Part of the traditional Iroquoian Condolence Ceremony, “requickening” transferred the name, duties and social status of a deceased member of the community to a successor to preserve the integrity of a lineage or clan and to assuage the grief of the mourning family.³ Within the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, everyone had an assigned place

¹ W. J. Eccles, “Teganissorens,” in *DCB*, V.2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 2/6/2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/teganissorens_2E.html; Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), p.181; Jon Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010), p.235.

² ANOM, C11A, V.13, f.143, « Mémoire de Lamothe Cadillac, » [1694].

³ Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, p.32-33 and William N. Fenton, *The Great Law of the Longhouse: A Political History of the Iroquois Confederacy*, (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1998) p.121-122.

within the overlapping bonds of kinship, clan, lineage and moiety that tied together the confederacy into a “body of relatives.”⁴ Through adoption, even outsiders could be inducted into this body of relatives through the bestowal of new names and titles that delineated their relationship to the rest of the Haudenosaunee.⁵ Adopted as Akouessan or “the Partridge” in 1665, Le Moyne had been considered as a “son” of the Onondaga and was known as such across all Five Nations. But as an outsider, Le Moyne also retained kinship connections in France and Canada. This had allowed him to act as a “go-between” for his native and adoptive nations; after his death, the Onondaga had lost this living connection to the French. Teganissorens therefore sought to rekindle amicable relations by adopting Le Moyne's next of kin into their community, granting them the same status and role as their father. As Le Moyne's eldest son and namesake, Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil would bear the mantle of Akouessan; his third son, Paul Le Moyne de Maricourt, became Taouestaouis—“the little bird ever in motion.”⁶

For years Le Moyne had trained his sons to follow in his footsteps as interpreters and cultural brokers. Lorraine Gadoury has argued that whilst in his letters of nobility Le Moyne was ostensibly ennobled in 1668 for his services “soit en réduisant ou disciplinant les sauvages, soit en se défendant contre leurs fréquentes insultes,” it was in fact his linguistic talents and kinship connections which had distinguished him from his contemporaries and encouraged Jean Talon to promote him to further imperial ambitions in the Saint Lawrence Valley.⁷ Trustworthy

⁴ Fenton, *Great Law of the Longhouse*, p.31.

⁵ Peter Cook, “Onontio Gives Birth: How the French in Canada Became Fathers to Their Indigenous Allies, 1645–73,” *Canadian Historical Review* 96, no. 2 (2015): 165–93.

⁶ In New York Maricourt's name was rendered as “Stow Stow.” The avian connections between the names Akouessan and Taouestaouis were likely deliberate to enforce familial connections. Several historians have suggested that the name Taouestaouis might have been given to Maricourt due to his frequent travels to Iroquoia. Before 1694, however, he had not made any official diplomatic voyages, so this seems unlikely. For the English use of Stow Stow see John Romeyn Brodhead et al., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New-York: Procured in Holland, England, and France* (Albany: Weed, Parsons, 1853), V.4, 492-3, 495-6, 598.

⁷ Cited in Lorraine Gadoury, *La noblesse de Nouvelle-France : familles et alliances*, Les Cahiers du Québec ; Collection Histoire 102 (Ville Lasalle, Québec, Canada: Éditions Hurtubise HMH, 1991), p.32.

ambassadors like Le Moyne were few and far between in Canada, making them highly prized and well rewarded.⁸ Le Moyne thus strove to impart his cultural capital to his sons so that they too could occupy positions of prestige in the colonial hierarchy. By 1686, it seemed that his efforts had been successful as Governor Denonville lamented the departure of Jacques Le Moyne de Sainte-Hélène for James Bay, claiming that it had left the colony bereft of its best interpreter since all the others, in his opinion, were “tous coureurs de bois peu habils et la plupart fripons.”⁹

To ensure that his sons could take over his diplomatic duties, Le Moyne applied the methods of his former Jesuit employers.¹⁰ He immersed his eldest sons in Indigenous cultures, languages and customs from a young age at his trading posts across Montreal. Though warfare made maintaining connections with his fictive Onondaga kin more difficult, Le Moyne also seems to have taken his eldest sons with him on some of his diplomatic missions. In 1684, Governor La Barre recorded “un Canot des Enfants de M. Le Moyne” returning from Onondaga during his expedition against the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.¹¹ During his diplomatic mission, Le Moyne had likely introduced (or perhaps reintroduced) his sons to members of their adoptive clan, who would have welcomed them into the “cabane qui lui est consacrée et a sa famille.”¹² Perhaps a reference to both a physical and metaphorical longhouse, this mention of a Le Moyne family “cabane” at Onondaga by Claude-Charles Bacqueville de la Potherie suggests that even before Le Moyne’s death, his sons had been incorporated into the Haudenosaunee body of

⁸ William A.S. Brown, “Learning to Colonize: State Knowledge, Expertise, and the Making of the First French Empire, 1661-1715” (Unpublished PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2016), p.282; Peter Laurence Cook, “Les Voyes de Douceur et d’Insinuation: French-Amerindian Diplomacy on New France’s Western Frontier, 1703-1725” (Master’s thesis, University of Ottawa, 1993), p.129.

⁹ ANOM, C11A, V.8, f.129-159, « Lettre de Denonville au ministre, » 10 novembre 1686; Gilles Havard, *Histoire des Coureurs de Bois: Amérique du Nord, 1600-1840*, (Paris: Les Indes savantes, 2016), p.99.

¹⁰ On Jesuit language learning, see Margaret J. Leahey, “‘Comment peut un muet prescher l’évangile:’ Jesuit Missionaries and the Native Languages of France,” *French Historical Studies* 19, no.1 (Spring 1995): 105-131.

¹¹ ANOM, C11A, V.6, f.303-313, « Mémoire de La Barre concernant son expédition au lac Ontario, » 1 octobre 1684.

¹² ANOM, C11A, V.18, f.146-149v, « Lettre du contrôleur La Potherie au Ministre, » 11 août 1700.

relatives. Closer to home, these kinship connections served Le Moyne and his sons well, as they developed close relationships with those Iroquois who had migrated to the Saint Lawrence Valley from the 1660s, with whom they equally shared ties of clan and lineage.¹³ Interacting with their Iroquoian kin on a daily basis, the Le Moyne family were firmly enmeshed in webs of kinship and friendship that traversed both the cultural and physical frontiers of North America.

During the War of the League of Augsburg, several of the Le Moyne brothers had used these connections to advance their military careers, leading Canadians and *troupes de la Marine* in many skirmishes, raids and campaigns alongside Indigenous warriors fighting their own parallel wars against the English and Haudenosaunee.¹⁴ By the end of the conflict, many of them had earned fierce reputations, but none more so than Sainte-Hélène and François Le Moyne de Bienville.¹⁵ Both died leading cross-cultural war parties and were mourned by their countrymen and Indigenous allies alike.¹⁶ The latter was even said to have had his own “nom sauvage,” suggesting he may also have been adopted by one of the Saint Lawrence mission communities.¹⁷ Once the Treaty of Ryswick was signed, however, there was little immediate call for the Le

¹³ Jean-François Lozier, “‘In Each Other’s Arms’: France and the St. Lawrence Mission Villages in War and Peace, 1630-1730” (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2012), p.198.

¹⁴ Perhaps the most significant of these raids was that on Schenectady in 1690. For narratives of this raid see ANOM, C11A, V.11, f. 5-40, « Relation de ce qui s’est passé de plus remarquable au Canada depuis le départ des vaisseaux au mois de novembre 1689 jusqu’au mois de novembre 1690, » Québec, novembre 1690; Charlevoix, *Histoire et Description*, Livre XIV, p.44-48; Thomas E. Burke, *Mohawk Frontier: The Dutch Community of Schenectady, New York, 1661-1710* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), p.105-108; Guy Frégault, *Pierre LeMoyne d’Iberville*. (Montréal: Fides, 1968), p.93-101; Louise Dechêne, *Le Peuple, l’État et la Guerre au Canada sous le Régime français* (Montréal: Boréal, 2008), p.205; W. J. Eccles, *Frontenac, the Courtier Governor* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1959), p.224-5

¹⁵ François Le Moyne de Bienville was the first to hold this title, which passed to his more famous brother Jean-Baptiste after his death. Jean Blain, “Le Moyne de Bienville, François,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 1, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 11/5/2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/le_moyne_de_bienville_francois_1E.html.

¹⁶ Sainte-Hélène was shot in a skirmish with the English outside of Quebec in 1690 and died of his wounds two months later. François Le Moyne de Bienville died ambushing a party of Haudenosaunee warriors camping in an abandoned house in Repentigny in 1691. ANOM, C11A, V.11, f. 41-79v, « Relation de ce qui s’est passé de plus considérable en Canada depuis le départ de la frégate La Fleur de May le 27 novembre 1690 jusqu’au départ de 91, » [1691]; Charlevoix, *Histoire et description*, Livre XIV, p.85-9; ANOM, C11A, V.11, p.552-563 [transcript], « Relation des actions qu’il y a eu cette campagne entre les françois et les sauvages anglois, » 2 septembre 1691.

¹⁷ « Relation des actions qu’il y a eu cette campagne entre les françois et les sauvages anglois, », 2 septembre 1691.

Moyne to mobilise their kinship alliances for military purposes. Instead, as this chapter shows, between 1699 and 1713, metropolitan and colonial authorities called upon the family to use their connections and cultural competencies to engender peace in North America and counter English influence on the continent. Ever eager for advancement and prestige, the Le Moyne brothers found themselves at the forefront of French diplomatic strategy, working to develop, build and manipulate Indigenous alliances in the pursuit of their own ambitions.

Taouestoauis: Performing Kinship between Two Worlds

In January 1699, the Onondaga headman Ohonsiowanne arrived at *Près de Ville*, the estate of Paul Le Moyne de Maricourt. Travelling to visit his father at La Montagne, only two miles away, Ohonsiowanne first called on his fictive kinsman Taouestoauis. His visit was not entirely personal. After the Treaty of Ryswick, many Iroquoian men and women—whether from Iroquoia or the Saint Lawrence mission villages—took the opportunity to visit their estranged kin. Gradually, communication networks began to flourish between the communities. Travellers like Ohonsiowanne acted as unofficial emissaries, re-establishing mutual trust and sowing the seeds for future peace.¹⁸ Known to the French as "La Grande Terre," Ohonsiowanne was a staunch francophile—an advocate of a stronger alliance with Canada than with New York.¹⁹ Also calling at La Montagne and Kahnawake on his travels, he likely sought to strengthen his ties with these diasporic Iroquoian communities and spread a message of peace. Before he had left Onondaga, however, Ohonsiowanne's fellow headmen had forbidden him from carrying wampum to Canada, thereby preventing him from formally meeting with the new Governor,

¹⁸ Gilles Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701: French-Native Diplomacy in the Seventeenth Century*, (Montreal; Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), p.76; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, p.198; Lozier, *Flesh Reborn*, p.281-285.

¹⁹ D. H. Corkran, "Ohonsiowanne," in *DCB*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed 14/12/2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/ohonsiowanne_2E.html.

Louis Hector de Callières. Attempting to spread his message in a more informal manner, Ohonsiowanne thus paid a visit to Maricourt, believing that, adopted as Taouestaouis, he would always work to "porter Onontio a la Paix."²⁰

Located just outside Montreal on the Chemin de la Montagne—which connected the town to the nearby La Montagne mission—*Près de Ville* had become an important nexus in the flourishing Iroquoian communication networks.²¹ As Taouestaouis, Maricourt was expected to host his fictive kin, reciprocating the treatment he could expect to receive at his family's "cabane" in Onondaga. Consequently, ever since he had purchased the estate from the Sulpicians in 1698, it had served "a loger les sauvages alliez et autres lorsqu'ils sont venus pour le service du Roy a traiter d'affaires."²² As the residence of an adopted Onondaga and situated outside of the imperial limits of Montreal, *Près de Ville* could be imagined as both a French and Iroquoian space, offering what Jan Grabowski has called a "common ground"—a place where the two cultures could meet freely and build close interpersonal relationships.²³

Funded by the naval treasury, however, *Près de Ville* was fundamentally a locus of French power. Each year Maricourt was reimbursed for the expenses he incurred hosting Iroquoian travelers, which allowed him to perform his kinship obligations—such as offering shelter, gifts, food and hospitality—whilst gleaned information from his guests or influencing

²⁰ "Propositions by the Sachems of Onondaga and Oneida, 3 February 1698/9," in Brodhead et al., *DCNY* V.4, p.492; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, p.200.

²¹ Also known as *Hôtel Maricourt*, *Près de Ville* was located roughly where Rue Côté and Rue de la Gauchetière now intersect in Montreal's Chinatown. Appropriately, this location is now opposite the Palais des Congrès de Montréal. François Daniel, *Nos gloires nationales ou histoire des principales familles du Canada*, V.1 (Montréal, Eusèbe Senécal, Imprimeur-Éditeur, 1867), p.45-46; Alex Jodoin and J. L. Vincent, *Histoire de Longueuil et de la famille de Longueuil*, (Montréal: Imprimerie Gebhardt-Berthiaume, 1889), p.148; BAnQ, CP2906, "Maison de Le Moyne de Maricourt, rue Côté, Montréal, où il mourut en 1704," [Carte-postale] Montréal: L'Action Française—accessed on 16/10/2017 at <http://collections.banq.qc.ca/ark:/52327/6725>.

²² ANOM, C11A, V.113, f.74, « État de la dépense fait pour la guerre et les fortifications sur les fonds de l'année 1699, » 17 octobre 1700.

²³ Jan Grabowski uses "common ground" to describe the Saint Lawrence mission communities, which were hybrid spaces formed through daily cross-cultural contact. Jan Grabowski, "The Common Ground: Settled Natives and French in Montréal, 1667-1760" (PhD diss., Université de Montréal, 1993).

their opinions.²⁴ Duplicitous tactics such as these were common in Franco-Indigenous diplomacy. Gilles Havard has argued that French imperial agents like Maricourt possessed a greater intellectual distance than their Indigenous contemporaries, which allowed them to manipulate diplomatic encounters and assert French pre-eminence and control.²⁵ Michael Witgen, however, has nuanced this interpretation by showing that Indigenous orators and diplomats also subverted diplomatic protocol in their own ways, often “shape-shifting” between various personalities to suit the occasion or their ambitions.²⁶ Despite their disagreements, Havard and Witgen both highlight the importance of political theatre in Franco-Indigenous diplomacy, nuancing the concept of the “middle ground” put forward by Richard White. Indeed, they show that, instead of building relationships through a “process of creative, and often expedient, misunderstandings” French and Indigenous diplomats were in fact continually vying to outperform one another to fulfill either their own ambitions, or those of their peoples.²⁷

Havard has also suggested that French diplomats sought to transform the “middle ground” into a “théâtre du pouvoir” by appropriating Indigenous customs in an attempt to undermine Indigenous sovereignty and agency.²⁸ Other recent scholarship has supported this

²⁴ Maricourt received *gratifications* (bonuses) of 100 *livres* in both 1698 and 1699, on top of a diplomatic salary of 50 *livres*. The *gratifications* would increase to between 500 and 600 *livres* in later years, though Maricourt would have to repeatedly request reimbursement. « État de la dépense...1699 » 17 octobre 1700; ANOM, C11A, V.113, f.118v, « État des dépenses que le roi veut et ordonne être faites par le trésorier général de la Marine, », Marly, 19 mai 1699; ANOM, C11A, V.21, f.5-28v, « Lettre de Vaudreuil et Beauharnois au ministre, » Québec, 15 novembre 1703; ANOM, B, V.23, f.206v, « Memoire du Roy aux S^{rs} Ch^{er} de Callieres gouverneur et Lieutenant General pour Sa Ma^{te} et au S^r de Beauharnois Intendant de justice, police, et finances en la Nouvelle France, » [1703].

²⁵ Gilles Havard, *Empire et métissages : Indiens et Français dans le Pays d'en Haut, 1660-1715* (Sillery, Québec; Paris: Septentrion ; Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2003), p.400; Gilles Havard, “Le rire des jésuites: Une archéologie du mimétisme dans la rencontre franco-amérindienne (XVII-XVIII siècle),” *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 62, no. 3, (May-June 2007): 539-573, p.544.

²⁶ Michael Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

²⁷ Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011). For more on this historiographic debate, see Brown, “Learning to Colonize,” p.226-229.

²⁸ Havard, “Le rire des jésuites,” p.540; Gilles Havard, “‘Protection’ and ‘Unequal Alliance’: The French Conception of Sovereignty over Indians in New France,” in Robert Englebert and Guillaume Teasdale eds., *French*

view, revealing that in cross-cultural encounters, European diplomats viewed themselves as more akin to actors and underwent a certain “mimesis,” assuming a diplomatic persona to better engage with the “Other.”²⁹ Following this framework, we might see that, for Maricourt, Taouestaouis was an act—an Iroquoian persona as an agent of empire who wished to earn prestige and reward. *Près de Ville* was his stage, a “theatre of power” upon which he performed his kinship obligations whilst working to advance the imperial interests of his superiors in Quebec and France. Indeed, just before Ohonsiowanne arrived at his residence, Maricourt received a letter from Callières, likely containing points of discussion for the upcoming meeting.³⁰ Ordered by Pontchartrain to explore peace with the Haudenosaunee, Callières probably instructed Maricourt to probe Ohonsiowanne and determine where the Onondaga stood on such a matter. With the stage set and his lines being read to him from the wings, Maricourt donned the guise of Taouestaouis and welcomed Ohonsiowanne into his home.

We cannot be entirely sure of what transpired between Maricourt and Ohonsiowanne at *Près de Ville*. The only record of their encounter comes from a speech made by Teganissorens at Albany the following month. According to Teganissorens, Maricourt attempted to discredit his Anglo-Dutch rival Johannes Schuyler by recounting what Schuyler later claimed to be “false lyes and storys” and “scandalous and malicious falsehoods...so designed to raise animosities between the two governm^{ts}.” Perhaps the most important of these was Maricourt’s apparent claim that, on a recent visit to Quebec to retrieve several Onondaga prisoners, Schuyler had been asked why he

and Indians in the Heart of North America, 1630-1815 (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2013), p.124.

²⁹ Ricardo Roque, “Mimesis and Colonialism: Emerging Perspectives on a Shared History,” *History Compass* 13, no.4 (2015), p.201-206; Brown, “Learning to Colonize,” p.223-225, 233-234.

³⁰ Arnaud Balvay shows that such instructions were common practice in both European and Canadian diplomatic protocol. Callière’s letter to Maricourt does not appear to have survived, however. Arnaud Balvay, *L’Épée et la Plume: Amérindiens et Soldats des Troupes de la Marine en Louisiane et Au Pays d’en Haut (1683-1763)* (Québec : Les Presses de l’Université Laval, 2006), p.143-144.

brought no Onondaga headmen to the meeting, to which he had "pointed to a negroe he had with him" responding, "here is the 5 Nations." Whether true or not, Maricourt was said to have used this story to position the French as the true allies and kinsmen of the Onondaga, arguing that whilst they called them "Children" the English referred to them only as "brethren" and treated them "like servants...worse than soldiers who are punished for the least offence."³¹ Finally, Maricourt reportedly suggested that if the Onondaga wished to reclaim their prisoners, they should pay a visit to Callières, allegedly taunting them by claiming that they "were no better than Slaves to ye Gov^r of New York, [if they] dare not come."³²

Ohonsiowanne appears to have taken Maricourt's advice. In March, he returned to Montreal accompanied by Tsonhuatsuan, another Onondaga, and Otacheté, an Oneida, for a formal embassy with Governor Callières.³³ Calling for a truce with the French and the Anishinaabe, the headmen requested that Callières send Maricourt and a representative from Kahnawake and La Montagne to accompany them to Albany, where they intended to recover their prisoners and conclude a trilateral peace between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, New France, and New York.³⁴ Callières, however, was under orders to prevent the Haudenosaunee from concluding peace on their own terms, let alone those of the English, and denied Ohonsiowanne's request. Recognising the value that the Haudenosaunee placed on Maricourt as a cultural broker, the governor instead decided to use his agent as a bargaining chip. He promised to send Maricourt and Father Bruyas to retrieve any French prisoners, but only once peace was formally

³¹ For more on the origins of these kinship metaphors and their significance, see Cook, "Onontio Gives Birth."

³² "Propositions of the Sachems of the Onondaga and Oneida", p.492-5.

³³ Fenton *Great Law of the Longhouse*, p.336; Havard, *Great Peace of Montreal*, p.77.

³⁴ AN, F3, V.8, f.143v, « Parolles adressées à Monsieur le Chevalier de Callières, » 8 mars 1699; La Potherie, *Histoire de l'Amérique Septentrionale divisé en quatre tomes*, (Paris: J-L Nion et F. Didot, 1722), V.4, p.117, accessed at *Slavery and Anti-Slavery*, McGill University Library, 14/12/2017.

concluded between the French and Haudenosaunee.³⁵ Four months later, Ohonsiowanne and Tsonhuatsuan returned to Montreal, hoping to bring Maricourt back with them to Onondaga, but Callières again refused their request, holding their fictive kinsman hostage until he got his way.³⁶

Meanwhile, the governor encouraged Anishinaabe raids on the Haudenosaunee Confederacy—especially the Seneca—to force their surrender. In July 1700, the Onondaga and Seneca had had enough and travelled to Montreal to treat with the French and their allies. On their arrival, Maricourt led them in a formal procession to *Pointe-à-Callières*—the governor's residence—in the guise of Taouestaouis, symbolising their desires for peace with the French.³⁷ Indeed, the Seneca headman Tonatakout emphasised the importance go-betweens would have in the coming peace process by naming the French officer Louis-Thomas Chabert de Joncaire as the Seneca plenipotentiary “comme M. de Maricourt l’est de celuy des Onnontaez.” Captured in 1687, Joncaire had been adopted into by the Seneca as their son Sononchiez.³⁸ Like Maricourt, he was expected to act as a broker between his real and fictive kin and Tonatakout reminded him of his obligation to “nous faire scavoir les sentiments d’onontio et luy porter les nostres.”³⁹ As negotiations began, the Onondaga and Seneca thus made it clear they expected their sons Taouestaouis and Sononchiez to walk the “path of peace” and reconcile their two peoples.

³⁵ AN, F3, V.8, f.144v-146v, « Reponse faite par Monsieur le Chevalier de Callieres aux paroles cy-dessous, » 8 mars 1699; Gilles Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal*, p.77.

³⁶ AN, F3, V.8, f.140v, « Parolles des Iroquois à M^r le Chevalier de Callieres, » 20 septembre 1699; AN, F3, V.8, f.141-141v « Responses de M^r le Chevalier de Callieres aux Iroquois » 22 septembre 1699; La Potherie, *Histoire*, V.4 p.125-127; Havard, *Great Peace of Montreal*, p.77-78.

³⁷ La Potherie, *Histoire*, V.4, p.136; Charlevoix, *Histoire et Description*, V.3, p.360; Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal*, p.92-94; Fenton, *Great Law of the Longhouse*, p.340; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, p.203.

³⁸ Joncaire was most likely captured during Denonville’s campaign against the Seneca, which he took part in shortly after arriving in Canada. Yves F. Zoltvany, “Chabert de Joncaire, Louis-Thomas, Sononchiez,” in Dictionary of Canadian Biography, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed December 13, 2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/chabert_de_joncaire_louis_thomas_2E.html.

³⁹ ANOM, C11A, V.18, pp.46-51 [transcript], « Entrevue de six deputés Iroquois et de M^r de Callières, » 18 juillet 1700; Fenton, *Great Law of the Longhouse*, p.259.

In August 1700, Callières finally allowed Maricourt, Bruyas and Joncaire to travel to Onondaga. As they arrived, the ambassadors were greeted by warriors and villagers who reportedly expressed “la joye qu’ils avoient tous de voir enfin dans le pays M. de Maricour.”⁴⁰ For the Onondaga, this was Taouestaouis’ metaphorical homecoming and symbolised not only their reconnection with their estranged Le Moyne kin but also the willingness of the French to make peace with the Haudenosaunee.⁴¹ “C’est maintenant” said the warrior who welcomed the French ambassadors, “que nous ne doutons plus de la droiture & de la sincerité du coeur de notre Pere *Onontio*.”⁴² Entering Onondaga in a formal procession behind the French flag, Maricourt mirrored his actions in Montreal a month earlier, though this time he performed expressly as a spokesperson for Onontio.⁴³ Once inside the village, however, he was reunited with Teganissorens, who conducted a traditional “Edge of the Woods” ceremony, intended to reconfirm Maricourt’s fictive kinship bonds and remind him of his obligations to his adoptive nation.⁴⁴ Embracing both his French and Iroquoian personae, Maricourt thus symbolically positioned himself as the key broker between his two nations.⁴⁵

Before representatives of each of the Five Nations, Maricourt and Joncaire made speeches exhorting their Onondaga and Seneca kin to respect and obey the Governor of New France. They reminded the nations that Onontio was their father, whilst *Corlar*, the Governor of New York, was only their brother.⁴⁶ Midway through their speeches, however, they were

⁴⁰ ANOM, C11A, V.18, f.150, « Lettre de La Potherie au ministre concernant ce qui s’est passé avec les Iroquois depuis les pourparlers du mois de juillet, », Québec, 16 octobre 1700.

⁴¹ Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal*, p.94.

⁴² La Potherie, *Histoire*, V.4 p.148.

⁴³ « Lettre de La Potherie » 16 octobre 1700; La Potherie, *Histoire*, V.4, p.149.

⁴⁴ Parmenter, *At the Edge of the Woods*.

⁴⁵ Richard Aquila, *The Iroquois Restoration: Iroquois Diplomacy on the Colonial Frontier, 1701-1754*, (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), p.50-1.

⁴⁶ « Lettre de La Potherie, » 16 octobre 1700 ; La Potherie, *Histoire*, p.152; Charlevoix, *Histoire et Description*, V.3, p.363.

interrupted by the arrival of John B. Van Eps, an envoy for Governor Bellomont of New York. Van Eps ordered the Haudenosaunee to ignore the French and prohibited them from sending any delegations to Montreal. But his intervention only seemed to strengthen Maricourt's arguments. Teganissorens, who despised the way Governor Bellomont presumed to command his nation, ordered the envoy to leave.⁴⁷ At the end of August, the Haudenosaunee defied Bellomont's orders and sent ambassadors to both Montreal and Albany to discuss terms for peace. In Montreal, the delegation met with Callières and representatives of France's western allies and agreed that a formal peace would be concluded between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the French, and the nations of the *pays d'en haut* the following summer. As a symbol of friendship, each party pledged to return their prisoners and bring them to Montreal before August 1701.⁴⁸

In June 1701, Maricourt, Bruyas and Joncaire returned to invite the Onondaga to the peace summit in Montreal. Acting on Callières orders, however, this time they dispensed with their Indigenous personae and attempted to create a French "theatre of power" at Onondaga. Once again, they entered the village "in great triumph with the French flagg," but this procession may have been as much for the benefit of the English ambassadors also present as it was for the Onondaga.⁴⁹ Though he recommitted to his duties as a go-between in another "Edge of the Woods" ceremony, Maricourt did not communicate Onontio's thoughts and feelings so much as dictate his demands. In his speeches, he gave the Onondaga thirty days to send their delegates and prisoners to Montreal and informed them of French intentions to build a fort at Detroit despite their past protests. Finally, Maricourt announced the recent ascension of Louis XIV's

⁴⁷ « Lettre de La Potherie au ministre, » 16 octobre 1700 ; La Potherie, *Histoire*, V.4, p.154-155; Charlevoix, *Histoire et Description*, V.3 p.364; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, p.204.

⁴⁸ Havard, *Great Peace of Montreal*, p.97-8; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, p.207.

⁴⁹ ANOM, C11A, V.18, f.139v, « Paroles des Iroquois qui sont venus à Montréal avec le Pere Bruyas, et les Sieurs de Maricourt et de Joncaire pour la conclusion de la paix, » 3 septembre 1700; "Journal of Captⁿ Johannes Bleeker Jun^r and Mr. David Schuyler Journey to Onondage being sent thither by the Commissioners for the managing the Indian affairs—Albany second June 1701," in Brodhead et al, *DCNY*, V.4, pp.889-894, p.890.

grandson, Philippe d'Anjou to the Spanish throne, insinuating that if the Haudenosaunee Confederacy refused to sign the peace, they would bring upon themselves "une guerre plus forte que la précédente avec *Onontio* & tous ses Alliez."⁵⁰

Maricourt's thinly veiled threats seem to have greatly intimidated the Onondaga. Later, Teganissorens reportedly admitted to the English that:

wee are affraid the French will make warr again upon us and what can wee doe then poor people for all them that he pronounces dead are certainly dead, wee have found itt soe by experience...and if wee comply not to what he will have us wee fear he will come again and kill us.⁵¹

Confused and concerned, Teganissorens publicly rebuked Maricourt, stating "[y]ou come and speak of peace and have scarcely sat down to smoke a pipe, but talk of coming and knocking us on the head, and therefore I say nobody knows your heart."⁵² Since the Haudenosaunee saw the heart as the symbol of the state of diplomatic relations, with this retort Teganissorens claimed to have seen behind the mask of "Taouestaouis," witnessing where Maricourt's loyalties lay.⁵³ In his desire for neutrality, however, Teganissorens could ill afford to offend Onontio, and was obliged to let Maricourt's behaviour continue uncontested.

Following Callière's wishes, Maricourt acted more as an enforcer than a facilitator of peace. After his speech, he rounded up several French prisoners, making "quelques menaces...aux Anciens qui paroissoient assez indifférens à donner les mains à la liberté des prisonniers." Two Onondagas challenged him, asking why "doe you begin to steal away

⁵⁰ La Potherie claims that Bruyas made these statements, but the English ambassadors present, Johannes Bleeker and David Schuyler, reported that it was Maricourt. La Potherie, *Histoire*, V.4, p.189; "Journal of Johannes Bleeker and David Schuyler Journey," in Brodhead et al, *DCNY*, V.4, p.891.

⁵¹ "Journal of Johannes Bleeker David Schuyler," in Brodhead et al, *DCNY*, V.4, p.891.

⁵² Originally quoted by Eccles, Teganissorens's rebuke has been repeated by historians ever since. Fenton, however, admits he does not know the origin of the source, and that those following him have cited it from him without question. Eccles, "Teganissorens," in *DCB*, vol. 2; Fenton, *Great Law of the Longhouse*, p.293; Havard, *The Great Peace*, p.204; Brown, "Learning to Colonize," p.258.

⁵³ For the significance of the Iroquoian rhetoric of "knowing the heart" see Brown "Learning to Colonize," p.258.

people?" Maricourt replied that their headman had agreed to this, but reluctantly handed over his prisoners, admitting that, "you are masters here." He promised, however, to return in thirty days and "compell those that were unwilling to deliver over their prisoners." Fearing that this incident might upset Onontio, Teganissorens offered Maricourt a wampum belt "d'une grandeur extraordinaire," and attempted to convince him that the Onondaga elders had little control over their prisoners, many of whom had chosen to become part of Onondaga society.⁵⁴ Maricourt could not accept this belt, since the return of prisoners was a key promise Callières had made to convince France's western allies to participate in the coming negotiations. Teganissorens thus relented and sent Maricourt back to Montreal with five "jeunes gens."⁵⁵

Though they no longer knew his heart, the Onondaga had little choice but to employ Maricourt as their plenipotentiary in Montreal that August. William Brown has argued that, during these negotiations, Maricourt offered the Haudenosaunee a "European façade" which allowed them to play to French desires and secure better terms in the treaty.⁵⁶ But Maricourt also offered the Haudenosaunee and French a useful scapegoat when issues arose with other Indigenous nations. For instance, when Miami ambassadors complained that the Haudenosaunee had brought very few prisoners, both Callières and the Onondaga blamed Maricourt, meaning neither had to admit any fault.⁵⁷ Likewise, when the Wendat headman Kondiaronk complained that the Haudenosaunee ambassadors were lodged at *Près de Ville* whilst his people suffered in pox-ridden camps, Callières evoked Maricourt's fictive kinship to brush this issue aside, assuring

⁵⁴ La Potherie wrote that the French captives, "ne paroissent pas avoir grande envie de s'en retourner: d'ailleurs il falloit gagner à force de presens ceux qui les avoient adoptez."; La Potherie, *Histoire*, V.4, p.150, 191-192. Many other captives were reluctant to return home, a good example being the story of Eunice Williams, captured in 1704. John Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story of Early America* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1994).

⁵⁵ La Potherie, *Histoire*, V.4, p.150, 191-192; "Journal of Captⁿ Johannes Bleeker Jun^r and Mr. David Schuyler," Brodhead et al., *DCNY*, V.4, p.894-895; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, p.210.

⁵⁶ Brown, "Learning to Colonize," p.288.

⁵⁷ La Potherie, *Histoire*, V.4, p.216-217; Brown, "Learning to Colonize," p.288; Havard, *Great Peace*, p.151.

Kondiaronk that since “Maricour étant leur fils adoptif, il ne falloit pas s’étonner s’ils étoient tous chez lui.”⁵⁸ More than just a go-between, Maricourt allowed both the French and Haudenosaunee to sidestep issues which might have stalled the negotiations.

On August 4th, 1701, delegates from France, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and nearly forty other Indigenous nations signed the treaty known as the Great Peace of Montreal. At the same time, Haudenosaunee diplomats signed a treaty in Albany, completing the "Grand Settlement" and confirming their confederacy's neutrality.⁵⁹ Maricourt had played a small, but significant, role in engendering this peace, acting as a vessel through which the Haudenosaunee and French could communicate with one another. But in attempting to balance his obligations to Callières and the Onondaga, Maricourt had repeatedly shown that he had little interest in acting as a neutral broker or go-between. Rather, he had revealed himself as an agent of empire, who used his connections and competencies to advance imperial interests, as well as his own. Even so, the Haudenosaunee chose to overlook this and used Maricourt to successfully plant the “Tree of Peace” in Montreal, indicating that they could also subvert diplomatic protocols to achieve their own ambitions. In planting this tree, the Haudenosaunee also forged a new relationship with the French, which would require constant maintenance and communication. Taouestaouis, therefore, would continue to take flight, ever in motion between Montreal and Onondaga.

“Le Maistre de Paix”: Adoption and Alliance in the Lower Mississippi Valley

On February 12th, 1699, Iberville spotted a plume of smoke rising from Biloxi Bay from aboard the *Badine*. A few months earlier, Pontchartrain had instructed Iberville to find a sea route to the mouth of the Mississippi River, so that France could secure the territory René-Robert

⁵⁸ La Potherie, *Histoire*, V.4, p.228.

⁵⁹ ANOM, C11A, V.19, f.41-44v, « Ratification de la paix conclue entre les Français, leurs alliés et les Iroquois, » [aout-septembre 1701]; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, p.211-212.

Cavelier de la Salle had claimed as Louisiana in 1682. Iberville was thus eager to forge connections with the local Indigenous communities, who might share their geographic knowledge and help France establish a foothold in the Lower Mississippi Valley. He made for shore with his younger brother Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne Bienville, the Recollet Anastase Douay, an Iroquoian interpreter and several Canadians. For two days they tracked the people who had lit the fire, leaving small gifts to convey their peaceful intentions. By nightfall, Iberville found a sick old man, who had been left to die. Communicating by way of signs, Iberville offered the man food and tobacco and built him a fire.⁶⁰ He then left to catch up with Bienville, whom he had sent to apprehend a hunting party they had spotted earlier that day. Finding that Bienville had captured a Biloxi woman, Iberville offered her gifts of tobacco to take to her village. Early the next morning, she returned with several Biloxi and Mactoby who smoked and feasted with Iberville's party and invited them back to their village. The next day, Iberville reciprocated, inviting three men aboard the *Badine* whilst leaving Bienville behind as a gesture of good faith.⁶¹

Meanwhile, twenty-one Bayagoula arrived at the Biloxi village. Familiar with stories of La Salle's earlier expeditions, they asked Bienville if he was also a man of the "Malbanchya," or Upper Mississippi, which he confirmed. Together they feasted until Iberville and his guests returned from the *Badine*, at which point Iberville recalled that:

le chef ou capitaine des Bayogoulas vint au bord de la mer me faire amitié et civilité à leur manière, qui est, estant proche de vous, de s'arrester, se passer les mains sur le visage et la poitrine et vous passer de là leurs mains sur la vostre, après quoy ils les lèvent vers le ciel, en se les refrottant et rembrassant. J'en fis autant, l'ayant veu faire aux autres; ils en firent autant aux Annochy, leurs amys. Après nostre rencontre et civilité de part et d'autre, nous fusmes à la tente de mon frère, où tous les Bayogoula

⁶⁰ By 1699, non-verbal communication already had a long history in the French Atlantic World, with roots in the earliest cross-cultural encounters of the sixteenth century. Céline Carayon, *Eloquence Embodied: Nonverbal Communication among French & Indigenous Peoples in the Americas*, (Williamsburg, Virginia : Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture ; Chapel Hill : University of North Carolina Press, 2019).

⁶¹ "Navigation de la *Badine*," in Pierre Margry, *Découvertes et Établissements des Français dans l'Ouest et dans le Sud L'Amérique Septentrionale (1614-1754): Mémoires et Documents Originaux* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Cie, Libraires-Éditeurs, 1881), Vol.4, p.151-154.

se rendirent me faire amitié et à tous mes gens, s'embrassant les uns et les autres. Je les fis fumer et nous fumâmes tous ensemble dans un calumet de fer que j'avois, fait en forme de navire avec le pavillon blanc et fleurdelysé, orné de rassade. Après quoy je leur donnay avec un présent de haches, couteaux, couvertes, chemises, rassades, et autres choses estimées parmy eux, leur faisant entendre que par ce calumet je les rendrois unis avec les François et que nous ne faisons plus qu'un.⁶²

With this ceremonial greeting, Antobiscania, the Bayagoula *mico* (chief), seems to have inaugurated Iberville into the Mississippian World.⁶³ Raising his hands to the sky, he called on the cosmos to witness his union with Iberville and the pledges they made to uphold the obligations allies were traditionally bound to perform to one another.⁶⁴ Iberville's perceived reciprocation—his offers of food, gifts and a calumet—seemed to confirm that he was willing to enter into this alliance. Conferring with one another, the representatives of the other assembled nations then agreed to smoke the calumet with Iberville, inducting him into an alliance of eleven Mississippian nations—the Bayagoula, Mougoulacha, Washa, Chitimacha, Yagenachito, Biloxi, Moctoby, Houma, Pascoboula, Natchez and Bayou Chicto Choctaw.⁶⁵

One month later, Antobiscania invited the newcomers to the Bayagoula village, which they shared with the Mougoulascha, to formally celebrate the union of their peoples. Hosting Iberville, Bienville, M. de Sauvole and Father Douay in the traditional manner, he had them sit on cane mats before the whole village, where they smoked, feasted and exchanged gifts whilst young men and women sang, danced and chanted. They smoked using Iberville's iron ship

⁶² "Navigation de la Badine," p.154-155.

⁶³ In May 1699, Mr. de Sauvole recorded the name of the "chef des Bayougoulas" as Antobiscania. Given that the French tended to assume that Indigenous nations only had one principal chief, I have chosen to believe that all references to a Bayagoula "chief" meant Antobiscania. This also helps raise the name of an important player in Louisiana's early history out of obscurity. "Recueil que j'ai pris sur mon journal de ce qui s'est passé de plus remarquable depuis le départ de M. d'Iberville du 3 mai 1699 jusqu'en 1700," in Margry, *Mémoires et Documents*, V.4, p.448-449.

⁶⁴ James Taylor Carson, "Sacred Circles and Dangerous People: Native American Cosmology and the French Settlement of Louisiana," in Bradley G. Bond, ed., *French Colonial Louisiana and the Atlantic World*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005): 65-82, p.70.

⁶⁵ Iberville and McWilliams, *Gulf Journals*, p.47-48.

calumet, for which Iberville claimed the Bayagoula “ont un très grande estime”, displaying it prominently in the centre of their village.⁶⁶ Behind the scenes, however, Iberville admitted he did not care much for this, writing that it “me fatigue beaucoup n’ayant jamais fumé.”⁶⁷

Many parallels exist between this Bayagoula ceremony and those which created the *fanimingo*, or “Squirrel King,” documented by Thomas Nairne, a Scottish trader who lived amongst the Chickasaw and Creek, suggesting that it may have held the same cultural significance. According to Nairne, in Chickasaw and Creek culture, a *fanimingo* was an outsider adopted into a community as a clan uncle through a calumet ceremony performed by a nation’s white, or “peace,” moiety. Once adopted, Nairne wrote that the *fanimingo* was obliged:

to make up all Breaches between the 2 Nations, to keep the pipes of peace by which they first contracted Friendship, to divert the Warriors from any designe against the people they protect...and if after all are unable to oppose the stream, are to send the people private intelligence to provide for their own safety.⁶⁸

Most importantly, a *fanimingo* was not a broker or “go-between” between two nations, but instead exclusively represented his adoptive nation’s interests at his natal nation’s council fire. If the *fanimingo*’s natal nation desired protection or wanted their interests represented at foreign councils, they had to adopt their own *fanimingos* from these other nations. Across the Lower Mississippi Valley, this custom enmeshed allies in webs of mutual adoption, tying people together across vast distances, preventing conflicts and even helping nations coalesce.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ “Journal de la frégate le *Marin*,” in Margry, *Mémoires et Documents*, V.4, 213-289, p.258

⁶⁷ “Navigation de la *Badine*,” p.154, 175. McWilliams notes that this quote was deleted from Iberville’s original manuscript but was still legible. McWilliams, *Gulf Journals*, p.67, n.100.

⁶⁸ Quoted in Edward J. Cashin, *Guardians of the Valley: Chickasaws in Colonial South Carolina and Georgia*, (Columbia, S.C: University of South Carolina Press, 2009).

⁶⁹ For more on the position of *fanimingo* in Choctaw, Chickasaw and Creek societies see Patricia Galloway, “The Chief Who is Your Father”: Choctaw and French Views of the Diplomatic Relation” in Gregory A. Waselkov, , Peter H. Wood, and M. Thomas Hatley eds., *Powhatan’s Mantle: Indians in the Colonial Southeast* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006) 345-370, p.361-2; Donna Akers, *Culture and Customs of the Choctaw Indians* (Santa Barbara, Greenwood, 2013), p.77-78; Robbie Ethridge, *From Chicaza to Chickasaw: the European Invasion and the Transformation of the Mississippian World, 1540-1715* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), p.228; Edward J. Cashin, *Guardians of the Valley*, p.5; Joshua Piker, *Okfuskee: A Creek Indian Town in Colonial America*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2009), p.23.



Fig. 2.1 : “Locations of Mississippian Villages c.1701,” from Nicolas de Fer, Vincent de Ginville *Les Costes Aux Environs De La Riviere de Misisipi, Decouvertes par Mr. De la Salle en 1683 et reconnues par Mr Le Chevallier d'Iberville en 1698* [Paris?: s.n, 1701]. Map. HNOC.

<https://louisianadigitallibrary.org/islandora/object/hnoc-p15140coll28:169>

By 1699, these webs of kinship and adoption were vital for survival in the Lower Mississippi Valley. Robbie Ethridge has described the region at this time as a "shatter zone," where established Mississippian nationhood had been torn apart by English-backed slave raiding and epidemic diseases. Between La Salle's final voyage and Iberville's arrival, the English had greatly expanded their influence in the Lower Mississippi Valley. From Carolina, they sent trade caravans laden with guns and encouraged nations such as the Chickasaw to take slaves from weaker nations in exchange for arms and munitions.⁷⁰ Grouping together to protect themselves,

⁷⁰ Robbie Ethridge, "Mapping the Mississippian Shatter Zone," in Robbie Ethridge, Sheri M. Shuck-Hall eds., *Mapping the Mississippian Shatter Zone: The Colonial Indian Slave Trade and Regional Instability in the American South* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), pp.1-62.

the smaller Mississippian nations used calumet diplomacy to forge alliances amongst themselves, either by creating *fanimings* or adopting refugees, forming multi-ethnic communities like Bayagoula and Mougoulacha village.⁷¹ Becoming known to the French as the *petites nations*, these smaller, coalescent nations saw the arrival of a new European power as a chance to turn the tide against the Chickasaw. Adopting Iberville as a *fanimingo*, they sought to integrate him and his men into their existing alliance networks and gain access to powerful allies who could offer them the weapons and support they needed to combat the English-backed slaving raids.

It would not have been difficult for the *petites nations* to comprehend the place of Iberville and his men in their world. With fewer than two hundred Frenchmen before 1704, the Louisiana colony was about the size of a typical Mississippian nation.⁷² Moreover, as the next chapter will show, Iberville promoted many of his kinsmen and allies to positions of power in the colony, creating a political structure defined by kinship that resembled those in Mississippian nations.⁷³ Perhaps the most striking difference between the two societies was that the French lacked women. The *petites nations*, however, used this to strengthen their alliances through intimate relationships and sexual encounters. On many occasions, they offered their women to the newcomers, who, familiar with the value placed on such cross-cultural relationships by traders in Canada, willingly accepted these offers. Some Canadians even married into these Indigenous communities, creating more ties between their peoples.⁷⁴ Iberville initially favoured

⁷¹ The Bayagoula had welcomed the remnants of a devastated Mougoulacha into their village sometime before Iberville's arrival, but eventually turned on them in 1700, killing their men and adopting their women. Elizabeth N. Ellis, "The Many Ties of the Petites Nations: Relationships, Power and Diplomacy in the Lower Mississippi Valley, 1685-1785" (PhD diss., The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2015), p.28-30, 50.

⁷² Ellis, "The Many Ties of the Petites Nations," p.55.

⁷³ For example, George Edward Milne has demonstrated the similarities between the Louisiana colony and the Natchez "ancient regime." George Edward Milne, *Natchez Country: Indians, Colonists, and the Landscapes of Race in French Louisiana*, (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2015), p.15-44.

⁷⁴ Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870* (Winnipeg, Man.: Watson & Dwyer, 1999); Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001); Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indigenous Prosperity and*

these unions and even petitioned to have them sanctioned by the king. Later, however, the chronicler André Pénicaut recorded Iberville's growing discomfort, claiming that, in 1700, he rejected Antobiscania's offer of women for his men by showing the *mico* his hand and declaring that "leur peau rouge et bazanée ne devoit point s'approcher de celle des François, qui estoit blanche."⁷⁵ Either way, through adoption, marriage and close daily contact, the *petites nations* came to understand the Louisiana colony as a familiar socio-political entity and a powerful ally and did their best to incorporate it into the Mississippian World.

Leading this integration was Antobiscania. Once described as "le sauvage le plus rusé que je connoisse," Antobiscania exploited his new alliance with the French to expand his own influence in the Lower Mississippi Valley. He immediately agreed to introduce Iberville and Bienville to the other *petites nations*, most likely seeing this as a way to demonstrate his control over access to the French.⁷⁶ Indeed, he first took the brothers to treat with the Houma, his nation's traditional enemies.⁷⁷ Despite their past animosity, the Houma welcomed the French and Bayagoula (quite literally) with open arms, offering them the traditional caresses and some small gifts. To the Bayagoula, Iberville noted, the Houma also "faisoit les mesme honneurs qu'à nous,

American Conquest: Indian Women of the Ohio River Valley, 1690-1792, (Williamsburg, Virginia : Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2019).

⁷⁵ "Relation de Pénicault," p.394. For more see Jennifer M. Spear, "Colonial Intimacies: Legislating Sex in French Louisiana," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 60, no. 1 (2003): 75–98; Jennifer M. Spear, *Race, Sex, and Social Order in Early New Orleans* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), and Jennifer M. Spear, "'They Need Wives': Métissage and the Regulation of Sexuality in French Louisiana, 1699-1730," in Martha Elizabeth Hodes, *Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History* (New York: New York University Press, 1999): 35-59.

⁷⁶ This description came from Mr. Sauvole in May 1699, alongside the only reference to Antobiscania's name. "Recueil que j'ai pris sur mon journal," Margry, *Mémoires et Documents* V.4, p.448-449. Carson and Ellis describe Antobiscania's relationship with Iberville and Bienville in more detail. Carson, "Sacred Circles and Dangerous People," p.70-7; Ellis, "The Many Ties of the Petites Nations," p.56-58, 61-63, 68-69.

⁷⁷ The Houma and Bayagoula had been at war for many years and their contested territorial claims were demarcated by the infamous *Istrouma*—a thirty-foot high red post decorated with fish carvings and the bones of fish and bears. In 1699, the French discovered this famous "Baton Rouge" which gave its name to the modern-day city. Gaillard Williams, *Gulf Journals*, p.65, n.95.

les regardant comme François, les ayant amenés chés eux.”⁷⁸ He overestimated his influence, however. Adopted by both nations, Iberville may simply have allowed the former enemies to see each other as kin and overlook their past hostilities. Lacking an understanding of these nuances though, Iberville began to interpret their actions as proof of his importance. As he left the Houma village, he attempted to assert his authority, ordering his men to fire musket-salutes and shout "Vive le Roi" three times. which, he claimed in his journal, the Houma reportedly mimicked.⁷⁹

Even after Iberville returned to France, these connections persisted. Before leaving, Iberville appointed Bienville as the deputy *commandant* at Fort Maurepas, serving under Mr. de Sauvole.⁸⁰ In Mississippian cultures, the younger brothers of a *mico* often acted as his *tichou-mingos* or “servants of the chief,” conducting diplomacy and ceremonies on his behalf.⁸¹ Accordingly, later that month, Antobiscania tried to maintain the alliance by agreeing to take Bienville to meet the Quinipissas. In 1682, La Salle had recorded this nation living on the banks of the Mississippi, which had convinced Iberville that finding them would prove that he had found a route to the mouth of the river. Before leaving for France, therefore, he had tasked Bienville with re-establishing contact with this nation. But working from outdated information, Bienville and Antobiscania did not find the Quinipissa, who had since been adopted into the Mougoulacha. Instead, they found the similarly named Acolapissa, who lived on the Pearl River.⁸² Only a few weeks earlier, however, the Acolapissa had been attacked by a Chickasaw

⁷⁸ “Navigation de la *Badine*,” p.177.

⁷⁹ “Navigation de la *Badine*,” p.184; “Journal de la frégate le *Marin*,” p.271.

⁸⁰ Certain historians have claimed that Mr. Sauvole was one of the Le Moyne brothers, occasionally giving the title of Sauvole to François-Marie Le Moyne, who in fact perished in 1687, perhaps during Governor Denonville’s expedition against the Seneca. See Jodoin and Vincent, *Histoire de Longueuil*, p.153-4.

⁸¹ “Tichou-mingo” or “Tishu Minko” is a Choctaw term, but similar concepts existed in several other Mississippian nations, such as the Natchez. Richard White, *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees and Navajos*, (Lincoln; London, University of Nebraska Press, 1983), p. 39-40; Galloway, “The Chief Who Is Your Father”, p.350; Milne, *Natchez Country*, p.36, 69.

⁸² “Recueil que j’ai pris sur mon journal,” p.448-449; Gaillard McWilliams, *Gulf Journals*, p.45 n.59; 53-54 n.76.

war party and two Englishmen. Mistaking Bienville for another Englishman, the Acolapissa ambushed him and Antobiscania before they reached the village. Fortunately, Antobiscania convinced the Acolapissa that Bienville was an enemy of the English, which encouraged them to lay down their arms and warmly welcome the Canadian. Whilst no closer to the Quinipissa, Bienville seized the opportunity to expand his brother's alliance network and returned to Fort Maurepas with two calumets, a sure sign that he, and by extension, Iberville, had been adopted as a *fanimingo*.⁸³

By 1700, Iberville and Bienville had formalised alliances with almost a dozen nations along the Mississippi, and had made contact with others from farther afield, including the Mobilians, Pascagoula, Tohomé and Choctaw.⁸⁴ Still, Iberville realised that acting as a *fanimingo* did little to ensure the authority he wished to have over the Mississippian nations. Indeed, on his return to Fort Maurepas in February 1700, he heard rumours that the Natchez had killed the missionary François de Montigny and learned that the Bayagoula and Houma were back at war.⁸⁵ This news pained Iberville, who was caught between the need to keep the peace “pour pouvoir aller plus facilement et securement decouvrir le dedans des terres” and his desire to assert his authority “pour ne pas se rendre méprisable à toutes les nations des environs.”⁸⁶ With fewer than two hundred men in Louisiana, he could scarcely risk a full-scale war, so decided to strike a

⁸³ Jean-Baptiste Bénard de La Harpe, *Journal historique de l'établissement des Français à la Louisiane* (New Orleans : A.L Boimaire; Paris : H. Bossange, 1831), accessed at *Slavery and Anti-Slavery*, McGill University Library, 9/12/2017, p.15; “Recueil que j’ai pris sur mon journal,” p.449.

⁸⁴ Ian W. Brown notes that Iberville and Bienville smoked the calumet with Bayagoula, Mougoulacha, Biloxi, Chitimacha, Pascagoula, Houma, Acolpissa, Quinipissa, Washa, Choctaw and Natchez. Ian W. Brown, “The Calumet Ceremony in the Southeast as Observed Archaeologically,” in Gregory A. Waselkov, Peter H. Wood, and M. Thomas Hatley eds., *Powhatan's Mantle: Indians in the Colonial Southeast* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006): 371-419, p.381

⁸⁵ “Lettre d’Iberville au Ministre de la Marine. Des Bayagoulas, le 26 février 1700,” in Margry, *Mémoires et Documents*, V.4, p.363. For Father Montigny see, Noël Baillargeon, “Montigny, François de,” in *DCB*, vol. 3, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 25/3/2020 2020 at http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/montigny_francois_de_3E.html.

⁸⁶ “Lettre d’Iberville au Ministre de la Marine, 26 février 1700,” p.363; “Journal d’Iberville commandant le vaisseau la *Renommé*,” published in Margry, *Mémoires et Documents*, V.4, p.402.

balance between the two. Taking eighty armed Canadians with him up the Mississippi, Iberville hoped to force the Natchez to hand over Montigny's murderers, whilst intimidating the Bayagoula and Houma into making peace.

On this expedition, Iberville made conscious efforts to subvert his position as the *fanimingo* with a clear performance of his French identity. Before arriving at the Bayagoula village, Iberville had his men trim their beards and don their finest linens, drawing a clear sartorial line between themselves and the Mississippians.⁸⁷ He then ordered Bienville and their seventeen-year-old brother Antoine Le Moyne de Châteauguay, who commanded the flotilla of sloops, canoes and pirogues, to fly the French flag, fire several fusillades and shout "Vive Le Roi!" Finally, whilst he followed Mississippian protocol when meeting with the Bayagoula and Houma, Iberville also laced his diplomatic performance with French symbolism, insisting on smoking the iron calumet he had given to Antobiscania at their first meeting.

It appears that Iberville intended to use the threat of violence to renegotiate his relationship with the *petites nations*. Likely inspired by the Governor of New France's persona of Onontio, Iberville seems to have wanted to recast himself as a father figure, whom he assumed would have the authority, power and influence to mediate in the disputes of his Mississippian "children."⁸⁸ When the Houma welcomed him as "le maistre de paix," he was quick to assume that this put him in control of the diplomatic encounter, and he insisted on representing the Bayagoula as they had represented him a year earlier. But for the Houma, the title of "master of peace" may simply have been a translation of their concept of the *fanimingo*, for they treated

⁸⁷ Paul du Ru and Ruth Lapham Butler, *The Journal of Paul du Ru (February 1 to May 8, 1700) Missionary Priest to Louisiana* (Chicago: The Caxton Club, 1934), p.19. As Sophie White has demonstrated, sartorial displays were a common way of demonstrating cultural and racial difference, especially in Louisiana and the Illinois Country. Sophie White, *Wild Frenchmen and Frenchified Indians Material Culture and Race in Colonial Louisiana* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

⁸⁸ On the origins of Onontio's role as the "father" in Canada, see Cook, "Onontio Gives Birth."

Iberville as a facilitator of peace, rather than its creator. Indeed, they consistently denied his repeated attempts to arbitrate, whether by speaking on behalf of the Bayagoula or receiving their prisoners. This visibly irritated Iberville, who recalled that the Houma eventually gave him the prisoners, “voyant que je me fachois de ce qu’ils refusoient.”⁸⁹ Recently devastated by disease, however, the nation probably wished to avoid further conflict with the Bayagoula or a new one with the French and acquiesced to Iberville’s demands to save their community.⁹⁰ Inevitably though, the French painted this as a diplomatic triumph, and the missionary Paul Du Ru recounted that it had taken “much French diplomacy to make them sign the treaty of peace, that is to make them agree with each other and smoke the same calumet.”⁹¹

Moving on to the Natchez, Iberville found that the rumours of Montigny’s murder were false and that the missionary was in fact alive and well, administering to the Taensas further upriver. With this, Iberville became increasingly confident in his assumed role as the “Master of Peace,” convinced that he had single-handedly restored peace to the Lower Mississippi Valley. Returning to France that summer, he leveraged his new presumed status amongst the Mississippian nations to convince the new naval minister, Jérôme Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain, that, if he were to return to Louisiana the following year, “il sera facile de Les engager a faire une paix Generale entre eux et a nous.”⁹² In Europe, the Spanish succession crisis was threatening to plunge the Atlantic World back into open conflict, making Pontchartrain very open to such a suggestion, especially if it could halt English expansion in North America.⁹³

⁸⁹ “Journal d’Iberville commandant le vaisseau la *Renommé*,” p.408.

⁹⁰ Iberville mentions that diarrhea had been in the village for four months, which Robbie Ethridge has suggested that this was likely a symptom of cholera or dysentery. Iberville *Gulf Journals*, p.122; Ethridge, *From Chicaza to Chickasaw*, p.185. Du Ru also mentions that the Great Chief’s rotting corpse had been left in his cabin for two months in accordance with Houma burial practices. Du Ru, *Journal*, p.26-7.

⁹¹ Du Ru, *Journal*, p.31.

⁹² ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.345, « Mémoire [d’Iberville], » [1701].

⁹³ « Mémoire [d’Iberville], » [1701].

Moreover, after Maricourt's role in the Great Peace of Montreal that summer, the Le Moyne family's reputation with Indigenous peoples was well known. Attempting to capitalise on this, Iberville even proposed an attack on Boston, boasting that the Haudenosaunee Confederacy would follow him and his brothers to war as "les principaux chefs de leur nation."⁹⁴ Whilst the minister did not approve this expedition, he placed his trust in Iberville's ability to create his own "Great Peace" in the Lower Mississippi Valley and advance imperial interests in the region. He therefore promised his agent 24,773 *livres* for the gifts as well as a promotion to *capitaine de frégate* if he succeeded in his goals.

On March 26th, 1702, Iberville put his plans for peace in motion. At Fort Louis de la Louisiane—just above the new settlement of Mobile—he received the *micos* of several local nations, including the Mobilians and Little Tohomé.⁹⁵ The guests of honour, however, were the Choctaw and Chickasaw. Before this moment, both nations had been on the fringes of French influence, but Iberville had long identified them as key players in the region. In February, he sent Henri de Tonty, a veteran of La Salle's 1682 expedition, to invite them to Mobile. Though his mission was challenged by an English trader living amongst the Chickasaw, Tonty convinced both nations to meet with Iberville.⁹⁶ That March, Iberville welcomed seven Chickasaw and four Choctaw dignitaries to Fort Louis.

It is no accident that Iberville chose Fort Louis. By all accounts it was a formidable bastion, brimming with cannons and armed soldiers. Perched on a commanding bluff, it exuded

⁹⁴ ANOM, C11A, V.19, f.247v, « Mémoire du S^r d'Iberville sur Boston et ses dépendances, » [1701].

⁹⁵ Iberville does not mention these nations, but Pénicault recorded their presence. "Relation de Pénicault," p.429.

⁹⁶ Jay Higginbotham, *Old Mobile: Fort Louis de la Louisiane, 1702-1711* (Tucacaloosa, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1991) pp.53-68; Jay Higginbotham, "Henri de Tonty's Mission to the Chickasaw, 1702," *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 19, no.3 (Summer, 1978), p.285-296; Patricia Galloway, "Henri de Tonty du village des Chacta, 1702: The Beginning of the French Alliance," in Patricia Galloway ed., *La Salle and His Legacy: Frenchmen and Indians in the Lower Mississippi Valley* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1982), pp.146-176.

French control over its surroundings, whilst its name consciously harked back to the imperial authority of Louis XIV.⁹⁷ An indisputable "theatre of power," the fort set the stage for Iberville to perform his vision of the French "Master of Peace" to his potential allies. As the Choctaw and Chickasaw delegates entered the fort, he demonstrated the depth of the king's coffers, ceremonially bestowing upon each nation twelve muskets, 200 *livres* of gunpowder and munitions, various tools and trinkets. For the Choctaw, who had long been victims of English-sponsored Chickasaw slaving, muskets were quintessential symbols of European power, and obtaining them was vital to their continued survival. Offering these valuable tools—which the Choctaw dubbed *tanampo*, from the verb "to be at war"—Iberville presented himself as both a powerful protector and a generous supplier, subverting the traditional pacific role of the *fanimingo* and presenting his new persona of the "Master of Peace" as a valuable source of French imperial power in the Lower Mississippi Valley.⁹⁸

Employing Bienville as his interpreter, Iberville turned to diplomacy. Acting in his role as the "Master of Peace," he thanked both nations for coming and expressed his joy that they were "disposez à vivre en paix ensemble avec toutes les nations du pays." Given their history of slave raiding, he then beseeched the Chickasaw to follow the Choctaw example and reject the English traders living amongst them who, in his words "n'estoient pas leurs amis." He then discredited the Chickasaw alliance with Carolina, whose plan, he claimed, "après les avoir fait affoiblir par les guerres, estoit de les venir enlever dans leurs villages, ensuite les envoyer vendre ailleurs dans les pays éloignés, d'où ils ne pourroient jamais revenir." If both nations cast out the English traders from their lands, Iberville pledged to compensate them with a new French trading

⁹⁷ Higginbotham, *Old Mobile*, p.76; On the French use of toponymy to underscore imperial power, see Havard, *Empire et métissages*, p.259.

⁹⁸ Carson, "Sacred Circles and Dangerous People," p.71.

post built between their territories where they would be able to exchange French goods for bison, deer and bear skins. “C’ estoient la les esclaves que je demandois,” he assured. As long as he was in control, he promised, “ils se nourriroient et toutes leurs familles de la viande de leur chasse, qui ne leur cousteroit pas la vie en l’exerçant.”⁹⁹

Iberville’s promises resonated with the Choctaw and Chickasaw delegates on a much deeper level than he likely expected. Patricia Galloway has shown that these nations considered all exchanges to happen within three spheres: “Subsistence,” “Prestige” and “Supreme.” Most exchanges—such as in food, skins, trade goods, trinkets and medals—fell under the purview of the first two spheres and could be performed between any allied nations, European or otherwise. At the very top, however, the “Supreme Sphere,” exclusively concerned the exchange of human beings, land or weapons and could only occur with people of an opposite moiety, the same lineage or fictive kin. Most Choctaw and Chickasaw trade with the English occurred on this “supreme” level, consisting mostly of guns and slaves, implying that certain traders also had fictive kinship connections with the two nations. But promising to only metaphorically “enslave” bison, deer and bears, Iberville uniquely pledged not only to refrain from taking human life but also to preserve it. Moreover, his offer to send several French cabin boys to live with the Choctaw and Chickasaw seemed to solidify his commitment to protecting their communities.¹⁰⁰ Whether knowingly or not, Iberville’s gestures implied his willingness to treat the Choctaw and Chickasaw not just as military allies or trade partners, but as fictive kin, evoking a “supreme” bond between their peoples and presenting himself as a worthy ally, kinsman and *fanimingo*.

⁹⁹ “Journal du Sieur D’Iberville depuis le 15 décembre 1701 jusqu’au 27 avril 1702,” in Margry, *Mémoires et Documents*, V.4, p.516-18.

¹⁰⁰ Patricia Galloway, “Choctaws at the Border of the Shatter Zone: Spheres of Exchange and Spheres of Social Value,” in Ethridge and Shuck-Hall, *Mapping the Mississippian Shatter Zone*, 333-364, 355-356. For the exchange of young boys between the French, the Choctaw and the Chickasaw, see Brandon Kyle Layton, “Children of Two Fires: Adoption, Diplomacy and Change among the Choctaws and Chickasaws” (PhD diss., University of California, Davis, 2018).

After his speech, the Chickasaw promised to expel all English traders from their lands, provided that Iberville offered them similar rates of exchange. Iberville agreed and sealed the deal by ransoming a Choctaw slave the *micos* had brought him as a gift and sending them home with a fourteen-year-old French boy named St. Michel in exchange. Offering the headmen of both nations some small gifts, Iberville then promised to inform his Mississippian allies that the war with the Chickasaw and Choctaw was over, provided that the Chickasaw encouraged the Abihka and Alabamas to adhere to the same peace. If they did not, Iberville threatened that “les Apalaches, nos amis, des haches de qui j’estois maistre, leur feroient une cruelle guerre,” even though he had little influence over this nation who were more closely aligned with the Spanish.¹⁰¹ Two weeks later, he sent the delegates home with an escort of five Canadians who were to ensure their safety until news of the peace had spread across the Lower Mississippi Valley. With his own “Great Peace” concluded at Mobile, Iberville was convinced that he had successfully established himself as the “Master of Peace” in the Lower Mississippi Valley. His mission complete, he placed his brother Bienville in charge of maintaining the alliance he had orchestrated and departed Louisiana for the very last time on April 27th, 1702.

Akouessan: Fictive Kinship and Obligation

A year after the peace was signed in Montreal, Maricourt traveled to Onondaga with the Jesuit Father Lamberville, who was to establish a mission as part of the treaty agreement. Lamberville was well received by most Onondaga, but his presence was challenged by Teganissorens and his family, who feared the influence the Jesuits might gain in the village and the tensions they could cause with the English. Though Teganissorens had openly rejected Governor Bellomont’s attempts to interfere in Onondaga politics two years earlier, this time he

¹⁰¹ “Relation du troisième voyage de D’Iberville,” p.518.

sought his support and returned from Albany bearing wampum from the governor commanding the Onondaga to expel Lamberville. Positioning himself as a mediator, Maricourt oversaw the debate between Teganissorens and the village's more francophile headmen, which concluded with the Onondaga agreeing to let Lamberville stay. After this dispute was resolved, Maricourt spent the rest of his sojourn overseeing the construction of the missionary's lodgings and a small chapel, before returning to Montreal that November.¹⁰²

Once the War of the Spanish Succession arrived in North America, Maricourt's presence at Onondaga increasingly worried the English, who sent agents to counter his influence and undermine the neutrality of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. By spring 1703, Maricourt was on the frontlines of a covert diplomatic war, sent to Onondaga by the new governor Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil to « rompre les mesures des Anglois qui vouloient revolter les Iroquois contre nous et les engager a renvoyer leurs missionnaires. »¹⁰³ His visit, however, was cut short by the death of his wife, Marie-Madeleine Dupont de Neuville in April.¹⁰⁴ In June, the Onondaga requested his return, « affain qu'estant dans nos villages tu puisse estre Informé de ce qui sy passera. »¹⁰⁵ Travelling to and from Onondaga over the next few months, Maricourt worked tirelessly to curb English influence in the nation. Though details are scant, he seems to have been successful because the English became so anxious about his influence with the Haudenosaunee that, in February 1704, reports on the famous French assault on Deerfield falsely assumed that “their Chief Officer was one Monsieur Marcure” and not Jean-Baptiste Hertel de Rouville.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² ANOM, C11A, V.20, f.155-171, « Lettre de Callières au ministre, » Québec, 4 novembre 1702; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, p.217-218.

¹⁰³ ANOM, C11A, V.21, f.5-28v, « Lettre de Vaudreuil et Beauharnois au ministre, » Québec, 15 novembre 1703.

¹⁰⁴ ANOM, C11A, V.21, f.62-65, « Parolles des Tsonnontouans et Onontagués a Monsieur de Vaudreuil, » 12 juin 1703 ; PRDH, #50073, Montréal, 1703-04-14, « Sépulture- Marie Madeleine Dupont. »

¹⁰⁵ « Parolles des Tsonnontouans et Onontagués a Monsieur de Vaudreuil, » 12 juin 1703.

¹⁰⁶ “Colonel Quarry to the Lords of Trade,” in Brodhead, *DCHNY*, V.4, pp.1082-1089, p.1083. On the Deerfield Raid see Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney, *Captors and Captives: The 1704 French and Indian Raid on Deerfield* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003); Demos “Unredeemed Captive.”

On March 21st, 1704, however, Maricourt died rather suddenly and unexpectedly. Throughout his career, his diplomatic efforts had been significantly under-appreciated. He had seen little reward for his service at Onondaga, and Governor Vaudreuil had recently even recommended that he be refused a pension.¹⁰⁷ After his death, Vaudreuil only offered a token gesture of praise for Maricourt, claiming in his obituary that he “avait beaucoup de credit et d’autorité parmy les Iroquois.” But even this does not seem to have been intended to praise Maricourt. In the rest of the obituary Vaudreuil spent more time praising the Le Moyne family in general, informing Pontchartrain that they were:

une famille...que les Iroquois regardent comme estant entierement dans leurs interests, et il nous est la derniere consequence d’avoir toujours quelquun quy aye du credit et de l’autorité chez eux pour contrebalancer les anglois quy sont sans cesse dans leurs villages.¹⁰⁸

Building on the family’s reputation of complete trust and influence amongst the Haudenosaunee, Vaudreuil also lay the groundwork for Maricourt’s replacement, concluding to the minister that since the officer had no heirs from either of his marriages, “ie ne vois que le S^r de Longeüil quy puisse prendre sa place.”

Longueuil, however, was not anyone's first choice for a diplomat. Having spent his teenage years in France as a page for the Maréchal de Humières, he was not as accustomed to Iroquoian languages as his brothers and was said to “entend mieux Leur langue qu’il ne la parle.”¹⁰⁹ He also still suffered from a wound received when pursuing the Haudenosaunee who attacked Lachine in 1689 and frequently took long absences from the colony to seek the curative

¹⁰⁷ ANOM, B, V.25, f.124, « Memoire du Roy aux S^{rs} Marquis de Vaudreuil et de Beauharnois Lieutenant general pour sa Ma^{te} en Intend^t de Justice Police et finances de la nouvelle France, » Versailles, 14 juin 1704.

¹⁰⁸ ANOM, C11A, V.22, f.32v, « Lettre du gouverneur général Vaudreuil au ministre, » Montréal, 3 avril 1704.

¹⁰⁹ ANOM, C11A, V.33, f.50-70v, « Lettre de Vaudreuil au ministre avec commentaires en marge, » 6 novembre 1712; Cook, “Les Voyes de Douceur,” p.127.

powers of the waters at Barèges.¹¹⁰ But Longueuil bore the Le Moyne name. Requickenened as Akouessan in 1694, he had inherited his father's status, kinship connections and reputation amongst the Onondaga. As the last Le Moyne in Canada, only Longueuil could embody the colony's relationship with the Onondaga. With the neutrality of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy hanging in the balance, Vaudreuil could ill afford to waste his influence.

More pragmatically, Vaudreuil could also trust Longueuil to work in the colony's best interests. Aged forty-seven, Longueuil had had a long career and knew the rewards that diligent service could bring.¹¹¹ In 1700, Louis XIV had raised Longueuil to a Baron in recognition of his family's service in the war, and three years later he was made a *Chevalier de l'Ordre de Saint Louis*.¹¹² Meanwhile, he had also earned a reputation as one of the few "disinterested" officers in the colony, which saw him nominated as a potential commander for Fort Niagara in 1707.¹¹³ But despite his achievements, Longueuil was always eager for more, making him particularly amenable to working with the colonial authorities. Mere weeks after Maricourt died, therefore, and when he had received word that the Onondaga were meeting with the English, Vaudreuil immediately ordered Longueuil to "aller a cette assemblée y soutenir nos interests."¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ For Longueuil's frequent travels back to France see ANOM, B, V.15, f.126, « Mémoire du Roy aux Sieurs Comte de Frontenac et de Champigny, » Versailles, 14 juillet 1690; ANOM, C11A, V.11, f.255v, « Lettre de Champigny au ministre, » 10 mai 1691; ANOM, C11A, V.12, f.335, « Extrait des lettres et demands concernant le Canada et l'Acadie, » [1693]; ANOM, B, V.22, f.274, « Liste des off^{ers} ausq^{ls} Sa Ma^{te} a permis de passer de Canada en France qui seront receus par le S^r Che^r de Galiffet sur la fluste la Seine q^l commande, » Versailles, 31 mai 1701.

¹¹¹ James Hart Merrell, *Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier* (New York: Norton, 1999), p.71; Cook, "Les Voyes de Douceur," p.121-122.

¹¹² ANOM, C11A, V.16, f.13v-14v, « Lettre de Frontenac et Champigny au ministre, » 15 octobre 1698; ANOM C11A, V.17, f.9, « Lettre de Callière et Champigny au ministre, » 20 octobre 1699; ANOM, B, V.22, f.24v-28, « Levée d'érection en baronnie de la terre et seigneurie de Longueuil en Canada pour le sieur Charles LeMoyne, » 26 janvier 1700; ANOM, C11A, V.21, f.50-59, « Lettre de Vaudreuil au ministre, » Québec, 14 novembre 1703.

¹¹³ ANOM, C11A, V.27, f.126, « Mémoire de Charon de La Barre, » [1707].

¹¹⁴ ANOM, C11A, V.22, f.14-14v, « Lettre de Vaudreuil et Beauharnois au ministre, » 17 novembre 1704; ANOM C11A, V.22, f.34v, « Lettre de Vaudreuil au ministre, », Québec, 16 novembre 1704. This seems to have been Longueuil's first diplomatic voyage, but two documents compiled by Brodhead indicate that Longueuil travelled to Detroit and the White River in 1700 to rally France's allies to war against the English. This suggests that the date is incorrect, since Longueuil never visited Detroit, but his son Paul Le Moyne, Chevalier de Longueuil, was the fort's commander during the War of the Austrian Succession. Brodhead et al., *DCNY*, V.9, p.704-708.

It appears that Longueuil's first visit to Onondaga successfully re-knit the kinship ties torn apart by Maricourt's death. That autumn Ohonsiowanne brought several Onondaga and Seneca delegates to visit Vaudreuil and "pleurer la mort de votre fils Maricour." During their visit, however, the Onondaga seemed more concerned with voicing their concerns about recent Odawa attacks.¹¹⁵ The following spring, more Onondaga headmen arrived in Montreal ostensibly to "(rattacher) le soleil qui estoit obscurcy par la perte que lon a faite de feu le S^r de Maricour," but also complained about Odawa violence. Fortunately for Vaudreuil, as their adopted kinsman, Longueuil was able to soothe the Onondaga frustrations by accepting their condolences and reciprocating their gesture "par un collier quil les remercie du souvenir qu'ils ont de son frere."¹¹⁶ Taking the chance to build on this restored friendship, Vaudreuil beseeched the francophile headman Garonguié "a ouvrir ton coeur aux S^{rs} Longueuil, de Joncaire, et de Lachauvignerye quand ils seront la hault comme si cetoit moy mesme."¹¹⁷ Assigning Michel Maray de La Chauvignerie as Longueuil's interpreter, Vaudreuil offered the officer as a direct line of communication between the Onondaga and Onontio, forcing Akouessan to take flight once again in the service of the colony.

Longueuil, however, was reluctant to fulfill his kinship obligations. In 1706, he informed several Onondaga diplomats that "il ne vouloit pas se mésler des affaires comme son père, et ces frères avoient fait."¹¹⁸ Diplomacy had brought Maricourt few rewards, and Longueuil likely sought a surer path to advancement, preferring instead to petition for promotion as major of

¹¹⁵ ANOM, C11A, V.22, f.52-52v, « Paroles de La Grande Terre, chef onontagué, » 18 octobre 1704; ANOM, C11A, V.22, f.57-57v, « Paroles des Tsonnontouans, » 12 septembre 1704.

¹¹⁶ ANOM, C11A, V.22, f.278-279v, « Réponse de Ramezay, » 15 avril 1705.

¹¹⁷ ANOM, C11A, V.22, f.281, « Réponse de Vaudreuil aux deux colliers du chef iroquois Garonguié, » 16 avril 1705.

¹¹⁸ ANOM, C11A, V.30, f.252, « Lettre de Raudot fils au ministre, » [1710].

Montreal.¹¹⁹ Ironically though, it was his influence amongst the Onondaga that ultimately secured him this position, for the Governor of Montreal, Claude de Ramezay, argued that he "me serait dun grand secours parceque jaures aupres de moy un homme qui entend et parle la langue des sauvages auquel jaures plus de confiance qua un interprete."¹²⁰ Nevertheless this promotion gave Longueuil another excuse to ignore his kinship obligations, and he requested exemption from travelling to Onondaga "comme il est avancé en âge et fort incommodé de ses blessures."¹²¹

In August 1707, Vaudreuil explained to an Onondaga delegation who had come to Montreal to mourn the recent death of Jacques Le Ber, that:

vous me demandéz nostre fils M^r de Longeüil pour faire vos affaires, comme faisoit autre fois son pere âcoûessen M^r Lemoine et comme a fait depuis M^r de Maricourt, J'ay de la Joye de voir que cette famille vous est toujours considerable, et je nestime pas moins M^r de Longeüil que vous faites, je ne vous l'ay point Envoyé ce printêms comme vous me l'avéz demandé parce que j'ay eu besoin de luy icy, Ce que le grand Onnontio Le Roy luy ayant donné la charge de Major, sa presence est toujours nécessaire en ville, Cependant je vous donne ce collier pour vous dire que je le regarde toujours comme vôstre homme d'affaires.¹²²

Given how important Longueuil was to his diplomatic strategy, Vaudreuil's willingness to indulge his reluctance to visit the Onondaga might seem strange. But the governor was apparently confident that Longueuil's reputation amongst the nation was enough, for he reported to Pontchartrain that the officer was "généralement aymé, et Estimé de tout le monde Les Sauvages mesme ont beaucoup de confiance en luy."¹²³ Furthermore, though Longueuil was no longer required to travel to the nation, like Maricourt he was still able to fulfill some of his

¹¹⁹ ANOM, C11A, V.23, f.200, « Résumé d'une lettre de Longueuil avec commentaires, » 1703; ANOM, D2C, V.49, p.133 [transcript], « État-Major Canada 1702, » [1702].

¹²⁰ ANOM, C11A, V.22, f.12v-13, « Lettre de Ramezay, gouverneur de Montréal, au ministre, » Québec, 12 octobre 1706. Others also supported Longueuil for the same reasons. See ANOM, C11A, V.120, f.93, « Extraits des lettres concernant le Canada avec commentaires, » 1706; ANOM, C11A, V.23, f.58v, « Lettre de Vaudreuil et les intendants Raudot au ministre, » Québec, 3 novembre 1706.

¹²¹ « Extraits des lettres concernant le Canada avec commentaires, » [1706].

¹²² ANOM, C11A, V.26, f.91v, « Réponse de Vaudreuil aux Onontagués, » 17 août 1707.

¹²³ ANOM, C11A, V.28, f.153v, « Lettre de Vaudreuil au ministre, » Québec, 12 novembre 1708.

kinship obligations by hosting those Onondaga who visited Montreal. Whilst there is little evidence of who stayed with Longueuil and when, documents from 1715, 1717 and 1720 show reimbursements paid to Longueuil for expenses related to the "sauvages Iroquois...toujours Receus chez luy a Montreal."¹²⁴ Working together, it seems that Vaudreuil and Longueuil reached a compromise that served both imperial and personal interests, allowing Longueuil to avoid the more burdensome aspects of cross-cultural diplomacy in exchange for his service in Montreal as a major who reportedly fulfilled "parfaitment le devoir de son Employ."¹²⁵

Intendant Antoine-Denis Raudot, however, accused Vaudreuil of putting Longueuil's personal interests before the good of the colony. Most of all, Raudot criticised Vaudreuil's decision to let Longueuil stay in Montreal whilst Joncaire was sent abroad, which he believed was creating an imbalance within the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. With more direct access to Onontio, he argued, the Seneca were becoming more influential than the Onondaga, who were traditionally considered as the central hearth of the confederacy. Indeed, Joncaire would later even propose moving this metaphorical hearth to the Seneca, which would be poorly received by the other Haudenosaunee nations.¹²⁶ Ideally, Raudot wished to develop strong kinship ties with both nations to keep these powerful allies on the French side, and suggested that Longueuil should take his eldest son, also named Charles, with him to Onondaga:

pour l'Instruire des manières iroquoises, se faire connoistre d'Eux et y acquérir leur amitié afin de pouvoir y aller a la place de son père et qu'on Eût toujours dans cette Colonie des personnes aimées et considérées de ces Sauvages, et propres à allez chez Eux, quand on voudroit.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ ANOM, B, V.37, f.200, « Le ministre à M. de Longueuil, » 13 juillet 1715; ANOM, C11A, V.38, f.42v, « Lettre de Vaudreuil et Bégon au Conseil de la Marine, » Québec, 17 novembre 1717; ANOM, C11A, V.42, f.21, « Lettre de Vaudreuil et Bégon au Conseil de la Marine et de délibération du Conseil, » Québec, 26 octobre 1720.

¹²⁵ « Lettre de Ramezay, » 12 octobre, 1705. For Longueuil's promotion, see ANOM, C11A, V.120, f.93, « Extraits des lettres concernant le Canada avec commentaires, » 1706; ANOM, C11A, V.23, f.58v, « Lettre de Vaudreuil et les intendants Raudot au ministre, » Québec, 3 novembre 1706.

¹²⁶ Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, p.225.

¹²⁷ « Lettre de Raudot fils au ministre, » 1710.

To further encourage this, Raudot recommended the young Longueuil for promotion to *enseigne* in 1710, forever associating the Le Moyne family's diplomatic actions with tangible rewards.¹²⁸

Longueuil's prolonged absence from Onondaga afforded the British many opportunities to undermine French influence amongst the nation. The Anglo-Dutch agent Laurence Claessen spent several long sojourns at Onondaga, building relationships with the more anglophile families. Lacking kinship connections and the support of his own government, however, his efforts had little lasting impact.¹²⁹ But where Claessen failed, Abraham and Johannes Schuyler proved far more successful. Like the Le Moynes, the Schuylers had strong generational ties to the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, originating with their father Philip Pieterse Schuyler. Tasked with stirring the Haudenosaunee to war on behalf of Great Britain, the brothers arrived at Onondaga in June 1709. By the end of the summer, they had successfully convinced almost all of the Mohawk warriors, two thirds from the Cayuga and Oneida, and even one quarter from the Onondaga to turn on the French and participate in a war feast at Albany. Marching northwards, these Haudenosaunee warriors joined 1500 British regulars and militia led by Francis Nicholson, but the invasion was halted in its tracks on the shores of Lake Champlain by disease, deteriorating provisions and desertion.¹³⁰

At the same time, several francophile Onondaga families sent Longueuil a string of wampum, "pour stimuler a aler chez eux prendre possession de sa Cabane et racomoder les affaires que les flamants avoient gastées."¹³¹ Though once reluctant to serve, Longueuil reportedly brought this wampum to Vaudreuil himself and requested leave to make the journey.

¹²⁸ ANOM, D2C, V.49, f.159, « Liste generale des officiers, » 1 juillet 1710.

¹²⁹ Claessen had been captured by Kahnawake Mohawk during the Schenectady raid in 1690 (led by Sainte-Hélène), meaning he had relatively few connections to the Onondaga. Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, p.220.

¹³⁰ Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, p. 226; Aquila, *Iroquois Restoration*, p.86.

¹³¹ By "flamants," the Onondaga orators were likely referring to the Anglo-Dutch Schuyler brothers.

According to Madame de Vaudreuil, however, her husband did not dare let Longueuil go out of fear "qu'il ne luy arriva cequi estoit arrivé autrefois au S^r Chevalier D'aux." In 1690, the Chevalier d'O had been tortured by the Haudenosaunee whilst acting as Frontenac's envoy, and his fate had served as a cautionary tale in Canada ever since, particularly in times of heightened tensions.¹³² Even so, Longueuil reportedly insisted, perhaps believing that risking his life would earn him the recognition he desired and maybe even secure his promotion to *lieutenant du roi*.¹³³ At the very least, his performance of bravery and sacrifice in the face of danger earned him the patronage of Madame de Vaudreuil, who asked Pontchartrain to reward both Longueuil and Joncaire, whom she claimed "se sont exposez a estre brûlez vifs pour la conservation du pays en maintenant la paix avec les yroquois qui sans eux nous auroient infailliblement fait la guerre."¹³⁴

But Longueuil had little to worry about. Much like Maricourt's arrival seven years earlier, Longueuil's return to Onondaga was treated as Akouessan's homecoming and he was greeted "avec des temoinages de joye" with "chacun s'efforçant de luy faire caresse."¹³⁵ The Onondaga promised Longueuil that they would never take up the hatchet against the French, but reiterated that they were still allies of the English. Reassured, Longueuil brought several Onondaga to Montreal in January 1710, who recounted to Vaudreuil that Longueuil "a paru comme un Soleil qui venoit pour disiper tous les nuages et il nous a remis a toute la joye dans le Coeur."¹³⁶ Believing that the governor had been to blame for Longueuil's prolonged absence, they begged "onontiau Leur pere de ne point Empescher Leur fils M^r de Longueuil daller chez Eux Comme ils

¹³² After being sent to treat with the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Chevalier d'O was captured and tortured whilst two of his attendants were burned to death. The Chevalier survived but was handed over to the English at Albany as a prisoner of war. Eccles, *Frontenac*, p.230.

¹³³ Across the French army, sacrifice was being increasingly seen as meritorious and part of diligent service to the king. Jay M. Smith, *The Culture of Merit: Nobility, Royal Service, and the Making of Absolute Monarchy in France, 1600-1789* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), p. 172.

¹³⁴ ANOM, C11A, V.31, f.67-67v, « Mémoire de la marquise de Vaudreuil au ministre Pontchartrain, » [1710]

¹³⁵ ANOM, C11A, V.82-82v, « Lettre de Vaudreuil au ministre, » Québec, 14 novembre 1709.

¹³⁶ ANOM, C11A, V.31, f.89, « Paroles des Onnotagués et Réponse de Vaudreuil, » 28-29 janvier 1710.

luy demande Et le prie Instament de ne Leurs pas Refuser cette grace."¹³⁷ As far as the Onondaga were concerned, Longueuil had finally embraced his role as Akouessan and they were not willing to let Vaudreuil clip his wings.

On November 14th, 1709, Longueuil informed Pontchartrain of his exploits at Onondaga. Whilst the letter no longer exists, Longueuil probably echoed Madame de Vaudreuil's version of events, evoking the hardships and dangers he had overcome thanks to his zeal and commitment to France.¹³⁸ His account must have made an impression on Pontchartrain, for the minister reportedly read it to the king himself, whom he recalled "a veu avec plaisir le succès de la negotiation que vous avez fait avec les Iroquois." As a result, Pontchartrain promoted Longueuil to *lieutenant du roi* in Montreal, recommending that he "redoubler vostre application et vostre zele pour le Service afin de meriter les nouvelles graces."¹³⁹ As the War of the Spanish Succession intensified, it seems, diplomacy had become increasingly associated with military service and earned diplomats similar rewards, finally convincing the reluctant Longueuil that his Onondaga inheritance could be as much a blessing as a curse.

But despite Longueuil's best efforts, by spring 1711 peace with the Haudenosaunee Confederacy was once again in peril. In April 1710, three Mohawks and one Mahican travelled to London with Pieter Schuyler and Francis Nicholson to meet with Queen Anne in order to request military aid and Protestant missionaries to curb French influence in their nation. Known as the "Four Indian Kings," their embassy prompted a renewal of British military and diplomatic efforts in North America.¹⁴⁰ In October 1710, Port Royal fell to the English, forcing the

¹³⁷ ANOM, C11A, V.30, f.126-127, « Paroles des Onontagués, » 4 septembre 1709.

¹³⁸ Alexandre Dubé, "Les Amérindiens sous le regard des bureaux de la Marine (1660-1760). Quelques pistes de réflexion sur un objet administratif," in Gilles Havard and Mickaël Augeron eds., *Un continent en partage: Cinq siècles de rencontres entre Amérindiens et Français* (Paris: Les Indes savants, 2013), pp.153-175, p.168.

¹³⁹ ANOM, B, V.32, f.32v, « Lettre à Mr le Baron de Longueuil, » Marly, 10 mai 1710.

¹⁴⁰ Eric Hinderaker, "The 'Four Indian Kings' and the Imaginative Construction of the First British Empire," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 53, no. 3 (1996): 487-526.

Haudenosaunee to seriously reconsider French claims to power on the continent. Closer to home, several Onondaga anglophiles also called upon Pieter Schuyler to destroy a French blockhouse built without their permission.¹⁴¹ As tensions escalated, Vaudreuil gathered warriors from the *pays d'en haut* in Montreal, causing many Haudenosaunee to believe another French invasion was imminent. Longueuil and Joncaire were sent to nip this anxiety in the bud and “assurer liroquois quil na rien a craindre.”¹⁴² Returning with several Onondaga and Seneca delegates, they organised a meeting with several delegates from the western nations, where Vaudreuil reassured the Haudenosaunee that they had little to fear so long as they remained neutral.¹⁴³ Whilst almost one hundred Onondaga joined Nicholson’s second failed invasion of Canada that summer, the majority of the Seneca and Onondaga remained neutral, suggesting that the connection embodied by Akouessan and Sononchiez was still very much alive.¹⁴⁴

After 1711, Longueuil's diplomatic voyages became almost annual occurrences. Both Vaudreuil and Raudot praised his continued service, informing Pontchartrain that:

Sa Majesté doit estre assurée du zel du Sieur de Longueil pour tout ce qui regard son service; depuis la mort du Sieur d Maricourt son frere il a esté obligé pour mesnager les iroquois, de faire plusieurs voyages chez eux, et meme d’y faire quelques sejour, abandonnant volontiers sa famille et toutes ses affaires particulieres pour Mesnager ces nations, ses negociations avec Eux ont toujours reussy avec tous les agrements qu’on peut avoit avec des nations comme celles la, il est fort sensible, Monseigneur, a la grace que Vous luy avez procuré l’année derniere et Les Sieurs de Vaudreüil et Raudot peuvent tous assurer par avance qu’il meritera toutes celles que vous luy faites Esperer.¹⁴⁵

Indeed, though following in his younger brother’s footsteps, Longueuil had been treated very differently. Whilst Maricourt had been a more willing and gifted diplomat, his efforts had been

¹⁴¹ Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, p.227.

¹⁴² ANOM, C11A, V.32, f.29v, « Lettre de Vaudreuil au ministre, » Québec, 25 avril 1711.

¹⁴³ ANOM, C11A, V.32, f.100-103v, « Paroles de Vaudreuil aux Onontagués et Tsonnontouans venus à Montréal avec Longueuil, Joncaire et La Chauvignerie, » [1711].

¹⁴⁴ Aquila, *Iroquois Restoration*, p.89-90; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, p.226.

¹⁴⁵ ANOM, C11A, V.32, f.210v-211, « Lettre de Vaudreuil et Raudot au ministre, » Québec, 7 novembre 1711.

centred on colonial security and had come at an uncertain time for French policy, which meant that he had not earned the recognition he deserved. With the War of the Spanish Succession, however, maintaining the neutrality of Haudenosaunee Confederacy became an international concern, turning diplomats into important imperial agents who were rewarded in the same way as military officers. Entering into the diplomatic service at this critical time, Longueuil was better positioned to turn his familial obligation into an opportunity for advancement, deploying his kinship connections in collaborating with the colonial government, advancing imperial interests in return for the rewards and promotions he desired.

Tichou-mingo or Tascamingoutchy? : War and Peace in Louisiana

In Louisiana, the War of the Spanish Succession brought its own complications. In 1702, a patrol led by Louis Juchereau de Saint-Denis, an officer and relative of the Le Moyne family, was ambushed by the Chitimacha whilst exploring the Mississippi north of Fort La Boulaye.¹⁴⁶ Pursuing his assailants, Saint-Denis captured several enemy warriors and planned to sell them into slavery as punishment. Bienville, however, could not let this pass. Only a few months earlier at Mobile, Iberville had pledged that the French would not take slaves and Bienville could not be seen to tolerate a betrayal of this agreement. He publicly chastised Saint-Denis, an act that created long-lasting tensions between the two men, but set a poignant precedent in Louisiana.¹⁴⁷ For the next few years, Bienville made efforts to confiscate Indigenous slaves from French colonists, reaffirming French policy that only legitimised slaves taken from nations with whom

¹⁴⁶ Louis Juchereau de Saint-Denis was the uncle of Iberville's wife, Marie-Thérèse Pollet de la Combe. Winston De Ville, "Juchereau de Saint-Denis, Louis," in *DCB*, V.3, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–accessed 20/02/ 2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/juchereau_de_saint_denis_louis_3E.html. For more on this incident, see Ellis, "The Many Ties of the Petites Nations," p.127-130.

¹⁴⁷ Pénicaut incorrectly places this event in 1704 and suggests that the French and Chitimacha were at war as a result of the murder of the missionary St Cosme, which will be described later. "Relation de Pénicaut," p.460-461; Higginbotham, *Old Mobile*, p.93-94.

the nation was at war.¹⁴⁸ With a firm hand Bienville hence tried his best to uphold and maintain the “supreme” relationship his older brother had formed at Mobile, demonstrating himself as a worthy *tichou-mingo* who could rule in his stead.

Other transgressions, however, proved much harder to control. Much as the English sought to undermine the neutrality of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, traders from Carolina attempted to turn the Mississippian nations against Louisiana. One such nation was the Alabama. Recently devastated by smallpox, the Alabama played the French and English off against one another to ensure their survival, courting both to see who might offer better terms of alliance.¹⁴⁹ In October 1702, Bienville welcomed forty Alabama to Fort Louis, concluding an alliance and brokering a peace with their former enemies—the Mobilians, Tohomés, Choctaws, Pensacolas and Apalachees. Early in 1703, however, the Alabama were also visited by Thomas Nairne, who attempted to use the recent English conquest of Saint Augustine to prove that his nation was the superior ally. Within a few months, he was successful, and the Alabama began mercilessly raiding the same nations to whom they had only recently pledged peace at Mobile.¹⁵⁰

Despite these setbacks, Bienville continued to court the Alabama. In late 1703, he welcomed a *mico* named Deer's Foot to Mobile, who informed Bienville that his nation had expelled Nairne and wished to reaffirm their alliance with France. As a gesture of goodwill, Deer's Foot offered the French colonists much-needed supplies of corn, but only if they came to collect it at his village. Bienville cautiously agreed, sending five Canadians to retrieve the corn. En route, however, Deer's Foot and his warriors turned on the Canadians while they were sleeping. In his vivid account, Pénicaut recalled that the Alabama stole the Canadians' muskets

¹⁴⁸ ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.574, « Bienville au ministre, » Port-Dauphin, 27 octobre 1711.

¹⁴⁹ Sheri M. Shuck-Hall, “Alabama and Coushatta Diaspora and Coalescence in the Mississippian Shatter Zone,” in Ethridge and Shuck-Hall, *Mapping the Mississippian Shatter Zone*, pp.250-271.

¹⁵⁰ Ethridge, *From Chicaza to Chickasaw*, p.211.

and used them against them, killing four, and tomahawking a fifth in the back as he fled.¹⁵¹ In reality, two men survived and made their way back to Mobile, where their reports of Deer Foot's treachery elicited an immediate retaliation from Bienville.¹⁵²

Taking inspiration from his homeland, Bienville offered a musket for each Alabama scalp brought to Mobile, "comme il s'est pratiqué long temps en Canada."¹⁵³ This was likely a reference to the policy implemented by Governor Frontenac between 1691 and 1698, who had offered bounties of ten *écus* (roughly thirty *livres*) to France's allies for each enemy scalp—English or Indigenous—despite protests from Pontchartrain, who criticised the exorbitant expense such a strategy entailed.¹⁵⁴ Bienville, however, argued that in Louisiana such a bounty allowed him to arm his Mississippian allies, reaffirming their alliance and putting them in a better position to make war on the English and their allies.¹⁵⁵ Calling the *petites nations* to arms, Bienville was met that autumn by almost two hundred Mobilian, Tohomé, Little Tohomé, Pensacola, Pascagoula and Choctaw warriors who, in his words, were "fort zellées, et contents que je leurs donnassent l'occassion de faire paroistre leurs attachements pour les Francois."¹⁵⁶

More likely, however, these nations sought to test Bienville's commitment to protecting and supporting them. In many Mississippian cultures, a *mico*'s younger brother could also

¹⁵¹ "Relation de Pénicaut" p.428-429.

¹⁵² Ethridge, *From Chicaza to Chickasaw*, p.210-211.

¹⁵³ ANOM, C11A, V.1, f.525, « Extraits des lettres de la Louisiane par un commis de la Marine: Le S^r de Bienville 28 juillet, » [1706].

¹⁵⁴ Jean-François Lozier "Lever des chevelures en Nouvelle-France: la politique française du paiement des scalps," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 56, no. 4 (2003): 513–42. For the value of an *écu*, see James S Pritchard, *In Search of Empire: The French in the Americas, 1670-1730* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.xxv.

¹⁵⁵ There is some debate over how much the bounty was. On March 14th, twenty Chickasaws were paid one musket and five pounds of shot and powder for each of the five scalps they brought, "suivant le traité passé avec eux." Pénicaut, however, states that the bounty was 10 *écus* per scalp or prisoner, whilst Bienville stated that he offered just one musket per scalp. Either way, Pontchartrain found the scheme to be "trop cher." La Harpe, *Journal historique*, p.83; "Relation de Pénicaut," p.435; ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.508, « Résumé par un commis d'une lettre de Bienville, » [1706]; ANOM, C11A, V.1, f. 525, « Extraits des lettres de la Louisiane par un commis de la Marine: Le S^r de Bienville 28 juillet, » [1706]

¹⁵⁶ ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.449-450, « Bienville au Ministre, » Fort Louis, 6 septembre 1704.

assume a military role, acting as his *tascamingoutchy*, or lieutenant.¹⁵⁷ Since Iberville was still in France, Bienville's allies likely wished to know whether he would remain his brother's servant, or take up arms as his lieutenant. Matching their show of force with sixty Canadians and gifts of firearms, Bienville seemed to confirm the latter. Before the war party departed, therefore, the Mississippian warriors held a feast in the Mobilian village, likely intended to reframe the alliance with France along more martial lines. Together, the Mississippians and Canadians sang, ate, smoked and danced, forming bonds of martial brotherhood, to the point that Bienville claimed that "on diroit que se c'estoit qu'un mesme Nation."¹⁵⁸

At this feast Bienville also underwent several Indigenous ceremonies designed to induct him into his new role as Louisiana's *tascamingoutchy*. One such ritual, it seems, was tattooing. Evidence is scant, but before his death in September 1704, Tonty wrote of an anonymous officer from a distinguished family, who:

outre une image de la vierge avec l'enfant Jésus, une grande croix sur l'estomac avec les paroles miraculeuses qui apparurent à Constantin et une infinité de piqures dans le goût des sauvages, avait un serpent qui lui faisait le tour du corps dont la langue pointue et prête à darder venait aboutir sur une extrémité que vous devinez si vous le pouvez.¹⁵⁹

Most historians have agreed that Tonty could only have been describing Bienville.¹⁶⁰ In 1720, Bertet de la Clue confirmed Tonty's observations, describing how Bienville often stripped naked to go into battle, showing off the many tattoos he had acquired.¹⁶¹ Tattooing held gendered,

¹⁵⁷ Milne, *Natchez Country*, p.69; Galloway, "'The Chief Who is Your Father,'" p.351.

¹⁵⁸ « Bienville au ministre, » 4 septembre 1704, f.151.

¹⁵⁹ Cited in Arnaud Balvay, *L'Épée et la Plume*, p.182.

¹⁶⁰ Arnaud Balvay remarks that in a private discussion with Gregory Waskelkov and Patricia Galloway they agreed that Tonty must have been referring to Bienville. In later works on the subject, Gilles Havard, Gordon Sayre, Katherine Dauge-Roth have all maintained this notion. Balvay, *L'Épée et la Plume*, p.190 n.101; Havard, *Empire et métissages*, p.604; Havard, "Le rire des jésuites" p.559; Gordon M. Sayre, "'Take My Scalp, Please!' Colonial Mimesis and the French Origins of the Mississippi Tall Tale," in Matt Cohen and Jeffrey Glover eds., *Colonial Mediascapes: Sensory Worlds of the Early Americas* (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2014); Katherine Dauge-Roth, *Signing the Body: Marks on the Skin in Early Modern France* (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020), p.156-158.

¹⁶¹ Balvay, *L'Épée et la Plume*, p.183-184.

social and political significance amongst Mississippian nations, with the designs representing a person's unique place in society.¹⁶² For warriors, tattoos were usually marks of manhood and prowess, acting, in the words of Gordon Sayre, as “meritographs or texts recording noteworthy deeds permanently attached to the authors.”¹⁶³ Made painfully with needles or sharpened bone, the “*infinité de piqûres*” on Bienville's skin likely documented the number of men or dangerous animals he had killed or captured.¹⁶⁴ Meanwhile, the snake that wound round Bienville's lower torso was a common Mississippian symbol of leadership—his counterpart amongst the Natchez, the *mico's* younger brother, for instance, was known as the *Serpent Piqué*, or Tattooed Serpent.¹⁶⁵ Decorated by his allies, Bienville literally incorporated Mississippian warrior culture into his new persona, permanently and visibly marking himself as the French military leader.

Bienville willingly embraced both this tattooing and his newfound persona. Whilst frowned upon in Europe as barbaric, tattoos similarly evoked a masculine, military ethos, often connected to the martial prowess of the Picts or Ottoman Janissaries.¹⁶⁶ In Louisiana, many officers, including Jean-Bernard Bossu, Jean-François-Benjamin Dumont de Montigny, and even Bienville's brother Châteauguay, acquired tattoos to perform their masculinity and ingratiate themselves with their allies.¹⁶⁷ Rather than simply accepting Mississippian designs, however, Bienville also chose to adorn his body with Christian iconography, perhaps as a way of acting out his French identity in a Mississippian manner. Moreover, through the juxtaposition of the Virgin Mary, whose femininity represented peace and protection to many Indigenous peoples across the Gulf of Mexico, and the militant words of God that appeared to Constantine —*in hoc signo vinces*,

¹⁶² Ellis, “The Many Ties of the Petites Nations,” p.33-36.

¹⁶³ Gordon M. Sayre, ““Take My Scalp, Please!”,” p.216.

¹⁶⁴ For the significance of tattooing in Franco-Indigenous relations see Arnaud Balvay, “Tattooing and its Role in French-Native American Relations in the Eighteenth Century,” *French Colonial History* 9, no.1 (2008): 1-14.

¹⁶⁵ Milne, *Natchez Country*, p.69.

¹⁶⁶ Havard, “Le rire des jésuites,” p.559.

¹⁶⁷ What Châteauguay had tattooed on his body, however, is unknown. Balvay, *L'Épée et la Plume*, p.182-3.

[in this sign thou shalt conquer]—Bienville corporeally performed his twin roles as both a peacemaker and a warmonger, embodying the expectations of the cross-cultural alliance he led.¹⁶⁸

Whilst he looked and acted the part, Bienville's first excursion against the Alabama was a disaster. Before they had even left, two warriors managed to mortally wound themselves with gunpowder. This was seen as a bad omen by many, especially the Choctaw, who abandoned the war party in droves. Not long afterwards, illness struck several Tohomé, including their *mico*, leading them to follow suit before the situation worsened. Once en route to the Alabama, the war party then wasted five days trying to find their enemies, which many blamed on their Mobilian guides, whom they suspected were still allies with the Alabama.¹⁶⁹ Bienville returned to Mobile and regrouped, setting out again a few days later without any Indigenous allies. After ten days, the Canadians stumbled upon an Alabama camp. Planning a nighttime ambush, however, they did not account for the dense thickets covering the hill leading to the camp, which made so much noise that the Alabama were quickly alerted to their presence. Two Alabama and two Canadians were killed in the ensuing clash, and several others injured.

Fearing losing face to his allies or superiors, Bienville claimed victory, reporting that “quoy que cette attaque n’ait pas estez aussy heureuse que nous l’eussions bien souhaittez elle a jetté une grande terreur parmy nos Ennemis comme nous l’avons appris.”¹⁷⁰ Apparently, the Alabama were unnerved by the fact that Bienville and his men had reached their villages undetected and significantly reduced their raiding on his allies. The war, however, continued for

¹⁶⁸ For the image of Mary in diplomacy in Spanish Texas and French Louisiana, see Juliana Barr, “A Diplomacy of Gender: Rituals of First Contact in the ‘Land of the Tejas,’” *William and Mary Quarterly* 61, No.3 (July 2004)

¹⁶⁹ Ethridge suggests that the Mobilians and Alabama were not allied but may have seen themselves as allies after the Alabama smoked the calumet with the French. She suggests it is more likely they were as hesitant as the other allied warriors to encounter the Alabama after the ill omens. Ethridge, *Chicaza to Chickasaw*, p.213.

¹⁷⁰ For the complete narrative see ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.449-467, « Bienville au ministre, » Fort Louis de la Louisiane, 6 septembre 1704. Penicaut also gives an account, although dates it incorrectly to 1702. Richebourg McWilliams, *Fleur de Lys and Calumet: Being the Penicaut Narrative of French Adventure in Louisiana*. (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 2011), p.65-67.

seven more years. For Bienville this ongoing conflict presented an opportunity to strengthen his new alliance. Much as Onontio had rallied his Indigenous allies against the Haudenosaunee, Bienville united his Mississippian allies against the Alabama. Militarising their alliance, he continued to welcome Alabama scalps as symbols of friendship, especially from the Choctaw and Chickasaw.¹⁷¹ Gradually, Bienville came to be seen as more of a military leader than a "Master of Peace," earning the respect of his allies through aggression, not diplomacy. This may also explain why Bienville was so reluctant to end the war despite Pontchartrain's orders to bring peace to the region. As such, the war raged until May 1711.¹⁷²

Governing the Lower Mississippi Valley with an iron fist, however, Bienville had to respond to any perceived affront to his alliance with violence. On January 1st, 1707, therefore, after learning that the missionary Saint-Cosme had been killed by the Chitimacha, Bienville rallied his allies against this nation. In March, he sent Saint-Denis with a force of Canadians, Biloxi, Bayagoula, Natchez and Chawasha to destroy one of their villages.¹⁷³ Twenty Chitimacha were captured in the raid. On this occasion, Bienville allowed them to be sold amongst the colonists as domestic slaves, evoking the right to enslave anyone captured in a "just war", which was more typically used by the Spanish, especially in neighbouring New Mexico.¹⁷⁴ This decision, however, both contravened Iberville's earlier promises and ran counter to the practices of Indigenous slavery in Canada and the French Antilles, where slaves were preferably bought or ransomed from other Indigenous nations.¹⁷⁵ Bienville thus passed the task of enslavement to his

¹⁷¹ La Harpe, *Journal historique*, p.95, 103.

¹⁷² ANOM, B, V.30, f.181v-183, « Lettre au S. de Bienville, », Versailles, 11 juillet 1709; ANOM, B, V.32, f.37-37v, « Lettre à M. de Bienville, », Marly, 10 mai 1710; La Harpe, *Journal historique*, p.110.

¹⁷³ La Harpe, *Journal historique*, p.101-102; Ellis, "The Many Ties of the Petites Nations," p.132-134

¹⁷⁴ See Andrés Reséndez, *The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement in America*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016).

¹⁷⁵ Brett Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance: Indigenous and Atlantic Slavery in New France* (Chapel Hill; University of North Carolina Press, 2012), p.137-8, 196-7.

allies and continued to accept Chitimacha slaves as diplomatic gifts until 1718. Over time, this provided the male-dominated colony with a much-desired influx of domestic labour and sexual partners free from kinship obligations. Bienville himself owned at least seven Chitimacha slaves, probably all women.¹⁷⁶ At the same time, it also sparked a desire for enslaved African labour. In 1708, Bienville petitioned Pontchartrain to allow Louisiana colonists to trade their Chitimacha slaves with planters in Saint Domingue at a rate of two Chitimacha for one enslaved African.¹⁷⁷ It was not for another decade, however, that African slaves arrived in Louisiana in any great number, imported by the *Compagnie des Indes* from 1719.

After the initial attack on the Chitimacha, Bienville was presented with Saint-Cosme's alleged murderer. Bringing down the full weight of his martial authority, Bienville wrote that he "luy [fit] casser la tête dans la place du fort."¹⁷⁸ Pénicaud elaborated further, describing how the Chitimacha prisoner was attached to a wooden horse before his head was smashed in, and "sa chevelure fut levée et son corps fut jeté à l'eau."¹⁷⁹ With such a gruesome execution, Bienville probably intended to send a powerful message to his allies and enemies alike. But when Pontchartrain heard of his actions, he was outraged. Above all, the minister feared that such violence "n'ayt des suites facheuses pour la colonie."¹⁸⁰ Rumours spread by Bienville's rival, the royal scrivener Nicolas de La Salle, also suggested that Bienville had burned an Alabama alive in

¹⁷⁶ For the impact of Louisiana's gender imbalance on slaving practices, see Ellis, "The Many Ties of the Petites Nations," p.98-104. See also Daniel Usner, *American Indians in Early New Orleans, From Calumet to Raquette*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2018), p.3-4.

¹⁷⁷ ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.522-523, « Résumé des lettres de la Louisiane par un commis de la Marine, » 28 juillet 1708; Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), p.58.

¹⁷⁸ ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.101, « Bienville au ministre, » Fort Louis, 25 février 1708.

¹⁷⁹ "Relation de Pénicaud," p.435. Pénicaud, however, places this event in 1703, not 1704.

¹⁸⁰ ANOM, B, V.29, f.263, « Lettre au S^r de Bienville, » Versailles, 30 juin 1707; Ethridge, *From Chicaza to Chickasaw*, p.218.

1706, prompting a full investigation into the acting governor's apparently tyrannical management of Louisiana's Indigenous alliances.¹⁸¹

Bienville, however, sought to allay the minister's concerns, assuring him that such executions were in the colony's best interest since:

c'est la coutume dans toutes les nations, non Seulement de ce continent mais encore celle du Canada, de tuer autant d'hommes a leurs ennemis qu'ils en ont eu de tués, Sans quoy il est honteux parmy eux de parler de raccomodement, Si on ne s'est vengé d'homme pour homme.

Trapped between the need to live up to the expectations of his allies and his superiors, Bienville tried to tread a fine line between the two, balancing his Indigenous and French personae. He drew his inspiration from Governor Frontenac, who, he reminded Pontchartrain, had put a stop to the war with the Haudenosaunee Confederacy by "les faire bruler Sur la fin cruellement femmes et hommes" which had had "Si bon effet qu'ils ne venoit en guerre apres qu'en crainte."¹⁸² Like Bienville, Frontenac had also adopted an Indigenous persona, engaging in war dances and performing other aspects of Indigenous martial masculinity, without ever becoming "ensauvagé."¹⁸³ Bienville pledged that whilst he would engage in seemingly brutal displays of Mississippian vengeance to maintain his alliances, he and his men would ensure that French standards were upheld, promising not to kill any women, "quoyque les Sauvages le fassent parmy eux." In other words, Bienville argued that performing his Mississippian persona would not hinder France's imperial ambitions, but in fact advance them, allowing the French to assert their power and control in Louisiana as Frontenac had in Canada.

¹⁸¹ ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.555-556, « Lettre du S. de la Salle, » Fort Louis de la Louisiane, 7 septembre 1706; ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.257-258, « Interrogatoire fait d'office par ordre de M^r le comte de Pontchartrain par nous commissaire de la Marine, » 24 février 1708.

¹⁸² « Bienville au ministre, » 25 février, 1708.

¹⁸³ Havard, "Le rire des jésuites," p.555.

Amongst the Choctaw and Chickasaw, however, Bienville's martial persona held very little weight. Both nations had thousands of warriors—increasingly armed with guns— whilst Louisiana could only muster a few hundred men and perhaps some of their allies.¹⁸⁴ With these two nations, therefore, Bienville was obliged to maintain his role as the *tichou-mingo* and uphold the alliance made by his brother, the *fanimingo*, in 1702. Much like Maricourt and Longueuil with the Haudenosaunee, Bienville tried to maintain Choctaw and Chickasaw neutrality, courting both nations equally to stall any English attempts to sway them.¹⁸⁵ But this became increasingly difficult after February 1705, as war broke out between the two nations. Obligated to remain impartial, Bienville protected the Chickasaw, many of whom had been living at Fort Louis, sending them home with an escort led by Dugué de Boisbriand. As the party passed the Choctaw villages, they were invited to join a calumet ceremony, but this turned out to be a ruse, and the Choctaw massacred the Chickasaw men and enslaved their women and children. Boisbriand was also accidentally injured in the chaos and 300 Choctaw warriors carried him back to Mobile as a gesture of apology. Hoping to keep the peace, Bienville ignored this affront and hosted a summit at Mobile that winter. On January 21st, 1706, several Choctaw delegates arrived at Fort Louis and offered Bienville some Alabama scalps as a symbol of friendship. Following in his brothers' footsteps, Bienville invited both nations to smoke the calumet and agree to peace.¹⁸⁶

But Bienville was fighting an uphill battle. Amongst the Chickasaw, English traders had begun sponsoring several large-scale slaving raids against the Choctaw. Due to Louisiana's many logistical issues, Bienville could not compete with the English nor honour Iberville's

¹⁸⁴ ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.343, « Dartaguet au Ministre, » Fort Louis, 1 octobre 1708.

¹⁸⁵ Though historians tend to argue that the Chickasaw leant towards supporting the English, Ethridge argues that at this time, many still favoured the French, making Bienville's efforts to court them quite valid. Ethridge, *From Chicaza to Chickasaw*, p.222.

¹⁸⁶ La Harpe, *Journal historique*, p.89-91, 94-5; Grayson Noley, "The Early 1700s: Education, Economics, and Politics," in Carolyn Keller Reeves ed., *The Choctaw Before Removal* (Jackson, University Press of Mississippi, 1985), p.107.

earlier promises to establish a trading post and began to lose the Chickasaw support.¹⁸⁷ Less than two months after concluding peace at Mobile, he learned that the Chickasaw had attacked the Choctaw and taken 150 slaves. Instead of seeking Bienville's arbitration, the Choctaw demanded arms and munitions to fight the Chickasaw. Bienville wanted to stay neutral and work towards reconciliation, but the English had forced his hand, for he could not afford to lose the Choctaw as allies too. Taking sides, he placed a scalp bounty on the warriors of any English-allied nation, a decision that shaped geopolitics in the Lower Mississippi Valley for decades to come.¹⁸⁸

By 1708, Thomas Nairne had rallied several Mississippian nations, including the Chickasaw and Choctaw, for a major offensive against Mobile. In response, Bienville sent his younger brother Châteauguay amongst the Choctaw to offset Nairne's influence and encourage the nation to make peace with the Chickasaw. Since Bienville had inherited the role of "Master of Peace" after Iberville's death in 1706, Châteauguay acted as his *tichou-mingo* and proved somewhat successful in his role. Indeed, he claimed that his embassy convinced Nairne to hold off assaulting Mobile, believing that "les Sauvages aiment naturellement les françois qu'ils ne S'attachent aux anglois que par nécessité et interest."¹⁸⁹ Evoking Iberville's legacy, Bienville then sent two cabin boys to each nation, gifting life to reaffirm their "supreme" alliance and bonds of kinship. By May 1711, however, the Chickasaw and Choctaw were at war again, and Bienville sent Châteauguay to escort several Chickasaw home from Mobile.¹⁹⁰ As long as the

¹⁸⁷ Bienville did reconsider establishing a trading post in July 1706, but it would not come to fruition due to a lack of funds. ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.523, « Bienville au ministre, » 28 juillet, 1706; ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.5-31, « Bienville au ministre, » Fort Louis de la Louisiane, 20 février 1707; Ethridge, *From Chicaza to Chickasaw*, p.219-220.

¹⁸⁸ ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.313-14, « Mémoire de ce que j'ai pu apprendre concernant les instructions de feu M. de Muy, gouverneur du fort de la Louisiane, » Fort de la Louisiane, 25 février 1708; La Harpe, *Journal historique*, p.95-6; Noley, "The Early 1700s," p.107.

¹⁸⁹ ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.168-170, « Résumé d'une lettre de Bienville, » 12 octobre 1708.

¹⁹⁰ La Harpe, *Journal historique*, p.108.

English attempted to turn both nations against Louisiana, Bienville was obliged to show them courtesy and respect, embracing the persona of the peacemaker, rather than the warmonger.

Whilst many small conflicts broke out in the Lower Mississippi Valley between 1702 and 1713, Bienville repeatedly informed Pontchartrain that all was well and that "Les Sauvages qui sont alliez des françois se comportent fort bien, ils ont seulement de petits guerres entreux qu'il tache d'apsoupir."¹⁹¹ Though unconventional, the minister could not much dispute the effectiveness of Bienville's alliance system. After Iberville's departure, Bienville had successfully renegotiated his relationships with France's Mississippian allies, creating a new military persona that more readily suited France's ambitions during the War of the Spanish Succession. As a result, besides the brief threat from Nairne, the Louisiana colony survived the conflict relatively unscathed. Many of their Mississippian allies could not say the same, however. Weakened by a decade of intense European-sponsored, inter-Indigenous violence many of the *petites nations* had been pushed into closer, more dependent relationships with the French. As such, despite the growing English influence in the Lower Mississippi Valley, the minister could still recognise Bienville as a valuable agent, able to manipulate and somewhat control a large alliance network that could resist future English expansionism and aggression.¹⁹² In time, this would allow Bienville to cling to influence in the colony, even when the minister questioned his leadership abilities and loyalties elsewhere.

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For just over a decade, five of the Le Moyne brothers, Longueuil, Iberville, Maricourt, Bienville and Châteauguay, were on the frontlines of French diplomacy in North America. To

¹⁹¹ ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.530, « Lettre de Bienville, » [1706]. See also ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.16, « Lettre de Bienville, » Fort Louis, 20 février 1707; La Harpe, *Journal historique*, p.98.

¹⁹² ANOM, B, V.30, f.181v-183, « Lettre au S^r de Bienville » Versailles, 1 juillet 1709.

further their ambitions on the continent, the French authorities sought to deploy the strong bonds of fictive kinship forged between the brothers and their Indigenous allies, encouraging them to embrace the personae and roles bestowed upon them through rituals of adoption. For Maricourt and Longueuil, this meant developing the relationships their father had once made amongst the Onondaga. But for Iberville, Bienville and, to some extent, Châteauguay, it meant embracing new, unfamiliar customs and rituals. All the while, however, the brothers were driven by a desire to serve, hoping to earn recognition from the naval minister and their monarch. In this way, they each attempted to insert their own identities and interpretations into their kinship roles, balancing their performances of “indigenous-ness” with performances of overt “French-ness.” By these means, the brothers positioned themselves not simply as cultural brokers but also imperial agents, manipulating their new relationships to undermine Indigenous sovereignty and assert a sense of French imperial authority in order to fulfil their ambitions for advancement and reward.

Chapter III
Thicker Than Water:
The Le Moyne Family Empire in the Atlantic World, 1698-1706

Writing to his Parisian correspondent Esprit Cabart de Villermont in August 1702, the Intendant of La Rochelle, Michel Bégon, remarked upon the recent return of Iberville and Sérigny from their explorations of the Gulf of Mexico and Lower Mississippi Valley. A long-time patron of the Le Moyne family, Villermont eagerly anticipated Iberville's arrival in Paris where he hoped to have his interest in New World curiosities piqued by the tales of his latest discoveries.¹ With the War of the Spanish Succession having just begun, however, Bégon regretfully informed Villermont that Iberville would have to postpone his visit, for his talents were needed to prepare France's Atlantic batteries against the inevitable English attacks. Still, Bégon was sure to keep his correspondent as up to date as possible and informed him that both Iberville and Sérigny had recently purchased a large plantation in Saint Domingue and expensive *seigneuries* near La Rochelle. This, he assured Villermont, "vous fait connoitre que le Mississippi n'est pas un si mauvais pays qu'on l'a voulu dire."²

Bégon's letter reveals the success enjoyed by the Le Moyne family at the turn of the eighteenth century. After over a decade of improvisation in Canada, Newfoundland and Hudson Bay, they had broken into the wider Atlantic World. Their careers would take them to Louisiana, Saint Domingue, La Rochelle and beyond. Warfare, diplomacy and exploration had made their names; the opportunity to lead colonisation efforts would further enhance their prestige. As

¹ For evidence of the relationship between the Le Moyne family and Villermont see BN, MG7, IA2, V.22802, f.27-28v, « Iberville à Villermont, » 25 mars 1692; BN, MG7, IA2, V.22802, f.57-58v, « Bégon à Villermont, » 19 avril 1692; BN, MG7, IA2, V.22802, f.63-64v, « Longueuil à Villermont, » 26 avril 1692. Bégon would also update Villermont on Iberville's voyages in many letters found in the *Collection Dangeau* which are not listed here for the sake of brevity. On Esprit Cabart de Villermont and his intellectual interest in Louisiana and the wider French Atlantic World, see William A.S. Brown, "Learning to Colonize: State Knowledge, Expertise, and the Making of the First French Empire, 1661-1715" (Unpublished PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2016), pp.79-97.

² BN, MG7, IA2, V.22811, f.215, « Bégon à Villermont, » La Rochelle, 15 août 1702.

Bégon suggested, the profits that Iberville and Sérigny made in Louisiana brought them within reach of the metropolitan elite. But the two brothers were not the self-made men that Bégon implied. Rather, their rapid ascension relied heavily on a vast network of kin, allies, patrons and clients across the Atlantic World.

This chapter charts the creation of this network at the turn of the eighteenth century. For scholars of the early modern era, a network can generally be defined as a group of individuals who actively co-operate in a mutually beneficial manner. Bound by patronage, religion, status, race, identity and, of course, kinship, networks served as the building blocks of early modern empires, forging pathways of communication between metropole and colony, and even between the colonies themselves.³ However, recent scholarship has shown that networks could also transcend empires; trans-imperial and cross-cultural relationships could create links on the peripheries of imperial rule. Here, the members of these networks could build “informal” or even “shadow” empires—borderless, stateless and multi-ethnic worlds entirely of their own creation. If it suited their interests, members of these networks might choose to integrate their informal

³ For works studying networks in the French Atlantic World see: J. F. Bosher, *The Canada Merchants 1713-1763* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); Kathryn Young, *Kin, Commerce, Community: Merchants in the Port of Quebec, 1717-1745* (New York: Peter Lang, 1995); Alexandre Dube, “S’appropriier l’Atlantique: Quelques Reflexions Autour de Chasing Empire across the Sea, de Kenneth Banks.” *French Colonial History* 6, no. 1 (2005): 33-44, Jennifer L. Palmer, *Intimate Bonds: Family and Slavery in the French Atlantic* (University of Pennsylvania Press, Inc., 2016) and Pierre Force, *Wealth and Disaster: Atlantic Migrations from a Pyrenean Town in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 2016). For a very select overview of the study of networks in other European empires see: Xavier Lamikiz, *Trade and Trust in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World: Spanish Merchants and their Overseas Networks* (London: The Boydell Press, 2013); Marta V. Vicente, *Clothing the Spanish Empire: Families and the Calico Trade in the Early Modern Atlantic World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Ida Altman, *Transatlantic Ties in the Spanish Empire: Brihuega, Spain & Puebla, Mexico, 1560-1620*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation upon the Ocean Sea: Portugal’s Atlantic Diaspora and the Crisis of the Spanish Empire, 1492-1640* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Susanah Shaw Romney, *New Netherland Connections: Intimate Networks and Atlantic Ties in Seventeenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Julia Adams, *The Familial State: Ruling Families and Merchant Capitalism in Early Modern Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005) Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560-1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) and David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

empires into larger, formal imperial projects, helping to expand them into new regions across the world. If not, however, these networks could pose a threat to the development and expansion of formal empires, becoming rogue influences on their fringes.⁴

Following this framework, this chapter explores the expansion of a Le Moyne Network [Appendix B] across six major enclaves of the Atlantic World—the Mississippi Valley, Mobile, La Rochelle, Spanish America, Saint Domingue and New France. With the permission and even, at times, support of the naval ministry, the Le Moyne family built extensive transatlantic, trans-imperial and cross-cultural relationships across North America, Europe and Africa, knitting together several disparate colonies into an informal empire of their own. Whilst professing to be agents of empire, the Le Moyne brothers frequently exploited the authority granted to them to their own advantage. This chapter thus also explores the ways in which the brothers defied metropolitan designs to privilege their own ambitions, exploiting the many ambiguities of colonial rule, the inherent weaknesses in empire and the chaos of a global war to pursue both legitimate and illegitimate schemes intended to bring them riches and renown.

“Un Nombre infini de négociants : ” Commercial Alliances in the Mississippi Valley

Returning from the Gulf of Mexico in 1699, Iberville penned several *mémoires* extolling the many virtues of a future colonial project in the Lower Mississippi Valley. Whilst he admitted the need for “un meilleur Escrivain que moy,” his accounts nevertheless depicted Louisiana as a

⁴ The notion of “informal empire” has long been established in the study of the Portuguese Empire in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans and provides a useful comparative tool of analysis for the French Empire. George Winius, “The ‘Shadow Empire’ of Goa in the Bay of Bengal,” *Itinerario* 7 (1983); Malyn Newitt, “Formal and Informal Empire in the History of Portuguese Expansion,” *Portuguese Studies* 17 (2001): 1–21; Cátia Antunes, “Free Agents and Formal Institutions in the Portuguese Empire: Towards a Framework of Analysis,” *Portuguese Studies* 28, no. 2 (2012): 173–85. For more on self-organised networks see Cátia Antunes, Amélia Polónia eds., *Beyond Empires: Global, Self-Organizing, Cross-Imperial Networks, 1500-1800*, (Boston: Brill 2016); David Hancock, “Self-Organized Complexity and the Emergence of an Atlantic Market Economy, 1651-1815: The Case of Madeira” in Peter A. Coclanis ed., *The Atlantic Economy during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Organization, Operation, Practice and Personnel* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2005), p.30-71.

bountiful paradise, with a fur trade that could eclipse that of Canada, lucrative silk farms, an extensive wool trade with the Spanish in New Mexico, plentiful bison that could be domesticated for their meat, hides and furs, and the exploitation of copious mineral resources thought to lie north of Fort Maurepas. Iberville proposed that if France wished to profit from all of this abundance, the king should lift all restrictions on trading in the colony and allow "un nombre Infiny de Négotians" to establish themselves in Louisiana. Well aware that the crown was strapped for cash after the recent war, Iberville assured that once settled, these merchants would provide tax revenues that "Desdommageront le Roy plus que Suffisament de la dépense qu'Il aura faicte pour cet Etablissement."⁵

Once reluctant to explore the Gulf of Mexico, Iberville completely changed his mind once he saw the economic potential of the Lower Mississippi Valley for himself.⁶ Compared to the overexploited fur trade of Hudson Bay and cod fisheries of Newfoundland, the seemingly undeveloped landscape of Louisiana appeared to offer endless opportunities for self-enrichment. Moreover, as an ambiguous frontier and contested borderland, the Mississippi Valley was a peripheral space beyond the limits of imperial authority, permitting whoever controlled it to bend the region to their whims, in ways that might advance their own wealth, status and prestige.⁷ With this in mind, Iberville's grandiose claims should be taken with a grain of salt. Both

⁵ « Mémoire pour l'établissement [...] Mississipy, » [1699].

⁶ In June 1698 Iberville wrote to Pontchartrain that "on a fort parlé, il y a quelque temps, que j'allois au Mississipi. Comme j'ay tourné cela en raillerie, on n'en parle plus que fort peu à présent," suggesting he was not initially very receptive of the minister's plan, even going as far as to mock it. "Lettre d'Iberville au Ministre de la Marine, 18 juin 1698," in Margry *Mémoires et Documents*, V.4, p.62.

⁷ Jay Gitlin, "On the Boundaries of Empire: Connecting the West to Its Imperial Past," in William Cronon, George Miles, Jay Gitlin eds., *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past* (New York, London: W.W Norton & Company, 1992) pp.71-89; Leslie Choquette, "Centre and Periphery in French North America," in Christine Daniels and Michael V Kennedy eds., *Negotiated Empires: Centers and Peripheries in the Americas, 1500-1820*, (New York: Routledge, 2002), p.193-206; Jacob F. Lee, *Masters of the Middle Waters: Indian Nations and Colonial Ambitions Along the Mississippi* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2019), p.89-91.

Shannon Lee Dawdy and Richard Wehying have shown that so-called “rogues” like Iberville often “sweet-talked, lobbied, bullshitted, bullied, and wheedled their way into the chambers of power” of the Atlantic World, attempting to garner interest in their colonial ventures. With this in mind, Iberville’s *mémoire* should be read as an “epistolary performance” intended to cast him as the sole authority on Louisiana and encourage both the king and Pontchartrain to grant him the freedom he needed to pursue his many commercial schemes unimpeded.⁸

Indeed, far from welcoming an infinity of merchants to Louisiana, Iberville instead leveraged his knowledge of the colony to request a number of exclusive monopolies in the Lower Mississippi Valley. In late 1699, he petitioned for the concession of lead mines that he believed lay north of the Bayagoula, an entrepôt at the mouth of the Mississippi, the return freight on all royal vessels sent to the colony and an exemption from any import duties on the lead he would extract. Intending to use an African and Indigenous labour force at the mines, he also requested a *vaisseau du roi* to purchase slaves on the Guinea Coast and permission to force distant Indigenous nations onto his land and “les accoustumer au travail.” Fearing that this might spark resistance, however, he also asked for a small detachment of soldiers to “contenir” his coerced labourers.⁹ Finally, he petitioned for the exclusive right to furnish the newly founded *Compagnie de la Colonie* with beaver pelts, which he argued would both help finance his mines

⁸ Shannon Lee Dawdy, *Building the Devil’s Empire: French Colonial New Orleans* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2008), p.19-20; Richard Weyhing, ““Gascon Exaggerations”: the Rise of Antoine Laumet (dit de Lamothe, Sieur de Cadillac), the Foundation of Colonial Detroit, and the Origins of the Fox Wars,” in Robert Englebert and Guillaume Teasdale eds., *French and Indians in the Heart of North America, 1630-1815* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2013), p.99.

⁹ Though Iberville is ambiguous as to whether the Indigenous labourers would be enslaved or not, the assertion that these nations were “esloignées” would seem to align with concepts of the “Panis” slaves of the Illinois country, implying that Iberville also intended to enslave them on his concessions. Brett Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance: Indigenous and Atlantic Slavery in New France* (Chapel Hill; Williamsburg, Va.: University of North Carolina Press; Published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2012), p.165-173.

and oblige him to end the rampant “course dans le Bois” in the Mississippi Valley.¹⁰ Pitching his ideas before anyone else had the chance, Iberville hoped to monopolise almost all commercial activity in Louisiana, turning the colony into a nexus of Atlantic trade and creating a mercantile empire that extended into western Africa, along the Mississippi to Canada and back to France.

Aware that he could not run such an empire alone, Iberville solicited the help of trusted associates to achieve his goals. In 1699, he supported the plans of Charles Juchereau de Saint Denis—the uncle of his wife Marie-Thérèse—to establish a bison tannery on the Wabash River. Appointed the judge of Montreal in 1693, Juchereau had been involved in the fur trade for years, working alongside his sister Charlotte-Françoise Juchereau to fund the commercial ventures of the likes of Henri Tonty and François Dauphin de la Forest.¹¹ Once the fur trade was outlawed in 1696, however, Juchereau stepped down from his judicial position and worked on putting together the *Compagnie de la Colonie*, the successor to the *Compagnie du Nord*. Travelling to France in 1699, Juchereau lodged with Marie-Thérèse and Iberville in La Rochelle on his way to Versailles.¹² During this visit, the two men likely began to formulate the plan for the tannery. Iberville had recently returned from Louisiana with a considerable interest in the value of bison hides.¹³ In 1699, he circulated a hide as a curiosity within academic circles across Europe, which

¹⁰ With no date given, there has been some confusion as to where these demands came in the timeline of Iberville’s voyages to Louisiana. Certain historians believe it dates from 1702, when Iberville also demanded a *comté*, but others suggest it was written in 1699. With its focus on the Mississippi, I suspect the latter interpretation is more valid, because, as we will see, after 1701 onwards Iberville abandoned most of his schemes in the Mississippi Valley and turned his attention towards the business opportunities provided by Mobile and Spanish America. ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.91-92, « Résumé de la main d’un commis de la Marine d’une lettre de M. d’Iberville, » [1699]; ANOM, C13A, V.1, 93-98, « Résumé de la main d’un commis de la Marine d’une lettre d’Iberville, » [1699] (almost duplicate, only minor differences).

¹¹ John Fortier, “Juchereau de Saint-Denis, Charles in *DCB*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 3/8/2018 at http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/juchereau_de_saint_denys_charles_2E.html.

¹² ACM, 3^E, 1802, f.4-11, « Déchargé donné par messire Charles Juchereau de Saint Denis, » 30 mars 1700. In this record, Juchereau de Saint-Denis is recorded as “logé à La Rochelle chez d’Iberville.”

¹³ Christopher Morris, “How to Prepare Buffalo, and Other Things the French Taught Indians About Nature,” in Bradley G. Bond ed., *French Colonial Louisiana and the Atlantic World*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005), pp. 22-42.

even reached John Locke.¹⁴ On Iberville's recommendation, Juchereau thus petitioned for a six-year monopoly on the bison trade along the Wabash, suggesting that such a venture would help to counterbalance the English in Carolina by establishing French commercial dominance in the Ohio Valley—an appealing prospect for Versailles. Lobbying for his relative, Iberville suggested that Juchereau alone “Sçait les moiens seurs pour y parvenir.”¹⁵

Later that year, Iberville also supported Pierre Charles Le Sueur, the husband of his cousin Marguerite Messier.¹⁶ The two men had already crossed paths at Versailles in 1698 when Le Sueur had successfully secured the concession of a mine in the Upper Mississippi. Officials in Canada had protested this decision, however, citing Le Sueur's long history of illegal fur trading, and his concession had been almost immediately rescinded. Undeterred, Le Sueur returned to France the following year with a sample of “Blue Earth,” which he claimed proved the presence of lead and copper ore. Once again, he ran into Iberville, who, having recently seen the commercial potential of Louisiana, was eager to back his kinsman's venture. Mobilising all his available resources, Iberville offered to transport Le Sueur to the Mississippi Valley and provide him with some Canadians to build his mine. He also invested his own capital in his kinsman's enterprise, incorporating his vision for the Upper Great Lakes into his trading empire.¹⁷

Iberville and Le Sueur's venture also attracted interest from several others, including Rémy-François L'Huillier, a tax farmer who had appraised Le Sueur's “Blue Earth” sample, Gabriel Argoud, a lawyer in the *parlement de Paris*, and Antoine Alexandre de Rémonville, a

¹⁴ Margry, *Mémoires et Découvertes*, V.4, p. LXIV.

¹⁵ « Mémoire pour l'établissement [...] Mississipy, » [1699].

¹⁶ Marguerite was the daughter of Anne Le Moyne and Michel Messier.

¹⁷ ANOM, B, V.21, f.83-83v, « Ordre pour permettre l'ouverture des mines de cuivre trouvées dans l'establisement du S^r LeSueur habitant de Canada, » Versailles, 21 mai 1698; ANOM, B, V.20, f.235-236, « Ordre pour révoquer la permission accordée au Sieur Le Sueur d'aller fouiller des mines, » [mai 1699]. For more on Le Sueur see Richard Weyhing, “Le Sueur in the Sioux Country: Rethinking France's Indian Alliances in the Pays d'en Haut,” *Atlantic Studies*, 10:1, 35-50 and A. P. Nasatir, “Le Sueur, Pierre,” in *DCB* V.2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 3/8/2018, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/le_sueur_pierre_2E.html.

seigneur, shipowner and friend of René-Robert Cavelier de La Salle.¹⁸ In 1697, Argoud and Rémonville had proposed forming a joint-stock company to transport 800 colonists, soldiers and African slaves in the Mississippi and Ohio Valleys before the English could settle the region. Overly ambitious, however, their project never gained much momentum, but it did spark interest in France about the commercial opportunities available in the Mississippi Valley.¹⁹ Perhaps hoping to profit from this interest, Iberville and Le Sueur formed the *Compagnie des Sioux*, bringing in L'Huillier, Argoud and Rémonville as outside investors. Little is known about the exact structure of this company, but it appears that the metropolitan investors were silent partners, providing the necessary capital for the construction the mine—named Fort L'Hullier—whilst relying on Le Sueur and Iberville to carry out the operations on the ground, affording the two men the freedom to pursue their own schemes in the region.

By 1700, Iberville, Juchereau and Le Sueur had acquired a set of privileges and monopolies that essentially granted them control over all European trade in North America's largest watershed. Whilst these privileges were potentially a challenge to metropolitan ambitions for the Mississippi Valley, in the absence of any imperial influence in the region, granting them was seen as the best way to encourage the colony's development and protect it from English encroachment. Indeed, Jeff Horn has shown that officials in France frequently used the “privilege of liberty” to foster economic development, creating a “bricolage” of monopolies and privileges designed to entice wealthy innovators and entrepreneurs to invest their capital into schemes and ventures that the royal treasury could not otherwise afford.²⁰ On the imperial

¹⁸ Marcel Giraud, *History of French Louisiana: Volume I, The Reign of Louis XIV, 1698-1715*, (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1974), p.48.

¹⁹ Giraud, *The Reign of Louis XIV*, p.15.

²⁰ Jeff Horn, *Economic Development in Early Modern France: The Privilege of Liberty, 1650-1820* (Cambridge; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2015).

periphery, where the difficulties of financing were even more pronounced, the use of such privileges to promote colonial ventures was also very common. Recent works by Sara Chapman, Richard Wehying and Guillaume Teasdale have shown that Detroit was founded in 1701 due to a “paradox of power” in which a cash-poor naval ministry was forced to yield certain powers and privileges to Antoine La Mothe de Cadillac in order to limit English influence in the Great Lakes.²¹ Taken together, these works nuance Dawdy’s concept of “rogue colonialism,” suggesting that in the French Atlantic World, self-interest was an inherent part of colonialism and was actively encouraged by the naval ministry. Far from “rogues,” figures like Cadillac, Iberville, Le Sueur and Juchereau were not pursuing their own interests in defiance of imperial ambitions, but in co-operation with them, granted power and privileges in the hopes that their self-interest might serve to advance the formation of a French Empire in North America.

On September 22nd, 1700, Pontchartrain instructed Iberville to prepare the *Renommée* and *Gironde* for another voyage to the Lower Mississippi Valley, where he was to gather information on “des plantations qu’on y peut faire, des marchandises qu’on en peut tirer, et de celles du Royaume qui y peuvent estre consommés.” Ever cautious, however, he deliberately ignored Iberville’s request for the concession of mines, merely acknowledging that first they should “sçavoir auparavant s’il y en a” in the margin. Still, the minister stressed that “la grande affaire est la decouverte des mines,” and expressed his hope that Iberville may one day turn as large a profit from Louisiana as the Spanish did from New Mexico.²² He also ordered Le

²¹ Guillaume Teasdale, *Fruits of Perseverance: the French Presence in the Detroit River Region, 1701-1815* (Montreal; Kingston; London; Chicago: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2019), Richard Weyhing, “The Straits of Empire: French Colonial Detroit and the Origins of the Fox Wars” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2012) and Sara Chapman, “Reluctant Expansionists: Louis XIV, the Ministers of Colonies and the Founding of D  t  it,” in Julia Prest and Guy Rowlands eds., *The Third Reign of Louis XIV, c.1682-1715* (London & New York: Routledge, 2017), p.40-49.

²² « R  sum   de main d’un commis, » [1699] ; ANOM, B, V.20, f.277-280v, « M  moire pour servir d’instruction au sieur D’Iberville capitaine de fr  gate l  g  re commandant La Renomm  e, » 22 septembre 1699.

Sueur to board the *Renommée* for Biloxi, where Iberville was to provide him with eight Canadians to help set up his mine. Juchereau, however, was ordered to make his own way overland from Montreal with two dozen men, who would be permitted to trade for any pelts other than beaver and establish their own mine if they struck lead or copper.²³

When no mines were found, Iberville turned his attention to trading with the Indigenous nations of the Lower Mississippi Valley. Exchanging gifts brought from France, he encouraged a burgeoning trade in various foodstuffs, peltry and hides that he could sell across the Atlantic World.²⁴ Such was his success that in 1702 Iberville estimated that Louisiana would soon produce almost 3 million *livres* of furs annually, especially if they could entice Indigenous traders away from the English in Hudson Bay. Diplomacy thus became essential to securing these potential profits, and Iberville's early interactions with the Mississippian nations should also be viewed with these commercial imperatives in mind.²⁵ Indeed, Iberville needed to keep the peace in the Lower Mississippi Valley to protect his trade and communication networks with Le Sueur and Juchereau. Forging alliances with the Bayagoula, Ouma, Natchez, Choctaw and Chickasaw, he also sought to incorporate these nations into his commercial network and turn them away from his rivals in Hudson Bay, Carolina and Canada. Iberville even proposed relocating several nations to strategic places across the Mississippi watershed, hoping to encircle Louisiana with allies and deny his rivals access to the Mississippi trade.²⁶ Pontchartrain did not

²³ ANOM, B, V.20, f.260, « Lettre du Ministre au Sieur D'Iberville, » Versailles, 26 août 1699 ; ANOM, B, V.22, f.278v-279v, « Concession accordée au S^r Juchereau po^r L'establissem^t d'une Tannerie au Missisipy, » [1699].

²⁴ Daniel Usner, *Indians, Settlers & Slaves in a Frontier Exchange Economy: The Lower Mississippi Valley before 1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), p.8

²⁵ See Chapter II. Preventing conflict between the Bayagoula and Ouma was particularly important in 1700 and 1701 to maintain communications channels with Le Sueur in the Upper Mississippi.

²⁶ «Mémoire de D'Iberville sur les pays du Mississippi, la Mobile et ses Environs, leurs rivières, les peuples qui les habitent, et du commerce qui se pourra faire dans moins de cinq ou six années, en établissant ce pays,» in Margry *Mémoires et Documents*, V.4 p.600-601. For Versailles' comments, see ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.364-370, « Mémoire sur les articles du Mémoire de M. d'Iberville concernant le Mississippi et la Mobile, » [1702].

support this plan, deeming it overly ambitious. Even so, it demonstrates that, for Iberville, diplomacy did not just help create alliances, but also built a cross-cultural network that could protect and sustain his informal empire in the Mississippi Valley.

At Fort L'Huilier, Le Sueur worked to extend this network into the Upper Mississippi. He welcomed several Sioux delegates to his post and began forging alliances through an illegal arms trade, lighting a long fuse to the diplomatic powder keg of the *pays d'en haut*.²⁷ Over the winter, he also brought many *coureurs de bois* into the network, offering them shelter and purchasing their contraband furs.²⁸ With the region's legal status as yet undetermined, little stopped Le Sueur and Iberville from funneling thousands of these furs down the Mississippi and across the Atlantic. Earlier in 1700, Iberville had sold almost 9000 pelts in New York, much to the outrage of officials in the city and Quebec alike.²⁹ The following year Le Sueur brought 3600 pelts to Biloxi, where he ordered another 2000 pounds of gunpowder to be sent north for further trade.³⁰ From Biloxi, he travelled to France with Iberville and successfully lobbied for his promotion as the new judge at Mobile—a position that could allow him to mould the colony's nascent legal system in a way that could favour their commerce. He then sent for his wife Marguerite and five children to join him from Montreal, but never took up his post. Whilst passing through Havana on his return to Mobile, he caught yellow fever and died in the Spanish port on July 17th, 1704.³¹

²⁷ Weyhing, "Le Sueur in the Sioux Country," p.42.

²⁸ Gilles Havard, *Histoire des Coureurs de Bois: Amérique du Nord, 1600-1840*, (Paris: Les Indes savantes, 2016), p.119-120, 123.

²⁹ ANOM, C11A, V.18, f.6v, « Lettre de Callière et Champigny au ministre, » 18 octobre 1700; For the English reports, see "Earl of Bellomont to the Lords of Trade, Boston 9 July 1700", "Representation to the Lords of Trade concerning New York, 4 October 1700," "Mr. Robert Livingston to the Lords of Trade, 13 May 1701" and "Lord Cornbury to the Lords of Trade, [1701]," in Brodhead, *DCHNY*, V.4 p.684, 701, 877 and 969.

³⁰ ANOM, C11A, V.20, f.220-221, « Copie d'une lettre de Boishébert à Callière concernant le trafic illégal des fourrures fait par Le Sueur et Juchereau de Saint-Denys, » Michillimakinac, 30 août, 1702.

³¹ Weyhing, "Le Sueur in the Sioux Country," p.44.

In Montreal, Juchereau assembled the necessary men and capital for his tannery. Even before he left Canada, however, his activities aroused suspicion, especially since he planned to leave “sans emmener avec luy aucuns Tanneurs.”³² He was then accused of spending the summer of 1702 peddling brandy and other wares to Indigenous traders in the Ohio Valley under the pretext of purchasing corn for his men, allegedly receiving over 600 beaver pelts in return.³³ Iberville nipped this controversy in the bud, however, explaining to Pontchartrain that it was far more preferable to allow Juchereau to accept these furs from Indigenous traders and *coureurs de bois* than to see them go to Carolina. Though skeptical, the minister agreed with this evaluation and granted Iberville the power to both augment Juchereau’s concession and locate it wherever he believed would best prevent the hemorrhaging of furs to the English colonies.³⁴

By February 8th, 1703, Juchereau had built his tannery on the Wabash River and made contact with Bienville at Mobile. Before he could begin to ship his wares, however, Juchereau fell sick, likely with malaria, and died on August 27th.³⁵ In his stead, the brothers Gabriel-Philippe Hautmesnil de Saint Lambert and François-Philippe Hautmesnil de Mandeville—sons of Montreal merchant Jean-Vincent Hautmesnil—took over command of the tannery.³⁶ Working alongside Bienville and Juchereau’s younger brother, Louis Juchereau de Saint Denis, the Hautmesnil brothers briefly integrated themselves into the Le Moyne network, sending over 12,000 bison hides acquired that summer down the Mississippi. On Bienville’s orders, Saint-

³² ANOM, C11A, V.20, f.60, « Lettre de Callière et Beauharnois, » Québec, 3 novembre 1702.

³³ ANOM, C11A, V.20, f.220-221, « Copie d’une lettre de Boishébert à Callière concernant le trafic illégal des fourrures fait par Le Sueur et Juchereau de Saint-Denys, » Michillimakinac, 30 août, 1702; Gilles Havard, *Histoire des Coureurs de Bois: Amérique du Nord, 1600-1840*, (Paris: Les Indes savantes, 2016), p.123.

³⁴ AM, B4, V.21, f.522v-523v, « M. d’Iberville, » 9 juillet 1701.

³⁵ Juchereau likely died in the same epidemic that plagued the neighbouring Indigenous nations that summer, thought to have perhaps been malaria; John Fortier and Donald Chaput, “A Historical Reexamination of Juchereau’s Illinois Tannery,” *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society (1908-1984)* 62, no. 4 (1969): 385–406, p.75.

³⁶ Both sometimes called Philippe, the two brothers are often confused by historians. See John Fortier, “Philippe de Hautmesnil de Mandeville,” in *DCB*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 3/08/2018 at http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/philippe_de_hautmesnil_de_mandeville_francois_2E.html.

Denis transported this merchandise to Fort de la Boulaye, which he commanded. Here, however, the hides stayed for several years. As ships from France were repeatedly delayed, the hides were either eaten by moths, damaged by humidity or gifted to Indigenous ambassadors. Without Juchereau in charge, the tannery was also soon abandoned. No longer a locus of the Le Moyne network, the site ironically became a meeting place for the *coureurs de bois* who competed directly with the family, offering them a base for their trade with the English.³⁷

Though short-lived, the schemes of Iberville, Le Sueur and Juchereau in the Mississippi Valley drew considerable ire from officials and merchants in Canada. From 1700, Callières, Champigny, and the directors of the *Compagnie de la Colonie* complained almost continually about the trio's malfeasance, accusing them of actively trying to ruin Canada for their own profit.³⁸ Pontchartrain, however, consistently defended their projects, arguing that the development of the Mississippi Valley was "une nécessité indispensable" to prevent the advances of the English into the continent. At most, the minister recommended that the company send a clerk to Mobile to oversee the collection of furs, but no such official ever arrived, affording the kinsmen ample freedom to continue their activities. In 1703, Iberville even secured permission for Bienville to openly accept furs from the *coureurs de bois*, professing that he would collect them on the company's behalf, whilst, in reality, his younger brother kept most of the proceeds for himself.³⁹

³⁷ Robert Michael Morrissey, *Empire by Collaboration: Indians, Colonists and Governments in Colonial Illinois Country* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), p.89-91.

³⁸ « Mémoire sur les articles du Mémoire de M. d'Iberville concernant le Mississippi et la Mobile, » [1702]; ANOM, C11A, V.18, f.5v-6v, « Lettre de Callière et Champigny au ministre, » 18 octobre 1700; ANOM, C11A, V.19, f.6v-8, « Lettre de Callière et Champigny au ministre, » [S.D]; ANOM, C11A, V.19, f.152v, « Lettre de Champigny au ministre, » 7 novembre 1701; ANOM, C11A, V.20, f.58v-60v, « Lettre de Callière et Beauharnois, » 3 novembre 1702; ANOM, C11A, V.20, f.220-221, « Copie d'une lettre de Boishébert à Callière, » 30 août 1702.

³⁹ ANOM, C11A, V.22, f.245-247, « Mémoire du Roy au S^r Ch^{er} de Callières, Gouverneur et L^{ie} G^{nal} po^{ur} Sa Ma^{té} et de Champigny, Intendant de Justice, Police et fina^{ce} de la Nouvelle France, » Versailles, 31 mai 1701 ; AM, B4, V.25, f.373, « M. d'Iberville, » La Rochelle, 15 février 1703.

But it was not the legal ambiguity around Iberville's actions that riled the officials in Quebec the most. Rather, they were angry that he had been permitted to usurp control over a domain that they believed was theirs to govern whilst also making an enormous profit at their expense. Attempting to arbitrate this dispute, Pontchartrain proclaimed an amnesty for all *coureurs de bois* across North America in 1703, naively hoping that this would entice these traders to permanently settle in either Canada or Louisiana, putting an end to all competition between the two. All this did, however, was draw an official line in the sand, effectively demarcating Louisiana as a separate territory. Later that year, the line was etched even deeper as Pontchartrain appointed Iberville as the *commandant* of Louisiana, which granted him jurisdiction over all lands south of the Ohio River.⁴⁰ Instead of solving the economic threat that Iberville, Le Sueur and Juchereau posed to Canada, therefore, the minister effectively sanctioned their activities. Emboldened by this implicit ministerial support, Iberville would not only continue his commercial activities in the Mississippi Valley but also reorient them, spreading his informal empire further across the Atlantic World.

"Ces sortes de gens leur estoient tout affair devoüez : " Patronage and Power at Mobile

Founded in 1702, Mobile soon became the centre of Le Moyne family activities in the Lower Mississippi Valley. Chosen for its relative proximity to the Choctaw and Chickasaw, access to the wide-reaching Alabama-Tombigbee riverine system, and the security of the Mississippi River, the settlement was the perfect locale from which to dominate the region's commerce.⁴¹ To assert his control, Iberville brought with him a veritable coterie of kin, friends

⁴⁰ ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.379-386, « Iberville au ministre, » [1703]; ANOM, B, V.23, f.192v, « Lettre à M. d'Iberville, » 24 janvier 1703; ANOM, B, V.23, f.193-194v, « Lettre à M. d'Iberville, » Versailles, 17 juin 1703.

⁴¹ Jay Higginbotham, *Old Mobile: Fort Louis de la Louisiane, 1702-1711* (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1991), p.24.

and allies to settle at the fort and secure his interests in the region. Amongst those boarding the *Renommée* and *Palmier* in late 1701 were Sérigny—who commanded the latter vessel—their twenty-year-old brother Gabriel Le Moyne d’Assigny, their brother-in-law Pierre Payen de Noyan, and their Canadian allies—the brothers Pierre Dugué de Boisbriand and Jean-Sidrac Dugué de Saint-Thérèse, and François-Alexandre Robinau de Bécancour. On the ground in Louisiana, they were met by Bienville, Châteauguay, Louis Juchereau de Saint Denis, Henri de Tonty and a number of Canadians and *flibustiers* who had served under Iberville since 1698. The Le Moyne brothers eagerly set about moulding the growing settlement to fit their own designs, establishing Mobile as the heart of their informal empire.

Much to their chagrin, however, Pontchartrain also sent Nicolas de la Salle to serve as the colony’s *écrivain*, or scrivener. A career bureaucrat, La Salle was appointed to keep a closer eye on the commercial activities in the Mississippi colony, reporting directly to the minister.⁴² Outwardly, Iberville supported La Salle’s appointment, describing him as “un très honneste homme, capable de remplir cet employ, duquel vous serez très content.”⁴³ But such remarks betrayed Iberville’s anxiety that this honesty might jeopardise his personal ambitions for Louisiana. Indeed, as an agent of the *Marine*, La Salle represented a challenge to Iberville’s presumed “privilege of liberty” and his monopoly on royal authority as *commandant*. Answering only to Pontchartrain, La Salle represented the minister’s interests in the colony, easing its integration into the formal empire and enforcing certain metropolitan restrictions and regulations. As Cátia Antunes has shown, however, such impositions upon the activities of informal networks often elicited resistance, pursued in three main forms: litigation, collaboration with foreign

⁴² C. E. O’Neill, “La Salle, Nicolas de,” in *DCB*, V.2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003. Accessed 3/8/2018, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/la_salle_nicolas_de_2E.html.

⁴³ “D’Iberville au Ministre de la marine, 30 juillet 1701,” in Margry, *Mémoires et Documents*, V.4, p.493; Higginbotham, *Old Mobile*, p.34-35.

powers, or, perhaps most commonly, illegality.⁴⁴ Leveraging the power and privileges granted to them by the state, “free agents” in informal networks used corruption, violence and intimidation to reassert their predominance, operating more akin to a crime syndicate than conduits of imperial power.⁴⁵ Threatened by La Salle’s appointment, the Le Moyne family thus sought to consolidate their power in Louisiana by any means possible, seizing control of the key institutions to ensure their authority.

The first of these institutions was Fort Louis de la Louisiane. On the Louisiana frontier, martial authority prevailed and control of the fort ensured influence over much of the colony. Bienville thus worked closely with the Canadian engineer Charles Levasseur to fashion the fort to his family’s needs. For one, Bienville had Levasseur build the royal storehouse equidistant to his quarters and those of La Salle. Whilst the storehouse was technically La Salle’s domain, Bienville likely intended to use this placement to access the colony’s supplies beyond the bureaucrat’s prying eyes. Since Louisiana was continually on the brink of starvation and ruin, controlling these resources was essential, and Bienville was later accused of filling his dinner table with the best supplies and selling many luxury wares—particularly wine and brandy—to desperate colonists at a 400 per cent markup. As we will see, however, later investigations would not be able to prove these accusations. Many colonists would even readily attest that Bienville actually redistributed meat and fresh vegetables to the poor, sick and needy and gave them many goods on credit.⁴⁶ Though perhaps influenced by a desire to maintain access to Bienville’s goods, their testimonies were probably quite accurate. Indeed, benevolence was in Bienville’s best

⁴⁴ Antunes, “Free Agents and Formal Institutions in the Portuguese Empire,” p.181

⁴⁵ Charles Tilly, “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime,” in Peter B. Evans et al. eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Dawdy, *Building the Devil’s Empire*, p.20.

⁴⁶ ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.249-254, « Extrait de l’information fait par M. Dartaguet contre M^r De Bienville, » 24-27 février 1708 ; ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.255-312, « Interrogatoire fait d’office par ordre de M^r Le comte de Pontchartrain par nous commissaire de la Marine, » 24-27 février 1708.

interest in these times of need, casting him as a benign benefactor and placing the colonists in both his financial and social debt. By controlling the storehouse, the Le Moyne brothers ensured that they were primary patrons in Mobile, guaranteeing them a loyal following of needy clients both in the fort and the wider settlement.

La Salle was not oblivious to Bienville's intentions. Once the storehouse was built, he immediately had his own client, Gerard, installed as the official *garde-magasin*. In 1703, however, Gerard died, offering Bienville a chance to appoint his own client, Jacques Huméry, a former *flibustier*.⁴⁷ With Huméry in charge, Bienville tightened his grip over the storehouse. Even when Pontchartrain appointed a second *garde-magasin*, Christophe Poirier, to keep Huméry in check, Bienville did everything in his power to ensure his continued access to the royal supplies, including allegedly treating Poirier with "la derniere Cruauté," and once even kicking and beating him when he refused him entry.⁴⁸ Wielding both violence and patronage, Bienville gradually usurped control of the colony's supplies from La Salle, denying him authority over the one institution he was meant to oversee. Indeed, by 1706, Bienville had apparently been so successful that La Salle complained that at Fort Louis "le Commandant ordonne en qualité d'Intendant."⁴⁹

As the highest-ranking officer in Louisiana, Bienville also strategically employed his martial authority to strengthen his influence over Fort Louis. Promoting his kinsmen, Bienville granted Louisiana's first companies to his younger brother Châteauguay and François Juchereau

⁴⁷ When Huméry was caught stealing in 1705 he was in turn replaced by La Fontaine Coulart, one of Iberville's choices. ANOM, E, 226, « Humery, garde-magasin au Fort-Louis de la Mobile (Louisiane), » [1703]; ANOM, C13B, No.8, p.6, « Lettre de La Salle au ministre, » 4 mars 1708; ANOM, B, V.27, f.185, « Lettre à M. D'Iberville, » 21 octobre 1705 ; Higginbotham, *Old Mobile*, p.50.

⁴⁸ ANOM, C13B, No.7, p.18, « Lettre de La Salle, » 25 juillet 1707.

⁴⁹ ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.472-501, « La Salle au Ministre, » Fort Louis, 7 septembre 1706; ANOM, B, V.29, f.252v-253, « Mémoire du Roy au S^r de Muy Gouverneur de la Louisiane pour lui servir lorsqu'il sera arrivé en ce pays, » Versailles, 30 juin 1707; AC, V.29, f.269v, « Memoire pour servir d'instruction au S.r Dartaguet comm^{re} ordinaire de la marine que le Roy a choisy pour passer a la Louisiane, » Versailles, 30 juin 1707.

de Vaulezar, the youngest of the Juchereaus and brother of Charles and Louis. Once commissioned, Châteauguay and Vaulezar sent agents to recruit soldiers in France, but rampant desertion, press-ganging and disease meant that only sixty-six soldiers arrived in Mobile in 1704.⁵⁰ Despite this setback, Bienville could still count on a network of officers which included Châteauguay, his major Boisbriand, and Levasseur, who became a lieutenant in Châteauguay's company. From France, Iberville also sent his teenaged stepbrother-in-law (and nephew to the Juchereaus), Antoine-François Ruelle d'Auteuil, to serve as Boisbriand's *aide major*. Moreover, after the collapse of Juchereau's tannery in 1705, the arrival of the Hautmesnil brothers further augmented the number of Le Moyne allies in the colony's military, and both joined Vaulezar's company. As we will see, however, Vaulezar never arrived in Louisiana to take up his commission, instead occupying himself with other tasks for the Le Moynes elsewhere in the Atlantic World.⁵¹ Even so, by 1705, Fort Louis was almost entirely garrisoned by officers and soldiers loyal to the Le Moyne family, granting them considerable influence and power.

Bienville used this fact to monopolise military power and violence within Louisiana. Amidst the turbulent conflicts with neighbouring Indigenous nations and a looming English menace, Bienville embodied the early modern state's assumed license to enact "legitimate" violence to ensure its own perpetuation. As the acting governor, it fell to him to marshal both the colony's forces and allies to protect it from those who wished to see it eliminated.⁵² Within the colony, however, this martial authority could also be abused to protect his own interests and entrench his own influence. Rather unsurprisingly, Bienville was accused of reigning tyrannically at Fort Louis, allegedly turning his men on anyone who disobeyed him. As we will

⁵⁰ ANOM, C13A, V.464, « Bienville au ministre, » 6 septembre 1704 ; Giraud, *The Reign of Louis XIV*, p.213-216.

⁵¹ ANOM, B, V.27, f.185, « Lettre à M. d'Iberville, » 21 Octobre 1705; Higginbotham, *Old Mobile*, p.197-198.

⁵² Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," p.169-191.

see in the next chapter, several dissidents, including the gunsmith René Boyer and merchant Jacques Allemand, complained of being put in chains for speaking out against the *commandant* and his officers. Even the ecclesiastical authorities were not spared, and Henri Roulleaux de la Vente, the priest at Fort Louis, accused Bienville of restricting his access to the chapel and intercepting letters he sent to France criticising the commander's regime.⁵³

Perhaps the best-known example of Bienville's alleged tyranny, however, was recounted by Nicolas La Salle in 1706. According to the *écrivain*, Bienville mistreated his new wife Jeanne-Catherine—who was several months pregnant at the time—whilst he was away on official business in Pensacola in 1705. As an epidemic swept through the colony, brought from Havana by the *Pélican*, many sick soldiers requested that Madame La Salle provide them with blankets and mattresses from the royal stores on behalf of her absent husband. With no authority to act in La Salle's stead, Jeanne-Catherine had to ask Bienville's permission to sign out the goods for the men. Bienville, however, outright refused. Jeanne-Catherine suspected that this was a ploy to have her to sign in her husband's place, so that Bienville could accuse the couple of conspiring to procure royal goods without permission. Whilst complaining publicly, she was overheard by Bienville (who, according to La Salle, was hiding in some nearby bushes) and ordered to recant her allegations. When she refused, Bienville had his men bar her from Fort Louis, effectively excommunicating her by denying her access to the chapel. By the time La Salle returned from Pensacola, he found his wife in labour, which purportedly obliged the couple to apologise to Bienville so that she might receive the necessary sacraments.⁵⁴ Though surely an

⁵³ Bienville's disputes with the ecclesiastical authorities in Mobile are too long and complicated to document here but has been recounted in considerable detail by Charles E. O'Neil and Jay Higginbotham. Charles E. O'Neill, *Church and State in French Colonial Louisiana: Policy and Politics to 1732*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1966), p.47-75; Higginbotham *Old Mobile*, Chapters XIV and XV.

⁵⁴ ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.474, « La Salle au Ministre, » 7 septembre 1706; ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.545-565, « Extrait des lettres- Lettre du S de La Salle, » 7 Septembre 1706. For detailed account of this dispute and its significance in the rivalry between Bienville and La Salle, see Higginbotham, *Old Mobile*, pp.229-232.

exaggerated tale penned by an irate La Salle, many details corroborate with other complaints about Bienville's tyrannical leadership, suggesting that he may well have abused his power to quash any opposition to his command. Indeed, as the Le Moyne brothers attempted to forge an empire of their own in Louisiana, the ability to leverage the threat of legitimate violence, even in the most intimate of interactions, became a useful way of reinforcing their grip over the colony.

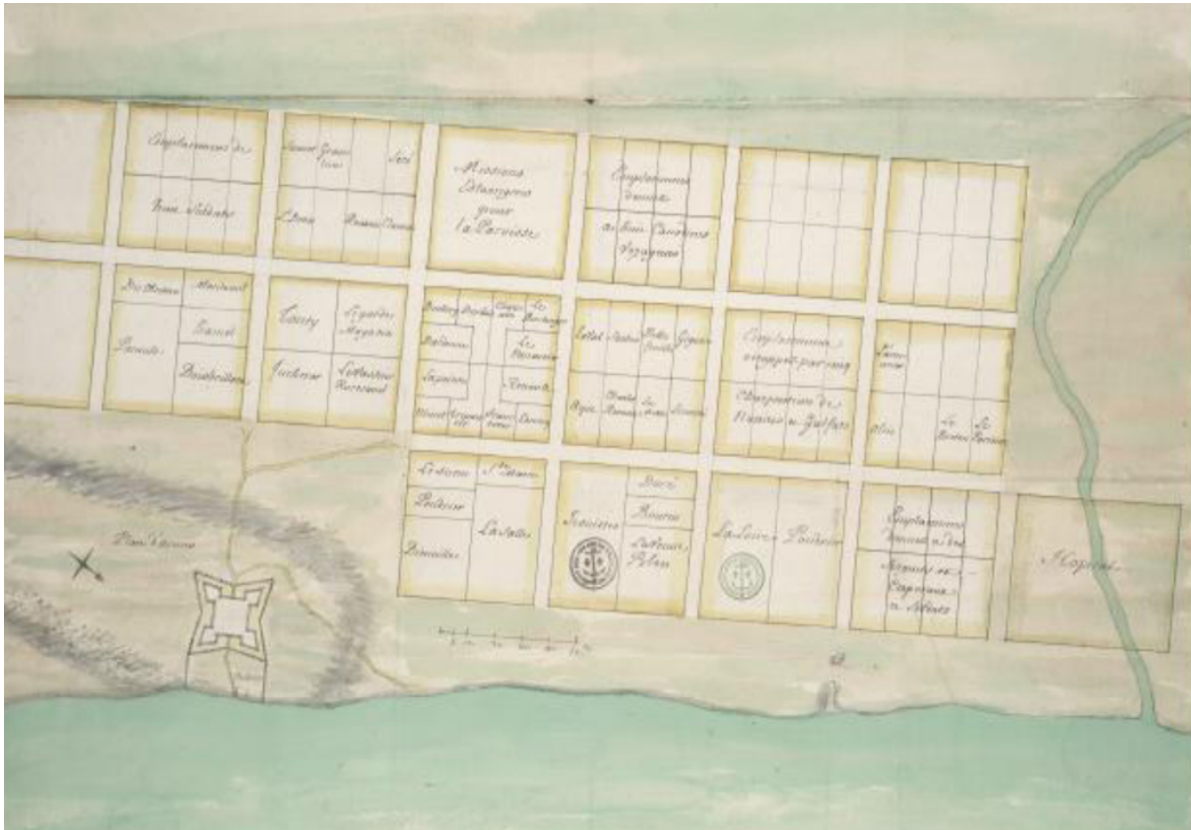


Fig. 3.1 : “Fort et Ville de la Maubille [1702].”

Map. ANOM, 04DFC119A

[http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ulysse/notice?n=73&id=FR ANOM 04DFC119A](http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ulysse/notice?n=73&id=FR_ANOM_04DFC119A)

Below Fort Louis, the Le Moyne brothers further exerted their influence by controlling the allocation of land for settlement in Mobile. In 1702, Iberville worked with Levasseur to design the new settlement, marking a number of plots for the colonists. Between these plots ran four grand avenues bearing the names Sérigny, Châteauguay, Bienville and Iberville—further imprinting the family’s influence onto the colonial landscape. [Fig 3.1.] Many of the best plots

were granted to loyal friends and allies of the Le Moyne family, including Levasseur, Tonty, Boisbriand, Bécancour, Le Sueur, Huméry and Juchereau de Saint Denis. Almost all of the others, however, went to the men that Iberville imagined would be the future of Louisiana—those who wished to settle with their families. As a result, the single largest plot in Mobile went to François-Xavier Lemay *dit* Poudrier, a veteran of Iberville’s campaigns in Hudson Bay, who had already sent word for his wife and children to come and join him in the new colony.⁵⁵

Families were key to the Le Moyne ambitions in Louisiana. In 1699, Iberville requested that Pontchartrain send over the wives of the Canadians and *flibustiers* living in the colony and recruit a number of young French women to marry those colonists who were still single. Whilst fulfilling his obligations as a coloniser, Iberville likely also hoped that the arrival of families would bring a certain stability to Louisiana, discouraging the “libertine” behavior of those men who preferred to live amongst the neighbouring Indigenous nations. More pragmatically, the arrival of women could also ensure that these same men continued to trade with Iberville at Mobile and not with the English, as they would have a reason to return frequently to the settlement. Moreover, as domestic life began to take hold, the presence of families in Mobile could also provide a lucrative market for the goods the Le Moyne family intended to import from France, all of which could be sold at considerable markups on the colonial periphery.

Encouraging family migration also allowed Iberville to extend his personal privileges in the Lower Mississippi Valley. Perhaps inspired by the raising of Longueuil to a Barony in 1700, Iberville petitioned Pontchartrain for the creation of the *comté d’Iberville* on the Mobile River in 1702. Intending to establish himself as a colonial *seigneur*, Iberville proposed building a number of small settlements along the river’s banks for incoming colonists and their families, which his

⁵⁵ Higginbotham, *Old Mobile*, p.73-75.

family would oversee from Mobile. Though Pontchartrain was initially reluctant to allow Iberville to carve out a personal domain in Louisiana, he had already turned a blind eye to similar schemes elsewhere in the French Atlantic World, such as Cadillac's *marquisat* at Détroit. Tacitly affording individuals opportunities for self-aggrandisement for the sake of colonial expansion, the minister thus provisionally authorised the creation of Iberville's proposed county, but only "quand cela sera en valeur."⁵⁶

Emboldened by this, Iberville encouraged Pontchartrain to send one hundred young French women to Louisiana, hoping that their presence would encourage agricultural settlement. But whilst the minister was keen to sponsor such a proposal, French authorities were only able to recruit a total of twenty-four women in Paris and La Rochelle, whom they sent to Louisiana aboard the *Pélican*. Known variously as the *filles à la cassette* or "Pelican girls," these women arrived in late 1704, bringing with them the disease that claimed Le Sueur's life in Havana. Three of the women sadly died on their arrival but many marriages were nonetheless celebrated that summer, including that of La Salle and Jeanne-Catherine.⁵⁷ Given the colony's supply shortages, a lack of funds and an ongoing global war, however, few more women were sent to the colony before 1711, stalling efforts to colonise the region. Perishing in Havana in 1706, Iberville thus never realised his ambitions for Mobile or his *comté*.

Even so, the Le Moyne family's control over access to land and women gradually deepened the colonists' dependence upon them. Many in Mobile, especially the Canadians, were already reliant on wages taken out of the colony's budget and were particularly grateful when

⁵⁶ John C. Rule, "Jérôme Phélypeaux Comte de Pontchartrain and the Establishment of Louisiana, 1696-1715," in John Francis McDermott ed., *Frenchmen and French Ways in the Mississippi Valley* (Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 1969), pp.179-197, p.195.

⁵⁷ For more on these women, their recruitment and their marriages see Giraud, *The Reign of Louis XIV*, p.150-155; Higginbotham, *Old Mobile*, p.132-138, 178-187.

Iberville and Bienville defied royal orders to cease these payments.⁵⁸ Everyone knew, however, that the hand that gave could also take away. This fostered such fervent factional loyalty amongst those who benefitted from the Le Moyne regime that when La Salle began to openly critique the family's policies and campaign for an end to the colonist's wages in 1706, he found himself with few allies. Whether out of fear, dependency or genuine admiration, most colonists in Mobile supported the Le Moyne brothers and refused to speak out against them when the time came.

The final locus of Le Moyne power in Louisiana was Île Massacre. Boasting a perfect natural harbour in Mobile Bay, this island had been envisioned by Iberville as the vital maritime link between Mobile and the wider Atlantic World. In January 1702 he ordered Bienville, Sérigny, Châteauguay and Noyan to oversee the construction of a warehouse on the island. Whilst La Salle insisted on contracting the labour, Châteauguay oversaw its actual fabrication. Perhaps on his orders, the building was built too small, meaning the colony's imports and exports had to be stored together. This caused considerable confusion for La Salle, for the private wares of the Le Moyne family were mixed with the royal supplies, enabling them to help themselves to anything they wanted. Again, La Salle was thwarted in his attempts to prevent these abuses by installing loyal guards, finding that "ces sortes de gens leur estoient tout affair devoüez." Indeed, whether bribed or agents of the Le Moyne family, most of *gardes-magasin* at Île Massacre turned a blind eye to the brother's activities. Letters uncovered in 1708 even proved that one such *garde-magasin*, Alexis Guay—appointed by the family in 1705—was directly

⁵⁸ Ponchartrain preferred that Iberville and Bienville encourage the settlers to farm their own land and earn their own keep, instead of being dependent on royal supplies and wages. ANOM, B, V.25, f.16v, « Lettre au S^r de Bienville, » Versailles, 30 janvier 1704 ; ANOM, B, V.25, f.22, « Lettre au S^r De Bienville, » Versailles, 13 février 1704 ; ANOM, B, V.27, f.184v, « Lettre à M. D'Iberville, » Fontainebleau, 21 octobre 1705 ; ANOM, B, V.27, f.186v-187, « Lettre à M. D'Iberville, » Marly, 4 novembre 1705 ; ANOM B, V.29, f.263, « Lettre au S^r De Bienville, » Versailles, 30 juin 1707.

implicated in “le commerce de M. De Bienville de concert avec ces autres freres.”⁵⁹ With the port and its warehouse under their control, the Le Moyne brothers could ship any merchandise, contraband or otherwise, wherever they wished across the Atlantic World.

Finally, the Le Moyne brothers also infiltrated the local economy. In Mobile, they operated at least two private warehouses through proxies close to the family. The first was built by Iberville just outside of the main settlement and was run by his *commis* (clerk) Jacques Allemand. Likely the younger brother of Pierre Allemand—who had served as a quartermaster and pilot for both the *Compagnie du Nord* and Iberville on their expeditions to Hudson Bay—Jacques had been trained as a master locksmith, which probably allowed him to access the royal storehouse at Fort Louis undetected. Indeed, it was alleged that many of the wares Jacques sold to the colonists on behalf of the Le Moyne family had been stolen from the royal storehouse.⁶⁰ Marguerite Messier, who had fruitlessly travelled from Montreal to join her husband Le Sueur in 1704, ran another small shop near Bienville’s lot, where she sold brandy, textiles, hats, shirts and shoes—most of which was thought to belong to her cousins. Both Marguerite and Allemand were also accused of selling gunpowder from the storehouse, further raising suspicions about the provenance of their goods.⁶¹ Though limited in scale, these proxies enabled the brothers to surreptitiously flood Mobile with their own merchandise, helping to eliminate competition and fence their stolen wares.

⁵⁹ In 1708 La Salle would uncover two letters directly implicating Guay in the Le Moyne schemes. ANOM, C13B, No.8, p.5, « Lettre de La Salle au ministre, » Île Massacre, 4 mars 1708.

⁶⁰ ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.207-208, « Nicolas de la Salle au ministre, » 12 septembre 1708; ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.256-257, « Interrogatoire fait d’office par ordre de M^r Le comte de Pontchartrain par nous commissaire de la Marine, » 24 février 1708. For Pierre Allemand see See F. Grenier, “Allemand (Lalemand), Pierre,” in *DCB*, V.1, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 4/9/2018, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/allemand_pierre_1E.html.

⁶¹ ANOM, B, V.23, f.74, « Lettre a M^r le Ch^{er} de Callieres, » Versailles, 6 mai 1702; ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.250-251, « Extrait de l’information faite par M^r Dartaguiette contre M^r De Bienville, » 24, 25, 26, 27 et 28 février 1708 ; ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.71-76, « Mémoire servant de réponse aux plaintes que Le Sieur de La Salle a faites et qui ont été envoyées au comte de Pontchartrain, » Fort St Louis, 28 février 1708.

By 1706, the Le Moyne family had cemented their authority in Mobile. Granted certain privileges and powers as imperial agents, colonisers and military officers, they had abused their positions to mould the fledgling settlement to suit their vision, seizing control of all the important institutions through corruption, intimidation and violence. Almost all aspects of life in Mobile were subject to the domination of the Le Moyne brothers, including access to vital supplies, plots of land and even marriage. Meanwhile, their actions systematically undermined La Salle's royal authority at every turn, denying him the opportunity to carry out his functions in the way that his superiors in France expected. Perceived as acting on behalf of the crown, the Le Moynes succeeded in monopolising authority in Mobile, turning it—and by extension the entire Mississippi colony—into a stronghold of their personal network.

“Fort honnestes gens..aimez de tout le monde : ” Integrating into La Rochelle

Across the Atlantic, Iberville and Sérigny also laid down roots in La Rochelle, turning it into their foothold in western France. During the War of the League of Augsburg, the port had become almost a second home for the brothers, serving as the base of operations for their expeditions to Acadia, Hudson Bay and Newfoundland. Boasting a tight-knit merchant community, ready access to France's naval infrastructure and a more direct avenue to their patrons in Paris and Versailles, La Rochelle was an ideal location from which to advance their careers and reputations in the metropole. Making the port their permanent home from 1699, the brothers harnessed their newfound wealth and influence to extend their family network and integrate themselves into local society. In August 1702, Bégon noted to Villermont that they been very successful, and were already known in La Rochelle as “fort honnestes gens tres paisibles et qui se sont aimez de tout le monde.”⁶²

⁶²« Bégon à Villermont, » La Rochelle, 15 août 1702.

On November 20th, 1699, Sérigny married Marthe-Élizabeth Héron, the daughter of Antoine Héron and Élizabeth Thibault.⁶³ A former Huguenot, Héron had become one of La Rochelle's most important merchants. Over the years he had worked for the *Compagnie d'Acadie*, the *Compagnie des Indes Occidentales* and the *Compagnie de Guinée* and was well known on both sides of the Atlantic, having visited Quebec several times to broker deals between the tax farm and the *Compagnie du Nord*. Héron's commercial interests also encompassed the Atlantic slave trade and *la course royale*, through which he had forged close relationships with several St. Malo merchant houses and even Jean-Baptiste Ducasse, the privateer, former Governor of Saint Domingue and a director of the *Compagnie de l'Asiento*. Almost exactly a year after his daughter's wedding, Héron's also secured a position as La Rochelle's deputy to the *Conseil de Commerce*, adding to his already notable influence in the port.⁶⁴ With marriages among merchants traditionally viewed primarily as business arrangements bringing together the capital, connections and clout of two houses, the union of Sérigny and Marthe-Élizabeth thus marked the entry of the Le Moyne family the metropolitan mercantile community.

Héron also connected the Le Moyne brothers to an array of merchant contacts across France. At the highest level, Héron worked with the Parisian banker Samuel Bernard and the Rouen merchant Nicolas Mesnager on the *Conseil de Commerce*. Both men were heavily

⁶³ LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, p.15-28, « Contrat de mariage entre Joseph Lemoyne de Sérigny et Marthe Elisabeth Heron, » 20 novembre 1699.

⁶⁴ For some of Héron's commercial activities in Canada see ACM, 3^E, 1809, f.67, « Contrat d'affrètement accordé par le sieur Dombourg aux sieurs Melchior Deblair, Pierre Harouard, et Anthoine Héron, » 9 avril 1686; ACM, 3^E, 1809, f.66v, « Contrat passé entre Jean Grignon et Melchior Deblair, Pierre Harouard, et Anthoine Héron, » 9 avril 1686; Geoffrey Symcox, *The Crisis of French Sea Power, 1688-1697: From the Guerre D'escadre to the Guerre de Course* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1974), p.204. For his activities in France and elsewhere in the Atlantic World, see also J. F. Bosher, *Men and Ships in the Canada Trade, 1660-1760: A Biographical Dictionary* (Ottawa: National Historic Sites, Parks Service, Environment Canada, 1992), p.77; Marcel Delafosse, "La Rochelle et les Iles au XVII^e siècle," *Revue d'histoire des colonies* 36 no.127-128, (troisième et quatrième trimestres 1949) : 238-281, p.269; Lionel Rothkrug, *Opposition to Louis XIV: The Political and Social Origins of French Enlightenment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015); Thomas J. Schaeper, *The French Council of Commerce 1700-1715: A Study of Mercantilism after Colbert* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1983), p.22, 40, 52, 83.

involved in colonial commerce and the growing interloping trade in Spanish America. Bernard in particular was a director in both the *Compagnie de Saint-Domingue* and the *Compagnie de l'Asiento*, associations with whom Iberville and Sérigny frequently crossed paths in the following years.⁶⁵ On a more local level, Héron also introduced the brothers to a handful of *rochelais* merchants, including Jean Borie, at whose wedding he served as a witness along with Marthe-Élizabeth and Iberville's wife, Marie-Thérèse Pollet de la Combe, in February 1702. Little is known about Borie, except that he was involved in the Canada trade until at least 1705, which was perhaps how he knew Héron. After this, however, Borie turned his attention towards *la course royale* and outfitted the ships for Iberville's campaign to Nevis in 1706.⁶⁶ Inducted into a metropolitan merchant society, Iberville and Sérigny soon had many opportunities to extend their interests across the Atlantic World.

Whilst Héron's social capital helped integrate the Le Moyne brothers into La Rochelle's merchant community, it was his financial capital that enabled Sérigny to secure his place in the metropolitan elite. In 1702, Sérigny purchased the *seigneurie* of Loire-les-Marais, located five miles north of Rochefort and twenty miles west of La Rochelle. If we believe Bégon's estimation, this cost Sérigny and Marthe-Élizabeth at least 86,000 *livres*, much of which may have been covered by the 30,000 *livres* dowry the couple received from Héron.⁶⁷ Though Héron had reserved half of this dowry for Marthe-Élizabeth's exclusive use, in their marriage contract Sérigny had set aside 30,000 *livres* of his own assets for himself, which suggests that he also sat

⁶⁵ For Mesnager see E. Stewart Sanders, "Nicolas Mesnager: Trade Negotiator," *Libraries Research Publications*, Paper 48, (1995)-, accessed 13/7/2018 at http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/lib_research/48. Chapter IV will discuss the brothers' involvement with Bernard and these companies in greater depth.

⁶⁶ ACM, 3^E, 1812, f.109v-110, « Contrat de mariage entre Jean Borie et d'Anne Moybet, » 14 février 1700 ; ACM, 3^E, 1811, f.55-55v, « Institution par Jean De La Maignière, Robert Butler, André Misset et Borie marchands propriétaires du navire le Saint Pierre, » 23 juin 1695 ; ACM, 3^E, 1802, f.22, « Déclaration, abandon et sommation par Jean Borie marchand, envers les assureurs Pierre Laurans et Jean Gitton, » 13 janvier 1701 ; Bosher, *Men and Ships*, p.45, 103. For Borie's involvement in the Nevis campaign, see Chapter IV.

⁶⁷ « Bégon à Villermont, » La Rochelle, 15 août 1702

on substantial wealth.⁶⁸ Together, Sérigny and Marthe-Élizabeth were able to pool their assets to purchase Loire-les-Marais debt free. In comparison, Iberville was obliged to take out loans of almost 50,000 *livres* to finance his purchase of Ardillières et Duplessis—an estate conveniently located halfway between La Rochelle and Rochefort—unable to rely on any outside help.⁶⁹ Héron's wealth thus gave Sérigny and Marthe-Élizabeth a notable step up on the social ladder and a strong financial base for their own commercial ventures.

Iberville and Sérigny also built on their existing contacts in La Rochelle. Over a decade earlier, Jacques Le Ber had sent his son, Louis Le Ber de Saint Paul, to act as his agent in the port. In 1689, Louis had married Louise-Françoise Grignon, the daughter of local merchant Jean Grignon. As the patriarch of a merchant house involved in the Canada trade since the early seventeenth century and the metropolitan agent of the *Compagnie du Nord*, Grignon was an important contact for Le Ber.⁷⁰ When Louis died in 1692, therefore, he sent his younger son Jacques Le Ber de Senneville to keep the connection to the Grignon family alive. By 1702, this relationship evidently still thrived, for Senneville, Iberville and Sérigny all signed the certificate of marriage between Grignon's second daughter Marianne and the Canadian merchant Charles

⁶⁸ « Contrat de mariage entre Joseph Lemoyne de Sérigny et Marthe Elisabeth Heron, » 20 novembre 1699.

⁶⁹ Iberville's estates were purchased for 94,000 *livres*, much of which was financed with a loan of 40,000 *livres* from the Parisian merchant Charles Trudaine de Montigny et Champigny and another of 8945 *livres* from the naval officer Jean Erard de Belle-Isle. ACM, 3^E, 1812, f.61-62v, « Quittance donné par messire Charles Trudaine à Pierre Le Moyne, » 21 juillet 1701; ACM, 3^E, 1812, f.123v, « Quittance donné par Jean Baptiste Gastumeau pour Charles Trudaine à Marie Thérèse Pollet d'Iberville, » 1 février 1702; ACM, 3^E, 1812, f.147v-148, « Quittance donné par Jean Erard à Marie-Thérèse Pollet pour son mari Pierre Le Moyne, » 6 avril 1702; ACM, 3^E, 1812, f.178v-180, « Vente et transport par Jean Maudet, greffier au siège présidial de La Rochelle, et Marie Pasquet, son épouse, à Pierre Le Moyne, écuyer, seigneur d'Iberville, du château, châtellenie, terre et seigneurie d'Ardillières, ainsi que la terre du Plessis, » 3 septembre 1700.

⁷⁰ ACM, 3^E, 1810, f.37-38v, « Contrat de mariage entre Louis Le Ber et Louise Grignon, » 25 avril 1689 ; ACM, 3^E, 1801, f.3-18v, « Inventaire des meubles et effets de Louise Grignon, » 24 janvier 1693. For more on Grignon see Boshier, *Men and Ships*, p.75, 85 ; J.F. Boshier "Sept grands marchands catholiques français participant au commerce avec la Nouvelle-France (1660-1715)," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, V.48, no. 1, (été 1994), p.16. Evidence also shows that Iberville and Longueuil had been in business with Grignon since 1688. ACM, 3^E, 1809, f.61, « Engagement pour 3 années de Jacques Villier auprès de Pierre Le Moyne, » 31 mars 1688; ACM, 3^E, 1810, f.35v, « Contrat d'engagement de François Nicolleau auprès de Jean Grignon représentant monsieur de Longueuil, » 18 avril 1689; ACM, 3^E, 1811, f.143v-144, « Vente du navire...par Jean Grignon et Pierre Laurent à Pierre Le Moyne, » 14 mars 1696.

Fleury Dechambault. Two years later, all three also signed as witnesses at the remarriage of Louise-Françoise Grignon to Jean Donat, La Rochelle's treasurer.⁷¹ Their continued involvement in these intimate occasions suggests strong overlapping ties of business, patronage and friendship between the Le Moyne-Le Ber and Grignon clans. Indeed, a year after her second wedding, Louise-Françoise leased Iberville a property on Rue de l'Escale, a street at the heart of La Rochelle's small Canadian merchant community. Quite possibly the same house originally gifted to Louis Le Ber as part of her dowry, this property became Iberville's primary family residence and the centre from which he conducted all his business across the Atlantic World.⁷²

By 1705, Le Moyne family's integration into *rochelais* merchant society came full circle with the arrival of François Juchereau de Vaulezar—uncle to Iberville's wife Marie-Thérèse Pollet. Though granted a captaincy in Mobile by Bienville, Vaulezar never left France, instead hoping to make a name for himself in La Rochelle's merchant community. On June 22nd, 1705, he married Marguerite Gaigneur, the daughter of the recently deceased Pierre Gaigneur and his wife Jeanne Grignon—another daughter of Jean Grignon.⁷³ For years, the Juchereau and Gaigneur families had been intimately intertwined. Marguerite's elder sister Marianne had married François-Viennay Pachot *fils*, stepson to Charlotte-Françoise Juchereau, Vaulezar's sister. Vaulezar's marriage thus further strengthened these familial connections and folded them into the burgeoning mercantile alliance between the Le Moyne, Le Ber, Juchereau, Grignon and Gaigneur houses, establishing a vast network that straddled both sides of the Atlantic.

⁷¹ ACM, 3^E, 1812, f.187v-188v, « Contrat de mariage entre Charles Fleury et Marianne Grignon, » 3 août 1702 ; ACM, 3^E, 1813, f.155v-157, « Contrat de mariage entre Jean Donat et Louise Grignon, » 20 juillet 1704.

⁷² ACM, 3^E, 1813, f.114v, « Bail à ferme accordé par Louise Grignon à Pierre Le Moyne, » 7 décembre 1705. See also « Contrat de mariage entre Louis Le Ber et Louise Grignon, » 25 avril 1689.

⁷³ Boshier, *Men and Ships*, p.67; Boshier, "Sept grands marchands catholiques," p.14; J. F. Boshier, "The Gaigneur Clan in the Seventeenth-Century Canada Trade," in Olaf Uwe Janzen, *Merchant Organization and Maritime Trade in the North Atlantic, 1660-1815* (St John's: International Maritime Economic History Association, 1998); Giraud, *The Reign of Louis XIV*, p.215.

Through these connections, the Le Moyne brothers turned their new home into a base of operations for their enterprises across the Atlantic World. As Iberville travelled to the Gulf of Mexico, Sérigny continued to exploit their Fort Bourbon monopoly. Between 1698 and 1699, he brought back a total of 225,000 *livres* of furs—a quantity only just shy of the collective produce of Canada.⁷⁴ As soon as Iberville returned to La Rochelle enthused by the potential of the Lower Mississippi Valley, however, they decided to sell their monopoly and focus on these new prospects. They found willing buyers in the La Rochelle merchant Jean Gitton—who had previously supplied Iberville with rations in Plaisance in 1696—and his partner in Lyon, Martin Desgarnières, who agreed to pay 32,000 *livres* for half of all the furs the brothers brought back from Fort Bourbon until 1701. After this, the merchants would pay only 12,000 *livres* a year to maintain these rights, reduced to 8000 *livres* if they transported the furs themselves. Once the Le Moyne brothers ceded their rights to the *Compagnie de la Colonie* in 1700, Gitton's son took up this latter offer, outfitting five voyages to Fort Bourbon between 1702 and 1713.⁷⁵

Free from their obligations in Hudson Bay, the brothers turned their attention to Louisiana. Operating between La Rochelle and Rochefort, Iberville became the primary contact for all matters concerning the colony. Few in France had any idea about Louisiana, and even fewer wanted to invest their own capital in the colony. As a result, Pontchartrain considered Iberville as the person who “connoissant mieux les besoins qu’un autre pourra vous dire” and

⁷⁴ For the voyages of the *Atalante* and *Ville d’Emden* see ANOM, B, V.20, f.45-45v, « Lettre du Ministre à Monsieur d’Iberville, » Versailles, 7 mai 1698 ; ANOM, B, V.45v-46v, « Offres que fait au Roy le S^r d’Iberville Cap^{ne} de fregatte legere pour le commerce de la Baye d’Hudson, » 7 mai 1698 [signé 19 avril 1698]; ANOM, B, V.20, f.49, « Lettre à M. Bégon, » Versailles, 7 mai 1698; Frégault, *Le Moyne d’Iberville*, 180-182. The combined total of the furs sold to Louis Guiges that came from Sérigny and the “Baie du Nord” between 1697 and 1699 was 70,320 pounds, whilst 86,552 pounds came from Canada between 1698 and 1699. LAC, R6024-0-6-F, « Conventions Particuliers Entre la Colonie de Canada et le fermier du domaine d’occident, », 9 juin 1700.

⁷⁵ For Iberville’s earlier dealings with Gitton see ACM, 3^E, 1811, f.172, « Promesse par Jean Gitton, marchand, envers le roi, d’exécuter le marché conclu avec Pierre Le Moyne, écuyer, sieur d’Iberville, » 5 mai 1696. For the 1699 agreement, see Boshier, *Men and Ships*, p.71; J.F. Boshier, “Sept grands marchands catholiques,” p.23.

who was “au fait de cette affaire mieux que personne.” Affording Iberville almost free reign over the supply expeditions, the minister granted him a large budget and ordered officials such as Bégon to defer to him on all decisions.⁷⁶ Between 1702 and 1706, Iberville provided the initial capital and advances to outfit the *Loire*, the *Pélican* and the *Aigle* and filed receipts with the naval treasurers Jacques de Vanolles and Moïse-Augustin de Fontaineu for reimbursement. In exchange, Pontchartrain granted Iberville the return freight on the vessels, assuming he would use it to develop a flourishing trade in colonial produce from the Lower Mississippi Valley. Of course, as we will see, Iberville used this privilege to further his own schemes.⁷⁷

Between 1702 and 1704, Iberville’s activities were hampered by maladies contracted in Louisiana and the Antilles—perhaps malaria or yellow fever.⁷⁸ His new connections, however, allowed him to maintain his overseas operations. For instance, Iberville’s *commis* Claude Allemand, the brother of Jacques, acted in his employer’s stead, serving aboard the various *vaisseaux du roi* to ensure that Iberville’s instructions were followed. In La Rochelle, Iberville also worked closely with Charles Fleury, the new husband of Marianne Grignon.⁷⁹ Also Canadian, Fleury had begun his career in the Hudson Bay trade. By 1702 he had developed a network of his own, which included his older brother Joseph Fleury de la Gorgendière, a successful merchant in the Canadian fur and cod trades, his younger brother Simon-Thomas

⁷⁶ ANOM, B, V.25, f.12v-14, « Lettre à M. Bégon, » Versailles, 30 janvier 1704 ; AM, B2, V.182, f.472, « Lettre à M. Bégon, » Versailles, 5 septembre 1705.

⁷⁷ ANOM, B, V.23, f.189, « Lettre du Ministre à M. Bégon, » Versailles, 27 février 1703; ANOM, B, V.23, f.192, « Lettre à M. d’Iberville, » [1703]; ANOM, B, V.23, f.193v-194, « Lettre à M. d’Iberville, » Versailles, 17 juin 1703; ANOM, B, V.27, f.186-187, « Lettre à M. d’Iberville, » Marly, 4 novembre 1705 ; AM, B2, V.170, f.147, « Lettre à M. d’Iberville, » Versailles, 17 octobre 1703 ; AM, B2, V.175, f.781v, « Lettre à Mr d’Iberville, » Versailles, 18 juin 1704.

⁷⁸ According to Bégon, in November 1703 Iberville was “à l’extrémité, et a pissé et vomi du sang noir comme de l’ancre.” Iberville was also said to have experienced continued knee pain during these years. These are all symptoms of malaria or yellow fever. See letters CCCII, CCCIII, CCCIV and CCCVI in Archives Historiques de la Saintonge et de l’Aunis, *Lettres de Michel Bégon*, Tome III, (Saintes, Librairie Labord, 1935), p.21, 23, 25, 30.

⁷⁹ ACM, 3^E, 1813, f.95v-96, « Contrat d’apprentissage de Jacques Tesserot, valet de Le Moyne d’Iberville auprès de Jean Allard fait par l’intermédiaire de Charles Fleury, »; ACM, 3^E, 33/2, f.84-87v, « Traité entre Henry Jules Duguay et Charles Fleury représenté par Pierre Lemoine d’Iberville, » 2 juin 1704.

Fleury de la Janière, who had recently moved to Martinique, and his relative Louis Jolliet, who captained Fleury's vessel the *Neptune* between France, Canada and the Caribbean.⁸⁰ Experienced and well connected, Fleury was a useful associate in Iberville's time of need, and in 1704, Iberville contracted him to outfit the *Pélican* and supply 40,000 *livres* of equipment to the struggling Mississippi colony.⁸¹

More than business partners, Iberville and Fleury soon became accomplices. In La Rochelle, Fleury was notorious as a merchant:

qui fait depuis long temps metier et march^{ises} de corrompre les off^{ers} du Roy qui commandent les V^x qui vont dans les Colonies, en leur proposant les moyens d'embarquer les march^{ises} du tiers et du quart en leur faisant trouver sur cela un proffit illegitime et deffendu par les ord.s de sa Maj^{té}.⁸²

Likewise, Iberville had been skimming off profits from the voyages he chartered to Louisiana by claiming larger reimbursements for the advances he had paid to his suppliers and *armateurs*—the middlemen who financed private naval expeditions. Bringing Fleury in on his schemes, Iberville had the merchant cache seventeen personal packages aboard the *Pélican* without paying freight or duties. Allemand then sold these packages in Havana, reportedly using the cash to settle Iberville's debts in Mobile. A year later Fleury became the receiver for the *Compagnie de la Colonie*, which may have allowed him to serve as a fence for the illegal furs still pouring out of the Lower Mississippi Valley.⁸³ Working alongside willing accomplices like Fleury and Allemand, Iberville and his kinsmen extended their fraudulent activities even wider.

⁸⁰ For more on the Fleury network in Canada see Jeannette Larouche "Joseph Fleury de la Gorgendière., 1676-1755, Négociant de Québec" (Master's thesis, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, Janvier 1983) and Bosher, *Men and Ships*, p.168.

⁸¹ « Traité entre Henry Jules Duguay et Charles Fleury » ; ACM, 3^E, 33/2, f.96-96v, « Transport par Gaston Jean Baptiste De Lamotte, employeur pour les affaires du Roi à Pierre Lemoyne d'Iberville, capitaine des vaisseaux, pour le paiement de vivres et l'armement de vaisseaux, » 4 juin 1704.

⁸² AM, B2, V.196, f.1144-1145, « Lettre à Mr D'Argenson » Versailles, 16 mars 1707.

⁸³ « Extraits des lettres, lettre de La Salle, » 6 septembre 1706 ; ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.337-338, « D'Artaguiette au ministre, » 18 août 1708 ; ANOM, C11A, V.24, f.390-390v, « Jugement de l'Amirauté de La Rochelle, » 15 juillet 1705

As well as these men, Iberville could also count on his wife, Marie-Thérèse Pollet de la Combe to manage his trading network on his behalf.⁸⁴ Marie-Thérèse first arrived in La Rochelle in the summer of 1697, having travelled with Iberville from Montreal via Plaisance.⁸⁵ When Iberville left for Louisiana the following year, he named her his *procuratrice*, granting her the legal right to manage his estates and business deals in his name. Agreements such as these are generally considered to show a great deal of mutual trust between a couple, as well as a firm belief in the wife's managerial skills.⁸⁶ Described by Bégon as “une Canadienne, très raisonnable et bien faite,” Marie-Thérèse certainly proved herself, dealing diligently with Iberville's creditors as they chased him for the repayment of the loans he had taken out to purchase Ardillières.⁸⁷ Able to draw upon Iberville's credit, Marie-Thérèse likely also used her authority as Iberville's *procuratrice* to make purchases for the estate and oversee her husband's ventures in the port.⁸⁸ Indeed, she appears to have developed close professional relationships with Fleury and

⁸⁴ Over the last two decades, more scholars have begun to examine the economic activity of women across the Atlantic World. In the French Atlantic, Kathryn A. Young, Sophie White, Karen L. Marrero and Julie Hardwick have examined female merchants or the commercial activities of women in Quebec, New Orleans, Detroit and France. Kathryn A. Young, “...sauf les perils et fortunes de la mer’: Merchant Women in New France and the French Transatlantic Trade, 1713-1746,” in Veronica Strong-Boag et al. eds., *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Sophie White, “‘A Baser Commerce’: Retailing, Class, and Gender in French Colonial New Orleans,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 63, No.3 (Jul. 2006); Karen L. Marrero, “Women at the Crossroads: Trade, Mobility and Power in Early French America and Detroit,” in Thomas A. Foster ed., *Women in Early America* (New York, NYU Press, 2015); Julie Hardwick, *Family Business: Litigation and the Political Economies of Daily Life in Early Modern France* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009). See also Douglas Catterall, Jodi Campbell eds., *Women in Port, Gendering Communities, Economies, and Social Networks in Atlantic Port Cities, 1500-1800* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

⁸⁵ Marie-Thérèse was in Plaisance for the baptism of her second son, Jean-Baptiste-Marie on July 18th, 1697, and then in La Rochelle for the formal ceremonies of this baptism on June 13th, 1698. *Rapport des Archives Nationales du Québec* V.48 (Québec : Roch Lefebvre, 1971), p.277-278.

⁸⁶ On the role of women as *procuratrices* for their absentee husbands in France and Canada see Benoît Grenier “« Sans exceptions ni réserve quelconques »: Absence des hommes et pouvoir des femmes à Québec au XVIII^e siècle,” and Nancy Locklin, “Legal Accommodations for Married Women on Their Own in Eighteenth-Century France,” in Emmanuelle Charpentier and Benoît Grenier eds., *Femmes Face à l’Absence, Bretagne et Québec (XVII^e-XVIII^e siècles)* (Québec: Cheminements, 2015).

⁸⁷ Bégon, “Lettre CXCI [29 novembre 1700],” in *Lettres de Michel Bégon*, V.2, p.45. For instances of Marie Thérèse acting as Iberville's *procuratrice* see ACM, 3^E, 1812, f.61-62v, « Quittance, » 21 juillet 1701; ACM, 3^E, 1812, f.123v, « Quittance, » 1 février 1702; ACM, 3^E, 1812, f.147v-148, « Quittance, » 6 avril 1702.

⁸⁸ See Clare Crowston, “Family Affairs: Wives, Credit, Consumption, and the Law,” in Suzanne Desan and Jeffery Merrick eds., *Family, Gender, and Law in Early Modern France* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009).

Allemand, who frequently lodged at her house on Rue l'Escale.⁸⁹ Whilst many of the documents imply that these two men were more commercially active than Marie-Thérèse, we can assume that they may often have been acting on her orders, a fact which is often obscured in many historical records. Though operating behind the scenes, it is safe to say that Marie-Thérèse played a prominent role in managing the Le Moyne network in La Rochelle, protecting Iberville's metropolitan interests whilst allowing him to deal with their affairs overseas.

Likewise, Marthe-Élizabeth Héron also played an essential role in the Le Moyne network. As the daughter of a successful merchant, Marthe-Élizabeth was financially literate and had proven business acumen. In 1694, her father chose her as the executor of his estate over his two sons, suggesting that he trusted her financial judgement. Héron also guaranteed half of Marthe-Élizabeth's dowry—a substantial 15,000 *livres*—for her own use, a custom traditionally intended to preserve a bride's financial independence. With this money, Marthe-Élizabeth was free to invest in her husband's schemes or pursue those of her own.⁹⁰ For the most part, she chose the former, investing, as we will see, in the Le Moyne plantations in Saint Domingue. Whilst she would not be officially named as Sérigny's *procuratrice* until he left for Louisiana during the War of the Quadruple Alliance in 1719, Clare Crowston has shown women like Marthe-Élizabeth were tacitly permitted to wield their husbands' "trade credit" without such a formal agreement, allowing them to manage the family estates and conduct most basic

⁸⁹ References to their personal connections can be found in AM, B3, V.137, f.687, « Extraits d'une lettre de Clairambault au ministre, » 27 décembre 1706; AM, B2, V.196, f.926, « Lettre au M^r du Val, » 23 février, 1707; AM, B2, V.196, f.1145, « Lettre à Mr d'Argenson, » 16 mars 1707. Kettering notes that early modern noblewomen dealing with a lot of capital often hired men to help them manage their income. Sharon Kettering, "The Patronage Power of Early Modern French Noblewomen" *The Historical Journal* 32, no.4 (Dec., 1989), p.818.

⁹⁰ ACM, 3^E, 1811, f.114v-115v, « Dispositions testamentaires par Anthoine Héron et sa femme Elizabeth Thibault, » 23 novembre 1694; Suzanne Desan, "Making and Breaking Marriage: An Overview of Old Regime Marriage as a Social Practice," in Suzanne Desan and Jeffery Merrick eds., *Family, Gender, and Law in Early Modern France* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), p.7, 11; Kettering, "Patronage Power," p.821-4.

transactions.⁹¹ Though not as directly implicated in the Le Moyne family business as her sister-in-law, by working and investing alongside her husband, Marthe-Élizabeth was nevertheless an important member of the family network, anchoring its operations in her native La Rochelle.

Marie-Thérèse and Marthe-Élizabeth also helped manage and develop the Le Moyne social networks. As Sara Chapman has pointed out, women were more than just “helpmates” or “social secretaries” for their husbands, but in fact played collaborative roles in the family economy, working to create patron-client relationships and maintain their family’s prestige and status.⁹² Indeed, both Marie-Thérèse and Marthe-Élizabeth were key to integrating their own families into the Le Moyne networks. For instance, in 1700, Marie-Thérèse hosted her uncle Juchereau in Iberville’s absence, enabling him to negotiate the creation of the *Compagnie de la Colonie* and the concession of his tannery on the Wabash.⁹³ Marthe-Élizabeth likely also put her husband Sérigny and Iberville in contact with her brother, also named Antoine, in Saint Domingue, beginning a fruitful relationship that will be explored shortly. Both women also maintained important patron-client relationships when their husbands could not, whether dispensing patronage by attending marriages or acting as dutiful clients. In 1704, Marie-Thérèse even took Iberville’s place at Versailles whilst he was ill—an act that undoubtedly helped him secure support for what eventually became the Nevis campaign.⁹⁴ It is thus clear that without the

⁹¹ Crowston shows that whilst those women who were not designated as their husband’s *procuratrices* were not permitted to sign contracts on their spouse’s behalf, they were customarily allowed to draw upon his trade credit for most day-to-day transactions. Crowston, “Family Affairs.” For Marthe-Élizabeth as Sérigny’s *procuratrice* in 1719-1720, see ACM, 3^E, 33/19, f.75-76, « Amortissement par Louis Joseph Houzé de La Feuillade au profit de Marthe Elizabeth Héron, » 10 décembre 1719; ACM, 3^E, 33/19, f.145-146, « Déclaration et protestation par Marthe Elizabeth Héron, » 9 mars 1720; ACM, 3^E, 33/20, f.486-487v, « Déclaration par Marthe Elizabeth Héron, » 11 septembre 1720; ACM, 3^E, 33/20, f.541-542v, « Déclaration par Marthe Elizabeth Héron, » 27 septembre 1720; ACM, 3^E, 33/23, f.117-118v, « Sommutation par dame Marthe Elizabeth Héron, » 29 avril 1723; ACM, 3^E, 33/31, f.239-240, « Procuration par Joseph Le Moyne, » 19 avril 1727.

⁹² Sara Chapman, “Patronage as Family Economy,” p.12.

⁹³ ACM, 3^E, 1802, f.4-11, « Déchargé donné par messire Charles Juchereau de Saint Denys, » 30 mars 1700.

⁹⁴ « Mémoire Succinct de la Naissance et des Services de Defunt Pierre Le Moyne, Ecuyer, seigneur d’Iberville, Ardillers, et autres lieux, chevalier de l’ordre de Saint-Louis, capitaine des vaisseaux du Roy, », published in Léon

tireless work of their wives, the Le Moyne brothers would never have been as well regarded as they were in France by 1706.

Between 1699 and 1706, Iberville and Sérigny succeeded in becoming prominent members of La Rochelle's merchant community and even began to make headway in the courtly society of Paris and Versailles. They augmented their social capital immensely through strategic marriage alliances, patronage and business associations, becoming some of the most popular residents of the small port and rubbing shoulders with the metropolitan elite. With the help of their wives, they established a metropolitan base for their Atlantic network, making La Rochelle the central hub of their growing informal empire. Though based in France, they were able to oversee their many projects in Canada, Louisiana and Saint Domingue, and had ensured that these schemes could operate even in the event of their illness or absence, guided by a network of close associates.

“Une ligue de frere...se trouvant commandants icy et cela par les voyes de Vera Crux et la havanne” : Trans-Imperial Connections in Spanish America

In November 1700, Philippe d'Anjou—newly crowned as Felipe V of Spain—decreed that all French vessels could weigh anchor in his American ports. Their captains were permitted to purchase any supplies or necessary materials up to a value of 2000 *livres* but were prohibited from any other form of trade.⁹⁵ Once the Spanish Empire was torn apart by civil war after July 1701, however, the loyalties of crown agents in these ports were severely tested. Deprived of supply convoys, many Spanish officials chose to overlook the official prohibitions on French

Guérin, *Histoire Maritime de la France*, 6 vols, (Paris, 1851-1859), V. 4, p.476; Bégon, “Lettre CXCI, Rochefort, 29 novembre 1700” in *Lettres de Michel Bégon*, V.2, p.45. For the Nevis campaign, see Chapter IV.

⁹⁵ These privileges were upheld in the early years of Felipe's reign, with decrees also issued on May 31st, 1702, January 20th, 1703, February 10th, 1703 and June 3rd, 1705. See Henry Kamen, *The War of Succession in Spain, 1700-15* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969), p.145.

trade, accepting bribes or turning a blind eye. After France won the *asiento* contract, French agents used the offer of slaving and textile contracts to sway Spanish colonial merchants in favour of the Bourbon regime.⁹⁶ The Atlantic World soon became a more fluid place for French merchants. From Peru to New Spain, they conducted an extensive interloping trade, creating a new trans-imperial “Bourbon Atlantic World.”⁹⁷ Alert to these developments, the Le Moyne brothers leapt at any chance to expand their interests into these new markets.

Iberville had never been officially instructed to trade with Spanish America. In the same year that he was commissioned to explore the Mississippi, however, Pontchartrain chartered both the *Compagnie de la mer du Sud* and *Compagnie de Saint Domingue*, granting them tacit permission to trade on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of the Spanish Empire. Bringing back copious amounts of bullion, these companies helped France sustain its armies across Europe.⁹⁸ But since the naval ministry paradoxically appeared to be fostering smuggling abroad whilst strictly controlling internal trade, many merchants saw this as an invitation to bypass any and all mercantilist policies. Once the War of the Spanish Succession further disrupted the navy’s

⁹⁶ On the loyalties of Spanish Americans during the War of the Spanish Succession see Christophe Rosenmüller, *Patrons, Partisans, and Palace Intrigues: The Court Society of Colonial Mexico, 1702-1710* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2008); Aaron Alejandro Olivas, “Loyalty and Disloyalty to the Bourbon Dynasty in Spanish America and the Philippines During the War of the Spanish Succession (1700-1715)” (PhD diss., University of California, 2013) and Aaron Alejandro Olivas, “Globalizing the War of the Spanish Succession: Conflict, Trade, and Political Alliances in Early Bourbon Spanish America,” in Matthias Pohligh and Michael Schaich eds., *The War of the Spanish Succession: New Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

⁹⁷ See “Chapter 4: Conjunctural Crisis: War and the Utrecht Settlement,” in Stanley J. Stein and Barbara H. Stein, *Silver, Trade, and War: Spain and America in the Making of Early Modern Europe* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2000); Philippe Hrodej, “Marine et diplomatie: les vaisseaux français un outil au service du Bourbon de Madrid et de l’empire espagnol d’Amérique (1700-1713),” and Fernando Jumar, “Le Commerce Français au Rio de la Plata Pendant la Guerre de Succession d’Espagne,” both published in Christian Buchet and Michel Vergé-Franceschi eds., *La Mer, la France et l’Amérique latine*, (Paris: Presses de l’Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2006).

⁹⁸ Charles Frostin, “Les Pontchartrain et la pénétration commerciale française en Amérique espagnole (1690-1715),” *Revue Historique* 245 Fasc.2 (498) (Avril-Juine 1971) pp.307-336; John C. Rule, “Pontchartrain and the Establishment of Louisiana”; Dale Miquelon, “Les Pontchartrain se penchent sur leurs cartes de l’Amérique: les cartes et l’impérialisme, 1690-1712,” *Revue d’histoire de l’Amérique française* 59, no. 1-2 (été-automne 2005) pp. 53-71; Hrodej, “Marine et diplomatie,” pp.27-45.

already tenuous control, this invitation spread even wider.⁹⁹ Located on the periphery of New Spain and the Spanish Caribbean, Louisiana was primed to become a crossroads of this quasi-legal trade, and the Le Moyne brothers were eager to make contacts in Spanish America.¹⁰⁰ Fortunately, when Iberville arrived in Saint Domingue in 1701 he learned that Governor Joseph d'Honon de Gallifet needed to send two officers to both Veracruz and Havana. Keen to have "Nouvelles de ce pay la," Iberville offered to transport them to Pensacola himself, from where they could catch Spanish ships bound for the two ports.¹⁰¹

Founded in 1698, Pensacola had been built to oppose French claims to Louisiana. Before 1701, its Governor, Andrés de Arriola y Guzmán, had diligently followed the official Spanish policy to treat French activities with suspicion and even hostility, even going as far as refusing Iberville's requests for supplies in 1700, even though Iberville had sent some several months earlier. By 1701, however, the Spanish *presidio* was in dire straits, plagued with rot, famine and the constant risk of mutiny or desertion. Arriolla had also been dispatched to Veracruz to fetch more supplies, leaving the acting governor Francisco de Córcoles y Martínez facing starvation. Offered an opportunity to exploit the new Bourbon Union and the networks that connected Pensacola to the rest of Spanish America, Iberville arrived at the fort in December 1701 with the officers from Saint Domingue, hoping to find the Spanish more willing to co-operate.¹⁰²

Once Iberville arrived in Mobile Bay, he received word from a desperate Martínez, who hoped that he might be able to aid the beleaguered Spanish fort. On December 16th, the two men

⁹⁹ Silvia Marzagalli, "Was Warfare Necessary for the Functioning of Eighteenth-Century Colonial Systems? Some Reflections on the Necessity of Cross-Imperial and Foreign Trade in the French Case," in Antunes, *Beyond Empires*, p.258.

¹⁰⁰ Cecile Vidal, "Introduction: Louisiana in Atlantic Perspective," in Cecile Vidal ed., *Louisiana: Crossroads of the Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), p.4.

¹⁰¹ AM, B4, V.21, f.541v, « Lettre d'Iberville, » Cap-Français, 11 novembre 1701.

¹⁰² "Mémoire de la Junte de Guerre," in Pierre Margry, *Découvertes et Établissements des Français dans l'Ouest et dans le Sud L'Amérique Septentrionale (1614-1754): Mémoires et Documents Originaux*. (Paris: Maisonneuve et Cie, Libraires-Éditeurs, 1881), V.4, p.553-568; Higginbotham, *Old Mobile*, p.27-30.

met privately aboard the *Renommée*, where Iberville laid out his plans to build Fort Louis and Mobile. During the meeting Martínez, had not contested these plans. On January 1st, 1702, however, he officially requested that Iberville cease his projects. But as acting governor, Martínez claimed that he had to make a report to the new Viceroy of Mexico, Francisco Fernández de la Cueva, Duque de Alburquerque, who would decide whether Spain would formally object to the new French settlement. But with no vessels at Pensacola capable of travelling to Veracruz, Martínez asked Iberville to lend him a ship to deliver this message. Two days later, Iberville agreed to Martínez's request, provided that the Spanish could supply a pilot with experience in sailing to Veracruz. Within a week, Iberville dispatched his trusted friend Jean-Sidrac Dugué de Sainte-Thérèse across the Gulf of Mexico to Veracruz at the helm of the *Précieuse*, accompanied by a Spanish pilot sent by Martínez.¹⁰³

It appears that Iberville and Martínez secretly conspired to realise their personal goals. Framing his request in the terms of his “obligation,” “devoir” and evoking the “estroit union qui est entre les deux Couronnes,” Martínez devised an excuse to send a ship to Veracruz that could bring back much-needed supplies, reducing his reliance on Ariolla's eventual return and quelling any threat of mutiny. Moreover, if the French established their own relationship with the Spanish port, Martínez could hope for a more reliable stream of supplies to both Louisiana and Pensacola in the future. Indeed, Alburquerque was a renowned francophile, having been appointed by Pontchartrain and escorted to Mexico by Du Casse, and Martínez probably expected that the French would be well received in Veracruz, leading to a mutually beneficial arrangement between Louisiana and Florida.¹⁰⁴ In return, he gave Iberville an opportunity to embed members

¹⁰³ “Lettre de D. Franc. Martines à d'Iberville- De Saint-Marie de Galve et du Chateau, 1er janvier 1702,” in Margry, *Mémoires et Documents*, V4, p.576-577 ; Higginbotham, *Old Mobile*, p.46.

¹⁰⁴ Olivas, “Loyalty and Disloyalty,” p.71-77.

of his own network in New Spain, with Sainte-Thérèse learning the best route to the port for future voyages and establishing connections at the Viceroy's court.

Over the following years, the Le Moyne brothers maintained their trans-imperial relationship with Martínez. They traded extensively with Pensacola, officially classing these exchanges as mutual wartime aid. In 1702, Bienville sent two shipments to the Spanish port in response to requests from Martínez, and then, in 1703, sent Boisbriand to collect a much-needed shipment of flour brought back from Havana by Arriolla, who had finally, albeit briefly, returned to command Pensacola. By February 1706, Bienville had supplied Pensacola with a few hundred barrels of flour, thirty quintals of lard, and a good quantity of weapons, ammunition and powder, at a total cost of 700 *piastres*, or roughly 2800 *livres*. When the Spanish sent a royal commissioner to Mobile to settle their debts, however, they found that the French owed almost 1000 *piastres*, or around 4000 *livres* more than had been recorded.¹⁰⁵

Aware of this discrepancy, La Salle accused Bienville of selling royal merchandise stolen from Fort Louis and Île Massacre for his own profit. Moreover, he accused Bienville of using Châteauguay's frequent supply voyages to Pensacola to sell his own merchandise, particularly brandy, to the Spanish.¹⁰⁶ In total, the *écrivain* tallied that the two brothers had amassed 1217 *livres* in unpaid freight charges over five years for their use of the royal sloops to transport their wares to Pensacola. Whilst this expense itself was rather paltry, the other costs incurred by the alleged appropriation of royal supplies were reportedly more significant. Indeed, following La

¹⁰⁵ Generally, a Spanish *piastre* was valued at about the same as one silver French *écu*, which was worth 3 *livres*. In Canada, however, a *piastre* was often valued at 4 *livres*. For the purposes of this calculation, I have chosen to use this latter rate, due to the scarcity of supplies and specie in Louisiana. For the voyages, see La Harpe, *Journal* p.72, 74, 83, 96; N. M. Miller Surrey, *The Commerce of Louisiana during the French Regime, 1699-1763* (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 2006), p.419.

¹⁰⁶ ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.545-565, « Lettre du S. De La Salle, » Fort Louis de la Louisiane, 7 septembre 1706 ; AC, V.29, f.248v-258v, « Mémoire du Roy au S^r de Muy Gouverneur de la Louisiane pour lui servir lorsqu'il sera arrivée en ce pays, » Versailles, 30 juin 1707 ; ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.514-590, « Le S^r de Bienville, » 28 juillet 1706; ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.5-31, « Lettre de Bienville, » Fort Louis, 20 février, 1707; La Harpe, *Journal*, p.91-2.

Salle's estimations, several contemporaries and historians have even suggested that this abuse of the supplies by the Le Moyne brothers may have been at the heart of the logistical issues and precarity Louisiana experienced in its early years.¹⁰⁷



Fig. 3.2 : “Carte du Golphe du Mexique ou l’on a marqué la Coste de la Louisiane avec beaucoup d’Exactitude [Inset],” from Joseph Le Moyne de Sérigny and Valentin Devin, *Carte de la Côte de la Louisiane, depuis l’Embouchure du Mississipi jusqu’à la baie de St Joseph ; ou l’on marque toutes les Isles, Ports et bons mouillages qui s’y trouvent, suivant les Observations faites par M. de Serigny en 1719 et 1720.* [c.1720]. Map. BNF, Département des cartes et plans, GE, SH, 18, pf.138 bis.
<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b5966520n/f21.item>

Pensacola may have been an important locus of the Le Moyne networks’ trade with Spanish America, but it was soon eclipsed by Veracruz and Havana. Through their connections to Martínez, the brothers succeeded in opening Louisiana to the wider Caribbean economy, creating what Dawdy has dubbed the “Mississippi-Caribbean World.” Over time, she argues, the currents of trade from Spanish America, legal or otherwise, came to sustain Louisiana and help it

¹⁰⁷ ANOM, C13B, No.7, « Lettre de La Salle, » 25 juillet 1707; Miller Surrey, *Commerce of Louisiana*, p.419.

thrive in the absence of regular supplies from France.¹⁰⁸ Even early in the colony's life, this was no different. Initially, the lack of French specie had meant that the Spanish were reluctant to support Louisiana, but Albuquerque finally sanctioned trade between Spanish America and the French colony on June 29th, 1704. Over the next few years, Iberville and Bienville sent royal transport ships on six trips to Veracruz and three to Havana, each commanded by their brother Châteauguay or their close Canadian associates Dugué de Sainte-Thérèse and Robinau de Bécancour and overseen by Iberville's agents Claude and Jacques Allemand.¹⁰⁹

With these men in charge, it should be no surprise that these voyages were not solely concerned with collecting supplies. Between 1700 and 1706, no Spanish galleons arrived in Veracruz, making the merchants of New Spain increasingly desperate for imported goods. They soon turned towards smugglers and French interlopers and according to one such Frenchman living in Mexico City in 1707, would pay a premium of up to 116 per cent for beaver pelts, iron, silk, ribbons, lace and Bordeaux wines.¹¹⁰ Albuquerque did little to stop this trade, and was in fact a major client of French interlopers, purchasing their wares to sell in Mexico City at a markup of almost 130 per cent.¹¹¹ Between La Rochelle and Mobile, the Le Moyne brothers could procure almost all of the goods desired by the Veracruz merchants and use the frequent supply voyages to transport this merchandise without paying the customary freight charges.¹¹² Later, La Salle provided evidence that the brothers owed at least 71,750 *livres* in duties for

¹⁰⁸ Shannon Lee Dawdy, "La Nouvelle-Orléans au XVIII^e siècle," *Annales, Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 62, n.3 (2007); Dawdy, *Building the Devil's Empire*, p.102.

¹⁰⁹ For references to Bécancour's voyages see La Harpe, *Journal*, p.73, 75, 79 and 81 and for Châteauguay p.88, 91-93 and 96; Higginbotham, *Old Mobile*, p.156-157; Miller Surrey, *Commerce of Louisiana*, 388-389.

¹¹⁰ Jean de Monséur and Jean-Paul Duviols, *Mémoires du Mexique: Le manuscrit de Jean de Monséur (1707-1709)* (Paris: Éditions Chandeigne, 2002), p.186-199; José Manuel Santos Perez, "Trade, the Spanish Empire, and the War of the Spanish Succession," in Matthias Pohlig and Michael Schaich eds., *The War of the Spanish Succession: New Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

¹¹¹ Rosenmuller, *Patrons, Partisans and Palace Intrigues*, pp.146-147; Olivas, "Loyalty and Disloyalty," p.79.

¹¹² ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.485, « La Salle au Ministre, » Fort Louis, 7 septembre 1706.

personal goods taken to Veracruz aboard royal vessels. Furthermore, he suspected that Bienville and Châteauguay had appropriated almost a third of the 37,000 *livres* of royal wares loaded on a brigantine bound for Veracruz, which they allegedly sold at a 600 per cent profit. In total, La Salle tallied that Le Moyne brothers had cost the crown 133,682 *livres*, 18 *sols* and 8 *deniers* in fees and stolen merchandise, saying nothing of “le prejudice que Tous ces voyages ont apportés a l’avancem^t de la Colonie, qui n’est pas plus avancé qu’au premier jour.”¹¹³

Though their fraud eventually came to light, the brothers were successful in hiding their activities for many years. In 1706, La Salle complained that all the captains returning from Spanish America—but especially Châteauguay—compiled meticulous expense reports for the reimbursement of their voyages but refused to submit detailed inventories of the goods consumed throughout.¹¹⁴ He likewise accused Bienville of forcing him to sign any receipt provided by Châteauguay, without first letting him verify its contents. Bienville defended this by arguing that La Salle had been lethargic in his reimbursements, leaving Châteauguay out of pocket for his vital service to the colony. He also purportedly tore up La Salle’s orders out of spite, claiming that the *écrivain* had shown clear insubordination in refusing to acquiesce to his demands. Finally, La Salle also reported that after Bécancour had died on a voyage to Veracruz in 1704, Iberville had coerced him into forging Bécancour's signature on a receipt, so that he might claim a larger reimbursement in France. Though he had long been aware of their transgressions, La Salle claimed that he had been unable to speak out against the Le Moyne brothers, out of fear that this “ligue de frere [sic]”—as he called them—who “se trouvant commandants icy et cela par Les voyes de Vera Crux et de la havanne” might intercept his

¹¹³ ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.157, « La Salle au ministre, » 4 mars 1708 ; ANOM, B, V.32, f.46-47, « Lettre au S^r D’Artaguiette, » Marly, 10 mai 1710 ; ANOM, B, V.32, f.61v, « Mémoire du Roy au S^r de La Motte Cadillac, » Marly, 13 mai 1710 ; ANOM, C13B, No.7, « Lettre de La Salle, » 25 juillet 1707.

¹¹⁴ ANOM, B, V.29, f.273, « Lettre au S^r de Châteauguay, » Versailles, 30 juin 1707.

correspondence and “m’enfaire subeir Les peines que La Vengeance leur peu sugere.”¹¹⁵ Only Iberville’s recent death had given him the confidence to make his accusations. Meanwhile, his inaction had allowed the brothers to continue their profiteering throughout Spanish America almost unimpeded for four years.

Admittedly somewhat small in scale, the Le Moyne family’s commercial interests in Spanish America were nevertheless important. Building profitable trans-imperial relationships with Spanish officials such as Martínez and Albuquerque in the name of imperial service, the Le Moyne family exploited the opportunities presented by a new Bourbon Atlantic World, expanding their informal empire across imperial boundaries and adapting this new space to their own ambitions. For the most part, they were able to keep their activities somewhat hidden through a combination of collusion, coercion and intimidation, appearing as diligent agents of empire whilst actively profiting from the weaknesses of imperial authority. In the short term, their self-interested actions damaged the imperial project in the Lower Mississippi Valley but in the long run, they positioned Louisiana as a crossroads of the Atlantic World, creating the Mississippi-Caribbean World and establishing the circuits of smuggling and illicit trade upon which future administrative regimes came to rely.

“Une belle habitation...qui leur sera d’un gros revenu :” Breaking into Saint Domingue

As they expanded their network across the Mississippi-Caribbean World, the Le Moyne brothers would have been unable to miss the explosive growth of Saint Domingue. In 1697, the Treaty of Ryswick brought an end to the colony's so-called “Frontier Era,” opening it to

¹¹⁵ « La Salle au ministre, » 7 septembre 1706 ; ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.5-31, « Lettre de Bienville, » Fort Louis, 20 février 1707.

colonisation and the rise of a plantation-based economy.¹¹⁶ Guided by the *Compagnie de Saint Domingue*, which controlled the island's southern peninsula, the colony grew rapidly. Many former *flibustiers* and *boucaniers* returned to the island, eager to turn their hard-won profits into peacetime revenues. Purchasing small plantations across the colony, they sparked an economic boom. Between 1690 and 1700 the number of sugar and indigo plantations increased dramatically, and the island's enslaved African population doubled.¹¹⁷ When France won the *asiento* contract in 1701, this investment only increased, and the colony was soon an interesting commercial prospect. Making port in Cap-Français on each of his voyages to Louisiana, Iberville had seen this growth first-hand and was keen to invest in the colony. In 1701, therefore, when he was forced to spend several weeks in the port after the *Palmier* was struck by lightning, Iberville partnered with René Cochon de Maurepas, a member of the colony's *Conseil Souverain*, to purchase a sugar mill in Grand Islet and a cacao plantation in Petite Anse for 60,000 *livres*.¹¹⁸

In his 1702 letter to Villermont, Bégon described Iberville's investment as "une belle habitation à Saint Domingue qui leur sera d'un gros revenu." Besides these remarks, however, little other information about the Le Moyne plantations exists. Based on Father Labat's famous recommendations, we can speculate that their sugar plantation might have encompassed about

¹¹⁶ On Saint Domingue's so-called "Frontier Era" see Philip P. Boucher, *France and the American Tropics to 1700: Tropics of Discontent?* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008).

¹¹⁷ Clarence J. Munford, *The Black Ordeal of Slavery and Slave Trading in the French West Indies 1625-1715. Volume II: The Middle Passage and the Plantation Economy*, (Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), p.388; Natacha Bonnet, "L'Investissement colonial au XVIIIe siècle: l'exemple de quatre plantations sucrières à Saint-Domingue," *Entreprises et histoire* 52, no.3 (2008) pp.46-55; Charles Frostin, *Les révoltes blanches à Saint-Domingue aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles (Haïti avant 1789)* (Paris: Éditions de L'École, 1975), p.138-140; John D. Garrigus, *Before Haiti: Race and Citizenship in French Saint-Domingue* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p.28-30.

¹¹⁸ As proof of this purchase Guy Frégault cites a unpaginated document in Iberville's service record in AM C7 which is supposedly an agreement concluded in 1706 in which Iberville bought out Cochon de Maurepas. I was unfortunately unable to locate this document in the copies of the file available Ottawa. Other historians have also cited the document, however, suggesting it exists in France. AN, C7, V.180, « Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, Capitaine de Vaisseau »; Guy Frégault, *Pierre LeMoyne d'Iberville*. (Montréal: Fides, 1968), p.269-270 n.1; "La Fortune d'Iberville," in Pierre-Georges Roy ed., *Bulletin des recherches historiques* V.XLVII, No.3, mars 1941, — accessed 13/7/2018 at <http://collections.banq.qc.ca/ark:/52327/2657489>.

750 acres, with about one hundred African slaves and considerable livestock. Labat calculated that, for an annual operating cost of 6610 *livres*, such a plantation could yield 38,030 *livres* of net profit.¹¹⁹ But sugar was a riskier investment than cacao. Growing cacao required only a third of the capital and enslaved labour of sugar, but produced comparable profits, making the crop a firm favourite amongst the small planters of Saint Domingue, where the rich mountain soils frequently produced bountiful harvests.¹²⁰ When Iberville made his purchase there were only eighteen sugar plantations in the entire colony, which might explain his decision to hedge his bets.¹²¹ The degree of risk might also explain the involvement of Cochon de Maurepas.

Originally from Nantes, Cochon de Maurepas was a local councillor and a wealthy slave trader, meaning that he could not only provide substantial capital but likely also had numerous contacts in the business who could help get the plantations up and running.¹²² Five years later, Iberville bought out Cochon de Maurepas with his profits from his expedition in Nevis, suggesting that he had intended the partnership to be temporary, only meant to provide seed money and guidance.

Only a few historians have ever mentioned Iberville's purchase of plantations in Saint Domingue, and none have acknowledged the involvement of other investors from the Le Moyne clan.¹²³ Indeed, later inheritance and purchase records signed in La Rochelle and Rochefort

¹¹⁹ Jean Baptiste Labat, *Nouveau Voyage aux isles de l'Amerique* (Paris: Chez Ch. J. B Delespine, 1742) V.4, p.173-174, p.207-, accessed on 28/7/2018 at <https://archive.org/details/nouveauvoyageau04laba>; Robert Louis Stein, *The French Sugar Business in the Eighteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), p.43-44.

¹²⁰ Garrigus, *Before Haiti*, p.36; Trevor G. Burnard, John D. Garrigus, *The Plantation Machine: Atlantic Capitalism in French Saint-Domingue and British Jamaica* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), p.34

¹²¹ Frostin notes that there were no sugar plantations in 1690, eighteen in 1700 and 120 by 1704, placing Iberville's purchase right at the beginning of the explosion in investment. Frostin, *Les révoltes blanches*, p.138.

¹²² By 1725, René Cochon de Maurepas had returned to France, where he became a *secrétaire du roi*, *Maison et Couronne de France*. His fortune of 300,000 livres made him the twelfth wealthiest merchant in Nantes. Jean Meyer, *L'armement nantais dans la deuxième moitié du XVIIIe siècle* [online]. (Paris, École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 1999) —, accessed 27/3/2020 at <http://books.openedition.org/editionschess/661>.

¹²³ Most also only mention Iberville's purchase of a plantation in passing, preferring to focus more on his voyage to Louisiana, which has hidden his slave-owning past and protected his "heroic" reputation. L. Le Jeune, *Le chevalier Pierre Le Moyne, sieur d'Iberville*, (Ottawa : Les Éditions de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1937), p.90, 240 ; Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville* p.269-270 ; Nellis M. Crouse, *Le Moyne d'Iberville: Soldier of New France*, (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1954), p.232-233; Higginbotham, *Old Mobile*, p.17; Roy ed., "La Fortune d'Iberville."

reveal that of the 60,000 *livres* invested in the plantation, Iberville initially only owned forty-one parts, worth 41,000 *livres*, mostly financed through the sale of *billets d'intérêts* to his kinsmen and allies. Essentially, these *billets* allowed the Le Moyne family to pool their capital and jointly purchase the controlling share in the plantation project, dividing the incomes between them in accordance with the amount of their investment. Amongst the shareholders were Sérigny and Marthe-Élizabeth Héron, who bought 10,000 *livres* of *billets*, Vaulezar, who contributed 4000 *livres*, and the Dugué brothers—Boisbriand and Sainte-Thérèse—who together purchased 2000 *livres* through the *procuration* of their sister Marie-Thérèse, who lived in Quebec. Without other evidence, we can presume that Iberville and Marie-Thérèse contributed the remaining 25,000 *livres*. As for the other investors, records show that Jean de Chambre, Baron d'Urgons, who served with Iberville on the *Renommée* in 1701, owned a *billet de cession* worth 2000 *livres*, whilst Cochon de Maurepas was bought out for 13,385 *livres*, presumably having made a return on his investment.¹²⁴ Notwithstanding the roughly 5000 *livres* left unaccounted for, we can thus see that far more people were interested in the Le Moyne plantations than previously thought.

Most of the plantation's investors were based in La Rochelle, centring the development of the plantations in a port known for its intimate familial connections to Saint Domingue.¹²⁵ From here, Iberville could manage the plantations whilst also overseeing his projects in Louisiana. Between 1703 and 1706, he hired a small indentured workforce for the plantation, signing contracts with Jacques Sauzeau, a local cooper and Jean Souhait, a surgeon from Quebec. Fleury also found Iberville's valet, Jacques Tesserot, an apprenticeship to a master

¹²⁴ ACM, 3^E, 1815, f.258, « Cessions faite par messire Jean de Chambre...à François Juchereau, écuyer, sieur de Vaulezar, » 9 novembre 1714 ; « Liste des officiers de marine choisis par le Roy pour servir sur les vaisseaux cy-aprez nommez, que Sa Majesté fait armer à Rochefort. Du 22 juin 1700, » in Margry, *Mémoires et Documents*, V.4 p.469 ; ACM, 3^E, 1815, f.260v-261v, « Ratification de cession sous seing privé d'une partie du capital constitué par les habitations appartenant au feu d'Iberville et acquise par François Juchereau de Vaulezar, » 17 novembre 1714 ; Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*, p.270.

¹²⁵ Palmer, *Intimate Bonds*.

cooper, perhaps intending to send him to join Sauzeau once his training was complete.¹²⁶

Iberville also used his metropolitan contacts to further integrate the plantations into his Atlantic vision. In 1703, he suggested to Pontchartrain that rather than transporting sugar from La Rochelle to Louisiana, the crown should instead purchase it in Saint Domingue to save one fifth on their freight charges.¹²⁷ Currently outfitting the *Loire*, captained by his fellow investor Boisbriand, his timing implied that he wished such a purchase to be made at his own plantation. Pontchartrain refused, however, and reminded Iberville he was only to bring goods from Louisiana, not Saint Domingue.¹²⁸ Even so, Boisbriand called at both Cap-Français and Havana on his voyage, and sold flour to an *asiento* agent, perhaps making connections that could further integrate the Le Moyne plantations into the Atlantic slaving economy.¹²⁹

Whilst not initially a shareholder in the plantations, Vaulezar made concrete efforts to connect them directly to the slave trade on behalf of the Le Moyne family. In 1703, rather than heading to Louisiana with his newly recruited regiment, he commanded the *Poly*—a royal slave ship belonging to the *Compagnie de l'Asiento*—on a slaving expedition to the coast of Guinea. Besides an offhand remark by Pontchartrain, little is known about this voyage, but given the capacity of his vessel, Vaulezar could have brought upwards of six hundred enslaved Africans to the company's principal outpost in Saint Domingue. Though most were likely shipped onwards to Spanish America, some of these slaves may also have been sold in the French colony, perhaps even making their way to the Le Moyne plantations.¹³⁰ Indeed, Vaulezar became intimately

¹²⁶ ACM, 3^E, 1812, f.228, « Engagement pour 3 années de Jacques Sauzeau, garçon tonnelier auprès de Pierre Le Moyne, » 9 janvier 1703; ACM, 3^E, 1813, f.130-130vm, « Engagement pour 3 années de Jean Souhait, garçon chirurgien auprès de Pierre Le Moyne, » 14 janvier 1706. ; ACM, 3^E, 1813, f.53v, « Contrat d'apprentissage de Jacques Tesserot auprès de Jean Allard, » 30 août 1706.

¹²⁷ AM, B4, V.25, f.370, « M. d'Iberville, » La Rochelle, 15 février 1703.

¹²⁸ ANOM, B, V.23, f.192, « Lettre à M. d'Iberville, » [1703].

¹²⁹ ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.338-339, « D'Artaguiette au ministre, » 18 août 1708.

¹³⁰ ANOM, B, V.23, f.194, « Lettre à M. d'Iberville, » Versailles, 17 juin 1703; Stein and Stein *Silver, Trade and War*, p.120-121; Munford, *The Black Ordeal*, V.1, p.203-4.

involved in the management of the plantations, installing his nephew, Pierre Lalande Gayon, as the plantation's manager and Iberville's Caribbean *commis* in 1706.¹³¹ Eight years later, Vaulezar would take over from Gayon, settling permanently in Saint Domingue. Buying up the shares of the Dugué brothers and Jean de Chambre, he oversaw the plantation on behalf of his kinsmen until 1734, giving the Le Moyne family another direct point of contact in the colony.¹³²

The Le Moyne family also sought to integrate their plantations into the circuits of the Mississippi-Caribbean World, connecting them to Spanish America by way of Louisiana. Alongside furs, iron, wine and other produce, merchants and colonists in New Spain also desperately coveted cacao, which they exchanged as currency with local Indigenous food producers.¹³³ Cacao was usually brought to Mexico from Peru, Caracas and the Spanish Caribbean, but the ravages of war had fostered a new contraband trade by Dutch and French smugglers, who trafficked enough produce from both Martinique and Saint Domingue to flood the market at Veracruz by 1716. It is not hard to imagine that the Le Moyne family may have profited from this contraband trade, especially since John D. Garrigus has argued that it was essential in enabling the small planters of Saint Domingue to develop their plantations in an otherwise difficult time.¹³⁴ With established connections and the infrastructure to transport their wares themselves, it is even likely that Le Moyne family smuggled their produce alongside the contraband that Sainte-Thérèse, Bécancour and Châteauguay already transported to Veracruz.

¹³¹ As we will see in the next chapter, however, he also was suspected of acquiring up to twenty-four illegally. ACM, B, V.5921, p.141, « État de la vente des negres à Léogâne, » ; ANOM, B, V.28, f.439-440, « Lettre à M. De Vaucresson, » Marly, 1 juin 1706; Giraud, *The Reign of Louis XIV*, p.115.

¹³² Pierre-Georges Roy ed., "François Juchereau de Vaulezard," in *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques* V.XXXII, No.9, Septembre 1926 ; ACM, 3^E, 1815, f.258, « Cessions faite par messire Jean de Chambre à François Juchereau, écuyer, sieur de Vaulezar, » 9 novembre 1714; ACM, 3^E, 1815, f.260v-261v, « Ratification de cession sous seing privé d'une partie du capital constitué par les habitations appartenant au feu d'Iberville et acquise par François Juchereau de Vaulezar, » 17 novembre 1714.

¹³³ Eugenio Pinero, *The Town of San Felipe and Colonial Cacao Economies* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1994), p.31-41

¹³⁴ Garrigus, *Before Haiti*, p.36.

In Cap-Français, the Le Moyne clan also extended their influence into the local administration, perhaps hoping to secure the longevity of their projects in the colony. One such contact was Antoine Héron *fils*, Sérigny's brother-in-law, who had been exiled by his father and sent to serve as a judge in Cap Français.¹³⁵ It was perhaps Héron who introduced Iberville and Sérigny to Cochon de Maurepas, who was his colleague on the *Conseil Souverain*. He may also have put his relatives in contact with the Vincent brothers, with whom they struck up a close relationship. Jean-Baptiste Vincent had recently arrived in Saint Domingue to serve as the colony's *procureur général*, accompanied by his younger brother—whose name is unknown—who became a scrivener.¹³⁶ Both positions gave the Vincent brothers considerable influence in the colony, which made them useful allies for the Le Moyne family. In 1701, therefore, Iberville decided to leave behind his younger brother, Gabriel Le Moyne d'Assigny, to train with them as a bureaucrat, informing Pontchartrain that:

Monsieur Vincent que je Eu le plaisir de passer ysy, dans la traversée ma débauché un de mes fraires et engager de rester icy dans l'espérance quil lui a donné que nous agirions de Consser et faire en sorte auprès de vous de lui optenir de vous monseigneur la plasse de monsieur son fraire dans le Conseil estably ay cap francés de St Domingue il prendre en se case, dautre Veue de poste du mississipy, C'est employ me paret Convenir a mon frère, qui est un jeune homme de Vingt quatre année qui C'est adonné aux estudes et est le seul de tous mes fraires qui na pas pris le party de la guerre je vous suplie monseigneur de luis accorder C'este plasse quil est en estat de remplir avec honneur et distenquestion je Contribueré de ma part a luy procurer un bon établissement monsieur Vinssens vous mandera mieux que moi de quoy il est capable.¹³⁷

¹³⁵ It is unclear why Héron exiled his son, but it may help to explain why he chose Marthe-Élizabeth as his executor. ANOM, B, V.21, f.554v, « Lettre à monsieur Bégon, » 11 mars 1700; ANOM, E, 220, « Héron, juge civil et criminel du siège royal du Cap-Français, à Saint-Domingue (1703-1705). »

¹³⁶ Jean-Baptiste de Vincent was formally the *lieutenant générale de la police* in Limoges and was promoted to the Conseil Souverain de Saint Domingue in 1701. Vincent Meyzie, *Les illusions perdues de la magistrature seconde. Les officiers « moyens » de justice en Limousin et en Périgord (vers 1665-vers 1810)*, (Limoges, Pulim, 2006) p.58; Records show that Sieur Vincent also arrived in July 1701 to serve as *écrivain*, probably his younger brother. ANOM, B, V.24, f.188, « Lettre au sieur Marie, » [1701].

¹³⁷ AM, B4, V.21, f.541-541v, « Lettre d'Iberville, » Cap-Français, 11 novembre 1701.

Besides this letter, little is known about Assigny, the oft-forgotten twelfth child of Charles Le Moyne and Catherine Primot. Apparently more gifted with the pen than the sword, Assigny had been groomed by his older brother for a role in the administration of the family empire. Once he turned twenty years old, Assigny accompanied Iberville aboard the *Renommée* to take up a position as an administrator in Louisiana, perhaps as a counterbalance to La Salle. After purchasing his plantations, however, Iberville saw more value in having Assigny train to become the next *procureur général* of Cap-Français, from where he could watch over his family's new investments and encourage others to turn a blind eye their contraband trade.¹³⁸ Ever the opportunist, Iberville leveraged Pontchartrain's patronage to secure this position for Assigny, once again lying about his brother's age.¹³⁹ Sadly, however, Assigny never lived up to his older brother's expectations, dying of yellow fever within the year.

The Le Moyne plantations had great implications for their Atlantic networks. By reinvesting the wealth they had earned in the fur trade, the family established a foothold in the booming plantation economy of Saint Domingue, and quickly integrated their new plantations into the circuits of trade in the Atlantic and Mississippi-Caribbean Worlds. Taking advantage of the profitable enterprises they had already developed in France, Louisiana and New Spain, the Le Moyne investors soon found lucrative markets for their produce—whether legal or otherwise. Their successes also enabled them to accumulate enough capital to buy out the first major outside investor by 1706, and the other by 1714. After this, the two plantations were firmly established as family patrimony and a continued part of their future revenue, inherited by

¹³⁸ In the Caribbean, such officials became notorious for practising what Banks has called “official duplicity,” frequently overlooking rampant smuggling and illegal activities practised by the colonists they presided over provided that they brought wealth and stability to their colony. Kenneth J. Banks, “Official Duplicity: The Illicit Slave Trade of Martinique, 1713-1763,” in Coclanis, *The Atlantic Economy*, pp.229-251. See also Wim Klooster, “Inter-imperial Smuggling in the Americas, 1600-1800,” in Bernard Bailyn, *Soundings in Atlantic History: Latent Structures and Intellectual Currents, 1500-1830* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2009), pp.141-180.

¹³⁹ Born in 1681, Assigny was twenty-one year's old, not twenty-four as Iberville stated.

Iberville and Sérigny's children several decades later. Perhaps more significantly though, the initial connections made by the Le Moyne brothers were some of the very first steps in connecting Saint Domingue and Louisiana, a geographic relationship that came to shape the French Empire in the Mississippi-Caribbean World.¹⁴⁰

“Mais fraires et mes amis que jai en canada en souffrer:” Alternative Networks in Canada

For those Le Moyne siblings still living in Canada —Longueuil, Maricourt and Marie-Anne—things were very different. As their kinsmen expanded their enterprises across the Atlantic World, these siblings struggled to stay afloat amidst an economic depression, brought on by the closure of the fur trade in May 1696.¹⁴¹ Like many in the colony, they pursued any possible method to survive economically, trading in both licit and illicit furs and managing the commercial interests of their absentee siblings. More distant from the increasingly integrated Le Moyne networks in Louisiana, Saint Domingue or La Rochelle, however, the siblings in Canada frequently found their interests at odds with those of their kin outside of the colony. Indeed, despised by the authorities in Quebec for his activities in the Mississippi watershed, Iberville complained in 1703 that “mais fraires et mes amis que jai en cannada en souffrer... des chagrins que je leurs atire quoy que inossamant.”¹⁴² Pursuing their own interests, therefore, the Le Moynes in Canada built their own alternative networks to weather the economic storm.

Records left after Maricourt's death show that, as early as September 1696, he had begun looking for creative solutions to bypass the prohibitions placed on the fur trade. With no heirs of his own, Maricourt bequeathed over 13,000 *livres* to his younger sister Marie-Anne and her

¹⁴⁰ See Cécile Vidal, *Caribbean New Orleans: Empire, Race, and the Making of a Slave Society*. (Williamsburg, Virginia: Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture; Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019).

¹⁴¹ Havard, *Histoire des Coureurs de Bois*, p.118.

¹⁴² ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.379-386, « Iberville au Ministre, » [1703].

husband Jean-Bouillet de La Chassaigne, a French officer whom she had married in 1699.¹⁴³ In his will, however, Maricourt stipulated that this inheritance was to be drawn from the capital he had invested in a silent partnership with the Montreal merchant Louis Le Comte Dupré.¹⁴⁴ But Dupré claimed he no longer had the funds, leading Marie-Anne and La Chassaigne to file a lawsuit that lasted until October 1706. In this lawsuit, it was revealed that Maricourt, his first wife Marie-Madeleine Dupont de Neuville, and Dupré had officially formed a partnership on September 1st, 1696, with Antoine Pascaud acting as a witness.¹⁴⁵ Both Maricourt and Marie-Madeleine had agreed to be silent partners, advancing Dupré 49,917 *livres* at an interest rate of 5 per cent. For his part, Dupré was “entièrement a sa bonne foi,” only obligated to provide an annual inventory of the “pertes ou profits qu’il aura plu à Dieu de leur donner.”¹⁴⁶ This arrangement lasted until Marie-Madeleine’s death on November 29th, 1703. An inventory of her affairs shows that, in total, the partnership had made a profit of 14,000 *livres* and was owed a further 14,000 *livres* from a La Rochelle merchant Willarme, a *coureur de bois* known as Le Lorrain and the Montreal merchant Raymond Amiot.¹⁴⁷ But none of these debts were repaid, for Willarme went bankrupt, Le Lorrain absconded to Louisiana and Amiot became insolvent. As a result, the partnership was much less fruitful than expected, making a net loss of 2910 *livres*.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴³ PRDH, #47772, « Mariage, 28 octobre 1699. »

¹⁴⁴ BAnQ, TL4, S1, D786, « Distribution des biens de la succession vacante de Paul Lemoine, sieur de Maricourt, » 13 septembre 1704-6 mai 1705.

¹⁴⁵ BAnQ, P1000, S3, D2727, « Contre de mariage entre Paul le Moyne de Maricourt et Marie-Madeleine Dupont de Neuville, » 29 octobre 1691.

¹⁴⁶ Maricourt’s *billets* would be paid on June 17th, 1696, October 25th, 1697 and October 8th, 1698. By the conclusion of the partnership in November 1703, the interest owed to Maricourt by Dupré on these *billets* amounted to 15,969 *livres* 2 *sols* 6 *deniers*.

¹⁴⁷ Rendered as “sieur Amiault”, this debtor was certainly Raymond Amiot, who Dupré pursued in October 1703 for the payment of “grosses sommes concernant des marchandises pour son commerce.” BAnQ, TL4, S1, D709, « Procès entre Louis Lecomte, sieur de Dupré marchand, demandeur et Raymond Amiot, marchand, emprisonné fils de noble Barthélemy, ancien magistrat de Toulouse (“capitoul”), défendeur, pour paiement de marchandises livrées, » 9 octobre 1703. Le Lorrain was perhaps Joseph Lorrain, a *voyageur* from Montreal. It is possible that Willarme was Pierre Villarme, a La Rochelle merchant, but there no further references linking him to Dupré or the Le Moyne family in the notarial records from this port.

¹⁴⁸ BAnQ, TP1, S28, P8302, « Appel de Louis Lecomte sieur de Dupré contre Jean-Baptiste Nolan, » 3 mai 1706.

Interestingly, when Maricourt entered into the partnership, he was in charge of the finances of his siblings who were still legally considered minors at the time—Marie-Anne, Bienville, Assigny and Châteauguay. He had also received payments of over 13,000 *livres* each from both Iberville and Sérigny, who had signed away their parts in the *seigneurie* of Châteauguay, which Maricourt had sold to Zacharie Robutel de La Noue in April 1696.¹⁴⁹ Much of the partnership's capital had thus been comprised of the “derniers de frères et soeurs dudit feu sieur de Maricourt.” Since the siblings were already invested in their brothers' campaigns in Hudson Bay and Newfoundland that same year, it seems that Maricourt had perhaps viewed the partnership with Dupré as a way to diversify their portfolio at a difficult time. Indeed, since the contract was negotiated in September 1696, all parties would have been well aware of the ordinance issued that May which effectively outlawed Dupré's intended trading, particularly as Maricourt's father in law, Nicolas Dupont de Neuville, sat on the *Conseil Souverain* where it was registered.¹⁵⁰ In openly defying these regulations, Maricourt seemingly hoped to ensure that his siblings' money continued to turn a profit even in the face of a stagnant fur trade.

Maricourt may also have chosen to remain a silent partner to protect his kin from the illicit nature of the partnership. From the sheer number of court cases concerning his activities in this period, it does not appear that Dupré had the same qualms about the legality of the enterprise, making him a useful scapegoat for Maricourt.¹⁵¹ Moreover, the records seem to show

¹⁴⁹ ACM, 3^E, 1811, f.169-169v, « Décharge et ratification par Pierre Le Moyne, » 26 avril 1696 ; ACM, 3^E, 1881, f.169v, « Décharge et ratification par Joseph Le Moyne, » 26 avril 1696.

¹⁵⁰ ANOM, C11A, V.14, f.295-295, « Projet d'ordonnance du roi supprimant les congés de traite et fixant les prix des diverses sortes de castors reçues au bureau des fermes à Québec » [1696] ; ANOM, C11A, V.125, f.195-199, « Déclaration du roi portant suppression des 25 congés et défense d'aller en traite aux Outaouais, à peine des galères, » 21 mai 1696.

¹⁵¹ From the BAnQ database, it appears that between 1695 and 1715, Lecomte Dupré was pursued for the payment of debts by several different people, as well as being tried in criminal cases for assault and the mistreatment of a ten-year-old boy in his employ. The records are too numerous to be listed here in their entirety, but can all be found online at <https://advitam.banq.qc.ca>.

that Dupré had access to an Atlantic network of men in Canada, La Rochelle and, later, Louisiana who were willing to engage in illicit trade. Entering into business with Dupré may thus have offered Maricourt a way to exploit an illegal trade network without risking these activities being traced directly back to him. Indeed, he had made this much clear in his instructions, telling Dupré that he “ne sera tenu de rendre aucun compte en detail,” so that he might have a degree of plausible deniability. This seems to have paid off, for Maricourt maintained his reputation for probity and was praised alongside Longueuil in 1698 for his apparent “désintéressement.”¹⁵²

None of the later court proceedings between Marie-Anne, La Chassaigne and Dupré pass any judgement about the illegality of the partnership between Maricourt and Dupré, focusing more on the collection of outstanding debts. Since a decade had passed, this might indicate an understanding that this kind of illegal behaviour had occurred during a difficult transitional period, especially as the partnership was relatively small compared to some other illicit schemes.¹⁵³ Whatever the reasoning, despite the losses, neither Maricourt nor his siblings were punished for their involvement with Dupré. Dupré, however, was obliged to pay them back almost 18,000 *livres* in October 1706, from which Marie-Anne and La Chassaigne were able to take the inheritance left to them by Maricourt.¹⁵⁴ Despite its risks, the partnership shows the lengths traders were willing to go to weather the economic difficulties in Canada in the early eighteenth century, reaching out to forge new, clandestine networks that could bring in supplementary revenues. Fortunately for the Le Moyne siblings, their investments in Iberville's

¹⁵² ANOM, C11A, V.17, f.84v, « Lettre de Champigny au ministre, » 20 octobre 1699.

¹⁵³ Indeed, Havard argues that “la corruption, en Nouvelle-France, est généralisée: la plupart des administrateurs, du haut en bas de la hiérarchie, prennent une part active au commerce illicite, et le Pays d'en Haut, qui échappe plus facilement au regard du prince, apparaît comme le terreau privilégié de l'illégalité.” Gilles Havard, *Empire et métissages: Indiens et Français Dans Le Pays D'en Haut, 1660-1715* (Sillery, Québec; Paris: Septentrion ; Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2003), p.336.

¹⁵⁴ BAnQ, TP1, S28, P8362, « Ordre d'exécuter l'arrêt du 3 mai 1706 dans la cause de Jean-Baptiste Nolan...contre Louis Lecomte, sieur Dupré, » 11 octobre 1706.

privateering campaigns had largely been profitable, mitigating the losses brought about by their involvement with Dupré. Others, however, were not so fortunate.

For most merchants in Canada, the outlawing of the fur trade severely limited their options. After Iberville prompted the collapse of the *Compagnie du Nord*, several of its directors petitioned for its charter to be granted to a successor company: the *Compagnie de la Colonie*. Leading this movement were Charles Juchereau de Saint Denis and Antoine Pascaud, both staunch allies of the Le Moyne family. Travelling to France in 1700, they negotiated a deal with the new tax farmer Louis Guigues, who agreed to purchase all of Canada's fur stocks, old or new, injecting some much-needed vitality into the stagnant trade. Founded in Quebec on October 15th, 1700, the *Compagnie de la Colonie* was comprised of a handful of former *Compagnie du Nord* directors, whose interests were transferred over to the new company, as well as roughly 200 new shareholders (*actionnaires*) from all levels of colonial society.

Many members of the Le Moyne network became shareholders, including Longueuil, Marie-Anne and La Chassaigne, Jacques Le Ber, Ruelle d'Auteuil, Juchereau de St Denis, Charlotte-Françoise Juchereau and Antoine Pascaud.¹⁵⁵ Notably absent from the list, however, were Maricourt—who was instead involved with Dupré—and Iberville and Sérigny, who had recently sold their rights to Hudson Bay to Gitton and Desgarnières. According to the company's conventions, each shareholder had to purchase at least one share valued at 50 *livres*. Those who invested over 1000 *livres* (or held at least twenty shares) were able to attend the company's assemblies, held in Quebec from 1703 at the annual arrival of the *vaisseau du roi*. All of the investors associated with the Le Moyne clan exceeded this threshold, with Le Ber investing the

¹⁵⁵ ANOM, C11A, V.125, f.366v, « Liste générale des intéressés en la Compagnie de la Colonie de Canada et des actions qu'ils y ont prises, » [1708].

most (16,200 *livres*) and Longueuil the least (1000 *livres*) granting them all, in theory, a voice in the company's management.¹⁵⁶

Amongst the Le Moyne associates, however, there were varying degrees of enthusiasm for the *Compagnie de la Colonie*. Some, such as Ruelle d'Auteuil and Pascaud, were heavily involved in the company's operations, acting as managing directors.¹⁵⁷ Others were employed by the company in various ways, such as Charles Fleury, who was their agent in La Rochelle. Others still, particularly Le Ber, Charlotte-Françoise Juchereau and La Chassaigne, were implicated through the transfer of the large sums they had invested in the *Compagnie du Nord*. Longueuil, however, was a unique case. Unlike his uncle and brother-in-law, Longueuil had not had any investments transferred from the *Compagnie du Nord*, for the Le Moyne siblings had withdrawn their family's shares in the company in 1694 to finance Iberville and Sérigny's privateering campaign. Instead, Longueuil chose to invest only 1000 *livres* in the new company, an amount on par with the investments of other military officers in Montreal and just enough for a voice at the company's assemblies.¹⁵⁸

Longueuil's token investment suggests a reluctance to invest in the *Compagnie de la Colonie*. It is possible that, like many others in Canada, he distrusted the company's management. Of the company's two hundred shareholders, eleven owned one-third of all shares, which made many sceptical of their intentions. But the company also monopolised the fur trade, which encouraged many to invest. Since merchants and traders were obliged to purchase shares if they wished to legally sell their services and wares, many opted to do so, however grudgingly.

¹⁵⁶ ANOM, C11A, V.40, f.211-217v, « Articles proposés par les habitants de la colonie pour servir de règlement à la Compagnie de la Colonie, » 15 octobre 1700; France Beauregard "Les Actionnaires de la Compagnie de la Colonie" (Master's thesis, Université Laval, 1985) p.54-55.

¹⁵⁷ Micheline d'Allaire, *Montée et Déclin d'une Famille Noble: Les Ruelle d'Auteuil (1617-1737)* (LaSalle, Québec: Hurtubise HMH, 1980), p.105-108.

¹⁵⁸ Officers in Montreal invested on average 1050 *livres*, whilst those in Québec invested 1430. See "Tableau VII: Sommes investies per capita (en livres) selon les occupations," in Beauregard, "Les Actionnaires," p.101.

Even Dupré sought to legitimise his enterprises by investing 1000 *livres*, despite continuing his side-business with Maricourt for another two years. Few of these “shareholders” cared whether the *Compagnie de la Colonie* actually made a profit, however, so long as they continued to purchase their furs. Indeed, since the company never actually insisted that anyone actually pay upfront for their shares, few worried about their liability or the longevity of the enterprise. This was particularly true for those who had previously been invested in the *Compagnie du Nord*, most of whom refused to purchase any more shares than they were transferred. We might therefore presume that most of the investments made by the Le Moyne family and their associates were of a more pragmatic nature, intended to keep open avenues for trade whilst cautiously preserving capital for the future.¹⁵⁹

This approach proved wise. During its short lifespan, the *Compagnie de la Colonie* was racked with internal problems, such as corruption, poor organisation and enormous debt. Viewing the situation from La Rochelle, Antoine Héron even recommended to the *Conseil de Commerce* that the company should have burned half their beaver stocks before they even began, for they possessed far more pelts than the French market could consume.¹⁶⁰ This was to say nothing of the problems Iberville, Le Sueur and Juchereau de Saint Denis caused the company by shutting them out of the Mississippi markets and flooding France with even more furs. Eventually, these issues forced the *Compagnie de la Colonie* to cease trading in 1706, dissolve its leadership and cede its rights to a European monopoly.¹⁶¹ This had little direct impact on most of the Le Moyne shareholders, who had either not yet paid or had paid very little for their shares.

¹⁵⁹ Many others in the colony were also sceptical about investing in the company. Dale Miquelon, *New France 1701-1744: “A Supplement to Europe”* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987), p.62-64 and Beauregard, “Les Actionnaires,” p.86-96.

¹⁶⁰ Miquelon, *New France*, p.66.

¹⁶¹ Guy Frégault, *Le XVIIe Siècle Canadien* (Montréal: Éditions HMH, 1968), p.248-251; Miquelon, *New France*, p.62-66.

Two, however, suffered greatly. In 1706, Ruelle d'Auteuil was forced out of his position as *procureur général* for his alleged corrupt management of the company and settled briefly in Paris. Pascaud was also forced to start afresh in La Rochelle, where he rented land on Sérigny's estate and began to further his interests in western France.¹⁶²

Even if the collapse of the *Compagnie de la Colonie* had little impact on most members of the Le Moyne clan, it is interesting to note the ways in which the commercial interests of those in Canada and Louisiana both overlapped and clashed. The enterprises of Iberville, Le Sueur, Juchereau and Bienville in the Lower Mississippi Valley all jeopardised the investments of their relatives back home, ultimately bankrupting the association they had backed and reconfiguring the colony's economy. As a managing partner of the *Compagnie de la Colonie*, Ruelle d'Auteuil was one of the most outspoken critics of his son-in-law's actions, perhaps as he had the most to lose. Even Maricourt, who was not directly invested in the company, suffered the consequences of his brother's actions when the *coureur de bois* Le Lorrain absconded with 5000 pounds of furs in 1699—some of which Iberville may even have sold in New York in 1700. Blissfully unaware that his schemes had more than social implications for his kinsmen, Iberville held Maricourt aloft as an example of the mistreatment of his siblings, claiming that the injustices his brother suffered were particularly cruel considering his recent role in negotiating the Great Peace of Montreal.¹⁶³ Whether this was out of ignorance or arrogance, it demonstrates that we cannot truly speak of a unified "Le Moyne family strategy." In Canada, Louisiana, France, or the Caribbean, the Le Moyne siblings all attempted to create networks that facilitated

¹⁶²Allaire, *Montée et déclin*, p.108-120; J. F. Bosher, "Pascaud, Antoine (1729-86)," in *DCB*, V. 4, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed 23/08/2018 http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/pascaud_antoine_1729_86_4E.html; ACM, 3^E, 574, f.28v-29, « Quittance donné par Charlotte Élisabeth Dugué à Joseph Le Moyne, » 26 Avril 1719.

¹⁶³ ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.379-386, « Iberville au Ministre, » [1703].

their own commercial ambitions, but only some of these networks were folded into the family's "informal empire," whilst others sat on its periphery. Disconnected from the rest of their family, Longueuil and Maricourt were gradually sidelined, forced to create other connections whilst Iberville asserted himself as the lynchpin of their family network.

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In March 1705, Bégon again wrote to Villermont to inform him that Iberville was currently in Paris, and having procured the government of Louisiana, hoped that he might now be left alone to "jouir tranquillement en France du fruit de ses travaux."¹⁶⁴ Through careful planning, he had put himself in a good position to do so. Across the Atlantic World, a trustworthy network of kin and associates operated a vast personal empire on his behalf that stretched from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, Canada to the Caribbean, and from western France to West Africa. Provided they maintained the illusion of their adherence to imperial interests, this network effectively had license to run their empire in any way they pleased. For the most part, this meant exploiting any and all opportunities for profit, whether legal or otherwise, to advance their own wealth, privilege and status. But as time wore on, they became more emboldened, taking greater and greater risks, pushing the limits of imperial toleration and flirting more openly with illegality. Once they pushed too far, flagrantly betraying Pontchartrain's already begrudging trust, the underworld of the Le Moyne empire was laid bare, as it all came crashing down around them.

¹⁶⁴ "Lettre CCCXXXIV, Rochefort, 24 mars 1705," in, *Lettres de Michel Bégon* V.3--, accessed 28/8/2018 <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5858125z>.

Chapter IV

A Family Affair: the armement d'Iberville, 1705-1745

One autumn night in 1706, Sérigny weighed anchor off Île de Groix, a few miles from the Breton coast. Fresh from a campaign led by his brother Iberville against the English in Nevis, he and his crew had spent the last few months trading their loot across the Caribbean and their English-made frigate, the *Coventry*, sat low in the water, laden with Spanish silver. Few aboard, however, wished to see their hard-earned profits disappear into the hands of the naval officials in Lorient or the expedition's financiers in Paris. Before departing, therefore, they had arranged to have their takings smuggled into France upon their return. Peering through the gloom, Sérigny spied his contact Peron in a small fishing sloop on the horizon. By day, Peron trawled the Breton coast for sardines but by night he plied his trade as one of the region's many infamous salt smugglers. Pulling up alongside the *Coventry*, Peron took a number of chests and sacks from the officers aboard, caching them safely amongst the day's catch. By 10 o'clock Peron made for his hometown of Port Louis, just outside of Lorient, where a handful of wagon drivers awaited him, ready to whisk the silver across France.¹

Two weeks later, rumours spread in Paris that as many as two million Spanish *piastres*—worth almost six million *livres*—had been smuggled ashore from the *Coventry*.² It was only a matter of time before Pontchartrain caught wind of the conspiracy. That summer, the minister had been tipped off by officials in France and the colonies about the possibility of widespread fraud amongst the officers of the *armement d'Iberville*, to which the *Coventry* belonged, and had

¹ AM, B3, V.136, f.292-295v, « Extrait d'une lettre de Barilly au ministre, » Lorient, 3 décembre 1706; AM, B3, V.137, f.608-619v, « Extrait d'une lettre de Clairambault au ministre, » Lorient, 20 novembre 1706; AM, B2, V.198, f.408, « Lettre au S^r Pajot, » Versailles, 27 juillet 1707; AM, B2, V.198, f.1573, « Lettre au S^r L'Hostelier, » Fontainebleau, 28 septembre 1707.

² AM, B3, V.137, f.652-662v, « Extraits d'une lettre de Clairambault au ministre, » 13 décembre 1706. This value of six million *livres* is based on one piastre being worth about 1 *écu* in France, which was itself worth 3 *livres tournois*.

ordered the investigation of all ships returning from this campaign. As soon as their quarantine was lifted, a royal scrivener and two archers boarded the *Coventry* and conducted detailed inventories and interviews with all the officers and crew. At every turn, however, these men remained unusually tight-lipped.³ After several days, Charles de Clairambault, *ordonnateur* of Lorient, could only prove that 154,273 *livres* of Spanish silver had been brought into the port. The rest, it seemed, had slipped away with Peron, prompting Pontchartrain to complain of the “peu d’Exactitude avec laquelle ce débarquement s’est fait.”⁴ As it became clear that Sérigny and his crew were hiding something, the minister ordered an inquiry into the *armement d’Iberville*, calling on officials from across the French Atlantic World to shed light on the situation.⁵

Lasting over four decades, the investigation into the *armement d’Iberville*—the name given to Iberville’s 1706 expedition to Nevis—created a treasure trove of documentation. After frantic correspondence between Pontchartrain and his naval officials in France in late 1706 revealed evidence of fraud, Louis XIV launched an official inquiry into the *armement* on July 2nd, 1707. Because the difficulties of war dragged out the inquiry, it was not until December 1715 that the royally appointed investigators were able to judge those involved. Even then, the deaths of several councillors meant that an official *Commission Extraordinaire* was not formally launched until 1723, and only promulgated its final judgements as late as 1750.⁶ Nevertheless, through meticulous examination, the inquiry revealed that most of the officers, merchants and officials involved in the *armement d’Iberville* were implicated in some kind of fraud. None,

³ « Extraits d’une lettre de Clairambault au ministre, » 13 décembre 1706 ; AM, B2, V.192, f.339, « Lettre à Mr. de Sérigny, » Versailles, 27 novembre 1706.

⁴ AM, B2, V.192, f.534-535, « Lettre à M^r Clairambault, » Versailles, 8 octobre 1706; AM, B2, V.192, f.699-700, « Lettre à M. Clairambault, » Versailles, 15 octobre 1706.

⁵ AM, B2, V.192, f.378, « Lettre à Mr Massiot, » Versailles, 1 octobre 1706; AM, B2, V.192, f.399, « Lettre à M^r de Sérigny, » Versailles, 27 novembre 1706; AM, B2, V.192, f.705-6, « Lettre à M. de Sérigny, » Versailles, 15 octobre 1706.

⁶ See AN, V.7, 214, Pièce No.1, « Ordre d’enregistrement de décisions du Conseil d’État au greffe de leur commission, » 9 mai 1726 and Pièce No.30, « Jugement du 5 aoust 1750, » 5 août 1750.

however, were quite as implicated as the Le Moyne family. The commission located them at the centre of a web of coercion and conspiracy designed to line their pockets with the riches of the Bourbon Caribbean, exploiting the chaos of war to embezzle hundreds of thousands of *livres*.

Making use of this wealth of evidence, this chapter seeks to reconstruct the activities of the *armement d'Iberville* between 1705 and 1706. Focusing on the involvement of the Le Moyne family in particular, this chapter shows how they used their network of connections in France, Louisiana, Saint Domingue and Spanish America to exploit the financial chaos of the War of the Spanish Succession and the lucrative markets of the “Bourbon Atlantic World” to turn large profits from the Nevis campaign at the expense of its financiers. By examining the investigation itself, this chapter also suggests that the *Marine* was ill-equipped to deal with such widespread deception within its ranks. Ultimately, the naval ministry failed to prosecute most of the main perpetrators in the *armement*—including the Le Moyne family. But whilst the Le Moynes were not directly punished, their reputations greatly suffered. This chapter thus concludes by charting the impact that the investigations had on the careers, status and ventures of the Le Moyne clan.

“La despance ne cousteroit rien au roy par les grandes prises que l'on feroit : ” Financing and Fraud in the *armement d'Iberville*.

Even before the War of the Spanish Succession was declared, Iberville had proposed several privateering campaigns against England's North American colonies. Initially, he set his sights on Boston and New York, preemptively sounding Manhattan harbour on his visit in 1700.⁷ By 1702, however, his attentions had turned towards Virginia, Carolina, Florida and the West

⁷ ANOM, C11A, V.19, f.241-252, « Mémoire du S^r d'Iberville sur Boston et ses dépendances, » [1701]. Officials in New York feared that Iberville had sounded much of Manhattan harbour, all the way to Sandy Hook, and fortified the port further in 1701 in preparation for an attack. See “Earl of Bellomont to the Lords of Trade, Boston 9 July 1700”, “Representation to the Lords of Trade concerning New York, 4 October 1700,” “Mr Robert Livingston to the Lords of Trade, 13 May 1701,” and “Lord Cornbury to the Lords of Trade, [1701],” in Brodhead, *DCHNY*, V.4 p.684, 701, 877 and 969.

Indies. Fearing the challenge these colonies presented to his personal empire in the Mississippi-Caribbean World, he petitioned for the chance to lead French soldiers, Canadians and Indigenous allies to destroy all major English settlements south of the Chesapeake in order to “empescher le progres anglois dans ces pais La sur les Nations des indiens.” Once St. Augustine fell to the English in 1703, Iberville’s fears were heightened. He began formulating plans to work with the Spanish against the English threat once and for all. This, he believed, could be achieved by razing Charles Town and burning the “flotte de Virginie” that patrolled the coast of English North America, leaving the southern colonies completely exposed. Writing to Pontchartrain in November, he requested permission to assemble a force of 250 Spaniards from Havana—including 200 freed blacks or *mulâtres*—300 French *flibustiers*, 150 Canadians and 150 Mississippian warriors, supported by a forty-gun *vaisseau du roi* and a new twenty-gun frigate, arguing that “la despance ne cousteroit rien au roy par les grandes prises que l'on feroit.”⁸

Rhetoric such as this had become increasingly common in proposals for privateering expeditions at the turn of the eighteenth century, for it resonated with the French navy’s objectives in the War of the Spanish Succession. Fighting one of the world’s first truly global conflicts, with campaigns across the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans, Pontchartrain embraced the state-sponsored privateering of *la course royale*.⁹ Warfare, both economic and physical, had been placed in the hands of a small number of companies—the *Compagnie de l’Asiento*, the *Compagnie de la mer du Sud* and the *Compagnie des Indes orientales*—who also sought to protect their commercial interests from the English. In the Atlantic World, the *Compagnie de*

⁸ ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.327-330, « Suite du Mémoire de M. d’Iberville sur la Floride, » novembre 1702; ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.333-348, « Mémoire [d’Iberville], » [1701]; AM, B4, V.25, f.362-370, « Projet de d’Iberville pour reprendre le château de Saint-Augustin en Floride, » La Rochelle, 17 mars 1703; AM, B4, V.29, f.212-216, « Proposition d’une entreprise sur la Caroline pour en chasser les Anglois, » [1704]; Guy Frégault, *Pierre Le Moyne d’Iberville*, (Montréal : Fides, 1968), p.246-258.

⁹ J. S. Bromley, “The French Privateering War, 1702-13” in J. S. Bromley, *Corsairs and navies, 1660-1760* (London; Ronceverte, WV, U.S.A.: Hambledon Press, 1987), p.213-242; Pritchard, *In Search of Empire*, p.358-362.

l'Asiento was the most significant of these military-commercial enterprises. Formed in 1701, the company counted both the French and Spanish kings amongst its shareholders, as well as Pontchartrain and two of France's most important financiers, Samuel Bernard and Antoine Crozat.¹⁰ Accorded several *vaisseaux du roi*, the company took a mostly defensive role, employing privateers like Jean-Baptiste Du Casse and Jean Doublet to escort French and Spanish supply and slaving convoys across the Atlantic Ocean and protect their strongholds in the Caribbean and West Africa.¹¹ Almost all of these expeditions were in turn financed by interloping trade or slave trading, keeping prices down for the Bourbon monarchs and turning handsome profits for the company's directors.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Iberville's venture intrigued many metropolitan financiers with interests in Atlantic commerce. Proposing to raze the Chesapeake, he piqued the interest of those invested in the tobacco farm, which struggled to compete with Virginia's production.¹² On August 21st, 1705, Iberville met with Antoine Crozat, a key investor in the farm, who pledged 150,000 *livres* to sponsor his scheme. Like many investors in the tobacco monopoly, Crozat had other Atlantic interests, and was also a director of both the *Compagnie de Saint-Domingue* and the *Compagnie de l'Asiento*.¹³ It was likely on his suggestion, therefore, that the *Compagnie de Saint Domingue* collectively pledged a further 70,000 *livres* for Iberville's enterprise. Through

¹⁰ Elisabeth Heijmans, *The Agency of Empire: Connections and Strategies in French Overseas Expansion* (1686-1746) (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2020), p.22-23.

¹¹ For a 1704 expedition to Whydah led by Doublet, see Munford, *The Black Ordeal of Slavery and Slave Trading in the French West Indies 1625-1715* (Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), V.1, p.210-211. For Du Casse's military activities for the *Compagnie de l'Asiento* see Philippe Hrodej, "Marine et diplomatie: les vaisseaux français un outil au service du Bourbon de Madrid et de l'empire espagnol d'Amérique (1700-1713)," in Christian Buchet and Michel Vergé-Franceschi eds., *La Mer, la France et l'Amérique latine*, (Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2006).

¹² Jacob M. Price, *France and the Chesapeake: A History of the French Tobacco Monopoly, 1674-1791, and of Its Relationship to the British and American Tobacco Trades* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1973).

¹³ For more the overlapping interests of investors in the tobacco farm, the *Compagnie de l'Asiento* and the *Compagnie des indes orientales* see Heijmans, *The Agency of Empire*, p.28, 35-36, 48-49.

this commitment, Iberville found himself in business with many prominent financiers, including Samuel Bernard, the tax farmers Pierre Thomé and Vincent Mayon, the naval treasurer Jacques Vanolles, the artillery treasurer Étienne Landais and the renowned privateer Jean-Baptiste Du Casse. With these men interested in his venture, it was not long before Iberville secured the support of other wealthy courtiers, including Crozat's relative, Michel Crozat, who pledged 30,000 *livres*, and Moïse-Augustin de Fontanieu—an *asiento* director, naval treasurer and financier of Iberville's expeditions to Louisiana—who invested 40,000 *livres*. Pierre-Benoît Morel, the president of the *Cour des Aides* and François Bourdelin, a royal councillor, also invested 50,000 and 3400 *livres* respectively. Lastly, Henri-Louis, comte de Chavagnac, a naval officer appointed as Iberville's second-in-command, invested a modest 7000 *livres*.¹⁴

From later court cases, however, it appears that, at least at first, few of these investors (known as *armateurs*) knew who else was involved. No written agreements, nor formal *société* were made. Rather, some of the biggest investors—notably Crozat, Morel, and the directors of the *Compagnie de Saint Domingue*—seem to have believed that they had negotiated exclusive agreements with Iberville. Legally, Iberville held the power to consent to, deny or adjust any contract made as he saw fit. Each investor therefore seems to have believed that their deal with

¹⁴ No other historians have explored the financial backing of the *armement d'Iberville* since the information was previously difficult to find. Now published on *Gallica* by the BNF, however, the "Recueil de pièces du procès entre la Compagnie des Indes et les « intéressez en l'armement, fait en l'année 1705, sous le commandement du feu sieur d'Yberville." provides a wealth of useful information for exploring this topic. Though a mess, the collection compiles a number of documents assembled for a court case between the *Compagnie des Indes* and the *armateurs* in 1737, and provides clues about the members of the *armement* and their investments. Scattered across the 400 pages are references to their invests, from which I was able to uncover the following shares—Morel: 50,000 *livres*; Crozat: 150,000 *livres*; Fontanieu: 40,000 *livres*, Bourdelin: 3400 *livres*, Crozat de Blainville: 30,000 *livres*; Chavagnac 7000 *livres*, *Intéressés dans la Compagnie de Saint Domingue*: 70,000 *livres* (although they only paid 55,000- the root of the dispute.). Discussion of the nature of their *société* by jurists in 1737 also helped to understand their obligations and roles. Whilst I was unable to document the entire history of the aftermath of the *armement d'Iberville*, this collection would be an excellent place to start for anyone interested in the overlapping interests of the many companies of the French Atlantic World and their involvement in colonial warfare. "Recueil de pièces du procès entre la Compagnie des Indes et les « intéressez en l'armement, fait en l'année 1705, sous le commandement du feu sieur d'Yberville"—, accessed 8/8/2018. at *Gallica*, <http://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cc54137>.

Iberville superseded the more typical equitable division of stakes common to a *société*, allowing them to invest more capital in return for a larger share of the profits. Over three decades later, however, the *procureur du roi* decreed that since each investor had consented to join the *armement*, whether tacitly or in writing, they had in fact been entered into a *société* and were subject to the rules applying to such an organisation. Thus, whilst each investor had pledged varying amounts, all were legally obligated to pay their part promptly so that no one party could profit on the interest at the detriment of the other parties. Moreover, no one party could be privileged over another, regardless of the size of their interest.¹⁵ Likely improvising his dealings rather than acting with any clear knowledge of the law, Iberville had played his financiers off against one another, appealing to their desire for profits to secure more investment for his venture, caring little for the problems this might cause down the line.

One week later, Iberville secured his most significant investor: Louis XIV. By 1706, the monarch was committed to underwriting most major privateering expeditions, furnishing *vaisseaux du roi* in return for the now-standard *cinquième* and the Admiral's *dixième* on all prizes taken.¹⁶ Pledging 200,000 livres, however, the king claimed a larger than usual stake in the *armement d'Iberville*, claiming a one quarter share in its prizes, on top of his typical cut. Moreover, the king promised to lease eleven *vaisseaux du roi*—most of which were already on loan to the *Compagnie de l'Asiento*—and raise 600 soldiers for the campaign, whom he would provide with eight months of supplies. In exchange he expected the *armateurs* to pay for the upkeep of the ships and pay the soldiers with one tenth of all prizes taken. Otherwise, they were free to divide the remaining profits amongst themselves according to their own agreements. As a

¹⁵ “Le Procureur au Roy,” 13 mai 1709 in “Recueil de pièces du procès entre la Compagnie des Indes et les intéressez en l'armement,” f.40-43v, [IMG 72-79].

¹⁶ J. S. Bromley, “The Loan of French Naval Vessels to Privateering Enterprises, 1688-1713,” and “The French Privateering War, 1702-13,” in J. S. Bromley, *Corsairs and Navies*.

primary shareholder in the *Compagnie de l'Asiento*, the monarch also accorded the *armateurs* the right to sell any captured slaves in the French colonies but notably said nothing about Spanish America. Finally, eager to hold Iberville to his promises, and eager to assure his share, the monarch demanded that he keep accurate accounts and inventories.

Backed by Louis XIV, the *Compagnie de Saint Domingue* and the *Compagnie de l'Asiento*, Iberville's venture took on a new, Atlantic dimension. Three months after the king pledged his support, Pontchartrain altered the direction of Iberville's campaign, instructing him to descend upon Barbados, before continuing on a rampage throughout the West Indies, ravaging Antigua, Nevis, Montserrat and St. Kitts. Then, if the opportunity presented itself, Iberville was to join forces with Du Casse, who was planning his own assault on Jamaica. Only once this was completed was Iberville to regather his forces and pursue his original campaign in English North America, pillaging outposts and settlements in Carolina, Virginia, New York and New England before ending his trail of destruction in Acadia and Newfoundland.¹⁷ No longer a strategic mission to secure Louisiana, Iberville's expedition was now a commerce raid into the heart of the English Atlantic World, designed to devastate its colonies and secure vast quantities of silver.

Indeed, silver was the common interest which bound together the *armement d'Iberville*. Fighting farther afield than ever before, the French military needed silver specie for the foreign exchanges necessary to keep its troops provisioned across Europe.¹⁸ As the war progressed, France came to depend on minting new currency to increase the yield of these vital exchanges. Much of the bullion for this came from Spanish America, brought to France by interloping or

¹⁷ AM, B4, V.29, f.219-225, « Memoire pour servir d'Instruction au S^r d'Iberville Cap^{ne} Entretenu dans La Marine, » Marly, 3 novembre 1705.

¹⁸ Guy Rowlands, "Keep Right on to the End of the Road: The Stamina of the French Army in the War of the Spanish Succession," in Matthias Pohl and Michael Schaich eds., *The War of the Spanish Succession: New Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp.323-342.

privateering expeditions. Once deposited at the *Hôtel de la Monnaie*, this silver was paid for with *billets de monnaie*—or “mint bills”—which could be reimbursed in specie within a short period of time. From 1701, a royal edict declared that these *billets* could be used as paper money and they were used to repay many military financiers, including Crozat, Landaïs and Bernard, for their substantial loans.¹⁹ Since many of their investments were underwritten by silver, these men became some of the largest backers of privateering and interloping enterprises in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, hoping the success of these ventures would ensure their own financial stability. After 1703, when the mint began issuing more *billets* than the bullion supply could afford, the value of mint bills tumbled, making these kinds of expeditions even more essential. For both the crown and these military financiers, the *armement d’Iberville* seemed to offer a chance, at least briefly, to stabilise the *billets de monnaie* and shore up their many investments.

Few others, however, revelled in the prospect of being paid in increasingly worthless bills. By April 1705, France’s many defeats had caused the value of the *billets* to plummet and by the end of 1706, buyers were selling mint bills at a discount of 53 per cent.²⁰ Meanwhile, silver could fetch much better rates abroad, especially since the *Hôtel de la Monnaie* was the only European mint to impose duties on foreign specie. With this in mind Pierre-Benôit Morel—President of the Paris *Cour des Aides* and perhaps the most outspoken critic of the *billets* amongst Iberville’s investors—later complained that it was “pas Juste que le Roy touche tout en argent comptant pendant qu’il reste à luy [...] en caisse des billets de monnoye.”²¹ From the *armement*’s very inception, Morel thus sought to safeguard his own investments by

¹⁹ For Bernard’s dependence on *billets de monnaie* see Guy Rowlands, *Dangerous and Dishonest Men: The International Bankers of Louis XIV’s France* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p.144-165.

²⁰ Guy Rowlands, *The Financial Decline of a Great Power: War, Influence, and Money in Louis XIV’s France* (Corby: Oxford University Press, 2012), p.111, 116-117.

²¹ AN, V7, 214, No.19, p.386 [transcript], « Jugement du 26 avril 1735, » 15 septembre 1735.

commandeering financial control of the entire expedition. Proposing his father-in-law, Louis Jacobé de Naurois, as the expedition's general director and paymaster, Morel asserted his control over the withdrawal of funds, the cashing of *billets* and collection of interest on investments, all tasks which offered ample opportunities for fraud. With his prestigious position at the *Cour des Aides*—the principal legal tribunal for tax collection in France—Morel perhaps believed that the other investors would trust his judgement, paying or receiving what he told them without asking to look at the accounts. This trust allowed Morel and Naurois to skim off profits during both the provisioning and liquidation of the fleet.²² Most importantly, this fraud put specie directly in their hands, meaning they no longer had to rely on repayment in a rapidly depreciating medium.

Morel likely also believed that his “special arrangement” with Iberville would allow him to profit at the expense of the other investors. Indeed, later records suggest that the two men colluded to undercut the other investors by siphoning off some of the cash paid to outfit the *vaisseaux du roi*. After years working in La Rochelle, Iberville had built a network of accomplices who could aid him in such a scheme. One such person was Jean Borie, whom Iberville appointed as his director in early August. On the same day that the *armement* was concluded in Paris, Morel wrote to Borie in La Rochelle, suggesting that he and Iberville had already begun colluding. Returning to La Rochelle, Iberville contracted Borie to provide the fleet with 600,000 rations, priced at 7 *sols* each. Two months later, however, Iberville withdrew 245,000 livres from the expedition's fund to pay for 700,000 rations, even though Borie had spent only 162,788 livres on 600,000. Morel signed off on this back in Paris, declaring that

²² For an overview of how privateering expeditions were typically financed and outfitted in this period see J. S. Bromley, "Projets et contrats d'armement en course marseillais 1705-1712," *Revue d'histoire économique et sociale* 50, No. 1 (1972) pp.74-109. For the fraudulent side, see Pierre Berthiaume, "L'ordre du désordre," in Sylvie Requemora and Sophie Linon-Chipon, *Les tyrans de la mer: pirates, corsaires & flibustiers* (Paris, Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2002), p. 127-144.

Borie's account books were "tres nets, en bon ordre, et la depense faite avec beaucoup d'economie." As suspected, the presence of Morel's signature meant that no one investigated the discrepancy further, allowing Morel, Iberville and Borie to split the difference—enough for them to collectively outfit a private merchant ship and have over 40,000 *livres* each to spare. On December 30th, Borie reinvested his share into the *armement*, earning him a stake in the expedition's prizes. Poised to make abundant profits, he informed Morel that if there were ever another opportunity "comme celle du S^r d'Iberville, il pouvoit compter sur luy pour tout."²³

During the War of the Spanish Succession, *armateurs* like Morel became notorious amongst officers for gouging an expedition's prize money at their expense. With this mind, many involved in the *armement*, Iberville included, made contingency plans to ensure that they profited. Almost all of the expedition's officers were involved in some kind of contraband trade, whether transporting small *pacotilles* to the Caribbean on behalf of local merchants or selling their own contraband merchandise in the lucrative colonial markets. Few appear to have had any qualms about this, likely seeing it as a way to ensure that they were paid for laying down their lives in the name of France.²⁴ It could take years, if not decades, for the *Amirauté* to officially liquidate a privateering expedition, but contraband provided immediate rewards. Indeed, the *armement d'Iberville* was not liquidated until 1727, and all the while Morel and Naurois held onto the 133,000 *livres* earmarked to pay the officers. Fraud, therefore, was a pragmatic way for the officers to protect themselves against the perils of privateering.²⁵

²³ « Jugement du 26 avril 1735, » 15 septembre 1735

²⁴ Marcel Giraud, "Crise de conscience et d'autorité: À la fin du règne de Louis XIV," *Annales. Histoire. Sciences Sociales*. 7e Année, No.2 (1952) : 172-190, p.173-4.

²⁵ AM, B2, V.183, f.113v, « Lettre à M. Bégon, » 21 octobre 1705 ; AM, B2, V.183, f.117, « Lettre au S^r du Meynis, » [S.D] ; AM, B2, V.183, f.148v-149, « Lettre à M. Bégon, » 28 octobre 1705 ; AM, B2, V.183, f.410-410v, « Lettre à M. d'Iberville, » 4 novembre 1705 ; AN, V7, 214, Pièce No. 2, « Jugement, » 20 mars 1727, p.29-30 [transcription] ; Berthiaume, "L'ordre du désordre" p.141.

Many of those involved in the most blatant fraud were either Canadian or Iberville's kinsmen. On the expedition's muster rolls were Iberville's brother Sérigny, their brother-in-law Noyan and up to three of their nephews—likely Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil, Étienne-Auguste Le Moyne d'Adoucourt and Jacques Le Moyne de Saint-Hélène.²⁶ Working together, they outfitted their vessels with as much contraband as possible, so that all could profit. Aboard the *Sphère*, Iberville hid his own merchandise in barrels he claimed to be filled with vegetables.²⁷ Likewise, aboard the *Coventry*, Sérigny and his officers jettisoned their supplies of flour, lard and vegetables—later discovered rotting on the docks of Rochefort—to make room for more valuable personal wares. Much of this was loaded onto the ship by Fleury, who had recently been appointed as the commissioner for the *Missions Étrangères* and tasked with loading the supplies for the missionaries sent to Louisiana aboard the *Coventry*. Iberville, Sérigny and Fleury, however, never intended to send the *Coventry* to the colony, but instead planned to fill its 670-ton hold with merchandise, loot and slaves for sale in Veracruz, exploiting the connections they had already made in the Spanish port. Still, Sérigny charged the missionary Nicolas Gervais 1000 *livres* of freight fees to transport his goods aboard the *Coventry*, which he duly pocketed.²⁸

²⁶ In 1705, Iberville petitioned for positions in the *gardes marines* for Longueuil and St Hélène. In the roster of officers present in Nevis, he also lists a “Mr Marigny de Longueuil” as a *capitaine* in the grenadiers and a “Mr de Longueuil” as his *enseigne*. Le Jeune thus argues that Longueuil and Saint Hélène joined him, whilst Crouse argues it was just the two Longueuil nephews, but there is no evidence suggesting that all three might have been on the expedition. Of course, both could be wrong as “Marigny” could possibly be a reference to Iberville's cousin Jean-Baptiste de Martigny, whose whereabouts are otherwise unknown between 1706 and 1709. AM, B2, V.183, f.864, « Lettre à M. d'Iberville, » “Relation de Mr D'Iberville, Depuis son départ de la Martinique, jusqu'à la prise & capitulation de l'Isle de Nièves appartenante aux Anglois,” in *Mercure Galant*, mai 1706, pp.282-319- accessed on 8/8/2018 at *Gallica* ark:/12148/bpt6k6291026q, p.316; L. Le Jeune, *Le chevalier Pierre Le Moyne, sieur d'Iberville*, (Ottawa : Les Éditions de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1937), p.241; Nellis Maynard Crouse, *Lemoyne d'Iberville: Soldier of New France*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1954).

²⁷ AM, B2, V.209, f.445, « Lettre au S^r Lhostelier, » 31 octobre 1708; « Jugement du 26 avril 1735, » 15 septembre 1735, p.377-78, 380-81 [transcription].

²⁸ AM, B2, V.196, f.1144-5, « Lettre à Mr d'Argenson, » 16 mars 1707; AM, B2, V.196, f.1266-7, « Lettre à Mr D'Argenson, » Versailles, 30 mars 1707; AM, B2, V.197, f.1231, « Lettre au S^r L'Hostelier, » Versailles, 8 juin 1707; AM, B2, V.214, f.288-9, « Lettre au S^r de Sérigny, » Versailles, 30 janvier 1709.

Once again, this fraud was intended to put specie directly into the officers' hands. After being caught smuggling Spanish *piastres* into France, the *Coventry*'s officers claimed that they had only committed the crime "pour qu'il ne fut point porté a la monnoye dont on n'auroit pu le retirer en especes et qu'on y auroit eü pour tout payment que des billets de monnoye lesquels sont fort decriés."²⁹ It seems that even the officer's extra-legal profits were threatened by the depreciating value of the *billets de monnoie*, prompting them to contract Peron to smuggle their bullion into France on their return as a contingency plan. Though we know almost nothing about Peron, we can assume that his talents at smuggling were well enough known to attract the officer's business. Making the most of the chaos of war, he and his network of smugglers would have likewise been eager to make a small amount of profit, even if it meant breaking the law.³⁰ With their help, the silver from aboard the *Coventry* could be sold to buyers across France and beyond its borders, all of whom would all pay handsomely for the valuable resource, allowing the officers to avoid repayment in almost worthless paper money.

Technically, Iberville lived up to his promise; his *armement* cost the navy very little since it was almost entirely financed by private investors. With little official oversight and considerable capital involved, however, the *guerre de course* was rife with opportunities for fraud and personal gain, whilst France's many financial issues further increased the likelihood of such liberties being taken. Whether *armateur*, officer or merchant, everyone involved in the *armement d'Iberville* wished to reap the rewards of the New World, but few wished to be paid in *billets* that the crown could not back. The *armement* thus became a complicated affair, as everyone privileged their own interests at the expense of the others involved. Amidst it all sat

²⁹ « Extraits de Clairambault, » 13 décembre 1706.

³⁰ For a concise summary of smuggling in France in the eighteenth century see "Chapter 4: The Shadow Economy," in Michael Kwass, *Contraband: Louis Mandrin and the Making of a Global Underground*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), p.87-116.

Iberville. By leveraging his experience and reputation he had assured himself almost complete control over the campaign's direction, investments, account books, recruitment and provisioning. Without a formal contract, the *armateurs* could do little to stop Iberville from pursuing his own interests. Not even Louis XIV or Pontchartrain, who were technically in control of the campaign's direction, could exert their influence over him once he left France. After all, the campaign was known as the *armement d'Iberville* and he ensured that he and his allies were the ones who stood to benefit the most.

“La mauvaise conduite de M. d'Iberville, s'est repandu partout.” Conspiracy, Collusion and Contraband in the Nevis Campaign.

On March 7th, 1706, the *Juste*, the *Prince*, the *Phénix*, the *Coventry*, the *Sphère*, the *Aigle*, the *Fidèle* and the *Ludlow* all appeared off the coast of Martinique. Leading his fleet to Fort Saint Pierre, Iberville met with several military officers and the heads of the colony's *Compagnie de Marchands* who agreed to bolster his forces with 1100 *flibustiers* and three companies from the fort's garrison.³¹ During this sojourn, Iberville's second-in-command and co-investor Chavagnac returned from a successful campaign in St. Kitts.³² He sold his loot, slaves and captured prizes in the town, keeping forty per cent for himself, and giving the rest, almost 77,000 *livres* to Iberville.³³ Chavagnac also brought word that whilst the English were braced for an assault on

³¹ This was overseen by a notary named Louis Le Moyne, who may have been a distant relative of Iberville's, perhaps from the Rouen branch of the family. ACM, B, V.5921, p.187-189, « Déclaration par devant Louis Le Moyne, » 13 mars 1706; ANOM, C8A, V.16, f.101-4, « Mithon de Senneville, » Martinique, 26 mars 1706; ACM, B, V.5291, p.182-186, « Inventaire des vaisseaux, » [1706]. For the Rouen Le Moynes see Alexandre Dubé, “Pierre-Jacques Le Moyne (1709-1778) et l'approvisionnement métropolitain des colonies françaises de l'Amérique du Nord.” (Master's thesis, McGill University, 2002).

³² Chavagnac had departed France in January for an advance reconnaissance campaign. AM, B4, V.31, f.130-131v, « Relation des entreprises contre Saint Christophe et contre Nevis, » mai 1706.

³³ Iberville's share was comprised of 54,333 *livres* from the loot and slaves, 16,712 *livres* 10 *sols* from the captured Boston vessel the *Cigne*, and 5664 *livres* 2 *sols* from the sale of all the supplies taken at St Kitts. See ACM, B, V.5921, p.214, « Extrait du compte générale de la vente des nègres et autre butin fait à Saint-Christophe, » Martinique, 25 mars, 1706; ACM, B, V.5921, p.215-17 « Estat gñal de la Vente des effets provenant du Butin de S^t Christophe, » [1706] ; ACM, B, V.5921, p.218-239, « Estat de la vente de Negres provenant du butin fait à St

Jamaica, they had left Nevis almost entirely unguarded. Taking into consideration the season, the weather and the number of sick in his charge, Iberville decided to forgo joining Du Casse and redirected his fleet towards the small island. On March 26th, he left Martinique with Chavagnac's vessels the *Glorieux*, the *Brilliant*, the *Apollon* and the *Nymphe* now in tow. En route, Iberville stopped in Guadeloupe, where he embarked a company of marines and fifty young creole noble volunteers. At Anse de la Grande Plaine he conducted his final review, dividing his 800 marines into four battalions and selecting 700 of the best *flibustiers* for the assault on Nevis [Fig. 4.1].³⁴

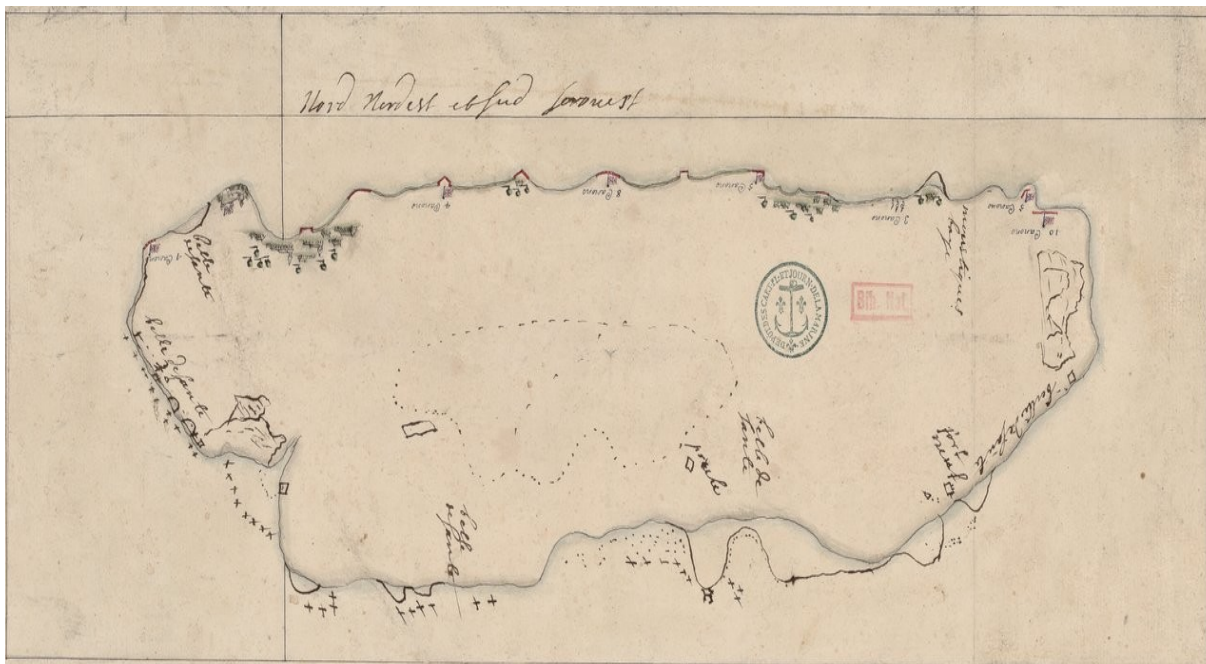


Fig. 4.1 : “Isle de Nieves, 1706.” [?, 1706] Map.
Bibliothèque nationale de France, département Cartes et
plans, GE, SH, 18, pf.154 ,DIV 22, P 4 D.
<http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb43847679q>

On April 1st, Iberville began his descent. Tricking the English, he sent Chavagnac on a feint down the coast, whilst hiding his own ships out of sight of the English, with their sails furled to reduce their visibility. Colonel Richard Abbot, the English commander, fell for the ruse

Christophe, » [1706]; ACM, B, V.5921, p.240-241, « Etat du net provenu du Brigantin le Cigne de Baston, » [1706]; ACM, B, v.5921, p.242-243, « Etat du net provenu du Vaisseau nommé le Recouvrement, » [1706].

³⁴ AM, B4, V.31, f.149-151v, « Lettre d'Iberville, » Du Bourg de Nyeve, 10 avril 1706.

and sent the bulk of his men to Fort Point, a northern bastion overlooking a well-defended bay where he believed the French would land. That night, however, Iberville's hidden fleet sailed to a quiet cove on the south of the island under the cover of darkness, weaving through the rocky outcrops with help of a pilot from Martinique.³⁵ With most of the English waiting to the north, only a few horsemen troubled them as they disembarked, firing a few shots before retreating. Within a few hours, everyone was safely on the beach and they set off through the night to surprise the English forces on the other side of the island.

By sunrise on April 2nd, Iberville arrived at the island's capital of Charlestown with three hundred men. On the march, his *flibustiers* had been ambushed and routed by some English troops, who had themselves been chased off in a bloody counter-charge led by his nephew Longueuil, which had cost the French a dozen men and many more casualties. After several hours of fighting, Charlestown finally fell to the French. The few remaining English soldiers withdrew either to a fortification in the mountains behind the town or to Fort Point. The latter bastion fell the next morning, abandoned by its commander before Iberville could demand his surrender. Chavagnac's fleet then arrived in the bay below the fort, capturing a number of abandoned ships laden with sugar. By the afternoon of April 3rd, the last of the English were holed up in the mountain fort above Charlestown, which Iberville promptly surrounded.

On April 4th, Easter Sunday, the French celebrated Mass before marching on the English. In his reports, Iberville claimed that the tenacity of his men struck such fear into the enemy garrison that they immediately chose to capitulate rather than fight. Whether true or not, Abbot surrendered and agreed to meet with Iberville later that afternoon. Iberville demanded that the English colonel agree to eight articles, including the surrender of all the island's men, women,

³⁵ Known to this day as French Bay in memory of Iberville's landing.

children and slaves as prisoners of war, in return for French clemency, supplies for the prisoners and an end to the destruction and pillage in Charlestown. Abbot was, however, able to negotiate a few favourable conditions for his officers, including the privilege of leaving the bastion with their arms, the safeguarding of their papers, and an allotment of captured slaves for themselves. After the accords were signed, the English formally surrendered Nevis to the French.³⁶

But before long, Iberville broke his promises. After the capitulation, many enslaved Africans took up arms and fled to the mountains to evade capture. Believing himself cheated of his finest prizes, Iberville allegedly ordered his men to burn all but twenty buildings in Charlestown and lock up the English prisoners in appalling conditions until they agreed to hand over their fugitive slaves. Soon realising this would not get the slaves back, Iberville resolved to compromise. He proposed that, in exchange for their freedom, the English colonists should deliver 1400 slaves—or their equivalent value in silver—to Martinique within three months. Few, however, wished to give in to these ransom demands. To force their hand, Iberville imprisoned several prominent colonists aboard the *Juste* and let his men run riot across the island, where they purportedly defaced monuments, burned churches, destroyed documents, imprisoned rich women and even disinterred the dead. By April 19th, the prisoners aboard the *Juste* finally acceded to his demands. Now infamous, however, the ransom was never paid.³⁷

³⁶ For French and English accounts see “Relation de Mr D'Iberville, Depuis son départ de la Martinique, jusqu'à la prise & capitulation de l'Isle de Nièves appartenante aux Anglois” in *Mercure Galant*, mai 1706, AM, B4, V.31, f.137-148, « Relation de l'expédition de l'île de Nevis, par d'Iberville, » [1706]; ANOM, C11A, V.25, f.13-13v, « Conditions accordées par M. d'Iberville...à M. Colonel Rich Abbot et à tous les officiers de Nièves, » 4 avril 1706; ; AM B4 V.31 f.170v « Journal du Chevalier Maupeou, commandant le *Phénix* »; CO, 184, 1, 12r-21r, “An Account of the taking of the Island of Nevis by Monsieur Dibervill,” and CO, 184, 1, 34r-35r, “Letter of Mr John Tonstall,” April 19th, 1706. See also Frégault *Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville*, p.262-269; Crouse, *Lemoyne d'Iberville*, p.250-266.

³⁷ ANOM, C11A, V.25, f.13v-14, « Expédition du traité faite entre feu M. d'Iberville et les habitants de Nièves pour quatorze cents nègres à remettre par ces derniers à la Martinique, » 30 avril 1706 [dated 19 avril]; AM, B4, V.31, f.182, « Mémoire concernant la rançon due par les habitants de l'Isle de Nieve, » [S.D]. Some of these documents can also found in AM, B4, V.31, f.153-153v, « Expédition du traité passé avec es habitants de Nevis, » 23 avril 1706 and AM, B4, V.31, f.179-180, « Conditions accordée par Monsieur D'Iberville Commandant une escadre du Roy en amerique a Monsir Collonel Rich Abbot et a tous les officiers de Nieve, » [1706]; Bromley, “The Loan of French Naval Vessels to Privateering Enterprises, 1688-1713”, p.205; Crouse *Le Moyne d'Iberville*, p.264-265.

A list of names drawn up by the English recorded that, in total, the French had taken 1253 English men, women and children prisoner. French documents added that they had also captured the 6023 enslaved African men, women and children living on the island.³⁸ But since many of these slaves were still resisting capture in the mountains, only 3187 were counted as prizes. Iberville paid the Martinique *flibustiers* with 800 of these slaves and divided the rest amongst the *armement* for sale across the Caribbean, entrusting most to his closest associates, including Sérigny and Noyan.³⁹ After pillaging Charlestown and most of Nevis' plantations, the expedition had also seized vast amounts of loot, including sugar, sugar-making equipment, English ships and countless other valuables stolen from the colonists. Overall, the expedition's total gross profit—including loot and captured slaves alike—was recorded as 1,178,616 *livres*, 19 *sols*, 6 *deniers*. Given that Iberville's personal *commis* Claude Allemand was tasked with the appraisal, however, we might suspect that much more loot may have left Nevis unrecorded.⁴⁰

On April 10th, Iberville dispatched his men to sell their booty across the Atlantic World. He sent the *Glorieux* and the *Phénix* straight to France where they arrived a few weeks later. Meanwhile, the *Sphère* travelled to Cartagena, carrying the personal goods Iberville had loaded

³⁸ ANOM, C11A, V.25, p.20-23 [transcript], « Copie traduite en françois d'un original anglois escrit sur une feuille de petit papier, » [1706]; CO, 184, 1, 22r-23r, "Names of English prisoners at Nevis," April 6th, 1706; CO, 184, 1, 24r-29r, "Capitulation of Nevis," April 19th, 1706; ACM, B, V.5921, p.151-155 [transcript], « Etat general des Negres, » Nièves, 20 avril 1706.

³⁹ ACM, B, V.5921, p.148-149 [transcript], « Etat general de l'emploi des 2379 nègres, » 15 juin 1706; ACM, B, V.5921, p.149-150 [transcript], « Etat des Negres, Negresses, Negrillons, Negrettes et Enfants a la mamelle qui sont revenus en partage aux armateurs de l'Escadre commandée par M. d'Iberville » [1706]; AN, V7, 214, No.8, « Liquidation des prises, » [1727].

⁴⁰ AM, B2, V.192, f.644, « Lettre au S^r L'Hostelier, » 15 octobre 1706; AM, B2, V.196, f.150, « Lettre a Mr Begon, » 21 janvier 1707; CO, 184, 1-33r, "Etat des Chaudieres et Autres ustanciles prises dans Nieve," [1706]; AN, V7, 214, No.8, pp.151-194 [transcript], « Liquidation générale des prises faites par l'armement du Feu Sr d'Iberville, » 18 janvier 1731. The net product of the campaign was 973,627 *livres* 11 *sols* 7 *deniers*, which after fees, left 755,702 *livres* 7 *sols*, 4 *deniers* of profit for the *armement*. AM, B4, V.31, f.218, « Extrait du produit net des prises faites par l'armement, » 27 mars 1717. According to the *amirauté* Claude Allemand judged all the prizes under Iberville's name ACM, B, V.5921, p.47-48, « Lettres aux M^{rs} les officiers de l'amirauté de la Rochelle, » 30 janvier 1707. In Martinique, Intendant Mithon also recorded 1,500,000 *livres* coming to the colony from Iberville, Chavagnac and other boats that summer, ANOM, C8A, V.16, f.121-121v, « S^r Mithon au ministre, » Martinique, 10 novembre 1706.

back in France. Aboard the *Apollon* and the *Brillant*, bound for Martinique, he entrusted the sale of both the loot and his own wares to Claude Allemand and Pierre Lalande Gayon. As planned, he also defied Pontchartrain's orders to send the *Coventry* to Louisiana, instead ordering Sérigny to take the vessel to Veracruz along with the smaller merchant ship that he, Morel and Borie had outfitted together with embezzled funds. In its place, he sent his brother-in-law Pierre Payen de Noyan to Louisiana at the helm the *Aigle*, laden with many of the goods Fleury had originally stashed on the *Coventry*. Finally, Iberville led the *Juste*, the *Prince*, the *Fidèle* and the *Ludlow* to Saint Domingue to sell the rest of the captured slaves before travelling onwards to Havana where they were to collect their payment from the *Compagnie de l'Asiento* and plan the rest of the campaign. On eve of April 21st, Iberville's fleet departed Nevis, leaving the colony in ruins.⁴¹

Arriving with 2158 enslaved Africans, Iberville flooded Saint Domingue's slave markets. After eight years of stewardship by the *Compagnie de Saint Domingue*, Saint Domingue was perhaps the most lucrative slave market in the entire Caribbean. Indeed, the War of the Spanish Succession had brought a major influx of Spanish *piastres*, particularly to the colony's southernmost peninsula, resulting in a major boom in sugar production. Colonists and planters were thus crying out for enslaved labour, offering valuable silver that Iberville was more than happy to take. In Cap-Français, he commissioned his brother's kinsman and local judge Antoine Héron to sell 1469 slaves and other loot from Nevis, which earned a total of 292,815 *livres*. Further south in Léogâne, Iberville's *commis* Isaac Sossa sold the remaining 689 slaves for 561,936 *livres*, highlighting where the colony's demand and money now lay.⁴² With only 800

⁴¹ "Lettre d'Iberville," 10 avril 1706.

⁴² ACM, B, V.5921, p.138-142, « Etat de la vente des negres à Léogane, » [1706]; AN, V7, 214, No.8, p.164-170 « Liquidation, » [1727].

slaves in the southern peninsula before 1706, this influx of slaves almost doubled the region's enslaved population, further contributing to its economic boom.⁴³

Whilst performed under the watchful eyes of the *Compagnie de l'Asiento*, the sales made in Saint Domingue nevertheless hid considerable fraud. In Léogâne, Sossa falsified a number of documents allowing him to embezzle 5906 *piastres* and six slaves. He also helped himself to much of the 11,000 *livres* that he had requested for the slaves' food supplies, a large proportion of which went to Iberville.⁴⁴ Finally, in his records Sossa recorded the sale of four slaves to a Sieur La Lande from Petit Goâve, who was perhaps Lalande Gayon, the overseer of the Le Moyne plantations. Gayon was also accused of having appropriated 17,000 *livres* worth of slaves—or roughly 24 enslaved men or women—for Iberville's plantations, likely through collusion with Sossa.⁴⁵ Further north in Cap-Français, things were not much different. Alongside the slaves, Héron sold other loot, particularly silk, taking five per cent in commission. Accepting payment in specie and silver, Héron sent these takings directly to Sérigny and Marie-Thérèse Pollet instead of the paymaster Naurois, caching the payments in shipments of indigo, sugar and other produce from their plantations. Moreover, Héron's accounts left a further 83,000 *livres* unaccounted for, which he likely kept for himself. By exploiting the demands of Saint

⁴³ Frostin notes that there were 800 slaves in the southern peninsula in 1703 and 3000 by 1713. The 689 slaves brought to Léogâne by the *armement d'Iberville*, would therefore have comprised almost a third of all slaves imported to the region during this time period. Frostin, *Les révoltes blanches*, p.140.

⁴⁴ AM, B2, V.191, f.663, « Lettre au S^r Pajot, » Versailles, 6 octobre 1706 ; AM, B2, V.191, f.998, « Lettre à M. Lombard, » Versailles, 20 octobre 1706 ; AM, B2, V.192, f.927, « Lettre au S^r L'Hostelier, » Versailles, 29 décembre 1706 ; AM, B2, V.196, f.727, « Lettre au S^r L'Hostelier, » Versailles, 9 février 1707 ; AM, B2, V.196, f.926, « Lettre à M. L'Hostelier, » Versailles, 2 mars 1707.

⁴⁵ « Etat de la vente des negres à Léogane, » [1706]. Gayon is not recorded in Martinique until later in 1706, meaning he may have joined Iberville to purchase slaves for the plantation before heading on to supervise the distribution of his wares in the other colony. This number of slaves he may have purchased is based on the legal purchase of four slaves by Sieur Lalande for 2900 *livres*, or roughly 725 *livres* each. ANOM, B, V.28, f.620, « Lettre à M. des Landes, » Marly, 24 août 1707 ; AM, B2, V.197, f.841, « Lettre à M. de Naurois, » Marly, 17 mai 1706 ; ANOM, B, V.31, f.156-7, « Lettre au S^r Mercier, » Fontainebleau, 25 juillet 1708 ; AM, B2, V.191, f.663-4, « Lettre au S^r Pajot, » Versailles, 6 octobre 1706 ; AM, B2, V.191, f.998-9, « Lettre à M. Lombard, » Versailles, 20 octobre 1706 ; Marcel Giraud, *History of French Louisiana: Volume One, The Reign of Louis XIV, 1698-1715*, (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1974), p.115-116.

Domingue's cash-rich colonists for enslaved labour, all involved in the sale of the *armement's* slaves sought to profit, taking valuable cargo or precious specie for themselves.

Sérigny also used the sale of slaves to cover his interloping trade. In Havana, he reportedly refused to sell half of his slave cargo to an agent of the *Compagnie de l'Asiento* "pour avoir un pretexte d'aller a la Vera Crux." Four years into the war, no Spanish convoy had yet arrived in this port, and the colonists were increasingly desperate for metropolitan produce. Far from the only French captain eager to exploit this market, Sérigny was one of eleven recorded to have docked in the port in 1706.⁴⁶ From the Spanish record of the *Coventry's* arrival, it appears that the *asiento* agent's assumption was correct, for Sérigny was permitted entry into Veracruz on June 17th "with the pretext of trading in negros, to uphold the asiento"⁴⁷ But once in the port, he only made a total of 41,228 *livres* from the sale of these slaves, turning a much larger profit on the clothing, silk, iron and other merchandise that Iberville and Fleury had loaded aboard the *Coventry* in La Rochelle. Taking advantage of the lax regulations under the Duke of Alburquerque, he traded these wares publicly, taking payment in indigo, cochineal and silver worth 400,000 *piastres*, or roughly 1.2 million *livres*. Before leaving for France, Sérigny sold some of these goods in Havana, adding a further 24,000 *livres* of silver to his takings.⁴⁸

On July 13th, Noyan arrived in Louisiana with the *Aigle* and the *Aventurier*. Making port at Île Massacre, he and Claude Allemand began selling the merchandise brought from France and Havana on behalf of the officers of the *Coventry* to the colonists, who paid with silver earned

⁴⁶ Nine ships arrived from France in 1706: the *Américain*, *Sirène*, *Mercure*, *Duc-de-la-Force*, *Fort*, *La Motina*, *Saint-Jean*, *Rose Marie* and *Anne*. The *Coventry* and another unnamed French ship came from Havana. Henry Kamen, *The War of Succession in Spain, 1700-15* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969), p.147, 147.n.26.

⁴⁷ In the original Spanish: "con el pretesto de traer negros, por tener el asiento de ellas." AGI, 2751, No.45, "Razón de los Navios Franceses, que an entrado en el Puerto de la Veracruz desde el año de 1704" Guzmán, 10 May 1707.

⁴⁸ "Razón de los Navios Franceses," 10 May 1707; AM, B2, V.192, f.705-706, « Lettre à M. De Sérigny, » Versailles, 15 octobre 1706 ; AM, B2, V.192, f.962-965, « Lettre à M. de Sérigny, » Versailles, 29 décembre 1706 ; AM, B2, V.196, f.215-217, « Lettre au S^r de Sérigny, » Versailles, 12 janvier 1707 ; « Liquidation, » 18 janvier 1731.

in the Pensacola trade. Bienville and Châteauguay soon arrived from Mobile and quickly took charge of the royal supplies. Before La Salle could arrive, Bienville sent Châteauguay to Pensacola to sell some of the wares, before travelling onwards to meet Iberville in Havana. Elsewhere, Allemand met with his brother Jacques at Fort Louis, where they apparently helped themselves to 5000 *livres* of gunpowder and over 15,000 *livres* worth of Spanish silver. In Havana, Claude stowed this aboard the *Coventry*, adding to Sérigny's already plentiful loot.⁴⁹ Meanwhile, La Salle watched on helplessly, fearing reprisal after being threatened by Iberville and ordered to only record the arrival of items already on the ship's manifest. A few days later, the *Aigle* left for Havana, having taken Louisiana's silver, but leaving it short on vital supplies.⁵⁰

Aboard the *Aigle*, Iberville also sent five slaves for Bienville and Châteauguay—perhaps the very first Africans to arrive in Louisiana. Indeed, whilst Gwendolyn Midlo Hall had argued that the first Africans were sent to the colony from Saint Domingue and Havana on Bienville's request after 1709, the list of slaves taken in Nevis clearly indicates that five were sent with Noyan to Mobile in 1706.⁵¹ Moreover, Jay Higginbotham has uncovered evidence showing that Bienville owned a seven-year-old African boy named Jean-Baptiste and a three-year-old named Joseph, whom he had baptised on June 11th, 1707, and June 30th, 1708, respectively.⁵² Other evidence also suggests that Bienville acquired an enslaved couple, named Jorgé and Marie, around this time, since he signed documents in 1733 which claimed they had been in his service

⁴⁹ ANOM, B, V.32, f.47, « Lettre au S Dartaguiette, » Marly, 19 mai 1710; AM, B2, V.192, f.644, « Lettre au S^r L'Hostelier, », Versailles, 15 octobre 1706; AM, B2, V.196, f.150, « Lettre à Mr Bégon, » Versailles, 21 janvier 1707.

⁵⁰ ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.566-569, « Extrait d'une lettre du S. de la Salle écrite à Mr Bégon, » Louisiane, 10 août 1706; « La Salle au Ministre, » Fort Louis, 7 septembre 1706.

⁵¹ Gwendolyn Mildlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), p.57-58.

⁵² Jay Higginbotham, *Old Mobile: Fort Louis de la Louisiane, 1702-1711* (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1991), p.302.

for twenty-six years.⁵³ Finally, Châteauguay also seems to have owned at least one slave before 1709. In January 1708, he moved an enslaved African named François Jacemin, to live with Marie, another of Bienville's slaves. Nine months later, François and Marie had a son named Antoine, possibly the first person of African descent born in Louisiana.⁵⁴ Whilst far from sparking the same economic boom as in Saint Domingue, the arrival of these slaves in the Lower Mississippi Valley nevertheless heralded the colony's eventual turn towards a more Caribbean-influenced plantation economy, increasing demand for imported African labour.

In Havana, Noyan joined Iberville, who was supposed to be garnering Spanish support for his original mission against English North America. But Iberville had no desire to continue his campaign. Instead, he risked lingering in Cuba despite the threat of disease so that his men could earn even more selling off the expedition's remaining prizes. His decision, however, privileged greed over good sense. That summer, the *mal de Siam*—probably yellow fever—swept through the Spanish colony, killing over 800 of Iberville's men, including Noyan. Amongst the casualties was also Frédéric-Joseph du Ménéis, the king's official *commis*, whose death plunged the *armement* into chaos. No longer under Ménéis' supervision, the survivors took off with anything they could get their hands on. Even Iberville seized this opportunity to take four sacks of silver, one of which he gave to the *flibustiers* and the other three, worth 4100 *livres*, he kept for himself. Not long after, however, Iberville paid the price for his avidity. On July 9th, 1706, he also died from the plague and was interred at the Church of St-Xpotal under the name of Don Pedro Berbila.⁵⁵

⁵³ LHQ, Vol. 5, #2, 4/1922, pg.265 "Petition to ratify freedom" June 4th 1735—, accessed on 6/2/2019 at <http://www.lacolonialdocs.org/document/2371>.

⁵⁴ Higginbotham, *Old Mobile*, p.302.

⁵⁵ BAnQ, P1000, S3, D2727, 32-33 « Acte de sépulture de Pierre Lemoyne d'Iberville. » Before it was destroyed, this church also incidentally housed the remains of Hernando de Soto, whose *entradas* into the Mississippi Valley in the 1540s informed Iberville's own voyages in Louisiana.

Following the death of its commander, the *armement d'Iberville* came to an end. Gradually, Iberville's fleet dispersed, arriving in France one by one over the summer and early autumn. By September, Pontchartrain received word of Iberville's death and immediately offered his condolences to Marie-Thérèse, writing that "j'en suis tres fasché par l'Estime part^{ere} que j'Avois pour luy, si je puis dans la suite rendre quelques ser^{ces} a sa famille et a vous, je le feray volont^{rs}."⁵⁶ Once the investigations into the campaign began to uncover Iberville's fraudulent activities in Nevis and Louisiana, however, the minister had a complete change of heart. He had trusted Iberville as one of his principal agents of empire, but this trust had been deliberately broken, exploited by Iberville to make a fortune at his patron's expense. As the extent of his client's betrayal dawned on the minister, he lamented that "la mauvaise conduite de M. d'Iberville, s'est repandu partout [...] il n'a pensé solidement qu'au moyen de trouver des avantages indirects dans son armement."⁵⁷

"Ils Croient qu'on ne prendra pas la peine d'Esclaircir les faits de si loin : " Investigation and Prosecution in France

Long before the *Coventry* returned to Lorient, rumours of the fraud committed by the *armement d'Iberville* circulated in La Rochelle and Rochefort. In June, Pontchartrain ordered a secret inquiry into the provenance of the illicit merchandise reported to have been shipped to the Caribbean.⁵⁸ As the fleet made its way back to France, however, the *armateurs*—the king included—got wind of these same rumours. Together, they began breathing down Pontchartrain's neck, eager to protect their profits. Attempting to allay their fears, Pontchartrain stepped up his investigation, instructing naval officials across France to look for clues of the

⁵⁶ AM, B2, V.191, f.358, « Lettre à M. d'Iberville, » Versailles, 22 septembre 1706.

⁵⁷ ANOM, B, V.31, f.151, « Lettre à Mrs Machault et de Vaucresson, » Fontainebleau, 25 juillet 1708.

⁵⁸ Pontchartrain had been hearing rumours since May. ANOM, B, V.28, f.196, « Lettre au S^r Pajot, » 29 mai 1706 ; AM, B2, V.189, f.710-711, « Lettre au S^r Massiot, » 2 juin 1706.

“grand commerce en fraude” and interrogate all officers and crews returning from the Caribbean.

Few officers co-operated, however, prompting Pontchartrain to complain that:

le soin que les officiers ont eu de cacher les Noms, est une Marque qu'ils ne disent pas la verite, A cet egard Et qu'ils Croient qu'on ne prendra pas la peine d'Esclaircir les faits de si loin, en quoy ils se trompent parce que sa M^{te} Envoiera des ordres sur les lieux pour faire cette decouverte Expliquez Encore a ses officiers qu'ils ne doivent pas Compter sur Aucune grace de Sa M^{te} s'ils N'accusent juste.⁵⁹

Watching this unfold, the king was furious. Not only had these officers disobeyed his orders, but they also appeared to have ripped him off. He thus ordered Pontchartrain to “casser tous les off^{rs} qui l'ont fait et de confisquer toutes les marchandises.”⁶⁰ Trying to address his sovereign's concerns, Pontchartrain wrote to his most trusted officials across the French Atlantic World, in an attempt to piece together information from Martinique, Saint Domingue and Louisiana and close the distance the officers had relied upon to hide their wrongdoing. He also sought the assistance of the *Amirauté*, tasking them with administering justice, evaluating the prizes taken and, if necessary, arresting any officers or merchants found guilty of illegal commerce.⁶¹ Mobilising almost the entire naval infrastructure, it seemed that the Pontchartrain intended to hold Iberville to his promise of a profitable expedition and was not inclined to let his fraud pass unchecked.

Behind the scenes, however, the minister's sentiments did not match those of the monarch. Whilst he informed his officials of the king's desire to decommission those involved, in a separate *mémoire* on the fraud Pontchartrain also emphasised His Majesty's willingness to spare his officers, provided that such clemency would cost the crown little.⁶² Privateering, and by

⁵⁹ AM, B2, V.190, f.44, « Lettre à M. Robert, » 7 juillet 1706.

⁶⁰ AM, B2, V.189, f.992-993, « Mémoire à Mr Robert sur le commerce fait à l'amérique, » [S.D].

⁶¹ AM, B2, V.189, f.725-727, « Lettre à M. Laudreau, » 2 juin 1706 ; AM, B2, V.189, f.891-892, « Lettre au S^r Massiot, » [S.D] ; AM, B2, V.189, f.94-941, « Lettre au M^{gr} le C^{te} de Toulouse, » 16 juin 1706.

⁶² ANOM, B, V.28, f.435-436, « Lettre à M. De Vaucresson, » Marly, 1 juin 1707.

extension, most of France's naval policy, was predicated on risk. By affording certain privileges and liberties to privateers, Pontchartrain had to expect that success might go hand in hand with profiteering. Fraud was common in the War of the Spanish Succession. Soon after the *armement d'Iberville* returned to France, the *affaire Danican* erupted as the *Compagnie de la Chine* pursued Noël Danycan l'Espine for funds he had kept from a successful expedition in the Pacific in 1703.⁶³ A year after Iberville's campaign, Jean-Baptiste Du Casse was also accused of filing fraudulent expense reports so that he might keep a larger proportion of the nine million *livres* he brought back from a profitable mission to New Spain.⁶⁴ With a world war to fight, Pontchartrain could hardly hope to prosecute every officer involved in this fraud, for doing so might mean finding himself without a navy. Moreover, many of those most implicated in the fraud were also involved in the companies he was personally invested in, such as the *Compagnie de l'Asiento*. Writing to the intendant of Brest, the minister was thus forced to admit that, as far as the *armement d'Iberville* was concerned, "je serois fâché d'être obligé d'en venir à la rigueur contre les officiers et contre les marchands."⁶⁵

After the war, the financial minister would grant a new *Chambre de Justice* unprecedented and expansive powers to bring justice to those involved in the corruption that had led to France's post-war debt crisis. Between March 1716 and March 1717, it successfully brought many financiers to justice, delivering a total of eighty-nine sentences of varying degrees of severity.⁶⁶ In 1706, however, the naval ministry did not have the capacity, powers or authority necessary to hold a similar tribunal for the officers of the *armement d'Iberville*. Even in

⁶³ For the « affaire Danican » see ANOM, C1, V.19 and 20.

⁶⁴ Hrodej, "Marine et diplomatie," p.31.

⁶⁵ « Mémoire à Mr Robert. »

⁶⁶ Erik Goldner, "Corruption on Trial: Money, Power and Punishment in France's 'Chambre de Justice' of 1716," *Crime, Histoire & Sociétés/ Crime, History & Societies* 17, no. 1 (2013): 5-28, p.14. See also Daniel Dessert, *Argent, Pouvoir et société au Grand Siècle* (Paris, Fayard, 1984), pp.238-276.

the navy's highest martial courts, officers typically only risked their honour, and perhaps temporarily their freedom, for any charges made against them.⁶⁷ It thus made more sense for Pontchartrain to ensure that the king and the *armateurs*—many of whom were financing the conflict—recovered their substantial investments than formally punish his officers.⁶⁸ When Chavaganac returned in mid-July, therefore, Pontchartrain chastised him for having “Perdu le Merit par le Commerce indigne d’un homme de naissance comme vous qui devoit avoir d’autres veues q’un Gain sordide,” but otherwise left him alone, provided that he give an exact account of all the commerce he had engaged in so that any profits might find their way back to the *armateurs*.⁶⁹ Other officers, such as Jean-François du Clerc and Guillaume Raguienne de Mareuil also received similar treatment.⁷⁰ His hands tied by his reliance on entrepreneurs and officers, Pontchartrain revealed the weak position the *Marine* was in, which discouraged him from prosecuting the expedition's main offenders.⁷¹

Nowhere was this more apparent than in his treatment of the Le Moyne network. Whilst Pontchartrain could not reprimand the deceased Iberville, nor punish his successors, he could attempt to recover any money Iberville had taken. In September 1706, therefore, Pontchartrain placed a seal on Iberville's residence on Rue L'Escale, ostensibly to recover 40,000 *livres* Iberville still owed the treasury for expenses at Fort Louis de la Louisiane.⁷² Normally such a

⁶⁷ Alain Berbouche, *Marine et Justice : La justice criminelle de la Marine française sous l'Ancien Régime* (Rennes : Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2010) p.86-87.

⁶⁸ AM, B2, V.191, f.172-3, « Lettre au S^r Pajot, » 15 septembre 1706.

⁶⁹ AM, B2, V.190, f.202-203, « Lettre à M Le C. De Chavagnac, » 14 juillet 1706; AM, B2, V.190, f.51 « Lettre à M. Robert, » Versailles, 7 juillet 1706.

⁷⁰ « Lettre à M. Robert, » 7 juillet 1706 ; AM, B3, V.140, f.249-250v, « Lettre de Du Clerc au ministre, » 4 juillet 1706 ; AM, B2, V.190, f.195-6, « Lettre à M Robert, » 14 juillet 1706 ; AM, B3, V.140, f.252-253v, « Interrogatoire de Jean François Du Clerc, » 17 juillet 1706 ; Giraud, *The Reign of Louis XIV*, p.119-120.

⁷¹ On Pontchartrain's inability to stop fraud in this period see Giraud, “Crise de conscience,” p.179-180.

⁷² AM, B2, V.191, f.359, « Lettre au S^r Massiot, » 22 septembre 1706 ; AM, B2, V.191, f.488, « Lettre à M. Bégon, » 29 septembre 1706 ; ACM, 3^E, 1813, f.212-213, « Mainlevée accordé par Guillaume Vialet aux noms des messieurs de Vanolles et de Fontanieu...relatives à 2 oppositions faites sur la succession de feu d'Iberville, » ; « Liquidation, » 18 janvier 1731.

procedure was performed by the local Châtelet, but Pontchartrain collaborated with the naval treasurers Vanolles and Fontanieu—both also personally invested in the *armement d'Iberville*—who personally investigated the residence. This would seem to suggest that the debt recollection was little more than a pretext to gather evidence of Iberville's fraud in the Caribbean. Indeed, despite protests from Marie-Thérèse and Fleury, who was lodged at the house at this time, Vanolles and Fontanieu scoured the property, taking detailed inventories of all Iberville's effects, papers, money and furniture. Opening his locked chests, they found the three sacks of silver he had taken in Havana—given to Marie-Thérèse by some *flibustiers* who had returned to France aboard the *Coventry*—which were duly confiscated. For some reason though, the treasurers left the rest of Iberville's cash alone, even though much of it later turned out to have been from Sossa's questionable sales in Léogâne.⁷³ Even so, they found enough to confirm Pontchartrain's suspicions, giving him grounds to turn on Iberville's kinsmen and accomplices.

By the time Sérigny returned aboard the *Coventry*, the naval officials of western France were on high alert. After cross-examining many officers from Iberville's fleet, Pontchartrain was already well aware that Sérigny had travelled to Veracruz instead of Louisiana.⁷⁴ Little more than this could be proven, however, as the poor conduct of the investigation upon the *Coventry's* arrival at Lorient made it impossible to precisely determine which of the ship's officers had been involved in any fraud. Though his family name made him highly suspect, even Sérigny escaped relatively unscathed. Indeed, it would have been hypocritical of Pontchartrain to reprimand him for travelling to Veracruz, since this was a prime market for the *Compagnie de l'Asiento* and the interloping trade he had been tacitly encouraging for years. The minister thus simply informed Sérigny that he was “tres mal satisfait de la conduite que vous avez tenu en cette occasion” and

⁷³ AM, B2, V.196, f.962, « Lettre à Mr L'Hostelier, » 2 mars 1707.

⁷⁴ AM, B3, V.137, f.315-315v, « Extraits d'une lettre de Clairambault, » 7 juin 1706.

ordered him to pay back the freight charges incurred for his personal voyage.⁷⁵ Otherwise, Sérigny was able to hold on to most of the profits from his voyage and was only obliged to pay back the 1000 *livres* he had extorted from Gervaise in 1731, but it is unclear if this payment was ever made.⁷⁶ His career, however, suffered far more greatly, for having lost Pontchartrain's respect he was not promoted again before 1717.⁷⁷

With a reputation for corrupting naval officers, Fleury was not so lucky. As a merchant, he was a perfect scapegoat and could be punished more severely for his crimes. In March 1707, Pontchartrain threw Fleury in the Bastille where he was interrogated by Bégon, who extracted enough information to confirm that “le Commerce fait par led S^r d'Iberville s'y trouve assez prouvé.” Pontchartrain quickly disseminated this news across France, imploring his officials to step up their investigations.⁷⁸ After languishing in the prison for a couple of months, —albeit able to continue his business through visits from his sister and Marie-Thérèse—Fleury was eventually released. Having given up good information on his accomplices, he was of little further concern to Pontchartrain, who simply ordered him to pay back all the money he had invested in the Veracruz voyage. Once this was paid, Fleury was able to resume his business unimpeded, and was only chased down by the *armateurs* after the liquidation in 1727, who ordered him to pay back a further 1452 *livres* owed for unpaid freight charges on the *Coventry*. This, however, was likely a fraction of the profits his fraudulent activities had earned him.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ AM, B2, V.192, f.705, « Lettre à M. de Sérigny, » 15 octobre 1706; AM, B2, V.192, f.962-965, « Lettre à M. de Sérigny, » 29 décembre 1706; AM, B2, V.196, f.216-217, « Lettre à M. de Sérigny, » 12 janvier 1707; AM, B2, V.197, f.1355, « Lettre au S^r L'Hostelier, » 15 juin 1707; AM, B2, V.198, f.912, « Lettre au S^r L'Hostelier, » 17 août 1707.

⁷⁶ AN, V7, 214, « Piece No.9, » 18 janvier 1731.

⁷⁷ See Chapter VI for more on Sérigny's later career.

⁷⁸ AM, B2, V.196, f.1266-1267, « Lettre à Mr d'Argenson, » 30 mars 1707; AM, B2, V.196, f.1268, « Lettre de St Mars, » 30 mars 1707; AM, B2, V.197, f.1231, « Lettre au S^r L'Hostelier, » 8 juin 1707.

⁷⁹ AM, B2, V.198, f.416, « Lettre au S^r Fleury, » Marly 27 juillet 1707; AN, V7, 214, Piece No.9, p.198-202, « Jugement de Fleury, 28 mai 1728, » 18 janvier 1731.

Many of Iberville's other mercantile contacts were also targeted. In 1706, Sossa was arrested after being caught red-handed carrying embezzled Spanish silver to the market in Bordeaux. Whilst in prison he confessed and was released in February 1707 after paying back all the profits he had made.⁸⁰ Claude Allemand, however, proved more difficult to catch. Fleeing the *Coventry* before it made port in Lorient (perhaps aboard Perron's fishing sloop) he joined Marie-Thérèse in La Rochelle. He was briefly imprisoned and interrogated by Bégon but lied extensively about his involvement in the *armement*. Shortly after he was bailed out by his brother Jacques, Claude's deception was uncovered and Pontchartrain put out another warrant for his arrest.⁸¹ To elude capture, Allemand accompanied Marie-Thérèse and Sérigny to Paris, but the authorities caught up with him in July 1707 and sent him back to prison in La Rochelle. This time Bégon broke Allemand, who spilled all on the Nevis campaign and the Le Moyne family's schemes in Louisiana. Much of this information confirmed the allegations made by the colony's *écrivain*, Nicolas La Salle, and was forwarded to the officials sent to Mobile to investigate the family's activities. Eventually, after four months in prison, Allemand pleaded with Pontchartrain for his release and the minister agreed, but only if he paid the 8300 *livres* he owed. With no money of his own, Allemand begged Marie-Thérèse to bail him out, but she refused on several occasions, only making the payment in January 1708.⁸²

⁸⁰ ACM, 3^E, 1813, f.5v-6v, « Soumission de caution faite par Pierre Moreau, » 16 février 1707; AM, B2, V.191, f.664, « Lettre au S^r Pajot, » 6 octobre 1706; AM, B2, V.191, f.998-999, « Lettre à M. Lombard, » Versailles 20 octobre, 1706; AM, B2, V.196, f.726-727, « Lettre au S^r L'Hostelier, » 9 février 1707; AM, B2, V.197, f.875, « Lettre au S^r l'Hostellier, » 18 mai 1707.

⁸¹ ACM, 3^E, 1813, f.13-14v, « Soumission de caution faite par François Bancio, marchand et par Jacques Allemand, » 16 mars 1707; AM, B3, V.137, f.681-690v, « Extraits d'une lettre de Clairambault, » 27 décembre 1706; AM, B2, V.196, f.150, « Lettre à M Bégon, » 21 janvier 1707; AM, B2, V.196, f.926, « Lettre au M^r du Val, » Versailles, 23 février 1707.

⁸² AM, B3, V.148, f.121, « Extraits d'une lettre de Clairambault, » 25 juillet 1707; AM, B2, V.197, f.1435, « Lettre à M Begon l'inspecteur, » 22 juin 1707; AM, B2, V.198, f.406, « Lettre au S^r Pajot, » 27 juillet 1707; AM, B2, V.198, f.1572-1573, « Lettre au S^r L'Hostelier, » Fontainebleau, 28 septembre 1707; AM, B2, V.199, f.689-690, « Lettre au S^r Pajot, » 16 novembre 1707; AM, B2, V.199, f.1191-1192, « Lettre au S^r L'Hotellier, » 28 décembre 1707; AM, B2, V.206, f.116, « Lettre au S^r L'Hostellier, » 1 janvier 1708; ANOM, B, V.29, f.289v-290, « Lettre à M. Begon l'inspecteur, » 12 octobre 1707.

Pontchartrain also inquired into the involvement of Sérigny's brother-in-law, Antoine Héron, in the sale of the expedition's slaves in Cap-Français. Exploiting his distance from the metropole, Héron repeatedly ignoring requests to submit documents, perhaps hoping to stall the minister's investigation and buy himself enough time to offload any goods or money he still held onto.⁸³ When Héron was caught sending his profits directly to Sérigny and Marie-Thérèse rather than to Naurois, however, Pontchartrain lost his patience and ordered all of Héron's assets and plantations to be seized until he responded.⁸⁴ Despite this, Héron stubbornly refused to return the 200,000 *livres* he was accused of having embezzled. In response, the minister ordered Héron's father to bring his wayward son into line. Wielding his patronage power, Pontchartrain reminded the older Héron that he was the one who had found his son a prestigious position in Saint Domingue and encouraged him to inform his child that "si les liasons qu'il a avec la famille de feu M^r d'iberville le portent a detourner ou a cacher ses effets je seray obligé de faire agir l'autorité du Roy contre luy."⁸⁵ But whilst the younger Héron's money eventually made its way back to France, he only received some "vifs reproches sur ses mauvais services," once again showing where the minister's interests really lay.⁸⁶

Of all of Iberville's associates, however, it was Borie who attracted the most attention. In December 1706, the merchant was summoned to Paris to formally submit a declaration all of the papers, goods and monies he had dealt with on behalf of the *armement*.⁸⁷ After some

⁸³ Héron would even attempt to launder some of the *armement*'s money in 1709 by purchasing a commission for the Sieur Breda, which Pontchartrain would order him to pay back. ANOM, B, V.31, f.609-610, « Lettre au S^r Breda, major de l'Isle de la Tortue, » Marly, 24 novembre 1709.

⁸⁴ ANOM, B, V.31, f.1162-1163, « Lettre au S^r Mercier, » 25 juillet 1708 ; ANOM, B, V.31, f.175, « Lettre à M^r Le Comte de Choiseul, » 25 juillet 1708.

⁸⁵ AM, B2, V.207, f.538-539, « Lettre à Mr Heron, » 9 mai 1708.

⁸⁶ ANOM, B, V.35, f.364, « Lettre au Sieur Héron, » 4 mars 1713.

⁸⁷ ACM, B, V.5921, p.18-20, « Procès-verbal contenant la déclaration des effets reçus par le S^r Borie, » 27 novembre et 31 décembre 1706; ACM, B, V.5921, p.56-59, « Jugement qui condamne le S^r Borie, » 23 décembre 1706; ACM, V.5921 p.52, « Inventaire des pieces Remises au greffe de l'amirauté de la Rochelle concernantes les prises faites par Monsieur d'yberville, » 1 février 1707.

deliberation, in June 1707, Naurois ordered Borie to pay 46,676 *livres* for the supplies he had failed to provide the fleet. When the balancing of the expedition's account books revealed the cost of his short-changing, however, this amount rapidly increased. As well as charging Borie for the money he had embezzled, the *armateurs* also expected him to pay the difference in price between the more expensive goods the fleet had been obliged to purchase in the colonies and the goods he should have supplied, bringing his total to 112,000 *livres*.⁸⁸ With Iberville having died, Borie could do little to prove his involvement and thus bore the initial brunt of these demands.

But reluctant to shoulder all this blame, Borie sought compensation from both the widowed Marie-Thérèse and Morel for the voyages he was obliged to make to Paris to answer for crimes they were also implicated in. Morel used these demands to cover his own back, writing that he would encourage Marie-Thérèse to make these payments if Borie kept his name out of the investigation. Marie-Thérèse, however, flatly refused to compensate Borie, perhaps hoping to keep her distance and hide her husband's ambiguous involvement. Left in the lurch, Borie tried to bring down his accomplices with him, claiming that "cette prétendue fraude et du fait du S^r Morel et du feu S^r d'Iberville dont Borie a dû suivre les ordres."⁸⁹ Though this did not entirely exculpate him, it succeeded in implicating his accomplices, and the *armateurs* condemned Morel and Marie-Thérèse, as the steward of Iberville's *communauté des biens*, to join Borie in repaying the outstanding 112,000 *livres*.

Over the following decades, Borie and Marie-Thérèse became embroiled in a fierce legal battle over this debt, in which Marie-Thérèse proved herself a formidable opponent. Intimately involved in Iberville's business affairs and entitled to half of their *communauté de biens*, Marie-Thérèse had a personal stake in ensuring that his activities remained ambiguous, so she could

⁸⁸ « Jugement du 26 avril 1735, » 15 septembre 1735.

⁸⁹ « Jugement du 26 avril 1735, » 15 septembre 1735

continue to profit from his investments across the Atlantic World. Already a competent businesswoman, she was apparently also familiar with the law, perhaps thanks to her stepfather François-Madeleine-Fortuné Ruet d'Auteuil, the former *procureur général* of New France who had settled in Paris after his commission was revoked in 1707.⁹⁰ Indeed, employing a number of legal loopholes, Marie-Thérèse maintained her control over the *succession d'Iberville* for as long as possible, biding her time so that she could protect her own interests.

In September 1706, Marie-Thérèse became the *tutrice*, or legal guardian, for her children—her eldest son Pierre-Louis-Joseph, her two daughters, both also named Marie-Thérèse, and her infant son, François-Jean.⁹¹ Guardianship was a common way for widows to retain their financial independence in the wake of their husband's death, for it granted them control over the entire *communauté des biens* until their children reached their majority.⁹² For the *succession d'Iberville*, this was not to begin until 1719, when Pierre-Louis-Joseph would turn twenty-five, affording Marie-Thérèse plenty of time to ensure the safety of her own share of the inheritance.⁹³ Meanwhile, Marie-Thérèse also deliberately avoided filing an inventory of Iberville's assets. Theoretically required upon a death in a couple, the inventory procedure was often postponed for several years, sometimes to hide the extent of the family's patrimony from any debt collectors. In Canada, inventories were usually only carried out once a widow or widower remarried, but many refused to perform the procedure due to the expense it could

⁹⁰ Allaire, *Montée et déclin d'une famille noble*, p.119-121.

⁹¹ It would be easy to assume that these two sisters were the same person, but each signed the others marriage certificate in 1721 and 1728 respectively as witnesses, proving they were different people. On Iberville's children, see Le Jeune, *Le chevalier Pierre Le Moyne, sieur d'Iberville*, p.249-250.

⁹² Christopher Corley, "Gender, Kin and Guardianship in Early Modern Burgundy," in Desan and Merrick eds., *Family, Gender and Law in Early Modern France* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), pp.183-222, 204-206; Christopher Corley, "Preindustrial 'Single Parent' Families: The *Tutelle* in Early Modern Dijon," *Journal of Family History* 29, no.4 (October 2004): 351-365, p.358-9.

⁹³ Giraud, *The Reign of Louis XIV*, p.118-119, n.51.

entail.⁹⁴ Whatever her reasons, Marie-Thérèse produced no such document and was later accused of having “La obmis dans les Circonstances les plus Critiques.”⁹⁵

On October 29th, 1708, Marie-Thérèse wed Louis de Béthune, the Comte de Selles, in Paris. Less than a week before the wedding, she filed an official statement with Naurois in which she refused to pay any sum, deliver any *billets* or hand over any papers belonging to Borie.⁹⁶ Entering into a new marriage, she likely hoped that the *armateurs* would ignore her involvement with Iberville, allowing her share of the couple’s *communauté de biens* to remain untouched. Unusually for the period, Marie-Thérèse and Béthune agreed to a *séparation de biens*, each promising to contribute to the marriage union “sur son bien,” perhaps to protect each other from their respective pasts. Not long after the wedding, however, Béthune voluntarily assumed joint guardianship of his three stepchildren, implicating himself in the management of their financial affairs and debts.⁹⁷ Though a risk, this allowed the couple to jointly safeguard the *succession d’Iberville*, whilst legally protecting the future inheritance of any children of their own.

It seems that Marie-Thérèse and Béthune successfully fended off all advances on the *succession d’Iberville* until at least 1720. Pierre-Louis-Joseph had died in 1710, leaving only François-Jean and the two Marie-Thérèses as the inheritors of Iberville’s estate. Once the latter two turned eighteen-years-old, Marie-Thérèse *mère* and Béthune renounced their responsibility for the *succession d’Iberville*, putting Iberville’s three surviving children in charge of defending their own interests.⁹⁸ On August 12th, 1720, however, the *Conseil de la Marine* ordered Marie-

⁹⁴ Josette Brun, *Vie et mort du couple en Nouvelle-France: Québec et Louisbourg au XVIIIe siècle* (Montréal [Que.: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2006), p.60-61.

⁹⁵ ACM, 3^E, 33/41, f.275-276v, « Transaction portant obligation par Marie-Thérèse Pollet de la Combe, » 22 novembre 1734.

⁹⁶ « Jugement du 26 avril 1735, » 15 septembre 1735.

⁹⁷ LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, p.29-44, « Contrat de mariage entre le comte Louis de Béthune et Marie-Thérèse de La Combe, veuve de Pierre Le Moyne d’Iberville, » 29 octobre 1708.

⁹⁸ Giraud, *The Reign of Louis XIV*, p.119 n.53.

Thérèse *mère* and Béthune to make a substantial payment to the *armateurs* to cover some of Iberville's debts. A week later she requested that her stepfather, Ruelle d'Auteuil, pay Naurois 88,000 *livres* on behalf of the *succession d'Iberville*. To repay some of this debt, she and Béthune took a loan of 50,000 *livres* from a local *seigneur*, Marc-François de Gelinar de Varaise, which was to be paid back by a lifelong annuity of 3500 *livres* from the *succession*.⁹⁹ Writing to Naurois, Marie-Thérèse insisted that she was no longer liable for Iberville's debts.

On May 25th, 1721, Iberville's eldest daughter, Marie-Thérèse Le Moyne d'Iberville married Jean Gaudion de la Vannerie, a naval treasurer. Within the last year, her younger brother François-Jean had died, leaving her and her younger sister as Iberville's only surviving heirs.¹⁰⁰ Bearing this in mind, Marie-Thérèse *mère* took extra precautions to ensure that her daughter's assets were safe, dictating in the wedding contract that she would hold on to them for four more years herself, leaving the newlyweds an annual stipend of 3000 *livres*. To protect her daughter further, Marie-Thérèse *mère* also insisted that Gaudion assume all of her daughter's debts, for which an inventory of Iberville's estate was finally drawn up in 1726.¹⁰¹ In total it appears that Iberville left behind 25,714 *livres* of moveable goods for his two daughters, and had reserved a further 10,000 *livres* to be given to each of them once they married. The inventory also shows that Gaudion agreed to bear almost half of the succession's debts, including those incurred with the Comte de Varaise, suggesting that he was perhaps willing to pay to safeguard his wife's

⁹⁹ « Jugement du 26 avril 1735, » 15 septembre 1735 ; ACM, 3^E, 33/22, f.64-65v, « Ratification par messire Louis comte de Bethune et par son épouse, » 17 mars 1722 ; ACM, 3^E, 33/23, f.114-116v, « Constitution d'une rente viagère au profit de messire Marc François de Gelinar de Varaise, » 27 avril 1723.

¹⁰⁰ Le Jeune notes that François-Jean stood as the godfather for Jean-Armand Brisson in November 1720. He did not sign as a witness as his older sister's wedding, however, and a document published in March 1722 declared that Iberville only had two heirs, his daughters. This would suggest that François-Jean died sometime in early 1721. Le Jeune *Chevalier*, p.250 and ACM, 3^E, 33/22, f.64-65vm « Ratification par messire Louis comte de Bethune et par son épouse Marie Thérèse Pollet de la Combe... ainsi que par les autres héritiers de feu Le Moyne d'Iberville, » 17 mars 1722.

¹⁰¹ ACM, 3^E, 33/21, f.142-146, « Contrat de mariage entre d'une part, Jean Gaudion... et d'autre part Marie Thérèse Le Moyne d'Iberville, » 25 mai 1721.

share of Iberville's inheritance, and that of their newborn daughter (another Marie-Thérèse!).¹⁰²

Either way, for Marie-Thérèse *mère* and Béthune, this union offered great respite from Iberville's debts, allowing them to concentrate on their own growing family.

Two years later, on March 6th, 1728, Iberville's youngest daughter, Marie-Thérèse d'Iberville, was also married, this time to her cousin Pierre-Joseph-Charles-Antoine Le Moyne de Sérigny. In their marriage contract, Sérigny *père* agreed to advance the couple 40,000 *livres*—a quarter of which was to be paid in movable goods—whilst Marie-Thérèse *mère* and Béthune offered their daughter another 15,000 *livres*, also comprised of movable goods.¹⁰³ From this, it appears that the marriage may have been intended as a strategic union of the Le Moyne patrimony, ensuring that any wealth they held stayed within the family. More importantly, however, the marriage also meant that both of Iberville's remaining heirs were legally in the charge of their respective husbands, relieving Marie-Thérèse *mère* and Béthune of all responsibility for their shares of the *succession d'Iberville*.

In November 1734, however, Gaudion and Sérigny *filis* filed a lawsuit against their mother-in-law on behalf of their wives, who requested a revaluation of Iberville's estate. Since the *Commission Extraordinaire* had begun to reveal the full extent of Iberville's dealings in the Caribbean, both daughters believed that they should have inherited “une somme bien plus considerable” than the almost 36,000 *livres* they had been offered in the 1726 inventory. Indeed, in hiding the extent of her former husbands' profits from her creditors, it seems that Marie-Thérèse *mère* had also been able to secure more than her share of the family estate, holding onto

¹⁰² ACM, 3^E, 33/28, « Inventaire et partage des biens de feu messire Pierre Le Moyne, seigneur d'Iberville et sa veuve Marie Thérèse Pollet de la Combe, » 12 février 1726.

¹⁰³ ACM, 3^E, 33/32, f.97-100, « Contrat de mariage entre d'une part Pierre Joseph Le Moyne...et d'autre part Marie-Thérèse Le Moyne d'Iberville, » 6 mars 1728. It is also from this document that we can be sure that there were two daughters named Marie-Thérèse, both signing the certificate separately.

many undeclared assets long after 1706. In her defence, she claimed that she “a fait avantage aux S^{rs} et dames de Gaudion et De Loire” by paying several debts on their behalf from her own share in the *communauté de biens*. But rather than take the matter to court, Marie-Thérèse *mère* agreed to pay her daughters with 6000 *livres* each in compensation, on top of any other amount that was found to be missing from the inventory.¹⁰⁴ The following day, Gaudion and Marie-Thérèse Le Moyne d’Iberville bought out all shares the others possessed in the estate of d’Ardillières, compensating them accordingly. With this, the division of Iberville’s inheritance was finally agreed upon, split equitably between his widow and surviving children.

One year later, the *Commission Extraordinaire* finally issued a judgement which reiterated the debt of 112,000 *livres* still owed by the *succession d’Iberville* and Borie. Given that both of Iberville’s daughters were now married, the commissioners ruled that they would no longer be pursuing Marie-Thérèse *mère* for this debt, which now fell to Gaudion and Sérigny to pay.¹⁰⁵ Working tirelessly for over two decades, Marie-Thérèse *mère* had thus succeeded in protecting her own interests against her husband’s creditors. Such was her success that to this day, it is still difficult to say how much of their debt the *succession d’Iberville* paid back to the *armateurs*. On May 20th, 1739, however, Marie-Thérèse *mère* was buried, apparently with “à peine de quoi subsister” due to the debts she had incurred for legal fees over the years.¹⁰⁶ Whilst her daughters inherited the rest of their parent’s *communauté de biens*, this did not last for long. Four years later, the *succession d’Iberville* came to an end, as both of the young Marie-Thérèses died within a year of one another, buried in 1742 and 1743 respectively. Of Iberville’s line, only

¹⁰⁴ « Transaction portant obligation par Marie-Thérèse Pollet de la Combe, » 22 novembre 1734.

¹⁰⁵ « Jugement du 26 avril 1735, » 15 septembre 1735.

¹⁰⁶ After her death, her daughter Marie-Armande Béthune would be forced to petition the king for 1000 *livres* in order to move to a convent, where she could continue to live nobly, since her mother had spent all her money paying the expensive legal fees required to hold off her creditors, including those chasing repayment from Iberville. Le Jeune, *Le Chevalier*, p.253.

his granddaughter Marie-Thérèse Gaudion remained. In 1743, she took over the Iberville estate, including Ardillières, with her new husband Michel-Joseph Froger de l'Éguille. Left in peace, she was never pursued for her grandfather's debts.

In the end, therefore, even Iberville, the greatest perpetrator of fraud in his own *armement*, appears to have gotten away with it. Though he made a show of bringing justice to those who had defrauded the crown, Pontchartrain's main concern had always been reclaiming the money that the king and his fellow *armateurs* had lost. Most of Iberville's accomplices were simply ordered to pay back their debts before being left alone, permitted to carry on their active commercial careers long after the *armement* was over. But, through the tenacious defiance of his widow, Iberville was one of a select few to avoid repaying the vast majority of his debts.

Exploiting the impotence of the *Marine* to prosecute its own officers, the many loopholes in French inheritance law and the painfully slow unfolding of *ancien régime* justice, Marie-Thérèse fought hard to successfully enable her children to keep hold of most of their father's illicit gains. Distributed among his successors, this wealth may even have allowed Iberville's descendants to continue their progenitor's ambitions and pursue distinguished naval careers that saw them fight across the Atlantic World in all of France's major conflicts until the Revolution.¹⁰⁷

“On ne fera jamais rien dans ce pays si l'on laisse le moindre officier de la race de feu M^r d'Iberville : ” Dismantling the Le Moyne Empire

In Louisiana, Pontchartrain's justice operated quite differently. Free from Iberville's threats, La Salle began to speak out against the abuses of power he believed had been committed by the Le Moyne family in Louisiana. Rallying those few in the colony who opposed Bienville,

¹⁰⁷ Michel Vergé-Franceschi, *Les officiers généraux de la Marine royale (1715-1774)* (Paris : Librairie d'Inde, 1990), V.1, p.77, 173, 280-282, 297-299, 353, 36-, accessed 23/08/2018 at *Gallica* <http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb37701367w>.

such as the priest Henri La Vente, La Salle decried the Le Moyne brothers' attempts to bend Louisiana to their own will and create their own personal empire at the crown's expense. Their self-interest, he argued, had brought French ambitions in the Lower Mississippi Valley to a halt and if the colony were to succeed, they would need to be removed. Inundated with reports of Iberville's misconduct in Nevis, Pontchartrain was inclined to agree but was unable to trust the word of the *écrivain* alone. La Salle had long been accused of having "peu d'application et de capacité" as a *commissaire* and often made mistakes in his accounting.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, grudges between the *noblesse de robe* and the *noblesse d'épée* were nothing new in colonial government, as each side tended to exaggerate complaints about the other to disparage their opponents and leverage more ministerial patronage.¹⁰⁹ But Pontchartrain ultimately believed that Louisiana was in need of new leadership, even if only to end the disputes paralysing the colony.

For the last six years, Bienville had served only as Louisiana's *de facto* governor, with all his power technically stemming from Iberville, the colony's *commandant*. Now that Iberville was gone, Pontchartrain took the opportunity to break the Le Moyne hold over the Lower Mississippi Valley by appointing new clients to serve in Louisiana's administration. For the position of Louisiana's first official governor Pontchartrain considered, amongst others, Henri-Joseph Beaumont d'Echilais, Charles-Gaspard Piot de Langloiserie and even Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil. All three had decorated military careers, but the latter two were too closely associated with the Le Moyne network for the minister's ambitions (Langloiserie was Boisbriand's brother-in-law). After some deliberation, Pontchartrain chose Nicolas Daneau de Muy, the officer who had commanded the *troupes de la Marine* Frontenac had sent for

¹⁰⁸ ANOM, B, V.29, f.266, « Lettre au S^r De la Salle, », Versailles, 30 juin 1707.

¹⁰⁹ Alexandre Dubé, "Making a Career out of the Atlantic: Louisiana's Plume," in Cécile Vidal, *Louisiana: Crossroads of the Atlantic World*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014): 44-67, p.49.

Iberville's campaign in Newfoundland and who was currently the *major* at Quebec. This decision stirred marked protests from the Le Moyne faction in Canada, particularly amongst the Juchereaus, which must have told Pontchartrain he was doing something right. Alongside De MUY, the minister chose Jean-Baptiste-Martin D'Artaguiette Diron, a twenty-three-year-old Basque clerk who had served at Bayonne, to act as La Salle's co-commissary before eventually replacing him. Pontchartrain also permitted D'Artaguiette to bring his brothers Bernard and Pierre with him to Mobile, perhaps in the hope that they would follow in their sibling's footsteps, bringing further administrative structure to the colony.¹¹⁰

In October 1707, De MUY and D'Artaguiette boarded the *Renommée* with instructions to examine La Salle's complaints about the Le Moyne brothers, especially Bienville, in detail. "Si tout ce qui y est contenu est veritable" wrote Pontchartrain to De MUY "led S^r de Bienville est fort coupable et merite punition." Before condemning Bienville, however, the two men were ordered to find concrete proof that he had "prevariqué dans ses fonctions et qu'il soit approprié les effets de sa ma^{té}."¹¹¹ Only then were they to send him back to France for punishment. Issuing an arrest warrant for such an eventuality, it seemed that Pontchartrain intended that, whether in chains or as a free man, Bienville would leave the colony for good. Writing him a final letter, the minister instructed Bienville to inform De MUY of the state of the colony and aid in his investigation before boarding the *Renommée* for France.¹¹² As for Châteauguay, who had

¹¹⁰ Higginbotham, *Old Mobile*, p.316-17.

¹¹¹ ANOM, B, V.29, f.248v-258, « Mémoire du Roy au S^r de MUY, Gouverneur de la Louisiane, » Versailles, 30 juin 1707; ANOM, B, V.29, f.259-262, « Lettre au M. De MUY, » Versailles, 30 juin 1707; ANOM, B, V.29, f.267-271v, « Mémoire pour servir d'instruction au S^r Dartaguiette, » Versailles, 30 juin 1707; ANOM, B, V.29, f.279-279v, « Lettre au S^r Dartaguiette, » Marly, 23 juillet 1707; ANOM, B, V.29, f.289-289v, « Lettre au S^r Dartaguiette, » Fontainebleau, 12 octobre 1707; ANOM, B, V.29, f.289-290, « Lettre à M. Bégon, l'inspecteur, » Fontainebleau, 12 octobre 1707; ANOM, B, V.29, f.277v-278v, « Lettre a M. de MUY, » Marly, 23 juillet.

¹¹² ANOM, B, V.29, f.277-277v, « Ordonnance de Sa Majesté qui Enjoint au S^r de Eschillais, » Marly, 23 juillet; ANOM, B, V.29, f.262v-263v, « Lettre au S^r de Bienville, » Versailles, 30 juin 1707; ANOM, B, V.29, f.264, « Ordre du Roy au S^r de Bienville commandant a la Louisiane de repasser en France, » Versailles, 30 juin 1707.

requested leave to France due to illness, the minister placed his fate in De MUY's hands, ordering him to respond based on the extent of Châteauguay's involvement in his sibling's activities.¹¹³

On February 11th, 1708, the *Renommée* arrived at Île Massacre. En route, however, De MUY had taken ill in Havana and died shortly thereafter, buried at sea on January 25th. Already, this misfortune threatened to jeopardise the minister's investigation. Du Casse, also present in the Spanish port, seized De MUY's papers, claiming he would send them to Pontchartrain but not before he allegedly forwarded either a copy or summary to Bienville, warning him of what was to come.¹¹⁴ Indeed, by the time D'Artaguiette arrived, Bienville was well aware of the charges made against him and began undermining the investigation. Greeting D'Artaguiette at Île Massacre, Bienville and Châteauguay immediately began courting the new *commissaire*, lodging him with Châteauguay, who apparently had the nicest home in Mobile, until they could find him an official residence. Offered the chance to keep his position until a replacement for De MUY arrived, Bienville also thanked D'Artaguiette, professed his loyalty to the crown and pledged his aid in the coming investigation. Confident he would be vindicated, however, he reportedly also remarked that "le temps me feroit connoître la Verité de toutes choses."¹¹⁵

Between February 24th and 27th 1708, D'Artaguiette held the very first trial in Louisiana's history. He interrogated eight colonists—Joseph Chauvin, *dit* Léry, Jacques Chauvin, Jean-Baptiste Saucier, Jean-Baptiste Joussette *dit* La Loire, François Trudeau, Étienne Burel, Guillaume Boutin and René Boyer—on a series of matters relating to Bienville's conduct. After

¹¹³ ANOM, B, V.29, f.273, « Lettre au S^r de Châteauguay, » Versailles, 30 juin 1707 ; ANOM, B, V.29, f.282, « Lettre a M. de MUY, » Versailles, 10 août 1707.

¹¹⁴ Cadillac would only make this accusation in 1713. In 1708, Bienville claimed he had not received the instructions for De MUY, even stating that they would have been useful since the colony was otherwise unaware of the king's intentions. However, the speed with which he acted, and this premature denial would seem to suggest he had at least some prior knowledge of the content of De MUY's instructions. ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.91, « Bienville au Ministre, » 25 février 1708; ANOM, C13A, V.3, f.60-62, « Cadillac au ministre, » 26 octobre 1713.

¹¹⁵ ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.239-240, « Dartaguiette au Ministre, » 26 février 1708.

years of cultivating support in the colony, Bienville told Pontchartrain that “je me flatte quaucun habitant ne peut maceuser de rien” and it appears that, for the most part, his estimations were correct.¹¹⁶ Of the eight witnesses, six declared that they had little to no knowledge of the misuse of the royal stores or ships, nor of any of the other accusations made against their *commandant*. Only the final two witnesses, Boutin and Boyer, admitted to having seen any wrongdoing. Unfortunately for D’Artaguiette, however, whilst Boutin’s testimony appeared to corroborate many of La Salle’s accusations, it lacked specificity and hard evidence. Boyer provided more concrete information, testifying to the misconduct of Noyan and his officers during the arrival of the *Aigle* and stating that he had seen supplies belonging to Bienville and Châteauguay—carefully marked with a “B”—for sale at the shop belonging to Marguerite Messier. Moreover, whilst he could not testify to their misuse of the royal ships, Boyer also claimed that he had heard of their abuses, and, as a gunsmith, testified that they had paid him to manufacture 300 muskets for them to sell privately in Pensacola.¹¹⁷ Though not much, these testimonies were enough to put Bienville’s impeachment in motion.

Amidst these interrogations, however, Bienville sought to undermine the judicial process. Writing pre-emptively to Pontchartrain, he requested the recusal of the testimonies of Burel, Boutin, Boyer and even Jacques Allemand. Burel, he argued, held a grudge against him for a 150 *livre* fine Bienville had given him (a little hypocritically) for selling stolen merchandise, whilst he deemed Boutin amongst “le plus Seditteur qui puisse être icy,” since he had fled to Pensacola for five months and resisted arrest when ordered to return to Mobile. In Boyer’s case, Bienville

¹¹⁶ « Bienville au Ministre, » 25 février 1705 ; ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.155, « La Salle au Ministre, » 4 mars 1706.

¹¹⁷ ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.249-254, « Extrait de l’information fait par M. Dartaguiette contre M. De Bienville, » 24-27 février 1708 ; ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.255-312, « Interrogatoire fait d’office par ordre de M. Le comte de Pontchartrain par nous commmissaire de la Marine, » 24-27 février 1708. For an excellent and detailed narrative recounting of D’Artaguiette’s investigation see Higginbotham, *Old Mobile*, pp.314-341.

claimed that he had a clear distaste for military authority, having been arrested twice, once for mortally wounding an officer and a second time for insulting another. Finally, Bienville accused Jacques Allemand of being “un Insolent et un seditieux,” even though he would not be questioned for the trial. Indeed, it seems that Jacques may have been in La Rochelle bailing his brother Claude out of prison after Bienville’s kinsmen had refused, a fact which had perhaps contributed to their apparent falling out.¹¹⁸ Whatever the case, Bienville attempted to dispel any rumours that might be spread about him by his enemies in Louisiana or in France before the trial even began. “Les accusations de ces Sortes de gens” he concluded “ne Sont guère recevables, je ne Sçay si les autres men chargent, mais je ne me Sens nullement coupable.”¹¹⁹

Faced with these bitter personal quarrels, D’Artaguiette came to a similar conclusion. Whilst he had uncovered some evidence, its provenance was highly questionable. Moreover, at least two of La Salle’s many complaints had proven patently false—Bienville had not sold food gifted by Indigenous allies to colonists, nor had he burned an Alabama prisoner alive at Fort Louis. Lacking De Muy’s martial authority, D’Artaguiette also knew that he had very little power to actually arrest Bienville, so decided to write off the complaints about him as products of factional divides in the colony and continue his investigation over the coming months. Meanwhile, he allowed Bienville to remain as acting governor until a replacement could be found. D’Artaguiette then sent his findings to Pontchartrain, addressing each of La Salle’s eighteen accusations in turn before rectifying some of the *commisaire*’s poor habits, regulating, for instance, the hours at which the royal warehouse would be opened and redressing the account books.¹²⁰ A few months later, he uncovered debts owed by Iberville for the freight on the royal

¹¹⁸ « Soumission de caution faite par François Bancio, marchand et par Jacques Allemand, » 16 mars 1707.

¹¹⁹ « Bienville au Ministre, » 25 février 1705.

¹²⁰ ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.313-16, « Mémoire de ce que j’ai pu apprendre concernant les instructions de feu M. De Muy, » 25 février 1708 ; ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.317-326, « D’Artaguiette au Ministre, » ; ANOM, C13A, V.2 f.327-

transports, which he recommended be added to the total owed by the *succession d'Iberville*.

Otherwise, however, Bienville was to stay in the colony, albeit under close surveillance.

In September, La Salle submitted his own evaluation of the trial. His report was full of accusations of collusion and intimidation and he included several attached letters which he claimed proved the Le Moyne family's malfeasance. Hoping to be rid of Bienville once and for all, he argued that "on ne fera jamais rien dans ce pays si l'on laisse le moindre officier de la race de feu Mr Iberville."¹²¹ Based on the information he had received from D'Artaguiette, Pontchartrain agreed with La Salle, replying that :

on ne dira rien contre ce dernier, tant qu'il sera revetu de la 1^{re} autorité du pais, ainsy il est necessaire d'attendre qu'il y ayt un nouveau Gouverneur pour esclaireir les Faits qui ont été mis en avant.¹²²

Pontchartrain seems to have realised that in abusing his trust, the Le Moyne family had been able to spread their roots so deeply across the Atlantic World that they would be difficult to entirely dislodge. Following La Salle's recommendation, he decided that it was best to cut off the head and hope the body would follow, removing Bienville for the good of the colony. Without the Le Moyne network to operate the colony on the crown's behalf, however, Pontchartrain was obliged to court other private investors more aligned with imperial ambitions.

From 1707, Pontchartrain assessed the schemes of several merchants willing to take over the colonial project in Louisiana. One proposal came from none other than Borie, who offered to deliver urgently needed supplies to the colony. Pontchartrain, however, suspected that Borie simply wished to use the voyage to take over Iberville's enterprises and "se rendra le M^e de ce Pais en suivant les Erremens dudit s^r d'Iberville et trouvera le moyen d'en chasser tous les autres

340, « D'Artaguiette au Ministre, » 18 août 1708 ; ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.341-348, « D'Artaguiette au Ministre, » 1 octobre 1708.

¹²¹ ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.206, « Nicolas de La Salle au ministre, » 12 septembre 1708.

¹²² ANOM, B, V.30, f.186, « Lettre au S^r Dartaguiette, » Versailles, 11 juillet 1709.

m^{ds} qui pourroient un jour y faire un commerce.”¹²³ He suspected the same about a proposal from Rémonville—who had previously invested in the *Compagnie des Sioux*—which he also rejected for being too self-interested.¹²⁴ Finally, in 1710, Pontchartrain landed on Antoine Crozat. Crozat had a wealth of experience in colonial development through his work with the *Compagnie de Saint Domingue*. The lesser of many evils, he had also at least always worked in the crown’s best interest, and Pontchartrain likely believed that granting him the monopoly over the Mississippi Valley could reinvigorate Louisiana’s lagging development. Crozat, however, needed considerable coaxing to take on this risky venture. Killing two birds with one stone, Pontchartrain removed the ever-persuasive Antoine La Mothe de Cadillac from his command in Detroit, where he had been abusing his power, and named him Governor of Louisiana, sending him to France to secure Crozat’s investment. Ironically, however, Cadillac succeeded in this mission by enticing Crozat with the lure of Louisiana’s extensive and profitable contraband trade with New Spain, originally established by the Le Moyne family.¹²⁵

Even though Cadillac took the reins in Louisiana, Pontchartrain was unable to entirely rid the colony of the Le Moyne family. D’Artaguiette’s investigation had offered very little evidence for Bienville’s misconduct. Mostly, his findings showed that Iberville had been at the centre of the fraudulent schemes, with his younger brothers only working on his instructions, leaving Bienville’s actual degree of involvement mired in ambiguity. At the end of 1710, La Salle also died, which put an end to his relentless accusations against the Le Moynes and thus much of the conflict in the colony’s government. Moreover, as the years had worn on, Louisiana had been

¹²³ AM, B2, V.196, f.1096-1097, « Lettre au S^r Pajot, » Versailles, 16 mars 1707.

¹²⁴ For the early plans of Rémonville and his partner Argoud, see Margry, *Mémoires et Documents*, V.4, p.21-43.

¹²⁵ Richard Weyhing, “The Straits of Empire: French Colonial Detroit and the Origins of the Fox Wars” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2012), p.79; Giraud, *The Reign of Louis XIV*, pp.131-140, 249; Rule, “Jérôme Phélypeaux and the Establishment of Louisiana,” p.196.

drawn further into a proxy conflict with the English and, as we have already seen, Bienville's personal influence among the local Indigenous nations made him essential to the war effort. With his hands tied, Pontchartrain thus had to begrudgingly keep him in the crown's employ, appointing (or technically demoting) him to *lieutenant du roi* in May 1710 and ordering him to accommodate the incoming governor.

Though unable to directly prosecute or punish Bienville, the minister could let him languish in the colony. As he waited for Cadillac's arrival, which was delayed for over three years, Bienville fished for the absentee governor's job, complaining that:

je Crois avoir remply mes devoirs, avec toute l'application qu'y a dépendue de moy, Il y a traize années que Je Suis icy, J'y ay passé ma jeunesse, J'y ay ossé ma Santé et Je ny ay Monseigneur, certainement fait aucun profit, bien Loin de cela, Jay Esté obligé de Contracter des dettes, Comme Il me seroit aisé De vous Le prouver

According to Bienville, he had amassed debts of over 15,000 *livres* during his career, and for years his salary had been spent paying debts he owed to his brother Longueuil and sister-in-law Marie-Thérèse. Indeed, after 1708, Longueuil sold off several properties belonging to Bienville and Châteauguay in Canada, likely in order to settle their many debts.¹²⁶ But whether exaggerated or not, these complaints still paled in comparison to his frustration that:

Je n'ay Encore reçu aucune grace, que Je ne Suis que garde de la Marine, que Je n'ay point amassé de bien icy, et que mes travaux ne m'ont encore procuré aucun avancement dans la marine, ou Jay Servy Longtemps et out Je vois beaucoup de ceux qui y sont venus après moy tres avancés, qui n'ont pas essuyé a beaucoup près les peines que Jay Eü.¹²⁷

For Pontchartrain, Bienville's distress seems to have been punishment enough. Replying over a year later, he coldly informed Bienville that the king would consider him for future

¹²⁶ BAnQ, CN601, S2 « Bail à loyer d'une maison, » 1 septembre 1708 ; BAnQ, CN601, S2, « Bail à loyer d'une maison, » 27 septembre 1709 ; BAnQ, CN601, S2, « Vente d'un emplacement, » 20 mars 1709 ; BAnQ, CN601, S2 « Vente d'une maison, » 25 novembre 1710 ; BAnQ, CN601, S2 « Dépôt d'une adjudication d'un emplacement, » 15 février 1711.

¹²⁷ ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.553-554, « Bienville au Ministre » 21 juin 1710; ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.594-599 « Bienville au ministre, » 27 octobre 1711.

advancements provided that he did not receive any further complaints and that Bienville showed strict subordination to the crown.¹²⁸ Withholding the customary reward for Bienville's self-professed merit, Pontchartrain therefore severed the horizontal webs of family patronage that had sustained Bienville's career thus far, instead placing him into a more rigid hierarchy with the minister, and ultimately the king, at the top. Kept on as a useful asset, Bienville would have to regain the trust his family had broken, slowly working off his debts in service to the crown.

Founded on September 12th, 1712, Crozat's *Compagnie de la Louisiane* formally took over administration of the Mississippi colony, marking a temporary end to the Le Moyne domination of Louisiana. Within the colony, the family's commercial schemes had ground to a halt as a result of the robust accounting system implemented by D'Artaguiette, whilst the destruction of the warehouses on Île Massacre by a Huguenot buccaneer in September 1710 and the forced relocation of Mobile the following year broke their hold over the settlement.¹²⁹ In June 1713, the new administration took charge as Cadillac and the company's new *commissaire ordonnateur* Jean-Baptiste du Bois du Clos, finally arrived in Louisiana. In an apt metaphor for the Le Moyne family's new status in the colony, Cadillac kicked Châteauguay out of his own house, using it for his gubernatorial residence. Though cast out, however, Bienville and Châteauguay still clung onto a small amount of power in the colony, for they were still valuable to its administration. As we will see, this was enough for Bienville to claw his way back to the top, as he reinvented himself and reinstated his influence in the Lower Mississippi Valley.

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For the Le Moyne family, the *armement d'Iberville* was the peak of their fame, influence and power across the Atlantic World. Benefitting from the support of the naval ministry a vast

¹²⁸ ANOM, B, V.34, f.160-161, « Lettre au S^r de Bienville, » Versailles, 22 décembre 1712.

¹²⁹ See "Chapter XXII: Moving Downstream," in Higginbotham, *Old Mobile*, pp.441-468.

transatlantic and trans-imperial network, they turned immense personal profits at great cost to the empire. Leaving Nevis with abundant loot and slaves, they funnelled their prizes into their schemes across the Mississippi-Caribbean World, furnishing their estates with enslaved labour, profiting from colonial markets, and embezzling vast fortunes all under the guise of royal service. But this was a step too far for Pontchartrain. With a war raging the minister could not overlook the loss of such vital funds and bullion. Caught by the weakness of his ministry, Pontchartrain was unable to prosecute most of the perpetrators of this fraud but nevertheless succeeded in breaking apart the Le Moyne empire—at least temporarily. For decades, Iberville's vast illicit fortune was tied up almost indefinitely in costly court proceedings, delaying the inheritance he could pass on to his descendants. Across the Atlantic, the watchful eyes of Pontchartrain's naval officials prevented his brothers from pursuing further colonial profits, slowly drying up their incomes as the war dragged on. Above all, however, it was the loss of the minister's esteem that cost the remaining brothers the most dearly, for Iberville's frauds cast a long shadow that stalled their careers for over a decade. But, since power and authority in the *ancien régime* empire were inherently patrimonial, this mild suffering could only last as long as a single lifetime. When the death of Louis XIV in 1715 ushered in an entirely new regime under the Regency, therefore, a new era began for those Le Moyne brothers left standing.

Chapter V
A House in New Orleans:
Property, Power and Prestige in Louisiana, 1718-1767

On March 27th, 1719, Bienville and Marc-Antoine Hubert, the *commissaire-ordonnateur* of Louisiana, wrote to the *Compagnie des Indes*, to request that they accord Bienville:

en franc alleu la Concession d'un terrain scitué au dessus et aux bornes de
La Nouvelle Orleans faisant face sur la Riviere du Mississipy et en
profondeur Courant a L'Ouest quart nord Ouest jusquau mississipy dans
lance au dessous des Chapitoulas¹

Alongside this, they filed a second petition, this time for a plot of land opposite New Orleans, extending for one league downstream along the banks of the Mississippi, which Bienville wished to use as grazing land for his herds of sheep and cattle.² Before they could approve Bienville's grants, the company's directors requested that he submit an official survey of their size and location, so that they could better assess their potential value. Earlier that spring, however, the Mississippi had burst its banks, submerging New Orleans under half a foot of water. Bienville thus informed his employers that he was unable to provide them the survey right away "a cause des pays Noyé." Believing the waterlogged lands to be essentially worthless, on February 6th, 1720, the *Compagnie des Indes* provisionally ratified Bienville's requests, entitling him to "prendre possession en toute Seureté de ce terrain, et d'y faire tel Etablissemens que vous jugerez a propos."³ Whilst the company did not issue any official titles to the land, Jean-Baptiste D'Artaguiette D'Iron—now one of its directors in Paris—assured Bienville that such papers "ne vous manqueront point quand il vous plaira d'en demander," provided that he produce the survey in due course.

¹ ANOM, G1, V.465, No. 65, « Lettre de Bienville et Hubert, » [1719/1723].

² ANOM, G1, V.465, No.64, « Extrait du registre des enregistrements des concessions accordés par la Compagnie des Indes en Louisiane, » 7 février 1724.

³ ANOM, G1, V.645, No.66, « Lettre de D'Artaguiette Diron à M. de Bienville, » 6 février 1720.

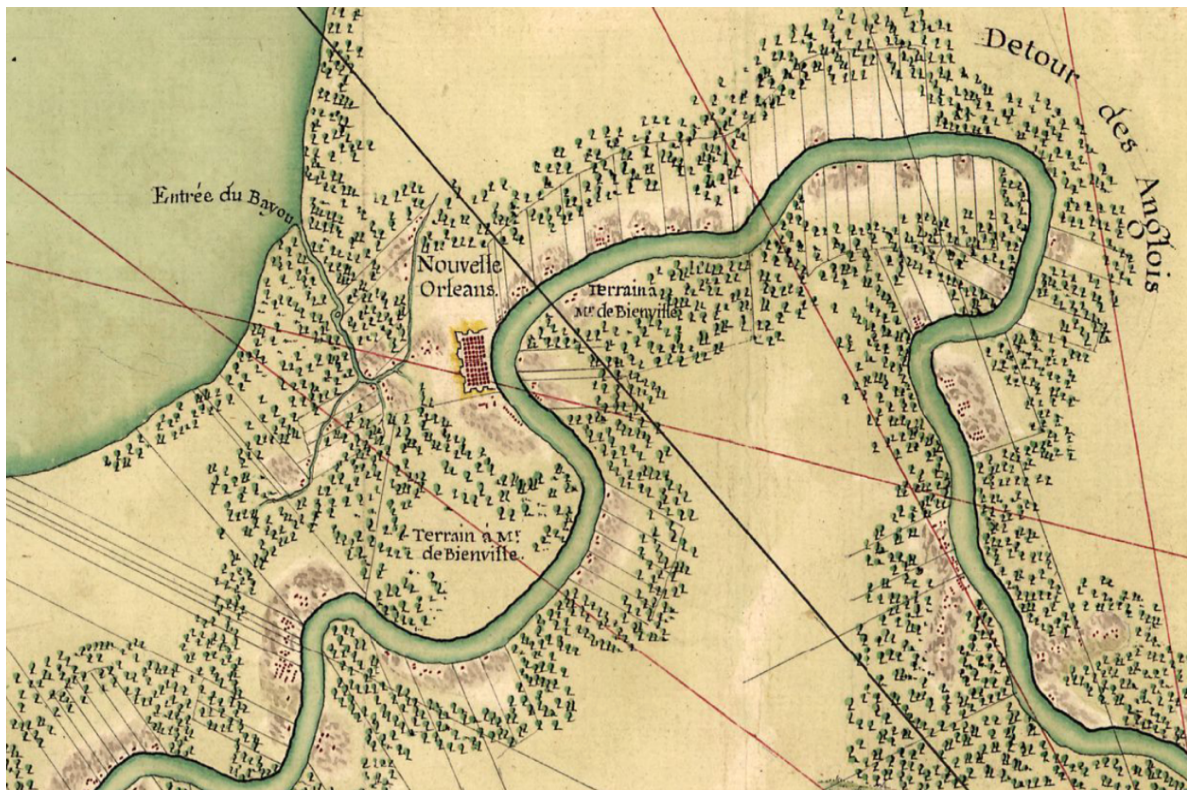


Fig. 5.1 : “Terrain à Mr de Bienville,” from *Carte du cours du fleuve St. Louis depuis dix lieues audessus de la Nouvelle Orleans jusqu'à son embouchure ou sont marquées les habitations formées, et les terrains concédez i.e. concédés, auxquels on n'a pas travaillé*. Map. [?,1732.] Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2003623384/>.

Bienville would not submit such a document for over two decades. Meanwhile, he claimed over 32,398 square *arpents* (approximately 27,370 acres or 42.75 square miles) of land in and around New Orleans which formed the foundations—at least in part—of the modern-day Garden District, Central City, Uptown, Carrollton, and Algiers neighbourhoods.⁴ [Fig. 5.1]. Many historians have argued that these lands gave Bienville a personal stake in the development of New Orleans, encouraging him to privilege the city as the capital of Louisiana and the centre of its growing plantation culture.⁵ Following the recent historiographic trend

⁴ According to claims he made to the crown in 1733, his estates adjoining New Orleans measured 3 by 1 league, whilst those opposite the city measured 133 *arpents* 7 *perches* by 1 league. Calculating one league at 84 arpents, this gives a total of 32,398.8 square arpents. One square arpent is approximately 0.85 acres, or 0.0013 square miles.

⁵ Marc de Villiers, *Histoire de la fondation de la Nouvelle-Orléans (1717-1722)* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1917); Shannon Lee Dawdy, *Building the Devil's Empire: French Colonial New Orleans* (Chicago: University of

which views New Orleans as a city born out of “rogue colonialism,” Lawrence Powell has even gone as far as to describe Bienville’s creation of New Orleans as a co-ordinated “landjobbing scheme” which saw Bienville use his power and influence over the distribution of land and slaves to make his newly granted estates more profitable and important. “There was nothing inevitable about the decision to make New Orleans the new capital” Powell argues, “unless one considers cunning in the service of self-interested ambition an ineluctability of history.”⁶

Whilst this narrative may fit an image of Bienville as one of Louisiana’s “rogue” pioneers, we must be careful to consider the nature of his personal interest in accordance with the values of his time. Insisting that Bienville’s motivations for acquiring his landed estates were purely pecuniary belittles the cultural significance of landholding and property in the *ancien régime*. In France, landholding was by no means a guaranteed way to generate riches or wealth and many landholders actually earned far less than one might expect from their estates. Land was instead more valuable as a signifier of status and privilege—the quintessential expression of nobility. Indeed, landholding not only fulfilled dynastic ambitions for a noble patrimony of titles, rights and wealth but also conferred upon the *seigneur* a certain public duty to his tenants, which was seen as an aristocratic vocation that complimented a noble family’s expected professional service to the king.⁷

Chicago Press, 2008); Dianne Guenin-Lelle, *The Story of French New Orleans: History of a Creole City*, (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2016); Richard Campanella, *Bienville’s Dilemma: A Historical Geography of New Orleans* (Lafayette: Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Louisiana, 2008).

⁶ See “Chapter 2: A Landjobbing Scheme,” in Powell, *The Accidental City*, p.33-59.

⁷ On land and nobility in *ancien régime*, see M. L. Bush, *Rich Noble, Poor Noble* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), p.105-106; Jean Duma, “The Characteristics of an Aristocratic Economy in France, 16th-18th Centuries,” in Paul Janssens and Bartolomé Yu-Casalilla, *European Aristocracies and Colonial Elites: Patrimonial Management Strategies and Economic Development, 15th-18th Centuries* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005): 37-56; Gail Bossenga, “A Divided Nobility: Status, Markets and the Patrimonial State in the Old Regime,” in Jay Smith ed., *The French Nobility in the Eighteenth Century: Reassessments and New Approaches* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006): 43-76.

Across the French Atlantic World, these metropolitan notions of nobility had long been in a state of flux. With few privileges to distinguish them from their lowborn compatriots and an ambiguous status in the metropole, colonial nobles likely felt pressure to continually reinvent themselves as a way to display their status to others. Eleventh in a long line of sons and heir to a nonexistent title, Bienville was acutely aware of this instability. As he attempted to find his feet in this changing world, therefore, Bienville followed the path of many amongst what François-Joseph Ruggiu has called the “noblesse atlantique,” and embraced military service, commerce and slavery to claim his place as a noble warrior and wealthy landholder.⁸ Taking Bienville’s New Orleans estates as its central focus, this chapter explores Bienville’s self-reinvention. It shows how he fused traditional concepts of nobility and patrimony with new “Atlantic” ones, adapting to the colonial landscape and reinventing what it meant to be a “noble” in the Lower Mississippi Valley.

“Sy longuement quils vivront noblement” Improvising a Noble Estate

In August 1717, Longueuil, Sérigny, Bienville, Châteauguay and their nephew François-Jean Le Moyne d’Iberville et d’Ardillières filed a petition with the *Cour des Aides* in Paris for the official recognition of their noble titles. After Charles Le Moyne was ennobled in 1668, his inexperience with noble status meant that he incorrectly filed his titles with the *Chambre des Comptes* instead of with the *parlement de Paris* or the *Cour des Aides*. Since the *Chambre des Comptes* dealt mostly with financial affairs and not noble titles, this meant that his claims were not formally registered in the metropole, threatening his family’s noble status. At some point between 1668 and 1717, the papers Le Moyne had filed at the *Chambre des Comptes* were lost in

⁸ François-Joseph Ruggiu, “Une noblesse atlantique ? Le second ordre français de l’Ancien au Nouveau Monde,” *Outre-mers* 96, no. 362 (2009): 39–63 and Ruggiu, “The Kingdom of France and Its Overseas Nobilities,” *French History* 25, no. 3 (1 September 2011): 298–315.

the world of paper of the nascent French bureaucracy. This meant that his sons had to file an entirely new claim to ensure their nobility was recognised. Living under a turbulent regency, Le Moyne's descendants could ill afford any ambiguity surrounding their noble heritage, especially if those with estates in France wished to benefit from the many tax exemptions that the metropolitan nobility enjoyed. Working together, the Le Moyne brothers presented the case for their noble status, insisting upon their family's history of noble deeds in the service of the crown. On August 12th, the *Cour des Aides* ratified their petition, permitting the brothers, their wives, legitimate children and any future offspring to "jouir... des privileges et Exemptions dont Jouissent les autres nobles du Royaume tant sy longuement qu'ils vivront noblement et ne feront actes derogant a noblesse."⁹

In Louisiana, however, Bienville was not able to "vivre noblement." Ever since 1706, a long shadow had been cast on the Le Moyne family, stalling their advancement. In May 1717, Bienville complained that Pontchartrain, "piqué contre feu Mr d'Iberville, je ne Scay par quelle raison, avoit resolu de faire retomber sa colere sur moy," denying him opportunities for promotion, wealth and status in the colony. Overlooked as governor in both 1708 and 1713, Bienville's status and influence in the colony had waned considerably, and he had spent much of the last decade being belittled by Governor Cadillac. Meanwhile, his meagre salary—when he actually received it—and the remote location of Mobile had prevented him from living the life of

⁹ LAC, MG, 18, H14, V.1, p.1-6, « Permission aux S^{rs} Lemoine de faire enregistrer en la Cour de Parlement et Cour des Aydes les Lettres de Noblesse accordées au mois de mars 1668 à Charles Lemoine de Longueuil et enregistrées à la Chambre des Comptes le 21 février 1680, » 12 août 1717; LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, p.7-8, « Copie de l'enregistrement des lettres de noblesse, » [S.D]; LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, p.45-57, « Information par forme d'enquête fait par la Cour des Aydes sur les frères Charles Lemoyne de Longueuil, Joseph Lemoyne de Sérigny, Jean Baptiste Lemoyne de Bienville, Antoine Lemoyne de Chateauguay, ainsi que sur François Le Moyne d'Iberville, fils de Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, » [1717].

luxury expected of a noble officer, forcing him to beg for the right to personally ship French goods to Louisiana, so that he might “ÿ Vivre avec quelque d  cence.”¹⁰

More importantly, however, Pontchartrain’s wrath also cost Bienville any opportunity to acquire landed estates. In 1711, Bienville petitioned for the concession of both Isle    Corne (modern-day Horn Island)—a narrow pine-covered strip of sand opposite Pascagoula—and a fief in Mobile Bay.¹¹ For the previous four years however, Intendant Raudot had sent the minister a number of scathing reports on seigneurial tenure in the Saint Lawrence Valley. In these documents the intendant urged Pontchartrain to limit the number of seigneuries granted in Canada, since many local seigneurs neglected to develop or populate their estates, preferring instead to simply benefit from them as symbols of prestige.¹² Pontchartrain thus ignored Bienville’s petitions until he could decide on an appropriate policy to follow in Louisiana. By 1716, the decision was made and the newly formed *Conseil de Marine* formally outlawed seigneurial tenure in both Louisiana and the Illinois Country. As a result, Bienville finally received his concessions, but only *en routure*, denying him the opportunity to live like his elder brothers as a colonial seigneur. Perhaps in protest, he later insisted on renaming Horn Island “Isle    Bienville”, etching his name onto the colonial landscape [Fig. 5.2]. Given that the island was barren and continually ravaged by hurricanes, however, Hubert remarked that it was little more than a worthless symbol of prestige in the middle of Mobile Bay.¹³

¹⁰ ANOM, C13A, V.5, f.59-65, « Bienville au Conseil de Marine, » 10 mai 1717.

¹¹ ANOM, C13B, No.10, « Bienville au ministre, » 20 juin 1711; ANOM, C13A, V.2, f.599, « Bienville au ministre, » Port Dauphin, 27 octobre 1711; Marcel Giraud, *History of French Louisiana: Volume I, The Reign of Louis XIV, 1698-1715*, (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1974), p.183-184; Marcel Giraud, *A History of French Louisiana Volume II: Years of Transition, 1715-1717* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993).

¹² See, for example, ANOM, C11A, V.26, f.238-241, « Lettre de Raudot fils au ministre » 13 novembre 1707; ANOM, C11A, V.26, f.150-175, « Lettre de Jacques Raudot au ministre, » 10 novembre 1707; ANOM, C11G, V.6, f.39v-58v « Autre m  moire de M. Raudot au ministre sur le m  me sujet, » 20 ao  t 1707 and ANOM, C11G, V.3, f.196v-200v, « M. Raudot p  re au ministre, » 19 octobre 1708.

¹³ ANOM, C13A, V.1, f.55, « Hubert au conseil, » [1717].



Fig. 5.2 : “Isle à Bienville” from Joseph Le Moyne de Sérigny, Valentin Devin *Carte de la coste de Louisiane*. Map. [c.1720]. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des cartes et plans, GE, SH, 18, pf.138 bis. <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b5966520n/f21.item>

Only in August 1717 did Bienville’s luck begin to turn. At almost the same time that his brothers filed their petition in Paris, the *Compagnie d’Occident* published its *lettres patentes*.¹⁴ Formed by the Scottish banker and economist John Law as the vehicle for his elaborate financial “system”, the *Compagnie d’Occident* was intended to relieve the French crown of its many post-war debts by developing commerce in the Lower Mississippi Valley. Law envisioned Louisiana as the French Chesapeake; he pledged to ship over 9000 indentured Europeans and enslaved Africans within a decade to cultivate tobacco and indigo in abundance. Acquiring the proprietary rights to Louisiana, the company opened the colony to private investment and distributed lands, equipment and slaves to potential colonists and settlers with generous terms and conditions.¹⁵

¹⁴ Giraud argues that the *lettres patentes* were not registered before August 23rd, 1717. Marcel Giraud, “La Compagnie d’Occident (1717-1718),” *Revue Historique* 226, Fasc. 1 (1961), pp.23-56, p.27.

¹⁵ For detailed discussion of John Law and his “system” see Arnaud Orain, *La politique du merveilleux: Une autre histoire du Système de Law (1695-1795)* (Paris, Fayard, 2018); François R. Velde, “John Law’s System,” *The American Economic Review* 97, no. 2 (2007): 276–79; Larry Neal, *I Am Not Master of Events: The Speculations of John Law and Lord Londonderry in the Mississippi and South Sea Bubbles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012); Cécile Vidal, “French Louisiana in the Age of the Companies, 1712-1731,” in L. H. Roper and Bertrand Van Ruymbeke eds., *Constructing Early Modern Empires Proprietary Ventures in the Atlantic World, 1500-1750*, (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 150-52; Philippe Haudrère, *La Compagnie Française des Indes au XVIII^e siècle*. Tome I. (Paris: Indes Savantes, 2005).

At the heart of this colony, the *Compagnie d'Occident* intended to establish a new administrative and commercial outpost: New Orleans. In September 1717, the company published a list of intentions for their new colony. Ninth of these was the resolution to establish “à trente lieues en haut du fleuve, un bourg que l’on nommerait la Nouvelle-Orléans”—the very first mention of the city.¹⁶ Assessing the colonial landscape, the directors finally chose Bayou Manchac as the desired location for their capital on April 14th, 1718. A well-known portage between the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico, Bayou Manchac sat at a crossroads between the older coastal settlements of Mobile and Biloxi and the newer inland settlements at Natchez, Natchitoches and Yazoo. This made it ideal as an administrative centre and central entrépot for the Lower Mississippi Valley. That same week, the directors commissioned the engineer Paul de Perrier to design their colonial metropolis, and began choosing its first settlers, decreeing that “il faut les obliger sil est possible, d’habiter dans l’Enceinte de la Nouvelle orleans.”¹⁷

In Louisiana, however, New Orleans was already taking shape. Mere days before the company directors in Paris decided on Bayou Manchac as the location for their new settlement, Bienville ceremonially made the first cut into the dense canebrake on the banks of the Mississippi, founding the town at a location he and Iberville had first visited over two decades

¹⁶ Though this resolution was officially published in 1721, Marc de Villiers suggests that the use of the conditional tense—“on établirait”—indicates that this it was first penned in August or September 1717, along with many other resolutions concerning the new colonial regime. Marcel Giraud agrees, arguing that the appointment of a *garde-magasin* and *caissier* for New Orleans on October 1st, 1717 places the resolution before this date. See “Directions et dépenses de la Compagnie d’Occident depuis le cours de son établissement jusqu’à ce jour” [c.1721] cited in De Villiers, *Histoire de la fondation de la Nouvelle-Orléans*, p.19. Accessed on 18/1/2019 at [Gallica](http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb341396298) <http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb341396298>; Marcel Giraud, *Histoire de la Louisiane française III: L’époque de John Law, (1717-1720)* (Paris: Press universitaires de France, 1966), p.317.

¹⁷ “Instruction pour M. Perrier, ingénieur en chef de la Louisiane, 14 avril 1718” in Pierre Margry, *Découvertes et Établissements des Français dans l’Ouest et dans le Sud L’Amérique Septentrionale (1614-1754): Mémoires et Documents Originaux* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Cie, Libraires-Éditeurs, 1881), V.5, p.599-608; ANOM, B, V.42, f.253, « État de la distribution qui doit être fait à la Louisiane des nouveaux habitants qui passent sur les frégates la *Victoire* et la *Duchesse de Noailles* et la flute la *Marie*, » 23 avril 1718; Richard Campanella, *Bienville’s Dilemma*, p.112, Lawrence N. Powell, *The Accidental City*, p.44-45.

earlier.¹⁸ Etching a plan for the settlement, Bienville took advantage of the spring weather and supervised as his men cut down the dense foliage that covered the river banks and threw together an assortment of palmetto-thatched cabins, shacks and warehouses—the foundation of the town to come.¹⁹ Writing back to France in June, Bienville proudly proclaimed that “On travaille actuellement a l’establissement de la nouvelle orleans.”²⁰

We can only speculate as to why Bienville decided to found New Orleans without the express permission of the *Compagnie d’Occident*. According to his commission as *commandant-général*, issued in September 1717, Bienville was explicitly forbidden from altering or founding any settlement without the consent of the *Conseil de Commerce*, Louisiana's new governing body.²¹ Rather confusingly, however, these instructions had arrived alongside the company’s resolution to found New Orleans and a number of people sent to man it.²² Perhaps eager to impress his new employers, Bienville may have seen this as an invitation to choose the best location for the new capital based on his existing regional knowledge. Indeed, that May he had submitted a *mémoire* to the *Conseil de Marine* outlining the best places for new settlements, including the location he later chose for New Orleans.²³ Moreover, in February 1718 the only other member of the *Conseil de Commerce* was Hubert,

¹⁸ Iberville and Bienville likely first arrived at the location that would become New Orleans on March 7th, 1699. “Journal de la Badine,” in Margry, *Mémoires et documents*, T.4, p.165; Campanella, *Bienville’s Dilemma*, p.105-108

¹⁹ “Account of Jonathas Darby,” *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*, 10 (June 1899): 201-207, p.201; Richebourg McWilliams, *Fleur de Lys and Calumet: Being the Penicaut Narrative of French Adventure in Louisiana*. (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 2011), p.65-67. p.208.

²⁰ ANOM, C13A, V.5, f.155v, « Bienville au Conseil de la Marine, » Fort Louis, 12 juin 1718.

²¹ “Commission for Bienville as Commandant General of Louisiana, September 20, 1717,” published in Dunbar Rowland and Albert Godfrey Sanders eds., *Mississippi Provincial Archives, 1704-1743: French Dominion* (Jackson, MS: Press of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1932), V.3, p.224-225.

²² De Villiers, *Histoire de la fondation de la Nouvelle-Orléans*, p.18.

²³ « Bienville au Conseil de Marine, » 10 mai 1717. Charlevoix mentions Bienville’s reconnaissance mission but inaccurately reports that Governor L’Épinay then instructed Bienville to build New Orleans at the location he had scouted. Pierre-François-Xavier de Charlevoix, *Histoire et description générale de la Nouvelle France avec le journal historique d’un voyage fait par ordre du roi dans l’Amérique septentrionale*. (Paris: Chez Nyon fils., 1744), V.2—, accessed on 8/2/2019 at *Sabin Americana*, McGill University Library.

who did not seem to object to Bienville's plans.²⁴ By June 1718, therefore, New Orleans existed as both a theory and a reality; Perrier's utopian city at Bayou Manchac and Bienville's shantytown on the Mississippi.

Why Bienville chose to build New Orleans at a vulnerable low point in the Mississippi floodplain has also been a matter of debate amongst historians and geographers, especially after Hurricane Katrina devastated the city in 2005. Amongst the most convincing theories are those which suggest that he chose the location for its long history of use by local Indigenous communities.²⁵ In 1699, Iberville first assumed that the land around what became New Orleans was "un pays impracticable." But once he spotted an Indigenous man burning the canebrake, he was convinced that it would one day be easy to clear and drain, giving him hope for a new settlement.²⁶ Indeed, Tristram Kidder has argued that centuries of careful cultivation of the region's ecosystem by Indigenous communities made the settlement of New Orleans "inevitable." Leaving behind shell middens at their settlements, generations of Indigenous peoples actively altered the landscape, creating new "islands" of biodiversity in the marsh that would provide later settlers with the sustenance and materials they needed to build the city.²⁷ Moreover, many Mississippian nations—including the Chitimacha, Houma, Bayagoula, Tensa, Tunica and Choctaw—used the nearby Bayou Saint John as a portage

²⁴ The *Compagnie d'Occident* would not formally institute the *Conseil de Commerce* until April 14th, 1718, assigning Bienville, Hubert, Boisbriand, Châteauguay, Larcebault, Le Gac, Perrier, Méan and their *commis* as directors. Giraud, *L'époque de John Law*, p.289-90; Jerry A. Micelle, "From Law Court to Local Government: Metamorphosis of the Superior Council of French Louisiana," *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 9, no.2 (Spring 1968):85-107, p.99-100.

²⁵ Campanella, *Bienville's Dilemma*, p.99-108; Shannon Lee Dawdy, *Building the Devil's Empire*, p.73-78.

²⁶ Christopher Morris, "Impenetrable but Easy: The French Transformation of the Lower Mississippi Valley and the Founding of New Orleans," in Craig E. Colten ed., *Transforming New Orleans and its Environs* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000): 22-42.

²⁷ Tristram R. Kidder, "Making the City Inevitable: Native Americans and the Geography of New Orleans," in Colten ed., *Transforming New Orleans*, pp.9-21.

connecting their lands to the gulf coast. Offering a wealth of natural resources and many trading opportunities, the location would have greatly appealed to Bienville.

In addition, the epidemics and slave raids that had swept the region since the 1680s meant that the location was mostly abandoned by the Indigenous communities who had once called it home. Archeological evidence suggests, for instance, that the Chapitoulas—known to the Choctaw as the “river people”—abandoned their village before 1699, leaving it open for French settlement.²⁸ Even so, shortly after founding New Orleans, Bienville was sure to conclude peace with the Chitimacha, on whose traditional lands the settlement stood. Bringing an end to a decade of war, Bienville smoked the calumet with Chitimacha diplomats and forged a new alliance between their nations.²⁹ He even invited the nation to relocate closer to New Orleans to strengthen these bonds, but the Chitimacha refused and in fact asserted their independence by sporadically harassing the French settlers over the next few decades.³⁰ But whilst the Chitimacha did not explicitly accept the French settlement, many other *petites nations*—including the Acolapissa, Oucha, Tensa, Houma and Bayagoula—did, moving closer to the town to take advantage of the protection and trade it offered in a location long associated with alliance and exchange. Indeed, Cécile Vidal has noted that the Choctaw knew New Orleans as *balabanjer* or “the town of strangers,” suggesting that its existence was tolerated to a certain degree, even if it was inhabited by non-Mississippians.³¹

²⁸ Dawdy, *Building the Devil's Empire*, p.74; Shannon Lee Dawdy, “La Village des Chapitoulas,” *New Orleans Historical*—, accessed on 23/4/2020 at <https://neworleanshistorical.org/items/show/1404>.

²⁹ Antoine-Simon Le Page du Pratz, *Histoire de la Louisiane : contenant la découverte de ce vaste pays, sa description géographique, un voyage dans les terres, l'histoire naturelle, ...* (Paris, Chez de Bure et al, 1758), V.1, p.105-114—accessed on 10/12/2018 at *Sabin Americana*, McGill University Library ; Elizabeth N. Ellis, “The Many Ties of the Petites Nations: Relationships, Power and Diplomacy in the Lower Mississippi Valley, 1685-1785” (PhD diss., The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2015), p.136-137.

³⁰ Ellis, “The Many Ties of the Petites Nations,” p.164-168.

³¹ Cécile Vidal, *Caribbean New Orleans: Empire, Race and the Making of a Slave Society*, (Williamsburg, Virginia: Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture; Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), p.98.

Word of Bienville's New Orleans finally reached Paris in September 1718.³² At the time, however, both Bienville and the *Compagnie d'Occident* were more concerned with the recent outbreak of the War of the Quadruple Alliance (1718-1720), which pitted the unlikely alliance of France, England, Holland and Austria against aggressive Spanish expansionism in Europe and the Americas.³³ Hoping to capture Pensacola for their colony, the company appointed Sérigny as Bienville's *co-commandant*, dispatching him to Louisiana with two new warships, the *Maréchal de Villars* and the *Comte de Toulouse*. Over the next few months, Bienville, Sérigny and Châteauguay fought a fierce campaign against the Spanish at Pensacola, which changed hands a total of three times before the French ultimately proved victorious in September 1719. On February 17th, 1720, however, the brothers' efforts were rendered fruitless, as the Treaty of the Hague restored the fort to the Spanish crown.³⁴

Meanwhile, little progress was made in New Orleans. Perrier died en route to Louisiana, throwing the company's vision for the city into disarray. Both this setback and the flooding in Bienville's New Orleans sent the *Compagnie des Indes* back to the drawing board to find a more suitable location for their capital. Many of Bienville's rivals in Louisiana took this chance to lobby the directors to move the capital to locations better suited to their individual political or economic agendas. Appointed as the future director of New Orleans in March 1718, Hubert lobbied for the capital to be built nearer to Natchez, where he had

³² A *résumé* of Bienville's letter from June 12th, 1718 was "fait et arrêté" on September 17th by Louis-Alexandre de Bourbon, Comte de Toulouse ; ANOM, C13A, V.5, f.148-150v, « Résumé d'une lettre de M. de Bienville, ».

³³ On the War of the Quadruple see Frederik Dhondt, "'Arrestez et Pillez Contre Toute Sorte de Droit': Trade and the War of the Quadruple Alliance (1718-1720)," *Legatio: The Journal for Renaissance and Early Modern Diplomatic Studies* 0, no. 1 (2017): 97-130 and Frederik Dhondt, *Balance of Power and Norm Hierarchy: Franco-British Diplomacy after the Peace of Utrecht*. (Leiden: Brill Nijhoff, 2015).

³⁴ ANOM, C13A, V.5, f.274-281, « Bienville au Conseil de Marine, » L'Île Dauphine, 20 octobre 1719; ANOM, C13A, V.5, f.303-314, « Relation de ce qui s'est passé depuis la reprise de Pensacola par les Espagnols, » [1719]; La Harpe, *Journal Historique*, p.146-167; Jack D. L. Holmes, "Dauphin Island in the Franco-Spanish War, 1719-22," in John Francis McDermott ed., *Frenchmen and French Ways in the Mississippi Valley* (Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 1969), pp.103-126.

acquired the Sainte Catherine concession in 1717.³⁵ “L’inondation” he reported “força tous les habitants à se rendre aux Natchez, où les terrains sont plus hauts et les chaleurs moins grandes.”³⁶ Others, such as Jean-Baptiste Larcebault and Charles Le Gac—the directors of Mobile and Île Dauphine—similarly petitioned to have the city relocated closer to the Gulf Coast and their interests in the maritime trade.³⁷ “Il paraît difficile de conserver une ville à la Nouvelle-Orléans” Larcebault informed his superiors, “le terrain qui y était destiné est noyé d’un demi-pied d’eau.”³⁸ By all indications, Bienville’s New Orleans was doomed, and along with it his hopes of making a name for himself in the colony. But Bienville remained surprisingly optimistic, convinced that his location was ideal for settlement. Making the most of the *Compagnie des Indes*’ lack of interest in the region, he took the opportunity to grant himself two large plots of land within the vicinity of his small town.

“Une bonne métairie près d’une Ville est souvent d’un meilleur rapport qu’une Terre Seigneuriale dans les bois” : Adapting Seigneurial Property in Early New Orleans

“Une bonne métairie près d’une Ville,” Bienville advised Antoine-Simon Le Page du Pratz in August 1718, “est souvent d’un meilleur rapport qu’une Terre Seigneuriale dans les bois, plus propres à la Chasse qu’au Commerce.”³⁹ Apparently taking his own advice to heart, Bienville finished construction of a residence outside of New Orleans in June 1720, began grazing livestock on his *métairie* and put twenty African and Indigenous slaves to work cultivating rice on his new plantations.⁴⁰ Most of his lands, however, lay uncleared and

³⁵ ANOM, B, V.42, f.187, « Commission de Directeur général au comptoir de la Nouvelle-Orléans pour le S^r Hubert, » 14 mars 1718; George Edward Milne, *Natchez Country: Indians, Colonists, and the Landscapes of Race in French Louisiana*, (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2015), p.83-85.

³⁶ Quoted in De Villiers, *Histoire de la fondation de la Nouvelle-Orléans*, p.39.

³⁷ See Charles Le Gac and Glen R. Conrad, *Immigration and War, Louisiana 1718-1721 from the Memoir of Charles Le Gac*, (Lafayette LA, University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1970).

³⁸ Cited in De Villiers, *Histoire de la fondation de la Nouvelle-Orléans*, p.39.

³⁹ Le Page du Pratz, *Histoire de la Louisiane*, p.38.

⁴⁰ “État de la Louisiana au mois de juin 1720,” in De Villiers, *Histoire de la fondation de la Nouvelle-Orléans*, p.47

unsettled for several years. Whilst many of those granted land by the company—known as *concessionnaires*—built their entrêpôts near New Orleans before 1721, none took the opportunity to settle on Bienville’s lands, preferring to be landlords in their own right. Nor did Bienville seem to make any effort to parcel out his own lands to settlers. Instead, he focused on granting *concessions* further upstream in numbers so great that Pénicault thought it tedious to repeat them all in his narrative.⁴¹ Far from a lucrative “landjobbing scheme”, Bienville seems to have had rather different ambitions for his land in New Orleans.

In January 1723 Bienville welcomed the first settlers onto his lands—several German or Swiss families. Initially brought to Louisiana by John Law, these families had survived a long and harrowing journey to Louisiana, only to find that the collapse of Law’s financial system and his subsequent exile from France had left them unemployed.⁴² In June 1721, therefore, many travelled to New Orleans to petition Bienville to send them home. Bienville, however, instead invited them to settle on company lands outside of New Orleans, hoping that their agricultural expertise might help his fledgling settlement.⁴³ But misery followed the German settlers. On September 11th, 1722, a hurricane tore through the Lower Mississippi Valley, badly damaging Mobile, Biloxi and New Orleans and completely destroying the newly built German villages of Marienthal and Augsburg. In December, Bienville attempted to help the refugees from these communities by petitioning the colony’s *Conseil Supérieur* to let him welcome up

⁴¹ McWilliams, *Fleur de Lys et Calumet*, p.321.

⁴² Originally Law recruited over 4000 Germans settlers to work on his lands, but over 2500 either succumbed to disease or deserted whilst waiting for passage at Lorient, whilst a further 1000 perished either on the voyage to Louisiana or on the beaches at Nouveau Biloxi. In June 1721 only 330 made it to New Orleans. For more on this tragedy and the surviving German settlers in French Louisiana, see René Le Conte, and Glenn R. Conrad, “The Germans in Louisiana in the Eighteenth Century,” *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 8, no. 1 (1967): 67–84; Reinhart Kondert, “Les Allemands en Louisiane de 1721 à 1732,” *Revue d’histoire de l’Amérique française* 33, no. 1 (Juin 1979): 51–65.

⁴³ Ariane Côté, “Les habitants, le paysage et l’agriculture des villages allemands de la Louisiane française en 1724,” *Cahiers d’histoire* 32, no.2 (2013), p.61–89.

to fifteen families onto his land and offer them an ample plot of land and loans of supplies, tools, cattle, swine and poultry to rebuild their lives.⁴⁴ By November 1724, six families—the Hechles, Houbers, Krestmans, Kuhns, Milhers and Weybers—had taken Bienville up on his offer, bringing with them an assortment of spouses, children, in-laws and orphans, creating a small community of twenty-eight new settlers. Two years later, they were joined by the families of Gaspart Keel, André Serement and Jacques Ouvre, adding a further eleven people.⁴⁵ Following the system of longlots that was common across French North America, Bienville granted each family a plot extending along six arpents of the banks of the Mississippi between New Orleans and Chapitoulas and stretching back forty arpents into the surrounding forest.⁴⁶

In November 1724, the census-taker Jean-Baptiste de Chavannes referred to these German families living on Bienville’s lands as his “vassaux allemands,” implying a feudal relationship between tenant and *concessionnaire* that was not supposed to exist in the Lower Mississippi Valley.⁴⁷ Indeed, whilst the *Compagnie des Indes* received the entire colony “en toute propriété, seigneurie et justice,” they elected to forgo the sub-infeudation practiced in the Saint Lawrence Valley.⁴⁸ Instead, in an attempt to consolidate their newfound property rights, they took inspiration from their Caribbean predecessors and instituted a regime of allodial tenure

⁴⁴ ANOM, C13A, V.6, f.339-340v, « Le Blond de la Tour au Conseil de Marine, », Nouvelle-Orléans, 13 septembre 1722 ; ANOM, G1, V.465, No.68, « Lettre de Bienville au Conseil de la Louisiane, » 11 décembre 1722 ; La Harpe, *Journal historique*, p.339-340.

⁴⁵ ANOM, G1, V.464, « Recensement des habitants depuis la Ville de la N^{lle} Orleans jusqu’aux Ouacha ou le Village des Allemands a dix Lieües au desous de ladite Ville, » [Novembre 1724]; ANOM, G1, V.465, No.98, « Recensement général dressé par Chavannes énumérant les habitations et habitants de la colonie de la Louisiane au 1er janvier 1726, » 1er janvier 1726.

⁴⁶ On the use of longlots in French North America see Allan Greer, *Property and Dispossession: Natives, Empires and Land in Early Modern North America*, (Cambridge, UK; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2018), p. 337-339; Carl J. Ekberg, *French Roots in the Illinois Country: The Mississippi Frontier in Colonial Times* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998) p.5-30.

⁴⁷ See margin notes in « Recensement général dressé par Chavannes énumérant les habitations et habitants de la colonie de la Louisiane au 1er janvier 1726, » 1er janvier 1726.

⁴⁸ Giraud, *L’époque de John Law*, p.25.

across Louisiana and the Illinois Country.⁴⁹ Anyone granted land *en franc alleu* was thus exempt from paying dues to the company but was in turn prohibited from exerting the traditional seigneurial rights over justice, patronage, nomination of local priests, hunting and fishing and could not demand rents higher than five *sols* per arpent from their settlers. But, as Marcel Giraud has pointed out, though contrary to their charter, this language created a grey area for the establishment of *seigneuries* which was—perhaps willfully—misunderstood and misinterpreted on the ground in the Mississippi Valley.⁵⁰

Both Carl Ekberg and Cécile Vidal have argued that such misinterpretation was common in the Illinois Country in the early 1720s. Before 1717, allodial land grants were rare in French North America, meaning that colonists in the Illinois Country—familiar with land tenure in the Saint Lawrence Valley—were not aware of subtle differences between seigneurial and allodial tenure outlined in the Custom of Paris.⁵¹ On the ground, the differences were almost imperceptible since, under both tenures, landholders could freely distribute lands and demand annual rents from their tenants. Officials such as Bienville and Boisbriand interpreted the new legislation through a lens of personal experience, technically granting lands *en franc alleu*, but in practice recognising the landholders as *seigneurs*. Many military, religious and company officials took advantage of this ambiguity to live as faux-seigneurs, enjoying all the privileges of seigneurial life though rarely collecting the dues owed to them. Records show, however, that this only lasted until 1723 when Boisbriand granted the last such ambiguous concessions in the Illinois Country.⁵²

⁴⁹ Allan Greer, “Property Formation in the Early French Atlantic,” Pre-circulated paper for the *Groupe atlantique français*, McGill University, December 4th, 2016, p.17-24.

⁵⁰ Giraud, *L’époque de John Law*, p.166, 203.

⁵¹ For a discussion of early allodial tenure in New France, see Greer, *Property and Dispossession*, p.162-165.

⁵² Ekberg, *French Roots*, p.38-45; Cécile Vidal, “Les implantations françaises au pays des Illinois au XVIII^{ème} siècle (1699-1765)” (PhD diss., École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 1995), p.292-296.

In Louisiana, this ambiguity seems only to have existed on Bienville's lands in New Orleans. Most *cessionnaires* received their lands directly from the *Compagnie des Indes*, but Bienville used his authority to grant himself his lands, requiring only the company's ratification. After abandoning Bienville's New Orleans, the company had little interest in the area, except for the cypress forests that they wished to keep for their own use.⁵³ Provided that Bienville did not overextend his authority, he could push the boundaries of his allodial grant, creating a system of property rights that befitted his seigneurial ambitions whilst also remaining within the legal parameters of his grant. As Allan Greer has shown, property formation in the French Atlantic World was a story of constant evolution and change, as colonists adapted metropolitan proprietary customs to suit local needs, politics and geography rather than importing them fully formed. Even in Bienville's native Canada, Greer argues, there was nothing "systematic" about the so-called "seigneurial system" that emerged in the Saint Lawrence Valley, which had many small, but significant changes to the property regime in place in France.⁵⁴ Drawing on his limited experience, Bienville experimented with different types of land tenure, taking inspiration from his homeland and from across the French Atlantic World to create a new proprietary regime adapted to the new social and economic realities of the Lower Mississippi Valley.

Prohibited from exacting traditional seigneurial dues from his tenants, Bienville improvised. In Canada, a *seigneur* was entitled to fees known as *cens*, *rentes*, *lods* and *ventes*

⁵³ Marcel Giraud, *Histoire de la Louisiane française : Tome IV, La Louisiane après le système de Law (1721-1723)* (Paris : Presses universitaires de France, 1974), p.257.

⁵⁴ Greer, *Property and Dispossession* and "Property Formation in the Early French Atlantic." For a recent debate on existence of a seigneurial "system" in the Saint Lawrence Valley see Allan Greer "There Was No Seigneurial System" *Borealia: A Group Blog on Early Canadian History*, (September 23rd 2018)—, accessed 4/1/2020 at <https://earlycanadianhistory.ca/2018/09/24/there-was-no-seigneurial-system/>; Benoît Grenier and Alain Laberge "Beyond the 'System': The Enduring Legacy of Seigneurial Property" *Borealia: A Group Blog on Early Canadian History*, (September 24th 2018) —, accessed 4/1/2020 at <https://earlycanadianhistory.ca/2018/10/09/beyond-the-system-the-enduring-legacy-of-seigneurial-property/> and Allan Greer, "Reply to Benoît Grenier and Alain Laberge" *Borealia: A Group Blog on Early Canadian History*, (October 16th 2018) —, accessed 4/1/2020 at <https://earlycanadianhistory.ca/2018/10/16/reply-to-benoit-grenier-and-alain-laberge/>.

from their tenants (*censitaires*) which were paid variously in specie, crops, livestock, agricultural produce or labour. In Longueuil, for example, Bienville's eldest brother charged a *cens* of between three and twelve *deniers* and collected rents of twelve *deniers* per square arpent as well one capon per arpent.⁵⁵ Perhaps inspired by this, Bienville instituted a single fee for his tenants—known as a *redevance*—which was to be paid in specie, livestock and labour. From January 1st, 1723, he charged his German tenants an annual rate of eight *livres*, three *sols*, four *deniers* and six capons per *arpent de face* alongside a fixed commitment of ten days of *corvée* labour.⁵⁶ Far more than the cap of five *sols* put in place by the *Compagnie des Indes*, these terms were particularly onerous, especially when compared to those in Canada. With no other rights or monopolies over his tenants' produce, however, this was the only way Bienville could ensure the viability of his lands and protect himself in the likely event that his advances were not fully repaid.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, even the destitute German settlers flourished and, in November 1724, Chavannes noted in his census that each man was a “bon travailleur” or “laborieux,” for they had cleared large amounts of land and collectively harvested 134 barrels of rice since 1723.⁵⁸

Following the Germans were a number of Canadian settlers. In early 1723, the brothers Jacques, François and Joseph L'Archevesque, and Étienne Roy—a nephew of the Chauvin brothers—also settled on Bienville's lands. Like the Germans, each took up six-by-forty arpent plots between New Orleans and Chapitoulas but paid, on average, a lower annual *redevance* of

⁵⁵ Louis Lemoine, *Longueuil en Nouvelle-France*, (Ottawa: Société d'histoire de Longueuil, 1975), p.63-65, 125-6; On seigneurial dues see Cole Harris, *The Seigneurial System in Early Canada: A Geographical Study* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1984); Benoît Grenier, *Brève histoire du régime seigneurial* (Montréal: Boréal, 2012); Allan Greer, *Peasant Lord, and Merchant: Rural Society in Three Quebec Parishes, 1740-1840* (Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1985).

⁵⁶ ANOM, G1, V.465, No. 70, « Procès-verbal, » 20 septembre 1737, ANOM, G1, V.465, No. 76, « Procès-verbal, » 26 septembre 1737. See also Giraud, *La Louisiane après le système de Law*, p.257.

⁵⁷ In 1734 Bienville complained that “il est certain qu'il n'a rien retiré de ces avances” ANOM, G1, V.465, No. 60, « Analyse de diverses pièces concernant la demande d'annulation de l'arrêt du Conseil d'Etat du 10 août 1728, » 24 août 1734.

⁵⁸ « Recensement des habitants depuis la Ville de la N^{lle} Orleans, » [Novembre 1724].

only six *livres*, two capons and two days of *corvée* labour per arpent.⁵⁹ Whether this was favouritism or pragmatism on Bienville's part is hard to determine. Over the next few years, this lower rate became standard on Bienville's lands with only minor variations made to future agreements.⁶⁰ Whilst the L'Archevesque brothers and Étienne Roy brought with them capital—that is, slaves and livestock—many other prospective tenants did not. Bienville nevertheless offered them similar rates as well as loans of supplies, equipment and animals, laying out detailed and generous terms for repayment within two or three years.⁶¹ With his revenues limited until his tenants could establish themselves on their plots, it seems that Bienville was willing to invest heavily in developing his lands, hoping for future prestige and incomes.

Table 1 shows that in 1737—the peak of occupancy on his lands between New Orleans and Chapitoulas—Bienville was entitled to a total rental income of 1570.5 *livres* and 510.5 chapons (worth about 1 *livre* each). Far from being indicative of a lucrative “landjobbing scheme,” this amount was actually quite paltry, especially when compared to his annual salary of 12,000 *livres* from the *Compagnie des Indes*—though it proved useful when these payments did not come from the metropole.⁶² More important for Bienville, it seems, was the dependence these financial obligations fostered amongst his settlers. In offering grants, loans and credit to incoming settlers at a considerable personal cost, Bienville was fulfilling the kind of public duty

⁵⁹ ANOM, G1, V.465, No.70, « Procès-verbal d'arpentage...d'un terrain tenu en censive de Bienville par Chavanne, » 20 septembre; ANOM, G1, V.465, No.78, « Procès-verbal, » 27 septembre 1737; ANOM, G1, V.465, No.79, « Procès-verbal, » 27 septembre 1737; ANOM, G1, V.465, No.80, « Procès-verbal, » 7 octobre 1737; ANOM, G1, V.465, No.85, « Procès-verbal, » 10 octobre 1737; « Recensement des habitants depuis la Ville de la N^{lle} Orleans, » [novembre 1724]; Giraud, *La Louisiane après le système de Law*, p.257

⁶⁰ See ANOM, G1, V.465, No 57-58, « État de la concession en franc alleu accordé par le C^{ie} des Indes à M. de Bienville sur le Mississippi, » 17 novembre 1737.

⁶¹ As with the Germans, Bienville would complain that for certain Canadians “il fit quelques avances dont il n'a pas été remboursé. This may, however, have been an exaggeration in order to have his lands restored to him by the crown. « Analyse de diverses pièces concernant la demande d'annulation de l'arrêt du Conseil d'Etat du 10 août 1728, » 24 août 1734 ; Giraud, *La Louisiane après le système de Law*, p.257.

⁶² ANOM, B, V.43, f.44, « État des appointements accordés aux Commandants généraux de la colonie, inspecteur général des troupes employées à la Louisiane à commander du 1er janvier 1722, » 1 janvier 1722.

expected of a landed aristocrat. Building on these networks of credit and debt, Bienville could also begin to foster quasi-feudal, patrimonial relationships with his tenants, thereby presenting himself to others as a colonial *seigneur*, lording over a number of “vassaux.”

Table 1: Redevances from Bienville’s Estates, November 1737

Tenant (Nov. 1737)	Frontage (Arpents)	Livres	Capons	Journées de Corvée
Chavanne	18	120	16	84
Hauterive	22	132	44	44
Levillier	6	48	6	10
D’Ausseville	6	48	6	10
Bellair	15	108	92	70
Broutin	22.5	135	20	31
De Mouy	12	72	24	24
Chauvin de la Frenière	27	324	108	108
Simars de Belisle	10	30	10	10
Darby	6	36	12	12
Chauvin de Léry	11	18	6	6
Livaudais	6	36	12	12
Couturier	8.5	25.5	8.5	8.5
Carrière	17.5	126	42	30
Les Pères Jésuites	5	30	10	10
Provenché	18	108	36	36
Raguet	36.6	174	58	58
Totals	250.6	1570.5	510.5	563.5

Sources from ANOM, G1, V.465, Nos. 69-96, «Procès-verbaux d’arpentage fait par Saucier, » 20 septembre- 23 novembre 1737

Traditionally monopolies on valuable resources such as mills, forests and rivers were more stable incomes than rents.⁶³ In Canada, for instance, Longueuil collected annual dues of

⁶³ Bosenga, “A Divided Nobility,” p.55.

2013 *livres*, over three-quarters of which derived from his monopolies over the local mill and common lands.⁶⁴ In Louisiana, Bienville was expressly prohibited from imposing monopolies on local resources, especially the cypress forests. Even so, by taking advantage of the changing economy of the Lower Mississippi Valley, he appears to have found a way to secure himself a presumed monopoly over his tenants' enslaved African labour. According to census data, Bienville owned almost fifty African slaves. In 1724, however, during a dispute over a plot of land opposite New Orleans, the engineer Adrien Pauger suggested that the *commandant-général* had over four hundred working on his estates.⁶⁵ Whilst Pauger likely exaggerated this number to emphasise that he needed the land more, it also suggests that Bienville may have been able to mobilise a significant portion of his tenant's workforces to work on projects on his own estates, such as the construction of *levées*. In New Orleans, the organisation of *corvée* labour for public works followed Caribbean lines, being imposed not on the settlers, but their slaves.⁶⁶ Demanding a total of over eighteen months of *corvée* man-hours from his tenants, it is likely that Bienville expected a similar arrangement, where tenants would send their slaves in their place to pay off their annual labour obligations. With these demands, Bienville thus ensured himself certain rights over his tenants' small enslaved workforces, whilst technically keeping in accordance with the company's prohibition on seigneurial privileges.

It is difficult to estimate the precise monetary value of this enslaved African labour. In New Orleans, daily rates for leasing slaves could range from one to twenty *livres*, meaning that the eighteen months of *corvée* labour that Bienville demanded could have been worth anywhere

⁶⁴ Longueuil only collected 473.5 *livres* in rents annually. Lemoine, *Longueuil en Nouvelle-France*, p.126.

⁶⁵ This lawsuit will be addressed in more detail later in this chapter. ANOM, C13A, V.8, f.63v, « De Pauger au Conseil de Marine, » 29 mai 1724.

⁶⁶ Vidal, *Caribbean New Orleans*, p.313-314.

between 500 and 900 *livres* a year.⁶⁷ Of course, Bienville would also have had to pay for the slaves' food, lodging and medical care whilst they were in his charge, reducing this slightly. One significant issue, however, was that relatively few of Bienville's tenants settled with their own enslaved workforces. Only Jacques L'Archevesque arrived with three enslaved Africans and one Indigenous slave, but Étienne Roy was able to borrow several African slaves from his uncles at Chaptoulas for two weeks to clear the canebrake on his newly acquired lands. Others, especially the German settlers, could not afford the 180 *piastres* or 650 *livres* required to purchase a slave from the *Compagnie des Indes*.⁶⁸ To enjoy the privileges he desired, therefore, Bienville needed to wield his influence to secure a source of enslaved labour for his tenants.

In 1719, the first large shipments of enslaved Africans arrived in the Lower Mississippi Valley. To encourage the purchase of their expensive human cargo, the *Compagnie des Indes* offered settlers options to buy slaves on credit, giving them up to two years to pay provided they could feed and clothe their new chattel property. Demand soon outstripped supply, however, necessitating the intervention of the *Conseil de Commerce*. Of course, this opened the system to corruption as the councillors used the distribution of African slaves as a form of patronage to increase their influence in the colony.⁶⁹ By 1723, every single councilor was accused of appropriating slaves for themselves or giving them out to their friends and allies. None were more complicit than Bienville, who was accused of distributing slaves only to his "commères et

⁶⁷ Vidal cites records from towards the end of the French regime that show that it could cost 30 *livres* a month to hire an enslaved female domestic worker, or 600 *livres* for an enslaved male labourer. Based on these rates, Bienville's annual 563.5 days of labour could be worth anywhere between 555 and 923 *livres*. It is important to note, however, that the rates cited by Vidal may have been different in the early days of New Orleans. Vidal, *Caribbean New Orleans*, p.323-4.

⁶⁸ ANOM, B, V.42, f.255-256, « Ordre que la Compagnie d'occident veut estre observé pour la vente des Negres qu'elle Envoiera a la Colonie de la Louisiane, » 27 mai 1718.

⁶⁹ ANOM, C13A, V.7, f.59v, « La Chaise au Conseil de Marine, » 18 octobre 1723 ; « Ordre que la Compagnie d'occident veut estre observé pour la vente des Negres, » 27 mai 1718. Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana*, p.67.

compères” and privileging his Canadian compatriots above all others.⁷⁰ Perhaps through his intervention, his neighbours, the Canadian Chauvin brothers, acquired ninety-six African slaves between them by 1721, a number that almost tripled within the next five years.⁷¹ That same year, the census also reported that over twenty-seven per cent of all slaves imported by the *Compagnie des Indes* between 1719 and 1721 had ended up in Bienville’s New Orleans, which had an enslaved population that dwarfed those in both Mobile and Biloxi.⁷²

Bienville also acted as a slave broker for his own tenants with the *Compagnie des Indes*. In 1724 he recommended that L’Archevesque, Roy, Hechle and Krestman should all receive more slaves, each having proved themselves diligent workers.⁷³ Two years later, the company sought to assess which colonists should receive more slaves. They received submissions from a dozen of Bienville’s tenants—possibly recommended by Bienville himself—who requested a total of 161 slaves, just shy of nine per cent of the total requested across the entire colony.⁷⁴ Besides providing him greater access to enslaved *corvée* labour, Bienville’s recommendations also enmeshed his tenants in more overlapping social and financial obligations to their landlord. Through his interventions, Bienville thus not only secured his own improvised monopoly, but also entrenched his feudalistic relationship with his tenants.

Finally, Bienville used his extensive landholdings to strengthen his relationships with important figures in New Orleans society. Of course, this had already been the case since as early

⁷⁰ Jean-François Benjamin Dumont de Montigny, *Regards sur le monde atlantique : 1715-1747* (Sillery : Septentrion, 2008), p.212.

⁷¹ Gary B. Mills, “The Chauvin Brothers: Early Colonists of Louisiana,” *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 15, no. 2 (1974): 117–31, p.127.

⁷² Calculations made using statistics taken from “General Census of All Inhabitants of New Orleans and Environs” in Charles R. Maduell, *The Census Tables for the French Colony of Louisiana from 1699 through 1732* (Baltimore, Genealogical Pub. Co., 1972), p.17-22 and “Table 2: French Slave Trade Ships from Africa to Louisiana” in Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana*, p.60.

⁷³ ANOM, G1, V.464, « Recensement des habitants depuis la Ville de la N^{lle} Orleans, » [novembre, 1724].

⁷⁴ ANOM, G1, V.464, « État des habitants qui ont fait au Greffe du Conseil leur soumissions pour avoir des nègres, et du nombre qu’ils en demandent payables aux termes réglés par la Compagnie, » 20 octobre 1726.

as March 1719, when he had enticed the Chauvin brothers and Dubreuil to build their plantations at the neighbouring settlement of Chapitoulas. After 1723, however, Bienville used his lands to cultivate clients amongst the military, religious and bureaucratic elite, offering plots to the officers Broutin, De Blanc, D'Hauterive, De Mouy, Provenché, Villainville, the Jesuit Order and the company administrators Bonnaud and Raguet.⁷⁵ He also shored up ties with his neighbours, offering a free grant to Marguerite Le Sueur—daughter of his cousin Marguerite Messier—when she married Nicolas Chauvin de la Frenière around 1724 and offering the other brothers even more land several years later.⁷⁶ Whilst renting to these more prominent local figures could have been to secure more reliable revenues for Bienville, it seems that he was actually more interested in garnering their support, particularly as he felt his own power and influence threatened by the arrival of the new *commissaire* Jacques La Chaise.

Bienville's improvisation thus created an illusion of feudal land tenure in New Orleans, albeit one heavily adapted to the economic, legal and social climates of the Lower Mississippi Valley. Translating the model of land tenure long established in the Saint Lawrence Valley, Bienville pushed the boundaries of the proprietary regime put in place by the *Compagnie des Indes*, exploiting loopholes which allowed him to act as a *seigneur* and bestow upon himself privileges that were similar to those enjoyed by his brothers elsewhere in the French Atlantic World. Going beyond the financial benefits of his landed estates, Bienville also used his vast reserves of land to establish his personal influence in New Orleans, fostering vassals and clients alike both within and outside the city limits. In pursuing this patrimonial regime, he helped to establish a planter class in the city who would use his lands as their base of power.

⁷⁵ For a full record of how and when the plots of land on Bienville's estates changed hands between 1723 and 1737 see ANOM, G1, V.465, No. 70-96, « Procès-verbaux d'arpentage fait par Saucier, » 20 septembre-23 novembre 1737.

⁷⁶ Mills, "The Chauvin Brothers," p.128.

“On pretend qu’il a plus de 50 Negres:” Plantations and Chattel Property

Whilst acting as a *seigneur* to his tenants, on his own private domain Bienville lived as a planter. Across the Atlantic World plantation slavery was seen to befit those of aristocratic birth, associated as it was with the command over both people and land.⁷⁷ Though not quite *seigneuries*, across the French Empire plantations were thought to convey a similar status upon their owners, regardless of their birth. Like *seigneuries*, plantations were symbols of wealth and patrimony, offering both immovable and chattel property that could be enjoyed by the owner and inherited by future generations. Many minor and landless nobles, from both the metropole and the colonies, thus sought their fortunes in the Caribbean, hoping to use their plantations to realise aristocratic pretensions.⁷⁸ As we have seen, similar ambitions had already prompted several members of the Le Moyne family to invest in the planting boom in early eighteenth-century Saint Domingue, providing a source of income that benefitted their heirs until they partially relinquished their rights in 1734.⁷⁹

In New Orleans, perhaps more so than anywhere else in the French Atlantic World, slavery was profoundly connected to status. Cécile Vidal has demonstrated that the relatively late founding of New Orleans meant that the city’s planters imported fully formed ideas about slavery, race and the plantation economy directly from the established slave societies of French Antilles. Problems of supply and implementation, however, meant that these ideas were not fully realised in Louisiana until the early nineteenth century.⁸⁰ Well aware of the status

⁷⁷ Vidal, *Caribbean New Orleans*, p.318; Jacques de Cauna, *Au temps des isles à sucre : Histoire d’une plantation de Saint-Domingue au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, Éditions Karthala, 2003), p.47.

⁷⁸ Pierre Force, *Wealth and Disaster: Atlantic Migrations from a Pyrenean Town in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016); Paul Burton Cheney, *Cul de Sac: Patrimony, Capitalism, and Slavery in French Saint-Domingue* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017).

⁷⁹ ACM, 3^E, 33/41, f.83-83v, « Consentement donné par Louis, comte de Béthune, » 20 mars 1734; ACM, 3^E, 33/41, f.88-88v, « Consentement donné par Marie Thérèse Le Moyne d’Iberville, » 27 mars 1734; ACM, 3^E, 33/41, f.90-92v, « Dépôt par Pierre Antoine Joseph Le Moyne, » 31 mars 1734.

⁸⁰ Vidal, *Caribbean New Orleans*, p.13-15.

plantations and slave-owning conferred, New Orleans planters continually competed with one another. Since slaves were purchased on credit, slaveholding became a quantifiable way of assessing prestige. To maintain his status as the most important man in the colony, therefore, Bienville had to acquire a large number of slaves.⁸¹ Though the Louisiana slave trade only officially opened in 1719, he was said to have acquired twenty African and Indigenous slaves by June 1720, and the November 1721 census recorded that he owned twenty-seven African and seven Indigenous slaves in New Orleans, alongside a further six Africans at his residence in Mobile. Another census taken five years later shows that this number grew to forty-nine African and two Indigenous slaves, split across his two estates.⁸²

But the provenance of Bienville's enslaved workers was continually under question. "On pretend qu'il a plus de 50 Negres" La Chaise reported in 1723, "et il ne paroist en avoir eu de la Compagnie que 37."⁸³ Of course, several of Bienville's slaves may have been acquired long before the company took possession of Louisiana. This was at least the case for two, Jorgé and Marie, who had been brought from Nevis or Havana by Noyan in 1706 and served Bienville for over two decades until their manumission in 1733.⁸⁴ Many others, however, were said to have been acquired through the violation of the *Compagnie des Indes*' monopoly, which granted the company the exclusive right to sell slaves from their Senegal concession to the colonists of the Lower Mississippi Valley. Some of Bienville's slaves, for instance, were

⁸¹ Thomas Ingersoll, *Mammon and Manon in Early New Orleans: The First Slave Society in the Deep South, 1718-1819* (Knoxville, The University of Tennessee Press, 1999), p.44-46.

⁸² ANOM, G1, V.464, « Recensement des habitants du fort Louis de la Mobile et des villages circonvoisins, » 28 juin 1721 ; ANOM, G1, V.464, « Recensement des habitants et concessionnaires de La Nouvelle-Orléans et lieux circonvoisins, » 24 novembre 1721 ; ANOM, G1, V.464, « Recensement général des habitations et habitants de la colonie de la Louisiane, » 1 janvier 1726.

⁸³ ANOM, C13A, V.7, f.60 bis, « La Chaise au Conseil de Marine, » 18 Octobre 1723.

⁸⁴ For the arrival of Jorgé and Marie in Louisiana aboard the *Aigle*, see Chapter IV. For their manumission, see LHQ, V.5, #2, 4/1922, pg.265, "Petition to ratify freedom," June 4th, 1735—, accessed on 6/2/2019 at: <http://www.lacolonialdocs.org/document/2371>.

suspected to have been captured at Pensacola during the War of the Quadruple Alliance, allegedly sent by Châteauguay before he was captured by the Spanish.⁸⁵ Others were thought to have been taken from the company without proper payment. Indeed, in 1723, several company directors, including Bienville, were accused of destroying credit bills for their slaves to hide the true number they had acquired. Many had also received slaves as gifts from friends and allies and even exchanged their own slaves for company slaves of greater value.⁸⁶ Most of this fraud was difficult to prove, however, and Bienville's slaves were left mostly untouched by the *Compagnie des Indes*.

To manage his slaves, Bienville employed an "Econome et indigotier" named George *dit* Raymond. Also a coppersmith, Raymond seems to have lived on Bienville's estate with his wife Marie Rousseau and the couple were perhaps the two servants recorded living in his household on the 1721 census.⁸⁷ In the Caribbean, an *économe* was typically a poor, inexperienced young man who wished to learn the ropes in hopes of making his own fortune. Raymond, however, seems to have acted more as a *gérant*—an employee who lived at the plantation, corresponded with the planter and his associates, managed the planting and the slaves and kept records of the produce.⁸⁸ Typically a *gérant* worked for ten per cent of the plantation's revenue, but it is unlikely that Raymond earned this much since he still held

⁸⁵ Some of these slaves may have been the remnants of cargo of 200 slaves shipped to the fort by the company aboard the *Aurore* that were later reported "lost." One of Châteauguay's former slaves also reported that once Châteauguay was captured at Pensacola in 1719, he sent Bienville his own slaves, recommending that his brother sell "tout ce que jay et faire argent de tout." Bienville, however, was suspected of appropriating some of his brother's slaves for his own use, several of them perhaps forming his initial workforce in New Orleans. ANOM, C13A, V.5, f.311, « Copie de la lettre de Mr Chateaugué écrite de Pensacola a Mr Bienville le 9 aoust 1719, » ANOM, C13A, V.7, f.60 bis-60v bis, « La Chaise au Conseil de Marine, » 18 Octobre 1723; Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana*, p.67.

⁸⁶ Bienville was directly accused of having acquired an adult African woman by exchanging her for a young girl in his possession; ANOM, C13A, V.7, f.59v-60v, « La Chaise au Conseil de Marine, » 18 octobre 1723; Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana*, p.73.

⁸⁷ "Criminal Trial, May 22nd, 1723," LHQ, No.1 Jan. 8 1917, p.109—, accessed on 31/1/2019 at <http://www.lacolonialdocs.org/document/47>.

⁸⁸ Jacques Cauna describes these roles in detail. See Cauna, *Au temps des isles à sucre*, p.60-63, 82.

another skilled job and, along with his wife, was a known fence for stolen goods, implying that he was not well paid.⁸⁹ Either way, Raymond would have been a useful asset, allowing Bienville to tend to his other duties in New Orleans without getting his hands dirty with the day-to-day the management of his plantations.

Louisiana's climate was not suitable for growing the sugar, coffee or cacao that made Bienville's Caribbean contemporaries rich, so he followed many other planters in New Orleans and forced his slaves to cultivate "vivres du pays" instead.⁹⁰ Rice was the staple crop on Bienville's plantations, though some indigo must have been cultivated by Raymond. Bringing knowledge from West Africa, enslaved Africans made rice production a profitable business in the Lower Mississippi Valley, allowing the colony to first sustain itself and then later export to Atlantic markets.⁹¹ Much of the rice produced by Bienville's slaves seems to have been sold to the *Compagnie des Indes* for provisions. But Bienville allegedly used his influence with his ally, the *major général* Jacques Barbizon de Pailloux, to sell his produce at higher prices, particularly in times of high demand. Both men were also reportedly active in the thriving frontier economy, exchanging their surplus rice and beans with the nearby *petites nations* for corn, game and fish, or more valuable skins and furs.⁹² Given his connections in the Mississippi-Caribbean World, it is not implausible that Bienville also sold his produce, particularly the indigo, beyond the purview of the *Compagnie des Indes*. Indeed, it seems that he had maintained his Spanish

⁸⁹ Court records reveal that Raymond and Marie were well known in New Orleans for fencing stolen goods, including linens and stockings; See Sophie White, "Slaves and Poor White's Informal Economies in an Atlantic Context," in Cécile Vidal, *Louisiana: Crossroads of the Atlantic World*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014): 89-102, p.100-102.

⁹⁰ ANOM, G1, V.465, No.57-58 « État de la concession en franc alleu accordé par le C^{ie} des Indes à M. de Bienville sur le Mississippi, » 17 novembre 1737.

⁹¹ Ariane Jacques-Côté, « L'Empire du riz en Louisiane française, 1717-1724, », *Études canadiennes / Canadian Studies* [En ligne], V. 82 (2017) —, accessed 9/11/2018 at <http://journals.openedition.org/eccs/896> .

⁹² ANOM, C13A, V.7, f.52v- 53, « La Chaise au Conseil de Marine, » 18 octobre 1723 ; Usner, *Indians, Settlers, Slaves*, p.197-199.

connections, for he and many of his contemporaries were later accused of illegally trading with them.⁹³ Whilst not generating vast incomes, this personal trade would have nonetheless allowed Bienville to live quite comfortably on his estates.

Other slaves would have worked in Bienville's household, perhaps as valets, cooks, gardeners, housekeepers, servants and washerwomen. In New Orleans as in the Caribbean, domestic slaves and servants, especially male ones, were often a symbol of pride and status for planters, visibly displaying their fortunes and connections.⁹⁴ Most of Bienville's household labourers would have been female, however, especially those of Indigenous descent.⁹⁵ Unlike those employed on the plantations, these domestic slaves would have slept within the household, perhaps in the kitchen. Attending to all of Bienville's basic needs, including cooking, cleaning, and dressing, they likely developed intimate and personal relationships with their master.⁹⁶ But given the asymmetry of power within the household, Bienville could readily turn this intimacy into something more overtly sexual. This seems to have been the case with a slave named Marie, whom he manumitted along with her husband Jorgé in 1733 "en reconnaissance des bons et fidèles services pendant 26 ans." This was a common euphemism used by masters to free their former sexual partners and illegitimate offspring, indicating that Bienville may have had a sexual relationship with Marie.⁹⁷ Perhaps not coincidentally, a decade later, just before his final

⁹³ ANOM, C13A, V.7, f.12, « La Chaise au Conseil de Marine, » 6 septembre 1723.

⁹⁴ Bernard Moitt, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles, 1635-1848* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 2001), p.62; Vidal, *Caribbean New Orleans*, p.311.

⁹⁵ In New Orleans, most Indigenous slaves were women and commonly performed domestic labour in residences across the city. Daniel Usner, *American Indians in Early New Orleans, From Calumet to Raquette*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2018); Usner, *Frontier Exchange Economy*, p. 62-63.

⁹⁶ Vidal, *Caribbean New Orleans*, p.206-207.

⁹⁷ The fact that Marie and Jorgé were freed in 1733 after 26 years of service would seem to suggest that they were amongst the five slaves brought from Nevis or Havana by Noyan aboard the *Aigle*. This might also explain Jorgé's Spanish name. LHQ, V.5, #2, 4/1922, pg.265, "Petition to ratify freedom," June 4th, 1735—, accessed on 6/2/2019 at <http://www.lacolonialdocs.org/document/2371>. On the use of this euphemism in manumissions, see Vidal, *Caribbean New Orleans*, p.209.

departure from Louisiana, Bienville also freed Marie's son Zacarie *dit* Jacob, which suggests that he may have been Bienville's illegitimate child.⁹⁸ Many similar cases occurred across New Orleans and, indeed, the French Atlantic World, with illegitimate sons being manumitted more frequently than daughters, often as a point of honour for their white fathers.⁹⁹

After the Louisiana Code Noir was issued in 1724, Bienville continued to cultivate closer relationships with his slaves. Following the Code's instructions, he attempted to instruct and educate his slaves in Christian values and encouraged many of them to marry.¹⁰⁰ In most slave societies, encouraging marriages amongst slaves was a way for slaveowners to enforce social control and ensure a continued enslaved population. Cécile Vidal and Emily Clark have noted, however, that even in this context, Bienville was unusually paternalistic in his encouragement of these marriages. In New Orleans, most slave marriages were performed with few formalities but in 1727 Bienville insisted that the parish priest record the names of two of his betrothed slaves—Jacques and Marguerite—as well as their parents, one of the only such instances of this practice.¹⁰¹ This may have been inspired by Bienville's desire to perform his adherence to the Code Noir, but evidence only survives of two other official marriages amongst his slaves, making it difficult to know his true commitment to the new laws.¹⁰² Many children born to

⁹⁸ Whilst Marie's name was mentioned, Jorgé's name was not, giving further support to this theory. See LHQ, V.11, #4, 10/1928, pg.633, "Manumission of slave by Governor Bienville," July 16th, 1743—, accessed on 6/2/2019 at <http://www.lacolonialdocs.org/document/5780>.

⁹⁹ On the complex dynamics between French masters and enslaved African women in New Orleans and the French Atlantic World see Jennifer M Spear, *Race, Sex, and Social Order in Early New Orleans* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); Jennifer M Spear, "Colonial Intimacies: Legislating Sex in French Louisiana," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 60, no. 1 (2003): 75–98; Jennifer L. Palmer, *Intimate Bonds: Family and Slavery in the French Atlantic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016); Jennifer L. Palmer, "The Fruits of Their Labours: Race, Gender and Labour in the Eighteenth-Century French Caribbean," *French History* 32, no. 4 (December 31, 2018): 471–92; Bernard Moitt, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles*.

¹⁰⁰ Guillaume Aubert, "'To Establish One Law and Definite Rules': Race, Religion, and the Transatlantic Origins of the Louisiana Code Noir" in Vidal, *Louisiana: Crossroads of the Atlantic World*, p.21–43

¹⁰¹ Registres paroissiaux (RP) 03/08/1727; Cécile Vidal et Emily Clark, "Famille et esclavage à la nouvelle-Orléans sous le régime français (1699-1769)" *Annales de démographie historique* 122, no.2 (2011), pp.99-126, n.18.

¹⁰² One was the marriage of Jorgé and Marie, and the other that of an unnamed couple in 1723. RP, 5/4/1732.

enslaved women owned by Bienville were baptised, however, suggesting that he followed the Code's tenets to a certain extent, but also indicating that there were many more "unofficial" than "official" relationships between the slaves on Bienville's plantations.¹⁰³

Finally, though few and far between, evidence exists of several acts of resistance by enslaved Africans and Indigenous peoples living on Bienville's estates. In March 1727, for example, an Indigenous slave named Sansoucy testified that there were fifteen (presumably African) men and one Indigenous woman living in a maroon community called Natanapallo, all of whom had previously belonged to either Bienville, Manade, Vigne or Raguet.¹⁰⁴ Two years later, Bienville's slaves were also said to have provided several fugitive African cattle rustlers with food and shelter before helping them to escape into the wilderness.¹⁰⁵ Given that both acts occurred whilst Bienville was in France, it could be inferred that his estate managers, such as Raymond, might have felt the need to exert their authority more forcefully in his absence, leading to more resistance. Either way, these acts of resistance serve as a poignant reminder that Bienville's wealth, privilege and status in New Orleans were in great part derived from a fundamentally brutal and oppressive regime.

La Ménagerie: Building Versailles on the Mississippi?

In September 1717, the *Compagnie d'Occident* appointed Bienville as their *commandant-général* and rewarded his service with his long-coveted *Croix de Saint Louis*.¹⁰⁶ Though not the promotion to "Governor" he had so desired, these honours represented the

¹⁰³ See Baptisms in RP, 9/9/1731, 9/11/1731, 16/12/1731, 12/4/1732, 16/5/1732, 16/3/1733, 8/10/1733, 12/11/1733.

¹⁰⁴ LHQ, V.3, #3, 7/1992, p.443, "Examination: Runaway Indian Slave," March 31st, 1727—, accessed on 20/3/2018 at <http://www.lacolonialdocs.org/document/1058>.

¹⁰⁵ LHQ, V.4, #3, 7/1921, p.348, "Criminal Procedure on Charges of Cattle Stealing and Killing," September 5th, 1729-, accessed on 20/3/2018 at <http://www.lacolonialdocs.org/document/1600> 20/3/2019.

¹⁰⁶ "Commission for Bienville as Commandant General of Louisiana, September 20, 1717; LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, p.58-59, « Provisions de chevalier de l'ordre militaire de St Louis pour le S^r de Bienville, » 20 septembre 1717.

recognition that Bienville was longing for.¹⁰⁷ For the last decade, his prestige and authority had been particularly insecure, having been overlooked twice for the role of Governor and repeatedly undermined and humiliated by Governor Cadillac.¹⁰⁸ Once promoted, Bienville began to conspicuously perform his new rank, authority and honour. In 1723, the new *commissaire* Jacques de la Chaise accused Bienville of affording himself the privileges usually accorded to a Governor, particularly in the form of the salutes issued by the vessels arriving in New Orleans.¹⁰⁹ According to the French officer Dumont de Montigny, Bienville also publicly questioned every new officer about their family background and lineage and even complained to the *Conseil de Marine* when he believed that too many were of low birth.¹¹⁰ Finally presented with a chance to live nobly, it seems that Bienville was eager to take any opportunity to pull rank and express his newfound authority.

In December 1721, New Orleans was finally declared the capital of French power, authority and commerce in the Lower Mississippi Valley. Following Enlightenment trends in urbanisation, the settlement gradually evolved to reflect royal authority in its street names and public squares, company business in its many wharves and warehouses, and French grandeur in

¹⁰⁷ The word “gouverneur” was actually crossed out on a letter sent by the *Compagnie d’Occident* to the *Conseil de Marine*, replaced by “commandant-général.” Though as *commandant-général* Bienville had many of the same powers as a governor, he could not act unilaterally, and his actions had to be approved by the *Conseil de Commerce*. ANOM, C13A, V.4, f.931, « Placet de la Compagnie d’Occident au Conseil de la Marine, » [1717 See Chapter VI for more on colonial governorships.

¹⁰⁸ Some key instances and complaints can be found in LAC, MG18, H14, V.2, p.13-19a, « Lettre de Bienville à Longueuil, » Fort Louis, 20 octobre 1713; ANOM, C13A, V.3, f.493-494, « Discussion entre MM. La Mothe de Cadillac et de Bienville, » [1714] ; ANOM, C13A, V.4, f.219-220, « Résumé par un commis des lettres de la Louisiane, » [1716]; “Lettre de Bienville à son frère,” in Alex Jodoin and J. L. Vincent, *Histoire de Longueuil et de la famille de Longueuil*, (Montreal: Imprimerie Gebhardt-Berthiaume, 1889), pp.119-127

¹⁰⁹ ANOM, C13A, V.7, f.39, « La Chaise au Conseil de Marine, » Nouvelle-Orléans, 6 septembre 1723; Marcel Giraud *A History of French Louisiana: Volume 5, The Company of the Indies, 1723-1731* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1991), p.26; Vidal, *Caribbean New Orleans*, p.150

¹¹⁰ Famously, however, Dumont de Montigny would claim that he gained the upper hand in one such exchange with Bienville, tricking the commander and humiliating him in front of the troops. See Dumont de Montigny, *Regards sur le monde atlantique*, p.108-110. See also Shannon Lee Dawdy, “Scoundrels, Whores, and Gentlemen: Defamation and Society in French Colonial Louisiana” in Richmond F. Brown ed., *Coastal Encounters: The Transformation of the Gulf South in the Eighteenth Century* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008): 132-150, p.144-45.

its gardens and feats of engineering.¹¹¹ Befitting his status as the colony's *commandant-général*, Bienville made New Orleans his home from August 1722. Building a personal residence just outside of its limits, he modelled it into a reflection of his own personal authority, status and power in the settlement and the colony. Indeed, evaluating plans and maps of his new home, Shannon Lee Dawdy has argued that "Bienville created a mini-Versailles for himself, placing his more decorative than functional plantation, just outside the town center from where he administered the colony and entertained his favored guests."¹¹²

These palatial ambitions are certainly evident on a 1721 map of New Orleans [Fig. 5.3] which depicts the very first image of a "partie de l'habitation de Mr de Bienville." Presented as a grand estate, the halls of residence are arranged around a central courtyard, with a manor house flanked by two detached, symmetrical wings. Around this compound, elaborate formal gardens extend to the front and the rear. Leading to the estate from New Orleans a *grande allée*—or avenue—crosses a bridge over a proposed canal just outside the planned city walls. Between the manor and the canal sits a decorative, potentially walled, garden in which floral *parterres* (decorative flowerbeds) are laid out in a rectangular fashion, traversed by four pathways converging at a central point, perhaps intended to play host to a fountain or statue. Towards the rear of the estate, trees are seen to be deliberately planted in four distinct *bosquets* (formal tree plantations), with three long *grandes perspectives* cut out between them, offering excellent sightlines towards the Mississippi River.

¹¹¹ Many historians have covered these different inspirations on city planning in early New Orleans. Dawdy, *Building the Devil's Empire*; Powell, *The Accidental City*; Guenin-Lelle, *The Story of French New Orleans*; Campanella, *Bienville's Dilemma*; Gauvin A. Bailey, *Architecture and Urbanism in the French Atlantic Empire: State, Church, and Society, 1604-1830* (Montreal; Kingston; London; Chicago: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2018); Gilles-Antoine Langlois, *Des villes pour la Louisiane française: théorie et pratique de l'urbanistique coloniale au 18e siècle* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003).

¹¹² Dawdy, *Building the Devil's Empire*, p.83.

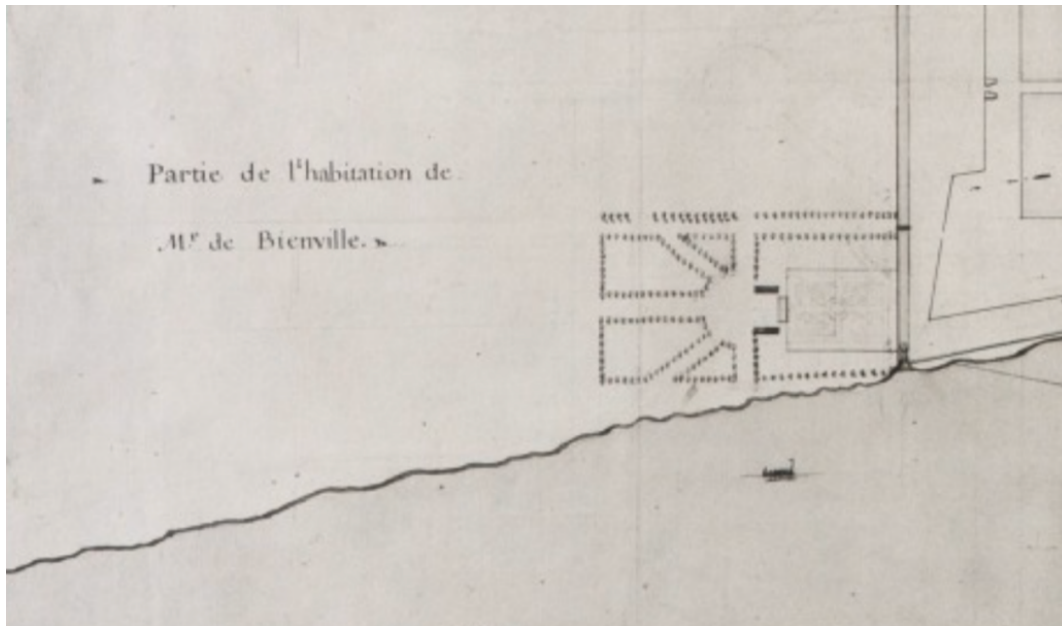


Fig. 5.3 : “Partie de l’habitation de Mr de Bienville,” from *Plan de la Nouvelle Orleans* [?, 1721] Map. HNOC

1950.57.1 <http://hnoc.minisisinc.com/thnoc/catalog/1/2153>.

As Chandra Mukerji has shown, for the French, elaborate landscaping and formal gardens were not simply aesthetic choices or expressions of personal property, but rather performative displays of mastery over the land and France’s territorial authority.¹¹³ Louis XIV had perfected this horticultural performance at Versailles, creating floral and arboreal spectacles designed to showcase his divine right, absolute authority and territorial command to visiting ambassadors, courtiers and statesmen.¹¹⁴ As an empire took form in the Atlantic World, French officials and institutions sought to emulate this tradition overseas, using gardens as a

¹¹³ Chandra Mukerji, *Territorial Ambitions and the Gardens of Versailles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Chandra Mukerji, “The Political Mobilization of Nature in Seventeenth-Century French Formal Gardens,” *Theory and Society* 23, no. 5 (1994): 651–77; Chandra Mukerji, “Reading and Writing with Nature: Social Claims and the French Formal Garden,” *Theory and Society* 19, no. 6 (1990): 651–79.

¹¹⁴ On the role of the gardens at Versailles, see Mukerji, *Territorial Ambitions and the Gardens of Versailles*; Allen S. Weiss, *Mirrors of Infinity: The French Formal Garden and 17th-Century Metaphysics* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1995.); Elizabeth Hyde, *Cultivated Power: Flowers, Culture, and Politics in the Reign of Louis XIV* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005.); Ian H. Thompson, *The Sun King’s Garden: Louis XIV, Andre Le Nôtre, and the Creation of the Gardens of Versailles* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2006); Robert W. Berger, and Thomas F. Hedin, *Diplomatic Tours in the Gardens of Versailles under Louis XIV* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

way to imprint French power and authority onto the colonial landscape whilst also performing their own legitimacy to their superiors, fellow colonists and outsiders alike.¹¹⁵ Likewise, Bienville's estate also seems to have taken its inspiration from Louis XIV's Versailles, even down to its very name—La Ménagerie.¹¹⁶

It is unclear how exactly Bienville was familiar with Versailles. It is possible that he had accompanied Iberville to court sometime between 1692 and 1698, but records of his exact whereabouts during these years are fragmentary.¹¹⁷ Even if he had not visited the palace himself, Bienville likely heard descriptions of its grandeur from kinsmen who had attended court, such as Longueuil and his wife Claude-Élisabeth Souart, who had served as a lady-in-waiting for the Princess Palatine for many years and returned to Versailles on several occasions with her husband. In New Orleans, Bienville's second-hand notions of the palace's grandeur may have been further refined by the royal engineers Pierre Le Blond de La Tour (incidentally also a distant kinsman of Bienville) and Adrien Pauger.¹¹⁸ Since Versailles represented the pinnacle of contemporary architectural and landscaping techniques, these two men would have been familiar enough with the kinds of designs used to translate them to New Orleans. Indeed, the initial plans for La Ménagerie—most likely drawn by La Tour—took many cues from the

¹¹⁵ Notable examples of this tradition in the French Atlantic World are the Royal Gardens at Gorée, the Jesuit gardens in Saint-Pierre, Martinique and the gardens in Cap Français and Port-au-Prince in Saint Domingue. For more see Bailey, *Architecture and Urbanism*, p.279.

¹¹⁶ Built by Louis Le Vau in 1664, *la ménagerie royale* was a zoo where Louis XIV housed a number of exotic animals collected from across the French Atlantic World. Marcel Giraud states that this name was first used to describe Bienville's estate on a 1721 map of concessions and habitations near New Orleans. Giraud, *La Louisiane après le système de Law*, p.245, 256-257.

¹¹⁷ As described in Chapter I, Bienville accompanied Iberville on his 1694, 1696 and 1698 expeditions, so we can presume that Bienville would have been in France at some point during the preparations, at which point he may have visited Versailles with his older brother.

¹¹⁸ Pierre Le Blond de La Tour was married to Bienville's first cousin once-removed Marie-Anne Messier, daughter of his cousin Marguerite Messier and Pierre Le Sueur. See ANOM C13A V.4 f.571-574 « Lettre de La Mothe de Cadillac » 2 février 1716 and Charles Edwards O'Neil, "The French Regency and the Colonial Engineers: Street Names of Early New Orleans," *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 39, no. 2 (Spring, 1998): 207-214, p.210.

martial imagery and symbolism of the Jardins de Versailles, creating an estate suitable for a *commandant-général*. For instance, the trees of the *bosquets* and lining the avenues were likely intended to both evoke the arboreal sentries which stood on the bastions and barricades of France's cities, whilst the multiple "grandes perspectives" cut through the Louisiana wilderness may have been a way to represent the *commandant's* metaphorical gaze over both New Orleans and the Lower Mississippi Valley—the domain he ruled on behalf of the monarch. Finally, the careful cultivation required to create the elaborate *parterres* and the engineering necessary to create a canal may have sought to convey French stewardship over the landscape, asserting the legitimacy and superiority of the French and, by extension Bienville's, regime.¹¹⁹

As was often the case in New Orleans, however, these ambitious plans were never fully implemented on the ground. Four years later, a second map depicts the "Terrain et Maison à M. De Bienville" with some substantial changes [Fig. 5.4]. Where there were once two elaborate *grandes allées* and decorative gardens in front of the manor, the plan shows a single avenue and two smaller fruit gardens (or perhaps orchards) behind outbuildings separated from the main house. Creating a courtyard with the main house, these buildings are no longer symmetrical but L-shaped. Behind the estate, the planned *bosquets* are also replaced by what might be six *parterres* or even large vegetable gardens, overlooking cultivated fields cleared from the wilderness. Along these fields, eleven small buildings—presumably slave quarters—stand in the shadow of a large levee along the riverbank. Interestingly, much of the information presented on this map is corroborated in a lease of the estate to the Jesuits the following April, which described the estate as having a fifty-foot frame house, a dovecote, a principal residence

¹¹⁹ Mukerji, *Territorial Ambitions*, p.79; Bailey, *Architecture and Urbanism*, p.284-5; Chandra Mukerji, "Stewardship Politics and the Control of Wild Weather: Levees, Seawalls, and State Building in 17th-Century France," *Social Studies of Science* 37, no.1 (Feb 2007):127-133, p.128.

and a fruit garden set on a twenty arpent plantation with no mention of formal gardens.¹²⁰ It is likely, therefore, the most accurate depiction we have of La Ménagerie.

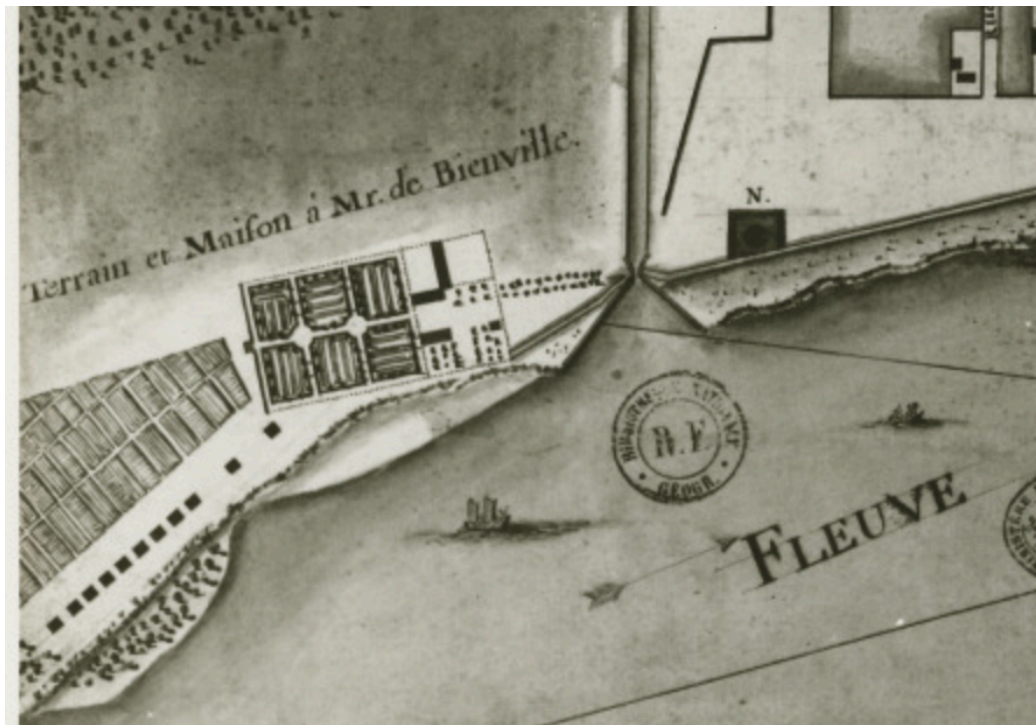


Fig. 5.4 : “Terrain et Maison à Mr de Bienville,” from *Plan de la Ville Nouvelle Orleans en l’etat quelle etoit le 30, Mai, 1725* [?, 1725] Map. HNOC, 1974.25.18.93, <http://hnoc.minisisinc.com/thnoc/catalog/1/39295>.

Many of the changes made between the 1721 and 1725 plans seem to be the result of an enforced adaptation to the difficulties of the colonial landscape. Instead of making his estate more “decorative than functional,” Bienville actually seems to have privileged practicality over pomp in most instances, but most evidently in his gardens. Lake Douglas has argued that this was common in New Orleans since the settlers’ lack of horticultural knowledge tended towards more modest, utilitarian gardens.¹²¹ Recent archeo-biological research has nuanced this perspective, however, arguing that many colonists were in fact able to adapt to New Orleans’

¹²⁰ Charles T. Soniat, “The Title to the Jesuit’s Plantation” *Publications of the Louisiana Historical Society* 5 (1911), p.14; Samuel Wilson Jr., *New Orleans Architecture: Volume II, The American Sector*, (Gretna, Pelican Publishing Company, 1997), p.5.

¹²¹ Lake Douglas, *Public Spaces, Private Gardens: A History of Designed Landscapes in New Orleans*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011), p.101, 106.

unique environmental challenges and find a balance between decoration and functionality in their gardens.¹²² Faced with these same issues, Bienville's estate closely resembled contemporary depictions of plots within the city limits [Fig. 5.5], though on a much larger scale, as he adapted his grand plans to something more befitting New Orleans' climate.

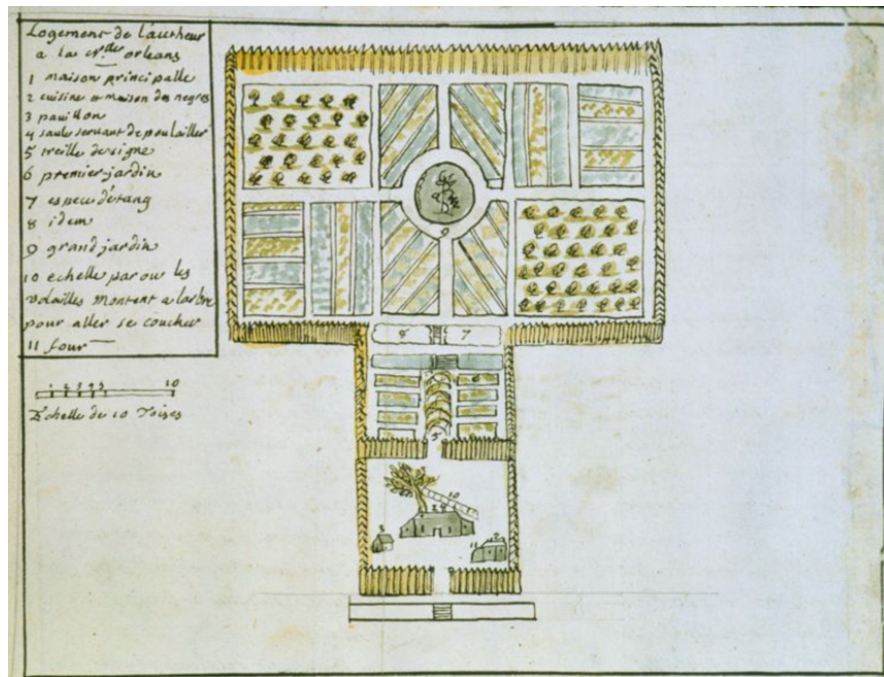


Fig. 5.5 : “A New Orleans House and Garden,” from Jean-François Benjamin Dumont de Montigny, *Logement de l'auteur a la Nlle. Orleans* [c.1747] Newberry Library, Ayer MS 257, No. 21

Much of this adaptation at La Ménagerie may have relied upon the horticultural knowledge of an enslaved African gardener known as “Brise-Fer.” Mentioned in the record of sale to the Jesuits, Brise-Fer lived with his unnamed wife and daughter in one of the estate's central outbuildings. He likely tended to both the ornamental and functional aspects of Bienville's gardens, undoubtedly bringing West African botanical knowledge to his work. In the absence of Bienville's own horticultural expertise—implicit in his use of an enslaved

¹²² See Clarissa Cagnato, Gayle J. Fritz and Shannon L. Dawdy, “Strolling Through Madame Mandeville's Garden: The Real and Imagined Landscape of Eighteenth-Century New Orleans, Louisiana,” *Journal of Ethnobiology* 35 no.2 (2015): 235-261.

specialist—Brise-Fer would have had room to exert a considerable personal influence over the estate’s management. Working alongside the cook (who may even have been his wife) he would have been able to dictate the vegetables and plants grown, impacting not only the appearance of the estate but also its subsistence economy and the household’s consumption.¹²³ Indeed, Brise-Fer proved himself so essential to the running of La Ménagerie that he and his family were included in the lease of the estate to the Jesuits in 1726 and remained in the service of the missionaries until the expulsion of their order from the colony in 1763. After this, Bienville’s grandnephew filed a petition to have Brise-Fer returned to his service, attesting to the enslaved gardener’s invaluable, and perhaps irreplaceable, knowledge.¹²⁴

West African influences also permeated the estate’s very construction. Built in *colombage-en-bois*, a rough and ready technique that filled a wooden framework with mud or manure, the estate’s principal buildings reflected the adaptation of Bienville’s enslaved labourers to the demands of the colonial landscape. Because this technique had separate origins in both Europe and West Africa, some scholars have argued that the many apparent similarities have long obscured the extent of African influences on French colonial buildings.¹²⁵ Across the Lower Mississippi Valley, colonists embraced *colombage-en-bois* for its ease, low cost and versatility. In New Orleans, the hospital, barracks and even the *Compagnie des Indes* headquarters were all constructed using the technique.¹²⁶ Thus, whilst twice the size of most other houses in New Orleans, Bienville’s manor was not much different in terms of design.

¹²³ Douglas, *Public Spaces, Private Gardens*, p.144-145.

¹²⁴ Soniat, “The Title to the Jesuit’s Plantation” p.14; “Petition for Recovery of Annuity,” September 3 1763—, accessed on 9/4/2018 at <http://www.lacolonialdocs.org/document/9980>.

¹²⁵ Bailey, *Architecture and Urbanism*, p.441.

¹²⁶ Although Carey makes several mistakes about Bienville’s residence from a misinterpretation of the sale record, his discussion of the “colombage-en-bois” or earthfast technique used across the colony at this time is particularly useful. Dwight Anthony Carey, “Building the Creole Empire: Architecture, Urbanism and Social Space in the French Colonial World, 1659-1810” (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2016), p.123-124.

Indeed, in Jean-Pierre Lassus' 1726 *Veüe et perspective de la Nouvelle-Orléans* [Fig. 5.6], the buildings on the estate (on the far left) are almost indistinguishable from those of the town.¹²⁷ But this was likely only intended to be a temporary inconvenience. *Colombage-en-bois* was not known for its permanence, rotting quickly in the humid Lower Mississippi Valley. Shortly after leasing La Ménagerie from Bienville, the Jesuits were forced to tear down the manor and rebuild a more stately, brick house which reflected newer architectural trends in New Orleans.¹²⁸ It is not hard to imagine that, if he had kept the estate, Bienville may have eventually done the same, but for the time being had been forced to adapt to the available resources and labour.

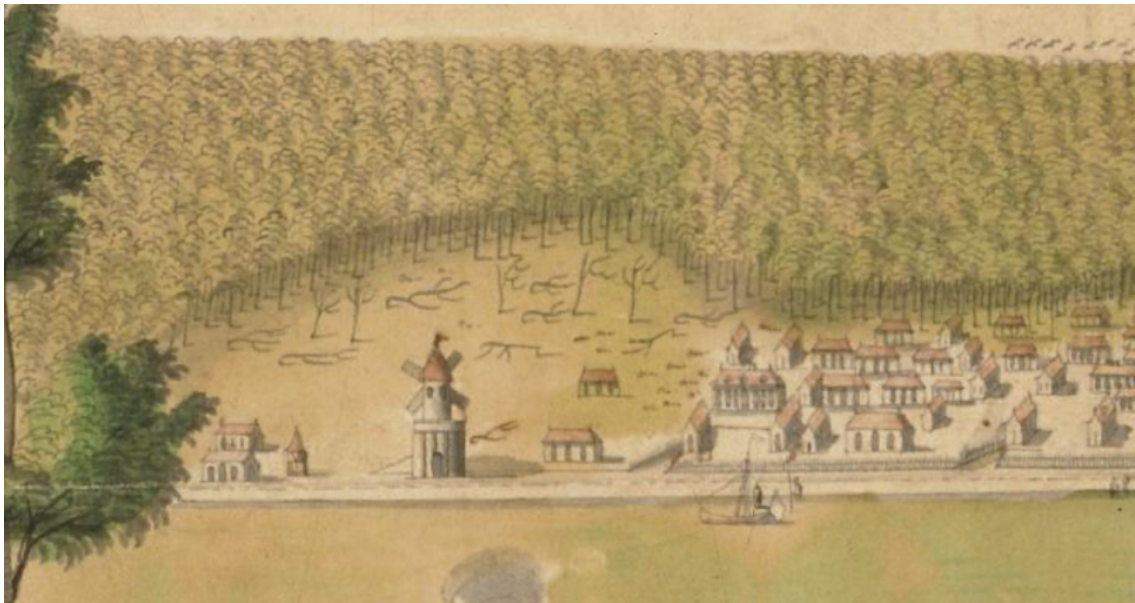


Fig. 5.6 : “View of Bienville’s Estate,” from Jean-Pierre Lassus, *Veüe et Perspective de la Nouvelle Orléans* [1726] Map. ANOM, 04DFC71A, http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ulyse/notice?id=FR_ANOM_04DFC71A.

Of all of Bienville’s original designs, the only one implemented without significant change was his *grande avenue*. Laid out by Adrien Pauger—despite violating the land claims

¹²⁷ Most houses in New Orleans were twenty *pieds* square, Bienville’s manor was 50. Giraud, *The Company of the Indies*, p.224.

¹²⁸ Wilson, *The American Sector*, p.5-6.

of other colonists— this avenue was lined with orange trees, which Bienville had most likely imported from Saint Domingue.¹²⁹ These trees had originally adorned Bienville’s residence at Mobile, but he had refused to include them in the sale of this estate to the *Compagnie des Indes* in February 1718, suggesting that they were significant to him.¹³⁰ Orange trees were not simply signs of wealth and prestige: their evergreen foliage and connection to the sun was associated them with the longevity and power of Louis XIV.¹³¹ Perhaps hoping to convey his royal authority, therefore, Bienville spent considerable time and effort having the trees installed at La Ménagerie, ordering Châteauguay to transport them all the way from Mobile. This seems to have paid off, however, as the trees left a marked impression on visitors such as Dumont de Montigny and La Chaise, who both described them being particularly large and beautiful.¹³²

Whilst La Ménagerie was nowhere near as grand as Versailles, in Louisiana, it nevertheless played much the same role. Officially, the *Compagnie des Indes* designated the Place d’Armes as the centre of government for their colony and built houses around the central square for the *commandant-général*, *commissaire*, the town major, and a number of directors as well as a specific chamber for the *Conseil Supérieur*. Bienville, however, chose to eschew these formal institutions in favour of governing almost entirely from his estate. Only four hundred paces from the last house in New Orleans—incidentally on Rue Bienville—La Ménagerie was close enough to be intimately involved with the goings-on in the city, but distant enough to offer separation from the more formal restraints of urban life. Many of the local elite, especially

¹²⁹ The construction of Bienville’s avenue caused a heated argument between Pauger and Sieur Dubuisson, who wanted to build a house outside of Pauger’s proposed city limits and on the axis of the avenue. Later, Pauger also got into an argument with Dubuisson’s sister over his proposed grid, and nearly duelled with her husband. ANOM, C13A, V.6, f.139, « De Pauger au Conseil de Marine, » Nouvelle-Orléans, 19 août 1721; Dawdy, *Building the Devil’s Empire*, p.64.

¹³⁰ ANOM, C13A, V.7, f.38, « La Chaise au Conseil de Marine, » Nouvelle-Orléans, 6 septembre 1723

¹³¹ Hyde, *Cultivated Power*, p.190-1.

¹³² Dumont de Montigny, *Regards sur le monde atlantique*, p.178 ; « La Chaise au Conseil de Marine, » 6 septembre 1723.

officers, thus visited Bienville's residence to file their complaints, campaign for their advancement or rub shoulders with their superiors, essentially turning it into a colonial court.¹³³

Indeed, La Ménagerie challenged divisions between public and private space. In the 1721 census, Bienville's household was one of only three in all of New Orleans listed with two male heads—Bienville and his nephew, Gilles-Augustin Payen de Noyan.¹³⁴ According to the service record of Gilles-Augustin's brother Pierre-Jacques, their mother Catherine-Jeanne Le Moyne had sent her sons to live with her relatives across the French Atlantic World after the death of her husband Pierre de Noyan in Havana in 1706. It appears that the family had invested heavily in the *armement d'Iberville* but had seen their profits disappear with the death of Noyan, likely at the hands of those who fled Cuba after yellow fever struck the expedition. Living at the Noyan estates in Normandy since 1700, Catherine-Jeanne found herself unable to raise her sons in a manner befitting their status as metropolitan nobles, so sent them to live with their kinsmen in the hopes they would find prestigious careers in the colonies. At seventeen, Pierre-Jacques was sent to live with Marie-Anne Le Moyne and La Chassaigne in Canada, who secured him a position as an *enseigne*, whilst Gilles-Augustin, and later his younger brother Pierre-Benoît, were sent to live with Bienville in Louisiana once they too were old enough.¹³⁵

Evidence suggests that Bienville and Catherine-Jeanne were particularly close. They seem to have maintained a long-distance correspondence over the years, which Bienville once

¹³³ Vidal, *Caribbean New Orleans*, p.123-4. One of the best documented accounts of an officer visiting Bienville at La Ménagerie to resolve issues with his colleagues was recorded by Dumont de Montigny, who sought justice after being thrown in the town's jail for insulting La Tour. For the full account, see Dumont de Montigny, *Regards sur le monde atlantique*, p. 178.

¹³⁴ Vidal, *Caribbean New Orleans*, p.193-194.

¹³⁵ In the service record, Pierre-Jacques' widow claimed that, « Madame de noyan resta avec quatre enfans et n'ayant point fortune assés suffisante pour leur faire tenir le rang que leur naissance exigeoit, elle pris le partie de faire passer pierre payen son ainé... en canada...et les deux autres ont passé la la Loüisianne. » ANOM, E, 332, « Mémoire des services de Pierres Jacques Payen de Noyan Ch^l de St Louis Lieutenant de Roy en Canada Mort à Paris le 30 xbre 1771, » [1771].

called “la seule consolation que j’ay eu en ce pays.”¹³⁶ Bienville was thus happy to welcome his two nephews into his home and used his local authority to find them positions in the colonial military, securing Gilles-Augustin a commission as major of New Orleans and Pierre-Benoît a position as a half-pay *enseigne*.¹³⁷ More pragmatically, however, by establishing a male-dominated household with a clear military character, Bienville deliberately blurred the lines between the professional and private functions of his household. Living and working alongside their uncle, Gilles-Augustin and Pierre-Benoît emphasised the governmental and military role of La Ménagerie, effectively serving as their uncles’ *aides-de-camp* and clerks. Their presence encouraged their fellow officers to see Bienville’s residence as a place where officers were welcome, ensuring its continued pre-eminence over the company-controlled governmental headquarters in the Place d’Armes.

But it was not only Frenchmen that made the journey to La Ménagerie. In 1718, Bienville hosted the first diplomatic visits from neighbouring Indigenous groups in his own residence, meeting with the Chitimacha diplomats in his palmetto-thatched “cabane.”¹³⁸ Like the residences of Longueuil and Maricourt in Montreal, La Ménagerie offered a somewhat neutral ground for diplomacy, a familiar home outside of “the town of strangers.” In May 1723, Bienville hosted four Chickasaw ambassadors for two months as they negotiated the return of several of their kinsmen who had been enslaved and sold by the *Compagnie des Indes* to German settlers. Though at war with the Chickasaw at the time, as their host, Bienville was obliged to act as the

¹³⁶ Bienville mentioned his epistolary relationship with Catherine-Jeanne in a letter to Longueuil, asking his brother to have her write to him more often. Unfortunately, their correspondence does not seem to have survived. « Lettre de Bienville à son frère, » in Jodoin and Vincent, *Histoire de Longueuil*, p.126.

¹³⁷ ANOM, C13A, V.5, f.359-360, « Délibération du Conseil de Commerce assemblé à l’Île Dauphine, » 11 avril 1720 ; Jean-Pierre Proulx, “Payen de Noyan, Pierre-Benoît,” in *DCB*, vol. 3, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 23/4/2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/payen_de_noyan_pierre_benoit_3E.html.

¹³⁸ Le Page du Pratz’s mentions that the peace negotiations held with the Chitimacha in late 1719 occurred in Bienville’s “cabane.” It is likely that the engraving entitled “La Marche du Calumet de Paix” that accompanies this work depicts Bienville’s early palmetto-thatched cabin. See Le Page du Pratz, *Histoire de la Louisiane*, p.106-113.

fanimingo and negotiate a deal with the *Conseil de Commerce* for the return of an enslaved woman and a child. Meanwhile, we can be sure that he used La Ménagerie as a theatre of power, performing his French authority through the use of his domestic slaves or by conducting tours of his gardens and estates much as Louis XIV would in Versailles.¹³⁹ Thus, whilst not quite the splendid palace Bienville had planned, La Ménagerie was nonetheless a locus of Bienville's power and authority as *commandant-général*, combining grandeur and function in a space which conspicuously displayed Bienville's status to French and Indigenous visitors alike.

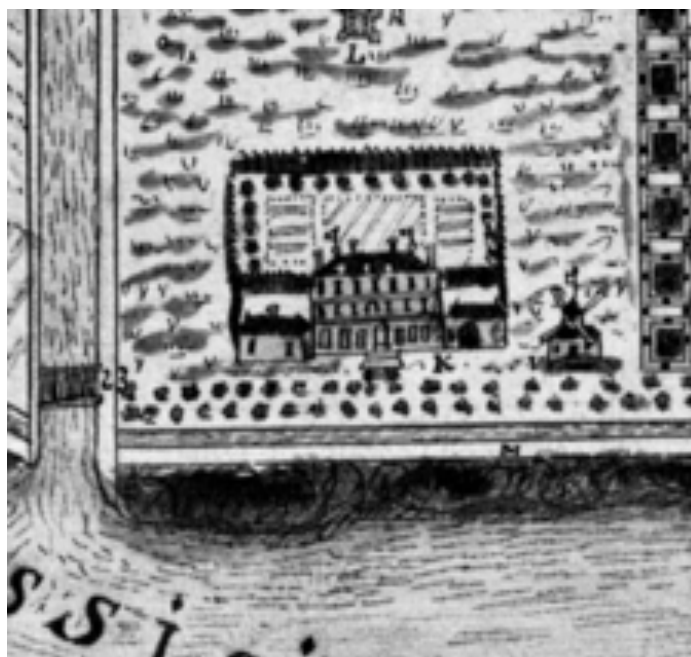


Fig. 5.7 : “Le Gouvernement,” from Jean-François-Benjamin Dumont de Montigny, *Plan de la Nouvelle Orleans ville capitale de la Louisianne et ses environs* [c.1747]. Newberry Library, Louis C. Karpinski Map Collection.

Only after he returned to Louisiana as Governor in March 1733 did Bienville acquire the grand gubernatorial residence of which he had dreamt. Working with the new *commissaire-ordonnateur* Edmé Gatien Salmon, Bienville proposed that the crown purchase a townhouse on

¹³⁹ Berger and Hedin, *Diplomatic Tours in the Gardens of Versailles under Louis XIV*.

Rue du Quay belonging to Claude Joseph André Dubreuil de Villars—one of Louisiana’s richest planters—to serve as the new seat of government in New Orleans. Labelled as “le gouvernement” in the drawings of Dumont de Montigny, Dubreuil’s townhouse appears to have been an elaborate three-storey affair—likely built in brick—which overlooked the Mississippi to the front and had extensive formal gardens to the rear. [Fig 5.7]. Such a residence certainly befit a royal governor and Bienville eagerly took up residence in the mansion on May 1st, 1738, before he had even received the express permission of the new minister, Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux de Maurepas.¹⁴⁰ Maurepas would only approve the purchase two years later, agreeing to pay Dubreuil 69,000 *livres* to cover the previous two years of rent and the purchase of the residence for the crown.¹⁴¹

Like most of New Orleans’ wealthy elite, Bienville also had a country estate. Built on his lands across the Mississippi from New Orleans, he named his estate Bel Air, evoking a bucolic vision for his second home. The name also outlined Bienville’s intention to formally separate his private and public personas. Indeed, whilst the governor’s mansion in New Orleans was to be his official residence, Bel Air was to be his personal domain and plantation. On the grounds, he built two residences, a brick barn, a dovecote, and twenty slave cabins. Around the borders, Bienville also had a number of large brick obelisks built to mark the edges of his private lands, each featuring a version of the Le Moyne coat of arms tucked into a small niche.¹⁴² Living the life of a member of the colonial elite, Bienville was no longer in need of a palace—his grand mansion and extensive rural estates very much confirmed his place as the most powerful man in Louisiana.

¹⁴⁰ ANOM, C13A, V.25, f.14, « Bienville et Salmon au Ministre, » 24 juin 1740.

¹⁴¹ ANOM, B, V.70, f.473-473v, « Lettre à Mrs de Bienville et Salmon, » 28 octobre 1740

¹⁴² ANOM, G1, V.465, No.89, « Procès-verbal d’arpentage fait par Saucier...d’un terrain appartenant à Bienville, » 20 novembre 1737; HNOC, MSS39, “Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville Survey,” 8 August 1783

“M. de Bienville regardait la Louisiane comme son patrimoine: ” Patrimony and Politics

Once New Orleans officially became the capital of Louisiana, the *Compagnie des Indes* sent two new *commissaires*, Jean-Baptiste Choplet du Sauvoy and Jacques de la Chaise, to the colony to audit the company's accounts, evaluate their assets and supplies, and collect any debts still owed to them to avoid further financial losses.¹⁴³ Du Sauvoy perished on the voyage, but La Chaise made it to New Orleans in September 1723. Finding the colony in a far worse state than the company had ever imagined, La Chaise began his audit, reviewing over 1400 private accounts to get to the root of the colony's financial woes. That autumn, he sent three reports to the *Conseil de Marine*, totaling over 150 pages, in which he placed the blame almost entirely on Bienville. Echoing the reports of Nicolas La Salle almost two decades earlier, La Chaise accused the *commandant-général* of abusing his power, routinely ignoring the corruption of his *garde-magasins*, favouring Canadians over Frenchmen, permitting trade with foreigners—particularly the Spanish—lining his own pockets during times of shortage, and threatening those who opposed him, forcing them into silence through fear and coercion.¹⁴⁴

Few of these accusations were anything new, but La Chaise's reports offered a unique interpretation of Bienville's alleged corruption.¹⁴⁵ For the *commissaire*, Bienville's many misdeeds were part of a calculated attempt to “faire tomber la colonie pour que le Roy s'en empara, et qu'il pût faire ce qu'il voudroit.”¹⁴⁶ More than a traditional clash between the *épée* and *la plume*, La Chaise framed Bienville's pursuit of patrimonial governance, quasi-seigneurial

¹⁴³ Giraud, *The Company of the Indies*, p.4-5, 15-17.

¹⁴⁴ ANOM, C13A, V.7, f.6-50, « La Chaise au Conseil de Marine, » Nouvelle-Orléans, 6 septembre 1723; ANOM, C13A, V.7, f.51-84, « La Chaise au Conseil de Marine, » 18 octobre 1723; ANOM, C13A, V.7, f.85-88, « La Chaise au Conseil de Marine, » Nouvelle-Orléans, 24 octobre 1723.

¹⁴⁵ The former *commissaire-ordonnateur* Marc-Antoine Hubert would also offer similar critiques of Bienville in 1723, suggesting he was “un homme faux qui gouverne despotiquement en ce pays.” ANOM, C13A, V.7, f.234-237, « Mémoire en extrait sur la conséquence de la colonie de la Louisiane et sur son état présent, » [1723].

¹⁴⁶ « La Chaise au Conseil de Marine, » 6 septembre 1723.

prerogatives, foreign trade and fraud in New Orleans as a threat to the very foundations of the Mississippi colony—monopolistic commerce, freehold concessions, and the development of productive plantations. La Chaise ultimately feared that Bienville intended to bring back royal power so that he might pursue his dynastic ambitions to their fullest extent, moulding Louisiana into his own personal *seigneurie*. He thus called upon his superiors to invoke their proprietary prerogatives and re-establish company control over their resources, lands and investments in the Lower Mississippi Valley, forever purging Louisiana of Bienville's perfidious influence.

In Paris, La Chaise's accusations deeply troubled the *Compagnie des Indes*. Based on their *commissaire*'s evaluations, the directors agreed that Bienville's actions demonstrated that he "a Eû trop d'autorité" which, left unchecked, had caused him to view Louisiana "comme son patrimoine du tems du Roy" and undermine the company at every turn "pour y faire Entrer le roy."¹⁴⁷ Accordingly, they attempted to limit his power, outlining their intentions to overhaul the entire colonial government and introduce an Intendant. They also recalled Bienville to France, ostensibly to consult on their proposed re-organisation of the interior posts, and finally offered Châteauguay his *congé*. These, however, were more orders than invitations. In their absence, Boisbriand was to govern the colony whilst La Tour was to command the troops.¹⁴⁸ But the departure of Bienville and Châteauguay, was repeatedly delayed, first by Boisbriand's slow arrival from the Illinois Country, then by poor weather which forced the *Profond* to return to New Orleans in November 1724, and finally by the tragic shipwreck of their vessel the *Bellonne*

¹⁴⁷ ANOM, C13A, V.8, f.183, « Projet de régie pour la colonie de la Louisiane, » [1724].

¹⁴⁸ ANOM, B, V.43, f.342-343, « Lettre du Roy à M. de Bienville, » Versailles, 20 octobre 1723 ; ANOM, B, V.43, f.363v, « Lettre du Roy à M. de Bienville, » Versailles, 16 février 1724 ; ANOM, B, V.43, f.408, « Lettre du Roy à M. de Bienville, » 1 avril 1724 ; ANOM, C13B, No.16, « Lettre à M. Bienville, » 15 octobre 1723; ANOM, C13B, No.17, « Lettre du roi à Bienville, » 15 février 1724 ; ANOM, C13B, No. 17 bis, « Lettre du roi à Bienville, » 1 avril 1724.

in Mobile Bay on April 11th, 1725, which the brothers only just survived. Only in June 1725 did they depart for good, arriving in Port-Louis on August 20th.¹⁴⁹

Table 2: Bienville's Tenancy Agreements 1723-1728

Original Tenant	Arpents	Date Signed	Signatory	Renter 1737
Jacques Ouvre et Barbe Chauvanne	6	1 janvier 1723	Bienville	Charles Petit de Levillier
Andre Krestman	6	1 janvier 1723	Bienville	Amyault d'Ausseville
Jacques, François et Joseph L'Archevesque	12	2 janvier 1723	Bienville	Ignace Broutin
Joseph L'Archevesque	6	12 janvier 1723	Bienville	Jonathan Darby
Simon Coste	6	1 septembre 1723	Bienville	Jean-Baptiste de Chavanne
Étienne Roy	8	1 septembre 1723	Bienville	Hubert Bellair
Provenché	8	1 juillet 1724	Bienville	Provenché
Hemery	6	28 octobre 1724	Bienville	Jean-Baptiste de Raguet
Hubert Bellair	3	5 novembre 1724	Bienville	Joseph Chauvin de Léry
Cardinal	10	18 décembre 1724	Bienville	Provenché
Étienne Roy	2	9 janvier 1725	Bienville	Hubert Bellair
Ignace Broutin	12	20 janvier 1725	Noyan	Renault d'Hauterive
Etienne Langlois	7	20 janvier 1725	Noyan	Jean-Baptiste de Raguet
Louis Langlois	7	20 janvier 1725	Noyan	Jean-Baptiste de Raguet
Chenier	8	20 janvier 1725	Noyan	Jean-Baptiste de Raguet
François Duqué	8	20 janvier 1725	Noyan	Jean-Baptiste de Raguet
Augustin Langlois	6	20 janvier 1725	Noyan	Carrière
Gaspart Keel	6	20 novembre 1726	Noyan	Jacques Julien Enoul de Livaudais
Jean-Bapsite de Chavanne (1728)	6	1 mai 1728	Noyan	Jean-Baptiste de Chavanne
Renault d'Hauterive	10	1 mai 1728	Noyan	Renault d'Hauterive
Louis Chauvin de Beaulieu	12	1 mai 1728	Noyan	François de Mouy
Nicolas Chauvin de la Frenière	17	1 mai 1728	Noyan	Nicolas Chauvin de La Frenière
François de Mouy	10	1 mai 1728	Noyan	François Simars de Belisle
César De Blanc	8.5	1 mai 1728	Noyan	François Joseph Couturier
Provost	10	1 mai 1728	Noyan	Nicolas Chauvin de La Frenière
Les Père Jésuites	5	1 mai 1728	Noyan	Les Pères Jésuites

Sources from ANOM, G1, V.465, Nos. 69-86, «Procès-verbaux d'arpentage fait par Saucier, » 20 septembre-23 novembre 1737

¹⁴⁹ ANOM, C13A, V.8, f.148-182, « Extraits du registre du Conseil Supérieur de la Louisiane du 6 novembre au 3 février 1724-1725, » [1724/5]; ANOM, C13A, V.8, f.232-232v, « Bienville au Ministre, » Lorient, 23 août 1725; Giraud, *The Company of the Indies*, p.34.

Meanwhile, Bienville had ample time to put his affairs in order. Between February 1724 and April 1725, Bienville and Noyan made fifteen separate rental agreements on his lands on both sides of the Mississippi—a total of 103 *arpents de face*—offering the same *redevances* demanded since 1723. [Table 2.] In May 1724, Bienville offered to sell the *Compagnie des Indes* a plot of land for their future plantation opposite New Orleans for 1000 *livres*. This land, however, had been claimed and developed by Adrien de Pauger since 1719. Taking his case before the *Conseil Supérieur*, Pauger vehemently protested the sale, arguing that he had been a good tenant, clearing the land at great personal expense, including the life of an African slave who had perished from overwork. After a lengthy dispute, a compromise was reached in which Bienville would sell his land to the *Compagnie des Indes* but transfer his profits to Pauger.¹⁵⁰

It seems that Bienville had anticipated that the *Compagnie des Indes* would look into his land grants. It had been four years since the directors had requested a survey of his lands, but he had yet to provide it, meaning that his grants were still merely provisional and his claims ambiguous and undefined. Now that the *Compagnie des Indes* had firmly established New Orleans as their principal outpost, they could not tolerate competing claims to the lands around the settlement, particularly if they wished it to grow. Aware that the company was able to revoke underdeveloped *concessions*, Bienville likely thought that they would try to reclaim his uncleared lands to eliminate any future disputes.¹⁵¹ Perhaps taking a leaf out of Pauger's book, Bienville thus engaged in this flurry of legal and commercial activity to encourage others to develop his uncleared lands and create a legitimate paper trail for his estates.

¹⁵⁰ ANOM, C13A, V.8, f.63-64v, « De Pauger au Conseil de Marine, » 29 mai 1724; ANOM, C13A, V.8, f.67-67v, « Arrêt au sujet des terrains de Pauger, » 9 février 1724; LHQ, V.3, #3, 7/1920, "Civil Suit: Adrien Pauger vs Bienville," October 14th, 1726—, accessed on 9/4/2019 at <http://www.lacolonialdocs.org/document/907>; See also Samuel Wilson, "The Plantation of the Company of the Indies," *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 31, no. 2 (1990): 161–91.

¹⁵¹ Giraud, *L'époque de John Law*, p.167-168.

Even in France, Bienville continued these measures by employing Noyan and Denis Hersant, a Canadian cloth merchant and business agent of several of his kinsmen, as his *procureurs*.¹⁵² In New Orleans, Noyan continued negotiating rental agreements on both sides of the Mississippi, leasing out at least a further eighty-three arpents—if not more—between 1726 and 1728. Of these agreements, eight were concluded on May 1st, 1728, indicating that Bienville might have been aware of what was to come and ordered his nephew to swiftly lease out as much land as possible.¹⁵³ Meanwhile, Noyan and Hersant continued to collect the rents due to Bienville, with Noyan representing his uncle in court to collect payments made in bills of exchange that Bienville was unable to collect himself. In 1727, Noyan oversaw the official survey conducted by Lassus for the new company plantation, forcing the engineer to officially recognise the borders shared between the plantation, his uncle's estate and those of his new tenants, thereby formally delineating Bienville's claims.¹⁵⁴ In Paris, Bienville negotiated the lease of La Ménagerie with Father Louis D'Avaugour of the Jesuit Order. In February 1726, the Jesuits had been permitted by the *Compagnie des Indes* to establish a plantation as close to the city as possible.¹⁵⁵ Sensing an opportunity, on April 11th, 1726, Bienville instead offered his pre-built manor house, slaves and 1000 square *arpents* of land for 12,000 *livres*, payable as a perpetual rent of 600 *livres* made in gold or silver either annually or in quarterly instalments.¹⁵⁶ Within the space of three years, Bienville had thus successfully leased out most of his underdeveloped lands, keeping only a small parcel at Bel Air for his personal domain, where his slaves continued to work in his absence.

¹⁵² Giraud, *The Company of the Indies*, p.36-37.

¹⁵³ "Table 2: Bienville's Tenancy Agreements 1723-1737."

¹⁵⁴ ANOM, G1, V.465, No.67, « Procès-verbal de délimitation dressé par Lassus concernant divers terrains située le long du Mississippi en face de la Nouvelle-Orléans, » 1 octobre 1727; Giraud, *The Company of the Indies*, p.37.

¹⁵⁵ ANOM, B, V.43, f.591, « Traité avec les R. P. Jésuites, » 20 février 1726.

¹⁵⁶ In 1728, Bienville and Noyan added a further five *arpents de face* to this, with rents payable at the standard *redevances*. Soniat, "The Title to the Jesuit Plantation;" "Petition for Recovery of Annuity," September 3, 1763.

Predictably, after reviewing Bienville's land claims, the *Compagnie des Indes* decided to exert their proprietary rights to New Orleans. On August 10th, 1728, they issued a decree annulling “ tout ordre de Concession de terres qui auroit pû etre accordé en franc aleu dans l'Estenduë de pays qui se trouve des deux costés du fleuve St Louis depuis le Ruisseau de Manchac jusqu'a la Mer.” Though framed as a general order, it was clear that this was specifically intended to deprive Bienville of his extensive and ambiguous landholdings. Indeed, the decree referenced him in all but name, stating that:

la plupart des particuliers qui ont eu la permission d'En prendre en franc aleu se soient placés dans le terrain cy dessus Expliqué et expressement réservé pour de petit habitans et pour le domaine de la Compagnie. Que même ils en ont accordées et pris pour Eux immédiatement attenant et vis a vis la N^{lle} Orleans des Etenduës tres Considerables dont ils auroient Surpris de la Compie LAprobation sous le faux pretexte que ces terres estoient continuellement noïées

With this ruling, the *Compagnie des Indes* re-established themselves as the *seigneurs* of New Orleans. They obliged every landholder and tenant to present their titles to the *Conseil Supérieur* for ratification within six months, whereupon they would receive a new grant of concession. These were limited to sixty square arpents, and those who claimed more saw their grants reduced and the surplus incorporated into the company's domain. Moreover, these new grants were issued with *redevances* set in line with the Custom of Paris at one *sol* per square arpent, but with the local adaption of a further tax of 100 *sols* per enslaved African. Finally, the *Compagnie des Indes* invoked their seigneurial rights to control the future distribution of lands and the patronage of the churches but chose to open hunting and fishing rights to all.¹⁵⁷

On the ground, this ruling changed little for Bienville's tenants. Rather than paying their rents to Bienville, they began to pay the (much more moderate) dues owed to the *Compagnie*

¹⁵⁷ ANOM, B, V.43, f.790-797, « Arrêt portant Règlement sur les Concessions accordées et à accorder à la Louisianne, » 27 juillet 1728.

des Indes. For Bienville, however, the ruling was catastrophic. Though he had taken precautions to lease out his lands, the *Compagnie des Indes* had completely voided his claims, denying him of the rents he expected, including the particularly large payments he had negotiated from the Jesuits. Furthermore, what remained of his personal domain at Bel Air—likely registered by Noyan—had been reduced to the standard sixty square arpents and subject to the expected *redevances* of roughly 228 *livres* per annum.¹⁵⁸ With no official title to his lands, he was unable to move against the company. It seemed that in reasserting their seigneurial title to Louisiana, the *Compagnie des Indes* had successfully purged the colony of Bienville's influence, ridding New Orleans of his territorial and patrimonial control.

Ironically, however, it was not Bienville's presence which brought the end of company rule in Louisiana, but his absence. After his departure, the *Compagnie des Indes* attempted to expand their plantation regime by renewing their emphasis on landed concessions, particularly at Natchez. But without Bienville's guidance, these overzealous attempts to secure their proprietary regime increasingly brought the colony into conflict with its Indigenous neighbours. On November 29th, 1729, the Natchez struck back at the alienation of their lands by French settlers, massacring the population of Fort Rosalie, and provoking widespread panic across the colony.¹⁵⁹ Attempting to control the chaos, Maurepas had no other choice but to relieve the *Compagnie des Indes* of their authority and restore Louisiana to crown control. On January 23rd, 1731, the *Compagnie des Indes* retroceded the colony to Louis XV and within six months their rights in Louisiana were reduced to mere debt collection.¹⁶⁰ As we will see in the

¹⁵⁸ This amount is calculated based on Bienville owning a plot measuring 60 square arpents and a total of forty-five enslaved Africans as recorded in the 1726 census.

¹⁵⁹ On the Natchez Revolt, see Milne, *Natchez Country*, Arnaud Balvay, *La révolte des Natchez*. (Paris: Félin-Kiron, 2008) and Elizabeth N. Ellis, "The Natchez War Revisited: Violence, Multinational Settlements, and Indigenous Diplomacy in the Lower Mississippi Valley," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 77, no. 3 (2020): 441–72.

¹⁶⁰ Khalil Saadani, *La Louisiane française dans l'impasse: 1731-1743* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008), p.15-30; Giraud, *The Company of the Indies*, p.430-439.

next chapter, it was this regime change which ushered in Bienville's return—at last formally recognised as Governor of Louisiana in 1732.

Two months after his return to New Orleans, Bienville sought the restitution of his former landholdings. On May 18th, he wrote to Maurepas to express his discontent with the decree of August 1728.¹⁶¹ Enjoying the crown's support, however, he did not seek to the *status quo ante*, but requested that the decree be annulled and his concessions returned to him “pour en jouir lui et ses heritiers avec tous les droites et privilèges de seigneur...qu'il plaira au Roy de les regler.”¹⁶² Amongst his arguments, he emphasised the enormous personal cost undertaken in the development of these estates, including the copious amounts of capital he had invested in the loans and grants made to colonists who still lived and thrived on the land. But money was not at the heart of Bienville's demands. He freely admitted that the *redevances* he had been demanding since 1723 may have been too high and claimed that both he and his tenants would be happy “si on reduisoit son droit comme celui de la plupart des terres qui ont été concedées en Canada.”¹⁶³

Maurepas agreed to consider the restitution of Bienville's rights to the land but warned that, given the authority behind the decree, “il ne convient point de toucher legerement.”¹⁶⁴ He thus requested detailed *mémoires* explaining the situation of Bienville's lands, including the land cessions made before and after August 10th, 1728. As had been often been the case with Bienville's paperwork, however, the documents that he sent in 1734 and 1735 did not conform to Maurepas' expectations and delayed the process further.¹⁶⁵ Moreover, the more

¹⁶¹ ANOM, B, V.59, f.600-600v, « Lettre à M. de Bienville, » 15 septembre 1733.

¹⁶² ANOM, G1, V.465, No.60, « Analyse de diverses pièces concernant la demande d'annulation de l'arrêt du Conseil d'État du 10 août 1728, » 24 août 1734.

¹⁶³ « Analyse de diverses pièces, » 24 août 1734.

¹⁶⁴ « Lettre à M. de Bienville, » 15 septembre 1733.

¹⁶⁵ ANOM, B, V.61, f.660-660v, « Lettre à M. de Bienville, » 2 septembre 1734 ; ANOM, B, V.61, f.661, « Lettre à M. Salmon, » 2 septembre 1734 ; ANOM, B, V.63, f.613v-614v, « Lettre à M. de Bienville, » 4 octobre 1735.

Maurepas learned about Bienville's lands, the more he considered that disrupting the rights of the settlers, many of whom had lived there for several years, and subjecting them to Bienville's seigneurial authority would be an injustice. It seemed unlikely, therefore, that Bienville's seigneurial ambitions would be fulfilled.

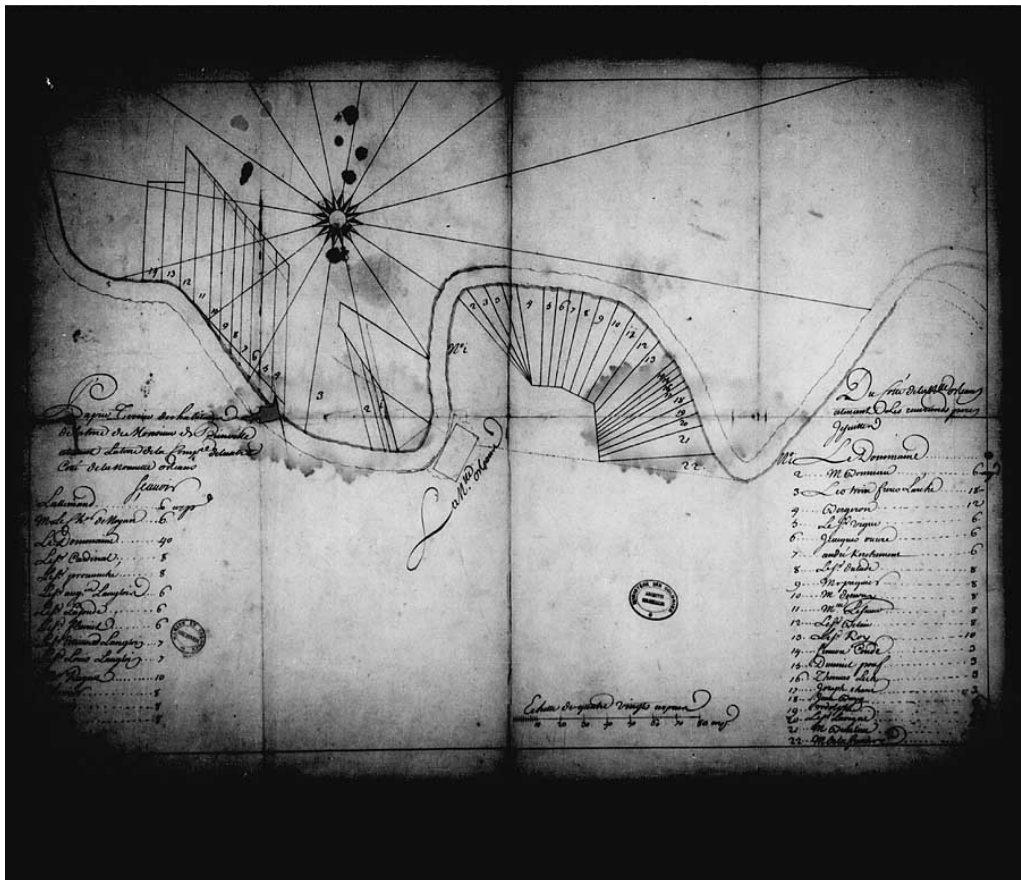


Fig. 5.8 : “ Plan de la concession Bienville de part et d'autre de la Nouvelle Orleans.” François Saucier [?]. Map. [1737]. ANOM, G1, V.465, No.56.

Even so, Bienville's followed up on Maurepas requests and finally commissioned two royal engineers, François Saucier and Ignace François Broutin, to perform official surveys of the lands that he claimed.¹⁶⁶ Between September 20th and November 23rd, 1737, Saucier

¹⁶⁶ For more on Saucier and Broutin see Walter J. Saucier and Kathrine Wagner Seineke, “François Saucier, Engineer of Fort de Chartres, Illinois,” and Samuel Wilson Jr., “Ignace François Broutin,” in McDermott ed., *Frenchmen and French Ways in the Mississippi Valley*, p.199-230 and 231-294. For Maurepas' requests, see

surveyed a total of twenty-six plots along 213 arpents of the Mississippi River between New Orleans and Chapitoulas, being sure to note the exact location, borders and *arpentage* of each plot, as well as the state of their development and any relevant records of cession, sale or rent [Fig. 5.8].¹⁶⁷ On the other side of the river, Broutin spent four days surveying Bel-Air, marking the estate's borders with cypress posts and creating a detailed map of the lands contained within, which unfortunately appears to have since been lost.¹⁶⁸ In their surveys, Saucier and Broutin both recorded each tenant's plot as being "tenu en censive de Bienville," implying an assumption of Bienville's seigneurial status, even despite the lack of confirmation from Maurepas. More importantly, however, they made detailed notes of the *redevances* owed to Bienville, which allowed the minister an insight into the potential disruption Bienville's desired *seigneurie* might cause.

But Bienville soon found himself "plus occupé des affaires du Gouvernement qui m'a été confié que de mes Interêts." As the Chickasaw Wars raged in the Lower Mississippi Valley, the governor was forced to delay the forwarding of the requested surveys to Maurepas until 1742. Perhaps realising that the documents were unlikely to convince the minister, he proposed a compromise and suggested that instead of making all of his former lands into a *seigneurie*, which might inconvenience the current occupants, only his personal domain at Bel-Air—as surveyed by Broutin—should receive this privilege. As compensation for the loss of rights over the other lands, which he claimed the *arrêt* "ma fait perdre le fruit avec le fond," he proposed that he be granted the former plantation of the *Compagnie des Indes*, which was now owned by

ANOM, B, V.64, f.517-517v, « Lettre à M. de Bienville, » Versailles, 17 octobre 1736; ANOM, B, V.64, f.519v-520v, « Lettre à M. de Salmon, » Versailles, 17 octobre 1736.

¹⁶⁷ ANOM, G1, V.465, No.69, « Lettre de François Saucier, » 25 novembre 1737; For the procès-verbaux see ANOM, G1, V.465, Nos. 70-96, « Procès-verbaux d'arpentage fait par Saucier, » 20 septembre- 23 novembre 1737.

¹⁶⁸ HNOC, MSS39, "Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville Survey," 8 August 1783.

the King and bordered his lands at Bel-Air.¹⁶⁹ The timing of this new compromise was likely not coincidental. After 1740, Bienville's poor health forced him to request his retirement to France, and he began to put plans into motion to fund his retirement. In February 1741 he sold a six-by-forty *arpent* plot at Bel Air, along with two slaves—named Louis et Marion Beaux—to Louis Blard for 9000 *livres*, two thirds of which was paid immediately and the balance set to be paid before his departure on August 17th, 1743.¹⁷⁰ Planning on leaving Louisiana behind, it seems that Bienville was more interested in retiring with a title and a small, productive estate, than petty annual *redevances*.

Maurepas was very open to Bienville's proposed compromise. After reviewing the 1737 survey, he suggested that establishing Bel Air as a *seigneurie* would not be an issue, provided that the king agreed. As for his other lands, however, the minister had begun to fear that allowing Bienville to collect the *redevances*, even at Canadian rates, might set a dangerous precedent in Louisiana. Compensation was thus a much simpler option, but Maurepas was also reluctant to grant Bienville the king's plantation in fulfilment of "une depense a laquelle S. M. n'est nullement tenüe."¹⁷¹ He instructed Salmon and Pierre de Rigaud de Vaudreuil—Bienville's replacement—to assess the value of the plantation and its slaves, even telling them to consider selling off the enslaved workers if this would be beneficial.¹⁷² Though the royal plantation was in a state of complete disrepair, Vaudreuil and Salmon eventually chose to maintain it as the King's Domain, gradually building warehouses and to turning it into an entrepôt for the royal wares arriving in New Orleans.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁹ ANOM, C13A, V.27, f.50-51, « Bienville au ministre, » 26 mars 1742.

¹⁷⁰ Louisiana Research Collection, Manuscripts Collection 600 (French Period) "Act of Sale of Property, New Orleans" 14 février 1741-, accessed on 15/3/2019 at, <https://digitallibrary.tulane.edu/islandora/object/tulane%3A11834>.

¹⁷¹ ANOM, B, V.74, f.648-648v, « Lettre à M. de Bienville, » 22 octobre 1742.

¹⁷² ANOM, B, V.74, f.649-651, « Lettre à Mrs. de Vaudreuil et Salmon, » 22 octobre 1742.

¹⁷³ Wilson Jr., "The Plantation of the Company of the Indies," pp.161-191

Three years later, Bienville had received neither compensation nor word on his promised *seigneurie*. Growing impatient, he ordered Noyan to liquidate his assets in the Lower Mississippi Valley, selling his estate at Bel Air, including the buildings and livestock, to Joseph Desdomaine Hugon, a cadet in the *troupes de la Marine*, for 15,000 *livres* on November 24th, 1746.¹⁷⁴ Whilst relatively meagre, this money helped Bienville live out his last decades comfortably in Paris. An estate inventory drawn up in 1767 shows that the former governor owned a modestly furnished apartment on Rue Vivienne, complete with a well-stocked cellar, a carriage and several servants.¹⁷⁵ Evidence also suggests that his income was supplemented by an annuity of 1000 *livres* from the Jesuits for the land he had leased them in 1726. Once they were expelled from the colony on July 9th, 1763, however, their property was put up for auction and the annuity halted.¹⁷⁶ Bienville contested this sale, claiming that it would nullify his recent transfer of the annuity and the estates' gardener—likely Brise-Fer—to his grand-nephew Jean-Baptiste Anne Payen de Noyan. In September 1763, the *Conseil Supérieur* in New Orleans sided with Bienville and ordered that the annuity and 7700 *livres* of arrears be paid to the young Noyan from the royal treasury.¹⁷⁷ With this ruling, Bienville's investments and interests in Louisiana finally came to an end.

On March 7th, 1767, Bienville died aged eighty-seven. Leaving behind no legitimate heirs, it was his nephews Paul-Joseph Le Moyne de Longueuil, Pierre-Jacques Payen de Noyan and Jean-Honoré-François-Xavier de Sérigny who travelled to Paris to oversee the

¹⁷⁴ Sale of a Plantation, November 24th 1746" LHQ, V.17, No.1, Jan. 1934, p.195—, accessed on 3/10/2019 at, <http://www.lacolonialdocs.org/document/7259>; Henry P. Dart, "Documents Concerning Bienville's Lands in Louisiana, 1719-1737: Third Installment," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 9 (1926), p.368.

¹⁷⁵ BANQ, P1000, S3, D2727, « Documents concernant la famille Lemoyne, »; AN, Y, V.15654, p.1, « Lettre à Monsieur Le Lieutenant Civil, » 13 avril 1767 and AN, Y, V.15654, p.3-50, « Scellés du 7 mars 1767 sur les effets laissées par Mr de Bienville, » [avril 1767].

¹⁷⁶ Raymond A. Schroth, S.J., "Death and Resurrection: The Suppression of the Jesuits in North America," *American Catholic Studies* 128, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 51-66, p.53.

¹⁷⁷ "Petition for Recovery of Annuity," September 3 1763.

division of his estate, whilst their cousin Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Châteauguay sent an agent from Martinique. According to his will, drawn up on January 15th, 1765, Bienville had ended his days in a better situation than most, owing no debts and able to “disposer de tous mes bien en faveur de qui ie le souhaiterois.”¹⁷⁸ His estate was divided five ways between Longueuil, Noyan, Châteauguay, Sérigny and Sérigny’s two children. Noyan’s share, however, was to be paid in part by his own son—to whom Bienville had lent 10,000 *livres* to purchase a cavalry company—and by a diamond worth 1500 *livres*. Longueuil and Bienville’s grandnieces, the daughters of Marie-Thérèse d’Iberville, also received diamonds, whilst his valet, lackey and cook were left *rentes-viagères* of between 250 and 300 *livres*. His coachman and his cook’s daughter were given small payments and the local parish received 1000 *livres* of alms for the poor. Together, Bienville’s assets seem to have been worth upwards of 60,000 *livres*, implying that though his seigneurial ambitions may have been foiled, he had nonetheless succeeded in creating a modest patrimony to be shared by his many heirs across the French Atlantic World.

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Even a century later, Bienville’s land claims would still cause issues in New Orleans. After the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, the United States Congress, faced with a seemingly impossible mess of French and Spanish land claims, pledged to confirm all claims in their vast new territory, provided that the landowners could prove their proprietorship, residence and improvements, and claimed no more than 640 acres. With the imminent annexation to the United States poised to make lands in Louisiana appreciate enormously, many rushed to

¹⁷⁸ BAnQ, P1000, S3, D2727, « Documents concernant la famille Lemoyne, » ; “Testament de Bienville, 1765,” in Jodoin and Vincent, *Histoire de Longueuil*, p.135-137. For detailed accounts of the death of Bienville, see the conclusion to this dissertation and Charles Edwards O’Neill, “The Death of Bienville,” *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 8, no. 4 (1967): 362–69.

establish their titles, creating a long backlog of court cases and endless litigation that almost crippled the new State of Louisiana.¹⁷⁹ In New Orleans, many of the claimants produced titles including grants once issued to their ancestors by Bienville, either on his private lands or as part of the official settlement program, attesting to his continued influence in the city.¹⁸⁰

More curiously, several of Bienville's distant relatives were amongst these claimants. Beginning in 1838, the descendants of those who had inherited parts of Bienville's estate sought the help of the French government in acquiring documentation that might prove their kinsman's original claims to large areas of New Orleans.¹⁸¹ Few names are mentioned except for a certain Mr. Beaujeu from Lower Canada—perhaps Georges-René Saveuse de Beaujeu, a historian, antiquarian and the *seigneur* of Nouvelle-Longueuil—who in 1847 requested a number of documents “pour faire valoir ses droits à les terres situés aux Etats Unis d’Amérique.”¹⁸² At his behest, many were compiled in France and were filed at the United States Fifth District Court in New Orleans on March 20th, 1849 as evidence for the plaintiffs in a case entitled “Heirs of Bienville vs. the United States.”¹⁸³ Unfortunately, no further

¹⁷⁹ Paul Wallace Gates, “Private Land Claims in the South,” *The Journal of Southern History* 22, no.2 (May, 1956): 183-204.

¹⁸⁰ See for example, *American State Papers: Public Lands*, V.6, p.321, 669, 678-9—, accessed on 22/3/2019 at <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.35112103325702;view=1up;seq=5>.

¹⁸¹ ANOM, G1, V.465, No.46, « D’Autremont au ministre de la Marine, » Paris, 10 juillet 1838.

¹⁸² ANOM, G1, V.465, No. 4,8 « Lettre de Menou, » 20 avril 1847; ANOM, G1, V.465, No.52, « Lettre de Hester Bossange au ministre de la Marine, » Paris, 5 mars 1847. Georges-René Saveuse de Beaujeu was son of Jacques-Philippe Saveuse de Beaujeu, who had inherited Nouvelle-Longueuil in 1807 from his uncle Joseph-Dominique-Emmanuel Le Moyne de Longueuil, son of the first Baron of Longueuil and grand-nephew of Bienville. See Jean-Jacques Lefebvre, “Saveuse de Beaujeu, Georges-René, Comte de Beaujeu,” in *DCB*, vol. 9, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed on 18/3/2019 at : http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/saveuse_de_beaujeu_georges_rene_9E.html.

¹⁸³ For the compilation process see ANOM, G1, V.465, No.49, « Lettre de Menou, » Paris, 19 mai 1847; ANOM, G1, V.465, No. 50, « Bordereau des documents concernant la concession Bienville dont les plans ont été délivrés au comte de Menou, » 27 mai 1847; No. 53 « Fiche explicative jointe à la demande précédente » [1847] ; ANOM, G1, V.465, No. 54, « Convocation envoyée du chef du bureau des archives à M. Bossange, » 10 mars 1847; ANOM, G1, V.465, No. 55, « Convocation envoyée du chef du bureau des archives à M. Bossange, » Paris, 7 mai 1847. The reference to the court case appears on the back of a État now in the Tulane University Land Transactions Collection; Louisiana Research Collection, Manuscripts Collection 506, Box 4, Folder 116 “Heirs of Bienville Land Claim, November 19, 1737.”

evidence of this case appears to have survived, perhaps lost within the notoriously disorganised court system of antebellum Louisiana—which left 1472 claims left unresolved even by 1858—or forgotten amidst the revolutionary turmoil in France in 1848 which saw a rapid overturn of six naval ministers.¹⁸⁴

In any case, this archival undertaking attests to the landed patrimony Bienville had succeeded in creating in New Orleans. During his early career, Bienville had lived in the long shadows cast by both the successes and failures of his elder siblings, unable to have himself recognised a true colonial *seigneur*. In New Orleans, however, he finally realised his ambitions, drawing inspiration from across the French Atlantic World to create an estate that merged notions of feudalism, plantation slavery and courtly prestige into a landed expression of Atlantic nobility. Though repeatedly contested by the French, Spanish and United States governments, the appeal of these land claims persisted long after Bienville's death, with his settlers and descendants alike hoping to benefit from his unique and profound influence on the development of New Orleans.

¹⁸⁴ Gates, "Private Land Claims in the South," p.192.

Chapter VI
Empire of the Sons:
Colonial Elites and Government in the French Atlantic World, 1723-1745

By the mid-eighteenth century, the four surviving Le Moyne brothers—Longueuil, Sérigny, Bienville, and Châteauguay—reached the peak of their long military careers, each competing for governorships across the French Atlantic World. Modelled on the administration of France's most prominent ports, colonial governorships were intended to extend royal authority and power overseas. In theory, each governor was afforded the same deference as the monarch himself and had absolute authority over the colony's military hierarchy and infrastructure, as well as its diplomacy and foreign policy. As military postings, such positions were usually granted to officers who had risen through the naval hierarchy, whether through diligent service to the crown or deft manoeuvring at court. Once appointed, they could count themselves amongst the highest of France's naval elite, second only to the *amiraux*, *chefs d'escadres* and *lieutenants-généraux des armées navales*. Bringing power and prestige, governorships should have attracted many ambitious naval officers, marking the culmination of a lifetime of service to the crown.¹

Before the Regency (1715-1723), however, colonial governorships were viewed with disdain by many naval officers, who saw them only as little more than steppingstones to more prestigious positions in the metropole. Once the Treaty of Utrecht was signed, therefore, the naval ministry profited from the period known as the Long Peace (1713-1744) to encourage more metropolitan officers to take up overseas appointments, offering generous salaries and, frequently, the title of Marquis for those who commanded on the fringes of the French Empire. With these inducements, colonial offices soon became coveted positions, especially since the

¹ Michel Vergé Franceschi, "Les gouverneurs des colonies françaises au XVIII^e siècle : l'exemple antillais et canadien," in Association des historiens modernistes des universités, *Les Européens et les espaces océaniques au XVIII^e siècle, Actes du colloque de 1997* (Paris : Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1997), p.109.

ongoing peace offered few opportunities for officers to prove themselves in traditional ways.² Even so, different postings held different degrees of prestige. Offering many opportunities for self-enrichment, the governorships of Saint Domingue and the Îles du Vent, for example, were considered amongst the most attractive offices, whilst those on the fringes of empire, in places such as Louisiana and Guyana, were much less valued. Over time, a hierarchy of postings developed, and officers would attempt to climb their way up the ladder, continually searching for more prestigious appointments across the French Atlantic World.

Most of this competition, however, was limited to metropolitan officers. Of all the governors appointed in the French Atlantic colonies before 1745, only five were colonial-born.³ Nominations depended on patronage, and metropolitan officers were more able to bend the ears of those in the naval ministry and earn themselves promotions over potentially more experienced and knowledgeable candidates from the colonies who were too distant to have their voices heard. Even officers originally from France, but serving in the colonies, struggled to compete with those with more powerful connections. As a result, colonial officers were perpetually overlooked for the highest commands in the empire, having to content themselves with occupying lower ranks in a colony's leadership, hoping that their service might one day catch the attention of the naval minister or another prominent patron.

² Franceschi, "Les gouverneurs des colonies françaises au XVIIIe siècle," p.113-114.

³ They were Claude Guillouet d'Orvilliers (born in St. Christopher, Governor of Guiana, 1715-1728), Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville, (born in Canada, Governor Louisiana 1733-1743), Antoine Le Moyne de Châteauguay (born in Canada, Governor of Cayenne 1737-1745 and Île Royale 1745-1747), André-Martin de Pointesable (born St. Christopher, Governor of Martinique 1742-1744) and Pierre de Rigaud de Vaudreuil (born in Canada, Governor of Louisiana 1743-1753, Governor of New France 1755-1760). For a list of all colonial administrators during this period James Pritchard, *In Search of Empire: The French in the Americas, 1670-1730*. (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.432-440. For the careers of some of these other colonial-born governors, see ANOM E 337 bis « Martin, André »; Étienne Taillemite, "Guillouet d'Orvilliers, Claude" in *DCB*, vol.2, University Toronto/ University Laval, 2003—, accessed 24/4/2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/guillouet_d_orvilliers_claude_2E.html and W. J. Eccles, "Rigaud de Vaudreuil de Cavagnial, Pierre de, Marquis de Vaudreuil," in *DCB*, vol. 4 University Toronto/ University Laval, 2003—, accessed 24/4/2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/rigaud_de_vaudreuil_de_cavagnial_pierre_de_4E.html.

But this was not entirely the case for the Le Moyne brothers. By 1724, Longueuil, Sérigny, Bienville and Châteauguay had each gone their separate ways, pursuing individual careers across the French Atlantic World. Drawing on the fortunes, experiences, reputations, knowledge and patronage networks that their family had accumulated over the years, each of the brothers continually attempted to renegotiate their position within the empire, grasping at any opportunity to climb the naval hierarchy and attain some semblance of prestige in their career. But, obliged to compete directly with their metropolitan contemporaries, they had varying degrees of success and had to fight for royal recognition at every turn. When the brothers did secure positions of power, they were often not the most prestigious offices. Moreover, these appointments came with no guarantees, and the brothers continually found themselves forced to perform and live up to the expectations of their rank.

Even so, of the five colonial-born governors appointed in this period, two were Le Moynes—Bienville and Châteauguay. Following their career trajectories therefore sheds some valuable light on what it took for a colonial-born officer to compete for and obtain a position of command within the French colonial administration. Several studies have looked at *intendants*, *ordonnateurs* and *commis* across the French Atlantic World, but very few have given a similar focus to colonial governors.⁴ Working backwards from the exceptions to the rule, this chapter uses the careers of the four remaining Le Moyne brothers between 1724 and 1745 to highlight

⁴ Jean-Claude Dubé, *Les intendants de la Nouvelle-France*, (Montréal: Fides, 1984) ; Marie-Eve Ouellet *Le métier d'intendant en France et en Nouvelle-France au XVIIIe siècle* (Québec: Septentrion, 2018); Sebastien Didier "Entre ville et campagnes, les subdélégués de l'intendance canadienne (1675-1763)," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 70, Numéro 1-2, (2016), p.113-137; Céline Melisson, "Procurer la paix, le repos et l'abondance. Les officiers de Plume de l'Amérique française entre 1669 et 1765" (PhD diss., Université de Tours, 2012) ; Donald Jile Lemieux, "The Office of 'Commissaire Ordonnateur' in French Louisiana, 1731-1763: A Study in French Colonial Administration" (PhD diss., Louisiana State University, 1972); Alexandre Dubé, "Making a Career out of the Atlantic: Louisiana's Plume," in Cécile Vidal, *Louisiana: Crossroads of the Atlantic World*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014): 44-67. Comparatively, for only a handful of works on French governors. Robert R. Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite: The Provincial Governors of Early Modern France* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978) and Vergé Franceschi, "Les gouverneurs des colonies françaises au XVIIIe siècle."

the qualities, talents, skills and heritage that the *ministre de la Marine* privileged in choosing colonial governors, and question why, on certain occasions, he was willing to bend the rules and give colonial-born officers a chance at command.

Indeed, this final phase in the Le Moyne brothers' careers came at a time of reform in the French Atlantic World, coinciding almost exactly with the tenure of Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux de Maurepas as *secrétaire d'État à la Marine*.⁵ Only twenty-two years old when he took office, the young minister had a lot to prove. Following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather, Louis and Jérôme de Pontchartrain, he also attempted to assert his influence over the French navy through loyal clienteles. Preparing for another war with Britain, Maurepas paid a great deal of attention to who served him and why, deploying men on the ground who could fulfil his imperial vision and bring their colonies into line with his imperial vision.⁶ Following the attempts of the remaining Le Moyne brothers to manoeuvre within this patrimonial system, this chapter thus also offers a valuable window into Maurepas' imperial strategy in these decades of peace, highlighting how his priorities and preferences for colonial administrators—in particular governors—evolved, adapting to the changes in imperial dynamics during his ministerial tenure.

“Pour la finance de l'office de Gouverneur pour le Roi: ” Joseph Le Moyne de Sérigny, Governor of Rochefort

In August 1723, the mayor of Rochefort, Thimothée Daniaud, assembled the local councillors and aldermen at the Hôtel de Ville to ratify the appointment of Joseph Le Moyne de Sérigny as the port's new governor. Despite his Canadian heritage, Sérigny had proven himself throughout his long career, earning appointments as a *Chevalier de l'Ordre de Saint Louis*,

⁵ Maurice Filion, *Maurepas: Ministre de Louis XV (1715-1749)* (Montréal: Les Éditions Leméac, 1967) p.44.

⁶ John C. Rule, “The Maurepas Papers: Portrait of a Minister,” *French Historical Studies* 4, no. 1 (1965): 103–7; John C. Rule, “Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux, Comte de Pontchartrain et Maurepas: Reflections on His Life and His Papers,” *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 6, no. 4 (1965): 365–77.

capitaine de vaisseau, and co-commandant of Louisiana.⁷ Indeed, when called before the Keeper of Seals, Joseph Fleuriau d'Armenonville, to swear to uphold this post in the name of Louis XV, Sérigny was recognised for his “suffisance, loyauté, prudence, capacité, expérience, fidélité et affection à notre service.” But with the royal coffers running low after a costly war, the monarch cared little about Sérigny's origins or service record. Much more valuable was the 44,000 *livres* he had pledged to pay “pour la finance de l'office.”⁸ Once the payment was ratified, therefore, Sérigny officially took up office as Governor of Rochefort.⁹

Municipal governorships were first issued in 1696 in an attempt to provide each of France's walled cities with competent officers to oversee their militias whilst also increasing state revenues at a time of war.¹⁰ Offering considerable privileges and honours to those who held them as well as their descendants, these offices proved very popular and were frequently sold off by the treasury in times of great need. Between 1696 and 1722, the offices were repeatedly issued and suppressed according to the fluctuations of war and peace in Europe.¹¹ In August 1722, however, the collapse of John Law's financial system prompted a new wave of venality to

⁷ LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, p.60-61, « Provisions de Chevalier de l'ordre Militaire de St Louis Pour le S^r de Serigny Lieutenant de V^{au}, » 28 juin 1718 ; LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, « Commission de capitaine de vaisseau Pour M. De Sérigny, » 1 février 1720.

⁸ LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, p.77-79, « Provisions de gouverneur de la ville de Rochefort pour Joseph LeMoyne de Sérigny. Copie certifié conforme, » 4 juin 1723.

⁹ LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, p.80-81, « “Extrait du registre des délibérations de la mairie de Rochefort (Aunis) p^r 1720. Délibération qui ordonne l'enregistrement des provisions de Mr de Sérigny en qualité de Gouverneur pour le Roi en cette Ville. Copie certifiée conforme,” 26 août 1723 ; Jean-Théodore Viaud, *Histoire de la Ville et du port de Rochefort*, V.1 (Rochefort: Mme Honorine Fleury, Libraire-Éditeur, 1845) —, accessed on 5/12/2019 via *Gallica* <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k9613595p>.

¹⁰ « Edit du Roy Portant création des Offices de Gouverneurs Hereditaires dans les Villes close du Royaume, Donné a Versailles au mois d'Aoust. Registré en Parlement le 6 Septembre 1696, » in *Recueil des differens Edits de Création des offices de gouverneurs, lieutenans de Roy, Maires, Lieutenans de Maires, Echevins, Consuls, Jurats, Capitouls, Asseseurs, Secretaires des Greffiers des Hôtels de Ville & leurs Controlleurs, Anciens, Mitrineaux, & Alternatifs-Mitriennaux, & ceux d'Avocats & Procureurs du Roy desdites Hôtels de Villes, &c.*, (Paris, Veuve Saugrain & Pierre Prault, 1734) —, accessed on 5/12/2019 via *Gallica*, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k97702197>.

¹¹ Municipal Governorships were first suppressed three years after the Treaty of Ryswick in 1700 but were reissued again in 1708 at the peak of the War of the Spanish Succession, alongside the new positions of municipal *lieutenant du roi* and *major* to increase state funding. Once the crown had begun to recuperate its wartime debts after the Treaty of Utrecht, the offices were 1717. For the edicts see *Recueil des differens Edits de Création des offices*.

flood France.¹² In an attempt to pay off France's debts with rapidly depreciating paper money, the Regency Council re-opened a variety of municipal offices, including governorships, in the towns which had previously held them as well as those which had not yet been afforded the opportunity. Amongst the latter was Rochefort which, though founded as an arsenal in 1665, had only recently begun to flourish as a town in its own right.¹³ As was the case in many other municipalities across France, Rochefort's government likely revelled at this opportunity to choose their own officials, rather than having them imposed. Working with the treasury, they readily accepted payments in various forms of paper money, taking it at its real, and not face value—a particularly cheap way to assure their jurisdictional autonomy.¹⁴

For Sérigny, this governorship presented a rare career opportunity. Between 1713 and 1744 the lack of inter-imperial conflict saw France's military and naval hierarchies become stagnant gerontocracies where promotions were increasingly hard to secure.¹⁵ Thanks to his family connections to Louisiana, Sérigny had been chosen to command the fleet sent to capture Pensacola from the Spanish during the War of Quadruple Alliance, which had earned him promotion to *capitaine de vaisseau* in February 1720.¹⁶ Outside of another war, however, it was unlikely that he would be given another chance to climb the naval hierarchy. Even though he had settled down near Rochefort, closer to the halls of power in Paris and Versailles, he would still

¹² « Édit portant création et rétablissement des officiers municipaux et autres, » in Athanase-Jean-Léger Jourdan, Decrusy, François André Isambert *Recueil Général des Anciennes Lois Françaises depuis l'an 420 jusqu'à la Révolution de 1789*. Vol. 21 1715-1737 (Paris: Librairie de Plon Frères, 1826?) p.209-210. William Doyle, *Venality: The Sale of Offices in Eighteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) p.49-50.

¹³ Sébastien Martin, *Rochefort arsenal des colonies : XVIIIe siècle*. (Rennes : Presses Univ. de Rennes, 2015.)

¹⁴ Nora Temple, "The Control and Exploitation of French Towns During the Ancien Régime," *History* 51, n.171 (1966): 16-34, p.25; Doyle, *Venality*, p.50.

¹⁵ See Michel Vergé-Franceschi, "Les officiers généraux de la marine royale en 1715," *Revue Historique* 273, Fasc. 1 (553) (Janvier-Mars 1985) : 131-157 and "Les officiers généraux de la Marine royale (1669-1774)," *Revue Historique* 278, Fasc. 2 (564) (Octobre-Décembre 1987) : 335-360 p.353-354.

¹⁶ LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, p.62, « Commission de capitaine de vaisseau pour M. de Sérigny, » 1 février 1720.

have to compete for promotion with the many other equally qualified metropolitan naval officers. Municipal governorships, however, were open to anyone with noble status, regardless of the origins of their titles. Once appointed, a municipal governor was distinguished from their fellow officers by privileges which granted them precedence over all other town officials in processions, public assemblies, and church services, and gave them command over all officers and troops—whether from the army or the navy—stationed in their jurisdiction.¹⁷ Purchasing the governorship of Rochefort thus offered the colonial-born Sérigny a chance to rise above his station and advance his career in the metropole without having to contend with his contemporaries for a prestigious office that was recognised across the French Atlantic World.

Besides prestige, the office also presented Sérigny with a sound financial investment. Notarial records suggest that, during the heyday of John Law's system, Sérigny had made several payments with notes issued by the Banque Royale. After the system crashed, however, the value of these notes had plummeted, leaving Sérigny to pay the difference by other means.¹⁸ Holding onto tens of thousands of *livres* in increasingly worthless notes, Sérigny perhaps viewed purchasing the governorship as a way to get rid of his rapidly depreciating paper money whilst earning a small return on his investment. At the very least, the governorship offered an annual salary of 800 *livres*, which, whilst meagre, was better than losing more money. Moreover, these wages could not be seized by any creditor unless they had lent the titleholder money to purchase

¹⁷ « Arrêt du Conseil d'État du Roy, Portant Reglement pour les privileges, droits & préceances des Offices de Gouverneurs, & Lieutenans de Roy, rétablis par l'Edit du mois d'Août 1722, » 18 octobre 1723 in *Recueil des Edits, Declarations, Ordonnances, Lettres Patentes et Arrêts du Conseil d'Etat du Roi rendus depuis mil sept cents vingt-un jusques & compris mil sept cents vingt-six*. Vol.8 (Dijon, L'Imprimeur du Roy, 1727) p.136 —, accessed 3/12/2019 at <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k9631173n> ; « Edit du Roy Portant création des Offices de Gouverneurs Hereditaires dans les Villes close du Royaume » 6 septembre 1696.

¹⁸ One record reveals that Sérigny and Marthe-Élizabeth had paid a debt of 10,000 *livres* to the enseigne Antoine Vitalis in paper money, but after the crash were obliged to pay Vitalis and his wife a *rente viagère* of 200 *livres* per annum to make up the difference. See ACM, 3^E, 33/22, f.232-233, « Constitution d'une rente viagère par Joseph Le Moyne...et Marthe Elizabeth Héron, » 23 octobre 1722.

the office—an appealing prospect as the *Commission Extraordinaire* launched its inquiries into the *armement d'Iberville* in early 1723, putting Sérigny's ill-gotten gains back in the spotlight.¹⁹ Purchasing the office, Sérigny probably hoped to earn a small income and offer some protection to his family's existing wealth and status.

Finally, the hereditary nature of the governorship may also have been enticing. After his father's noble titles were formally recognised by the *Cour des Aides* in 1717, Sérigny began consolidating his seigneurial privileges in the Aunis region, laying the foundations for his eventual retirement and his family's future.²⁰ Whilst he was fighting at Pensacola in 1720, his wife Marthe-Élizabeth Héron worked on his behalf to confirm his rights to high justice in the parishes of Loire, Breuil-Magné, Saint Hippolyte and Vergeroux—located between Rochefort and his own estates at Loire-les-Marais—as well as low, middle and high justice over the increasingly depleted forest of Rochefort. Three years later, and just two months before his appointment as governor, these titles were confirmed, effectively granting Sérigny seigneurial control over most of the lands surrounding his new gubernatorial jurisdiction.²¹ Landed property, however, was in theory a more precarious investment than a venal office. Completely indivisible, venal offices appealed to those who wished to provide their emerging dynasty with some stability by acquiring privileges that could be inherited intact.²² As a father of three, Sérigny knew his estates would eventually be divided and perhaps wished to offer his heirs at least one

¹⁹ Both the original 1696 Edict and the 1708 reissue declared that “Ne pourront les gages desdits Gouverneurs estre saisis par aucun creancier que par ceux qui auront presté leurs deniers pour l'acquisition desdit Offices.” « Edit du Roy portant création des Offices des Gouverneurs Hereditaires. 6 septembre 1696, » and « Edit du Roy portant rétablissement des Offices de Gouverneurs des Villes. Décembre 1708, » in *Recueil des differens Edits de Création des offices*.

²⁰ LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, p.1-6, « Permission aux S^{rs} Lemoine de faire enregistrer en la Cour de Parlement et Cour des Aydes les Lettres de Noblesse accordées au mois de mars 1668 à Charles Lemoine de Longueüil et enregistrées à la Chambre des Comptes le 21 février 1680. »

²¹ ACM, 3^E, 33/20, f.541-542v, « Déclaration par Marthe Elizabeth Héron, » 27 septembre 1720; ACM, 3^E, 33/23, f.117-118v, « Sommutation par dame Marthe Elizabeth Héron, » 29 avril 1723.

²² Doyle, *Venality*, p.157.

indivisible form of patrimony which could bring them prestige. Building his own dynasty in western France, Sérigny may thus have invested in the office not only to further his family's regional influence but also guarantee it for years to come.

Once Governor of Rochefort, Sérigny furthered his attempts to increase his family's prestige and influence in western France. In December 1723, his eldest daughter, Catherine-Élizabeth, married Louis-Philippe de Rigaud, Comte de Vaudreuil—a *lieutenant de vaisseau* and the eldest son of the Governor of New France.²³ Earlier that year Sérigny and Louis-Philippe had both signed as witnesses at the marriage of Antoine Pascaud and Elizabeth Butler in La Rochelle, where they had likely discussed the union of their houses.²⁴ Bringing together two prominent naval families, the marriage offered a strategic alliance that could bring prestige and opportunity to all its members. But more than this, the wedding was seemingly deliberately timed to mark Sérigny's entry into the upper echelons of the metropolitan naval elite. Amongst the signatories on the wedding certificate were several prominent naval figures including Louis de Béthune, Catherine-Élizabeth's step-uncle and the *chef d'escadre* for Picardie, Charles de Sainte-Maure, *lieutenant général des armées navales*, and François Beauharnois, Intendant of Rochefort, former Intendant of New France and brother of the future Governor of New France.²⁵ Witnesses for marriage ceremonies were typically drawn from a higher social rank, and inviting them was often a way to court useful allies, patrons and protectors.²⁶ Carefully orchestrating this ceremony, Sérigny signalled his ambitions to become one of the most notable naval officers in Rochefort.

²³ ACM, 3^E, 33/23, f.436-436, « Contrat de mariage entre Louis Philippe de Rigaud, comte de Vaudreuil et Catherine Elizabeth Le Moyne, » 22 décembre 1723.

²⁴ ACM, 3^E, 1851, « Contrat de mariage entre Anthoine Pascaud et Elizabeth Butler, » 2 janvier 1723.

²⁵ Michel Vergé-Franceschi, *Les officiers généraux de la Marine royale (1715-1774)* V.1 (Paris : Librairie d'Inde, 1990), p.2228, 2245, 2228 ; Jean-Claude Dubé, "Beauharnois de la Chaussaye, François de, Baron de Beauville," in *DCB*, vol. 3, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed 9/12/2019, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/beauharnois_de_la_chaussaye_francois_de_3E.html.

²⁶ Sébastien Jahan, "Parenté et stratification sociale : Les témoins aux contrats de mariage dans la France du centre-ouest (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles)" in Scarlett Beauvalet-Boutouyrie, Vincent Gourdon et François-Joseph Ruggiu eds.,

Less than a year being reopened, however, municipal governorships were once again abolished across France. Those affected were compensated with *rentes* drawn upon the towns and cities where they had been appointed.²⁷ Whilst most of Sérigny's biographers have assumed that he held the governorship until his death, it actually seems that he also fell victim to this wave of venal suppression.²⁸ Whereas notarial documents signed in 1723 and 1724 referred to him as the port's governor, those penned after 1724 only named him as a "capitaine des vaisseaux en ce port de Rochefort."²⁹ Even when municipal offices were reopened in 1733 to finance the War of the Polish Succession (1733-1735), there is no evidence that Sérigny took the chance to repurchase the governorship. After his death in 1734, an inventory of his estate recorded him only as a *Chevalier de l'Ordre de Saint Louis* and *capitaine de vaisseau*.³⁰ Indeed, Sérigny appears to have been Rochefort's last governor, for the position was eventually replaced by a *commandant* in 1733, a rank first held by Charles de Saint-Maure.³¹

No evidence of Sérigny's compensation survives, but it was unlikely to have been considerable. Not long after being removed from power, he began to make concerted efforts to protect his seigneurial incomes, suggesting a heightened concern for his financial wellbeing.

Liens sociaux et actes notariés dans le monde urbain en France et en Europe (XVIe-XVIIIe siècles) (Paris : Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2004) : 187-205.

²⁷ Doyle, *Venality*, p.50, 91. See also « Edit du Roy portant Rétablissement des Offices de Gouverneurs » November 1733 in *Recueil des differens Edits de Création des offices de gouverneurs*.

²⁸ This assertion has been repeated in several biographies, which tend to gloss over Sérigny's career after 1724. See for, example, Alex Jodoin and J. L. Vincent, *Histoire de Longueuil et de la famille de Longueuil* (Montreal: Imprimerie Gebhardt-Berthiaume, 1889), p.153 and Bernard Pothier, « Joseph Le Moyne de Sérigny », *DCB*, V.2.

²⁹ ACM, 3^E, 33/24, f.239-240v, « Bail à ferme de 3 années accordé par Joseph Le Moyne, » 26 mai 1724 ; ACM, 3^E, 33/24, f.264-265v, « Bail à rentes accordé par Joseph Le Moyne, » 10 juin 1724.

³⁰ ACM, 3^E, 33/41, f.103-118, « Inventaire des effets délaissé par feu Joseph Le Moyne, écuyer, seigneur de Sérigny et de Loire, » 23 octobre 1734.

³¹ Théodore de Blois' *Histoire de Rochefort*, published in 1733, also only lists Sérigny as a *capitaine de vaisseau* whilst Charles de Saint-Maure is listed as the port's *commandant*. Théodore de Blois, *Histoire de Rochefort, contenant l'établissement de cette ville, de son port, et arsenal de marine, et les antiquitez de son château* (Paris: Chez Briasson, 1733), p.174—, accessed on 12/12/2019 via Gallica

<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k1513014m?rk=21459;2>. On naval *commandants*, see James Pritchard *Louis XIV's Navy 1748-1762: A Study of Organization and Administration*, (Kingston, Ont.: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987) p. 59, 96.

Indeed, when several of Rochefort's councillors contested his claims to lands around the port in 1725, Sérigny reluctantly agreed to a compromise "pour Le bien de la paix," agreeing to relinquish most of his judicial rights in return for his continued exercise of those rights "utiles pour les matieres fiscales daubaines et des herances Et batardise,"—especially the right to offer and collect *rentes* and *censives*.³² For over a decade, Sérigny continued to lease out his lands, but this does not seem to have been enough to fully compensate for his poor investments.³³ When his estates were divided between his sons in 1734, both men claimed large sums for the payment of outstanding dowries and loans, suggesting that they might have been left unpaid due to the financial difficulties their father had experienced after 1724.³⁴

Once relieved of office, Sérigny was dragged back into naval service. In 1727, the sixty-year-old officer was called to serve as the *capitaine en second* aboard the *Ardent*, part of a fleet led by the Marquis d'Ô to deal with the Barbary pirates raiding the coasts of Provence.³⁵ Four years later, he was given command of the *François* and tasked with delivering supplies to Martinique, before sailing on to Saint Domingue and Saint Croix, where he was ordered to survey British movements on the latter island and enforce its neutrality if necessary.³⁶ Realising

³² LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, p.82-87, « Désistement par Joseph Lemoyne de Sérigny "de la justice haute, moyenne et basse, sur tout le terrain de la forêt situé dans la paroisse de Notre-Dame de Rochefort" en faveur de la Chambre du Palais royal de Rochefort, » 5 juin 1725.

³³ ACM, 3^E, 22/26, f.276-276v, « Ferme accordé par Joseph Le Moyne, » 30 avril 1725 ; ACM, 3^E, 33/31, f.237-238, « Bail à métairie, » 19 avril 1727; ACM, 3^E, 33/31, f.241-242, « Ferme par Joseph Le Moyne,, » 19 avril 1727; ACM, 3^E, 33/335, f.407-408v, « Bail à métairie, » 17 novembre 1729 ; ACM, 3^E, 33/38, f.84-85, « Bail à métairie, » 7 mars 1732 ; ACM, 3^E, 33/39, f.175-176v, « Bail à métairie, » 1 juin 1732.

³⁴ LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, p.91-103, « Transaction entre Pierre-Joseph Le Moyne de Sérigny et Jean Honoré Xavier Le Moyne de Sérigny, » 30 janvier 1735 and LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, p.107-118, « Acte de partage entre Joseph LeMoyne et Jean Honoré François Xavier LeMoyne de Sérigny, » 22 juillet 1739.

³⁵ LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, p.129-147, « Etat des services du S^r de Sérigny capitaine de vaisseau des ses frères du S^r de Sérigny son fils major de la Marine, » [1754?]. The Marquis D'Ô's campaign was relatively unsuccessful in combating piracy but served as an effective show of French force in the Mediterranean as Britain and Spain fought over Gibraltar. For the campaign, see AM, B4, V.39, f.302, « Instructions pour le marquis d'O, » ; AM, B4, V.39, f.371, « Lettre du marquis d'O, » ; Michel Vergé-Franceschi, *La Marine Française Au XVIIIe Siècle: Guerres, Administration, Exploration* (Paris: SEDES, 1996.), p.95.

³⁶ ANOM, C8A, V.42, f.67-68, « Champigny de Noroy au ministre, » 30 septembre 1731. Sérigny's voyage proved unnecessary, France sold Saint Croix to the Danish in 1733. He did, however, take latitudinal measurements which were later used by the cartographer Jacques-Nicolas Bellin. See Jacques-Nicolas Bellin, *Observations sur la*

that these missions would not further his own career, however, Sérigny followed the Le Moyne tradition of using his rank to advance his kinsmen and put them in a better position to climb the naval hierarchy themselves. On both the *Ardent* and the *François*, therefore, he nominated his son-in-law Louis-Philippe de Vaudreuil as his *lieutenant*, offering him the chance to serve on campaigns more prestigious than his earlier assignments on transatlantic supply voyages.

Perhaps because of this familial patronage, Louis-Philippe was given command of the *Éléphant* in 1729, which transported the new Intendant of New France, Gilles Hocquart, to Quebec. Returning the favour, Louis-Philippe took his brother-in-law Pierre-Joseph-Charles-Antoine de Sérigny, a *garde marine*, under his wing for the mission. Famously, however, this voyage ended in a shipwreck near L'Île aux Grues on September 1st, 1729.³⁷ No-one perished in this disaster, and the ship's officers were in fact praised for their life-saving actions. Even so, on his return to Rochefort, Louis-Philippe was tried by a court martial led by none other than Charles de Saint-Maure. As a patron of the Vaudreuil-Sérigny clan, it is no surprise that on March 7th, 1730, Saint-Maure declared that Louis-Philippe was "entièrement absous de l'information contre lui." With this incident behind him, Louis-Philippe rose through the ranks, promoted to *chef d'escadre* in 1748 and *lieutenant général des armées navales* in 1753, before retiring as the *commandant* at Rochefort until his death in 1763. Following in his footsteps, his sons Louis-Philippe and Jean-Louis also served with distinction in the War of American Independence, bringing great honour to the Vaudreuil-Sérigny clan.³⁸

construction de la carte de l'Océan Occidental: pour servir aux vaisseaux du Roi (Paris, 1751), accessed 10/1/2020 via Gallica <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k1075074z>.

³⁷ANOM, C11A, V.51, f.476-478v, « Procès-verbal du naufrage du vaisseau du roi l'Éléphant, » 12 septembre 1729 ; ANOM, C11A, V.51, f.237-239v, « Procès-verbal du naufrage de l'Éléphant et du sauvetage de ses effets, » 12 septembre 1729.

³⁸ Michel Vergé-Franceschi, *Les officiers généraux de la Marine royale*, p.1709-1720; Étienne Taillemite, "Rigaud de Vaudreuil, Louis-Philippe de, Marquis de Vaudreuil," in *DCB*, vol. 3, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 10/1/2020 at http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/rigaud_de_vaudreuil_louis_philippe_de_3E.html.

Trained by his brother-in-law, Pierre-Joseph also had an illustrious career. In the 1730s, he commanded several *vaisseaux du roi* on supply missions to Canada, Martinique, and Louisiana. In 1738, he captained the *Orox* which delivered many of the troops sent from France for his uncle Bienville's upcoming campaign against the Chickasaw. After the outbreak of the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748), Pierre-Joseph earned his promotion to *capitaine de vaisseau* and major of Rochefort in 1745. He served briefly in expedition led by the Duc d'Anville to Acadia in 1746, before returning to take up his new command, which he held until his death in 1753.³⁹ His younger brother, Jean-Honoré-François-Xavier, also operated out of Rochefort, at first taking on many assignments given to him by Vaudreuil, but then serving on his own merits in several campaigns during the Seven Years' War.⁴⁰ Keeping the family tradition alive, each of their sons would each also either assume positions of command or marry into naval dynasties across the French Atlantic, with one—Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Sérigny—even appointed as mayor of Rochefort in 1813.⁴¹ Whilst serving as Governor of Rochefort might not have been the way to get there, on September 12th, 1734, Sérigny thus died having nevertheless established a respectable naval dynasty in western France.

**“Le Gouverneur General ne doit point etre Canadien ni avoir de parens au Canada:”
Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil, Interim Governor of New France**

On October 10th, 1725, Governor Philippe Rigaud de Vaudreuil died in Quebec. Having spent his final decade undermining the British gains in the Treaty of Utrecht, the governor's death left the colony in a precarious situation, as smouldering tensions with the Mesquakie (Fox),

³⁹ « Etat des services du S^r de Sérigny capitaine de vaisseau des ses frères du S^r de Sérigny son fils major de la Marine, » ; ANOM, C13A, V.23, f.56v, « Mémoire du Roy au Sieur de Bienville sur les opérations de l'entreprise qu'il doit faire contre les Chicachas, » [1737]; Vergé Franceschi, “Les officiers généraux de la marine,” p. 1718, 1720.

⁴⁰ LAC, MG18, H14, V.171-181, « Etat des services de Messieurs de Serigny, » 5 mai 1818.

⁴¹ Blois, *Histoire de la ville et du port de Rochefort*, V.2 p.515-518.

Haudenosaunee, Abenaki and British threatened to again engulf it in the flames of war.⁴² With Canada caught between a rock and a hard place, the new naval minister, Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux de Maurepas, needed to find a governor able to steer the colony through this difficult time. Many candidates from across the French Atlantic World put their name forward for the position, including Joseph Montbeton de Brouillan, *dit* Saint Ovide, Governor of Île Royale, Jacques-Charles Bochart de Champigny, Governor of Martinique, and Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil, Governor of Montreal.⁴³ Already serving as interim Governor of New France, Longueuil was sure that he would beat out his esteemed competition. In Canada, promotions tended to be based on seniority, as a way of avoiding favouritism.⁴⁴ Before Longueuil, both Callières and Vaudreuil had become governor after climbing the ranks of the colony's leadership. Too old and too established in Canada to serve elsewhere, Longueuil had set his sights on a similar trajectory and expected to be rewarded for his years of service with the colony's most prestigious command. Writing to the new minister, he insisted that he be granted "la même distinction dont il a plû a Sa Maiesté de recompenser les Services de plusieurs de mes predecesseurs dans le Gouvernement de Montreal."⁴⁵

⁴² The tensions stirred by Vaudreuil have been covered extensively by historians of New France. For a general overview of the period after the Treaty of Utrecht see Yves F. Zoltvany, *Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil: Governor of New France, 1703-1725* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1974), p.199, 206-7 and Dale Miquelon, *New France 1701-1744: "A Supplement to Europe"* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987). For more on the tensions with the Mesquakie, see Brett Rushforth, "Slavery, the Fox Wars, and the Limits of Alliance," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 63, no. 1 (2006): 53–80. For disputes with the Haudenosaunee Confederacy see Peter Laurence Cook, "Les Voyes de Douceur et d'Insinuation: French-Amerindian Diplomacy on New France's Western Frontier, 1703-1725" (Master's thesis, University of Ottawa, 1993), p.14-15 and Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), p.248-250. For the Abenaki conflict with the British, sponsored by Vaudreuil see Jeffers Lennox, *Homelands and Empires: Indigenous Spaces, Imperial Fictions, and Competition for Territory in Northeastern North America, 1690-1763* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), pp.46-87.

⁴³ Sydney Drysdale Standen, "Charles, Marquis De Beauharnais De La Boische, Governor General of New France, 1726-1747." (PhD, University of Toronto, 1975), p.106-107

⁴⁴ Jay Cassel, *The Troupes de La Marine in Canada, 1683-1760: Men and Material* (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 1987), p.111-112.

⁴⁵ ANOM, C11A, V.47, f.196-197, « Lettre de Longueuil au ministre, » Québec, 21 octobre 1725. For Longueuil's brief tenure as Interim Governor of New France, see ANOM, C11A, V.47, f.121-135, « Lettre de Longueuil et Bégon au ministre, » 31 octobre 1725 ; ANOM, C11A, V.47, f.200-204v, « Discours de Longueuil aux Iroquois

In 1724, however, an anonymous *mémoire* had circulated at Versailles, outlining the best course of action to curtail British expansion in North America.⁴⁶ Amidst its many suggestions for the government of New France, the *mémoire* argued that the “Gouverneur General ne doit point estre Canadien ni avoir de parens au Canada, mais estre envoyé de France.”⁴⁷ Certain historians have claimed that the “anti-Canadian” sentiment displayed in this *mémoire* was a direct reaction to the alleged corruption during Vaudreuil’s tenure. Indeed, many contemporaries accused Vaudreuil of stirring up conflict with the Mesquakie to benefit Canadian fur traders, as well as denying their Louisianan rivals access to the markets of the *pays d’en haut*. In late 1724, Maurepas reportedly reprimanded the governor for his behaviour, but his letter was lost in the shipwreck of the *Chameau* in August 1725.⁴⁸ As a result, these historians argue, once Vaudreuil died, Maurepas was reluctant to confirm Longueuil as Governor of New France, fearing that his Canadian birth and connections would only serve to deepen this sort of favouritism and factionalism. Following the suggestions outlined in *mémoire*, they claim, the minister chose to overlook Longueuil and employ a metropolitan officer in his place—his distant relative Charles Beauharnois de la Boiche.⁴⁹

Whilst he could not compete with Longueuil’s colonial knowledge and experience, Beauharnois was neither inexperienced nor unfamiliar with North America. A distant relative of

assemblés au village des Onontagués, » [1725]; ANOM, C11A, V.47, f.442-448, « Discours des Iroquois qui sont venus pleurer la mort de Ramezay, » 10 septembre 1725; ANOM, C11A, V.47, f.62-67, « Lettre de Longueuil et Bégon au ministre, » 31 octobre 1725.

⁴⁶ Jean-Baptiste-Antoine Ferland has speculated that this anonymous *mémoire* was written by a priest from Saint-Lazare with a deep knowledge of Canada. See Jean-Baptiste Antoine Ferland, *Cours d’histoire du Canada*. V.2 (Québec, N. S Hardy, 1882) p.428-429.

⁴⁷ ANOM, C11A, V.47, f.498, « Mémoire sur le Canada, » [1725].

⁴⁸ Zoltany, *Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil*, p.205-206; Pritchard, *In Search of Empire*, p.406.

⁴⁹ Most notably, this notion is espoused by the biographers of Vaudreuil, Beauharnois and Longueuil respectively. Zoltany, *Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil*, p.208; Standen, “Charles, Marquis De Beauharnois De La Boische” p.107; Céline Dupré, “Le Moyne de Longueuil, Charles” in *DCB*, V.2. For Beauharnois appointment see ANOM, B, V.49, f.627v, « Mémoire du Roy pour servir d’instruction au S^r Marquis de Beauharnois, Gouverneur et Lieutenant général de la Nouvelle France, » Versailles, 7 mai 1726.

the Phélypeaux family, Beauharnois had first entered the navy in 1691 under the tenure of his kinsman Louis de Pontchartrain, earning his stripes in the Wars of the League of Augsburg and Spanish Succession.⁵⁰ Over the years, he had served under René Duguay Trouin and the Comte de Toulouse and had even accompanied Iberville on his first voyage to the Gulf of Mexico.⁵¹ Meanwhile, both his younger brother François Beauharnois and his brother-in-law Michel Bégon had served as Intendant of New France, and by the time of Beauharnois' appointment, Bégon still lived in Quebec with his wife Jeanne-Elisabeth de Beauharnois.⁵² Placing his trust in his relative, Maurepas believed that Beauharnois would be able to address Canada's many problems with "le plus de prudence, de fermeté et la plus vive attention."⁵³

Rather than a targeted response to Canadian politics, therefore, it seems that Maurepas' decision to appoint Beauharnois was instead an attempt to assert his newfound ministerial authority in Canada by installing a loyal client in a prominent position of command. Only five months earlier, on September 7th, 1723, Maurepas had assumed sole control over the *bureaux de la Marine* following the death of his father-in-law and steward Louis Phélypeaux de la Vrillière.⁵⁴ Young and untested, the new minister needed to assert his control quickly by creating loyal clienteles, but found himself faced with a growing naval gerontocracy who did not need, nor desire, his favour. The stagnation of naval promotions, however, had also fostered a new generation of highly ambitious junior officers who were desperate to prove themselves.

⁵⁰ The Beauharnois and Phélypeaux clans had been joined in 1605 by the marriage of Anne de Beauharnois and Paul Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain. For biographies of Beauharnois see Standen, "Charles, Marquis De Beauharnais De La Boische" and "Beauharnois de la Boische, Charles de, Marquis de Beauharnois" in *DCB*, vol. 3, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 21/8/2019 http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/beauharnois_de_la_boische_charles_de_3E.html.

⁵¹ Beauharnois served aboard the *Poly* on Iberville's first voyage to Louisiana in 1698-1699.

⁵² Jean-Claude Dubé, "Beauharnois de la Chaussaye, François de, Baron de Beauville" in *DCB*, vol. 3, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 21/8/2019, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/beauharnois_de_la_chaussaye_francois_de_3E.html.

⁵³ « Mémoire du Roy pour servir d'instruction au S^r Marquis de Beauharnois, » 7 mai 1726.

⁵⁴ Filion, *Maurepas*, p.44.

Maurepas thus turned his attention towards them, advancing their careers in the hopes that they would be well positioned to take over command of the *Marine* once the old guard retired or died. Unable to offer them advancement in the metropole, Maurepas looked towards the colonies, hoping they might prove valuable training grounds for this new generation of clients. Over the next two decades, Maurepas dispatched many of his new clients across the French Atlantic World, offering them prestigious appointments whilst they waited for promotion in the metropole. Once the War of the Austrian Succession broke out in 1744, many of these clients—Beauharnois included—were well trained and ready to command, and were promoted to *chef d'escadre*, tasked with leading France's fleets throughout the conflict.⁵⁵

Of course, in the meantime, installing these clients across the empire had the added benefit of strengthening the ties between the colonies and the naval ministry. Eager to assert his newfound authority, Maurepas appears to have wanted to reinstate a sense of hierarchy within the navy, positioning himself definitively at the top at the ministry's patronage network. As Alexandre Dubé has shown, however, the *Marine* was not defined by a single vertical hierarchy, but a latticework of horizontal networks, each of which allowed naval officials and officers a chance to seek patrons outside of the traditional chain of command.⁵⁶ Many of these networks existed in the colonies themselves, where "horizontal" ties of kinship, marriage, business and alliance worked to undermine a more theoretical "vertical" hierarchy of power. Though these local networks did not prompt the same fear of "creolisation" that troubled the Spanish crown, the publication of the 1725 *mémoire* seems to suggest that they were still viewed as a threat to

⁵⁵ On Maurepas' use of colonial governorships as steppingstones for his clients as they advanced towards eventual metropolitan promotion, see Kenneth J Banks, *Chasing Empire across the Sea Communications and the State in the French Atlantic, 1713-1763* (Montreal; Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), p.194 and James Pritchard, "The Naval Career of a Colonial Governor: Charles de Thubières, Marquis de Caylus, 1698-1750," *Proceedings of the Meeting of the French Colonial Historical Society* 16 (1992):12-23.

⁵⁶ Banks, *Chasing Empire*, p.187; Alexandre Dubé, "S'appropriier L'atlantique: Quelques Réflexions Autour De Chasing Empire Across the Sea, De Kenneth Banks," *French Colonial History* 6 (2005): 33-44, p.38-39.

imperial ambitions.⁵⁷ In the case of Canada, therefore, Maurepas not only appointed Beauharnois to promote an important and valuable client, but also to shake up colonial clienteles and reinstate the presumed pre-eminence of ministerial favour.

On May 14th, 1726, Maurepas informed Longueuil that he would not be the next Governor of New France. Filling his letter with flatteries, the minister softened the blow by granting Longueuil's youngest son, Paul-Joseph, the Chevalier de Longueuil, a lieutenancy in Canada and an *expectative* for a company.⁵⁸ Offering such rewards, Maurepas effectively sought to replace Vaudreuil as Longueuil's new patron. Much like the older officers in France, however, Longueuil realised that his career had plateaued, and he did not need this patronage for himself. Instead, he took the chance to exploit Maurepas' patronage to advance the interests of his kinsmen in Canada. Only a few short days before Beauharnois arrived at Quebec, therefore, Longueuil used the last of his gubernatorial authority to fulfil Paul-Joseph's *expectative* and grant him his own company.⁵⁹ After handing over the colony to Beauharnois, he beseeched Maurepas to extend his protection over his other relatives, promising that, in return, he would use his influence amongst the Haudenosaunee Confederacy to fulfil imperial ambitions and counter the British in the Great Lakes. Finally, Longueuil also requested a *Croix de Saint Louis* for his eldest son Charles, which he eventually received in 1734, and an *expectative* for his nephew

⁵⁷ In the Bourbon Spanish Empire, more severe governmental reforms would be undertaken to keep creole elites out of positions of power. Mónica Ricketts, *Who Should Rule?: Men of Arms, the Republic of Letters, and the Fall of the Spanish Empire* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), p.9-32; J. H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492-1830* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), p.137-138; M. A. Burkholder and D. S. Chandler, "Creole Appointments and the Sale of Audiencia Positions in the Spanish Empire under the Early Bourbons, 1701-1750," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 4, no.2 (Nov. 1972):187-206.

⁵⁸ An *expectative* was a placeholder promotion which guaranteed the holder would acquire the position they desired once the next one became available through a retirement or death. For Paul-Joseph's career, see Andrew Rodger, "Le Moyne de Longueuil, Paul-Joseph, Chevalier de Longueuil," in *DCB*, vol. 4, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed August 21, 2019,

http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/le_moyne_de_longueuil_paul_joseph_4E.html.

⁵⁹ ANOM, C11A, V.48, f.183-183v, « Lettre de Beauharnois au ministre, » 10 octobre 1726.

Pierre-Jacques Chavoy de Noyan, who received his company in March 1729.⁶⁰ Taking advantage of the new hierarchy of power, Longueuil thus helped a new generation gain a foot on the ladder of the colonial hierarchy, whilst expanding his own position and influence within the colony.

Once Beauharnois arrived, Longueuil also made sure to ingratiate himself with the new governor, hoping to open other avenues for his family's advancement. Continuing in his role as Governor of Montreal, he soon established himself as Beauharnois' right-hand man, offering his knowledge and experience to help deal with the crises with the Mesquakie in late 1726 and 1727.⁶¹ Earning the governor's esteem, Longueuil managed to secure Paul-Joseph a position as the *commandant* at Fort Frontenac—one of the most highly desired postings in the colony—by convincing Beauharnois that it would be an opportunity for his son to learn Iroquoian languages and customs. Appointed in early 1727, the young Longueuil's tenure did not last long, however, as he fell ill later that year, forcing his father to request his return to Montreal so he might recover. In his son's place, however, Longueuil recommended René Legardeur de Beauvais, the older brother of his new wife Marguerite Legardeur de Tilly, whom he had married only a month earlier.⁶² Exploiting his favour with the new governor, Longueuil gradually incorporated Beauharnois into his horizontal patronage networks, using him to increase his reputation and extend his alliances across the colony.

⁶⁰ ANOM, C11A, V.48, f.405v-406, « Lettre de Longueuil père au ministre, » 4 octobre 1726 ; ANOM, C11A, V.48, f.407v-408, « Lettre de Longueuil père au ministre, » 19 octobre 1727 ; ANOM, D2C, V.47, « Remplacement d'officiers des troupes, » 29 mars ; ANOM, D2C, V.47, « Remplacement d'officiers des troupes, » 20 avril 1729.

⁶¹ During this period Beauharnois would frequently call conferences with “M le Baron de Longueuil et les principaux officiers” at his residence in Quebec. ANOM, C11A, V.49, f.110, « Lettre de Beauharnois au ministre, » 25 septembre 1727. Longueuil would also be amongst the list of officers approving war with the Mesquakie in 1727. ANOM, C13A, V.67, f.204-206, « Mémoire, » [1727].

⁶² ANOM, C11A, V.48, f.405v-406, « Lettre de Longueuil père au ministre, » 4 octobre 1726 ; ANOM, B, V.50, f.534, « Le conseil de marine à M. le baron de Longueuil, » 13 mai 1727 ; ANOM, C11A, V.48, f.407v-408, « Lettre de Longueuil père au ministre, » 19 octobre 1727 ; ANOM, C11A, V.49, f.437v-438, « Lettre de Dupuy au ministre, » 1 novembre 1727 ; ANOM, C11A, V.50, f.176, « Lettre d'Aigremont au ministre, » 15 octobre 1728 ; ANOM, D2C, V.49, f.294, « État major Canada, » 3 février 1729 ; C. J. Russ, “Legardeur de Beauvais, René,” in *DCB*, vol. 3, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed August 21, 2019, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/legardeur_de_beauvais_rene_3E.html.

On June 7th, 1729, Longueuil died, aged seventy-two.⁶³ But even his death provided opportunities for his kinsmen to advance. In January 1730, Beauharnois was petitioned by both Bienville—who was residing in Paris after being recalled from Louisiana—and Jean-Bouillet de la Chassaigne, Governor of Trois-Rivières, for appointment as Governor of Montreal.⁶⁴ Whilst older than Longueuil, La Chassaigne had been second in seniority in the colony and had ridden his brother-in-law's coattails for decades, succeeding him in every position he had held since 1710.⁶⁵ On this occasion, La Chassaigne once again assumed his brother-in-law's former position in Montreal, since, to guarantee the value of Beauharnois' patronage, Maurepas was obliged to overlook his own candidate, Josué Berthelot de Beaucours, *lieutenant du roi* in Île Royale.⁶⁶ Both a talented engineer and well connected at court, Beaucours was a valuable client, but had been repeatedly overlooked for promotion in Canada due to the presumed “droit par l'ancienneté des services” that Longueuil and La Chassaigne had over him.⁶⁷ After Longueuil's death, however, Maurepas was finally able to appoint Beaucours to succeed La Chassaigne in Trois-Rivières. Ignoring Beauharnois' nomination, the minister thus succeeded in placing a key client in a position from which he could advance towards the governorship of Montreal.⁶⁸

⁶³ ANOM, C11A, V.51, f.364, « Lettre du baron de Longueuil au ministre, » 25 septembre 1729

⁶⁴ As we will see, Bienville was instead re-appointed as Governor of Louisiana in 1732. ANOM, D2C, V.49, f.302-302v, « Nominations, Gouvernement de Montréal, » 16 janvier 1730 ; ANOM, C11A, V.51, f.177, « Lettre de Beauharnois au ministre proposant des candidats pour divers postes ou honneurs, » 26 octobre 1729.

⁶⁵ Ulric Lévesque, « Jean Bouillet de la Chassaigne », dans *DCB*, vol. 2, Université Laval/University of Toronto, 2003—, accessed 13/9/2019, http://www.biographi.ca/fr/bio/bouillet_de_la_chassaigne_jean_2F.html.

⁶⁶ Banks *Chasing Empire*, p.194-195. For Beaucours, see C. J. Russ, “Dubois Berthelot de Beaucours, Josué,” in *DCB*, vol. 3, Université Laval/University of Toronto, 2003—, accessed 13/9/2019, http://www.biographi.ca/fr/bio/dubois_berthelot_de_beaucours_josue_3F.html.

⁶⁷ Beaucours had been appointed as an engineer in Louisbourg in 1715 but had been repeatedly overlooked by the *Conseil de Marine* and Maurepas for positions in Canada. ANOM, B, V.48, f.972, « Le Conseil de Marine à M. de Beaucours, » 26 juillet 1725; ANOM, B, V.49, f.723, « M. de Maurepas à M. de Beaucours, » 2 juillet 1726; ANOM, B, V.52, f.593, « Le président du conseil de marine à M. de Beaucours » 20 juin 1728. Interestingly, it seems that seniority was more of an issue than his patronage connections, because in 1730, he came recommended by the Duchesses of Béthune and Lorge. « Nominations Gouvernement de Montréal, » 16 janvier 1730.

⁶⁸ ANOM, B, V.54, f.431, « Le président du conseil de marine à M. de la Chassaigne, » 4 avril 1730 ; ANOM, C11A, V.52, f.186-188, « Lettre de Beauharnois au ministre, » 10 octobre 1730 ; ANOM, C11A, V.53, f.46v, « Lettre de Hocquart au ministre, » 15 octobre 1730.

This decision proved wise. La Chassaigne's tenure highlighted the perils of a governmental system that privileged seniority and local patronage networks over talent or suitability for command. In his advanced age, La Chassaigne seems to have suffered from dementia which rendered him "hors d'État de connoître d'aucune affaire." For two years, Montreal was effectively governed either by Beauharnois or the town's *lieutenant* Jean-Louis La Corne des Châptes.⁶⁹ Once the latter died in May 1732, the town's government fell almost entirely to La Chassaigne's wife, Marie-Anne Le Moyne. From Longueuil's former townhouse, Marie-Anne managed La Chassaigne's governmental affairs with the help of her relatives—mostly likely the Baron and Chevalier de Longueuil—and her household staff. One valet was even reported to have delivered a dispatch to Beauharnois which he had signed himself on La Chassaigne's behalf. By February 1733, Beauharnois complained that, though well intentioned, this informal network was unable to keep up with the changing demands of government in such an important commercial and diplomatic post. He thus suggested that, for the good of the colony, La Chassaigne should be formally retired with an annual pension of 3000 *livres*.⁷⁰ With this, La Chassaigne and Marie-Anne returned to Trois-Rivières where La Chassaigne passed away less than a year later, aged seventy-eight. Withdrawing her Le Moyne inheritance, Marie-Anne entered into the town's Ursuline convent, where she lived until her death in 1739, leaving behind small inheritances for both the Baron and Chevalier de Longueuil, Pierre-Jacques Payen de Noyan and Jeanne Le Moyne de Sainte-Hélène, as well as over 20,000 *livres* for the Ursulines.⁷¹

⁶⁹ ANOM, C11A, V. 58, f.191-192v, « Lettre de La Chassaigne à Maurepas, » 1 octobre 1732; ANOM, C11A, V.57, f.181-184v, « Lettre de Beauharnois et Hocquart au ministre » 15 octobre 1732; For more on La Corne, see Céline Dupré, "La Corne de Châptes, Jean-Louis de," in *DCB*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 10/12/2019, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/la_corne_de_chaptes_jean_louis_de_2E.html.

⁷⁰ ANOM, D2C, V.49, f.304-304v, « Remplacement des officiers de guerre, » 18 février 1733.

⁷¹ This sum of 20,000 livres was mostly comprised of rents drawn upon the Hôtel de Ville in Paris, as well as the *gabelle* and other revenues and investments La Chassaigne had in France. LAC, MG18, H14, V.1, p.119-126, « Testament de Marie-Anne Le Moyne, veuve de Jean Bouillet, chevalier seigneur de la Chasseigne, vivant, gouverneur de Montreal, » 5 décembre 1739. For records relating to the accumulation of this wealth see BAnQ,

On April 1st, 1733, Beaujours officially replaced La Chassaigne as Governor of Montreal. In Trois-Rivières, his vacant position went to Pierre Rigaud de Vaudreuil, the third son of the former governor and brother to Louis-Philippe. Whilst tending to family affairs in France in 1728, the young Vaudreuil had become a loyal client of Maurepas and had even used his new connections to opportunistically solicit the governorship in Montreal for himself in 1731.⁷² With this, Maurepas had succeeded in installing his clients in the three most powerful positions in the colony, establishing some semblance of a hierarchy over the government of Canada. Lower down the ranks, however, seniority and horizontal networks still prevailed. Thanks to the support of his uncle Bienville, the new Baron de Longueuil was promoted to major of Montreal in September 1733.⁷³ Few more opportunities for advancement presented themselves, however, and he remained in this position for almost a decade, only receiving promotion to *lieutenant du roi* in Trois-Rivières in 1743 and Montreal in 1748. Meanwhile, he followed in his father's footsteps, conducting diplomacy with the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, leading the Canadian contingent sent to aid his uncle Bienville during the Chickasaw Wars and fighting in the North American theatre of the War of the Austrian Succession.⁷⁴

Eventually, in May 1749, the Baron de Longueuil was promoted to Governor of Montreal, assuming the position held by both his father and uncle before him.⁷⁵ In an ironic twist

TL3, S11, P1344, « Requête de Marie-Anne Lemoine, veuve de feu Jean Bouillette, », 8 octobre 1736 ; BAnQ, TL3, S11, P1345, « Comparution de Marie-Anne Lemoine, veuve de feu Jean Bouillette, » 10 novembre 1736, BAnQ, TL3, S11, P1346, « Requête de dame Marie-Anne Lemoine, veuve de Jean Bouillet, » 19 novembre 1736 and BAnQ, TL3, S11, P1347, « Instance entre Marie-Anne Lemoine... à l'encontre de François Chastelin, » 28 novembre 1736.

⁷² ANOM, D2C, V.47, f.287-288, « Remplacement d'officiers, » 19 février 1732.

⁷³ ANOM, C13A, V.14, f.95v, « Bienville au ministre, » Rochefort, 15 novembre 1732 ; ANOM, C11A, V.58, f.194-195v, « Lettre de Le Moyne de Longueuil au ministre, » 29 septembre 1732 ; ANOM, C11A, V.60, f.345-346v, « Lettre de Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil au ministre, » 20 septembre 1733.

⁷⁴ André Lachance, "Le Moyne de Longueuil, Charles, Baron de Longueuil (1687-1755)," in *DCB*, vol. 3, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed 13/9/ 2019, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/le_moyne_de_longueuil_charles_1687_1755_3E.html.

⁷⁵ ANOM, C11A, V.89, f.78, « Le Président du Conseil de Marine à M. de la Jonquière, » 23 mai 1749 ; ANOM, C11A, V.91, f.201, « Lettre de La Galissonnière au ministre, » 12 octobre 1748.

of fate, however, within two years Longueuil *fils* also found the interim command of the colony thrust upon him after the death of Governor Jacques-Pierre de Taffanel de la Jonquière in March 1752. Much like his father, Longueuil intended to petition for his appointment as the next Governor of New France, similarly relying on his status as the colony's most senior officer. Before he could even put pen to paper, however, the metropolitan officer Marquis Ange de Menneville Duquesne, arrived at Quebec bearing a commission appointing him as Jonquière's replacement. Maurepas had been ousted from power in a coup three years earlier, but it seems that his successor, Antoine-Louis Rouillé, pursued much the same policies, perhaps wishing to maintain some consistency in colonial government. On the brink of another war with Britain and facing the unravelling of their alliances in the Great Lakes and the Ohio Valley, Rouillé could not afford weak leadership and followed Jonquière's recommendations that Duquesne would prove a worthy successor who could bring stability to the colony.⁷⁶

In October 1752, Intendant François Bigot expressed his relief that the Baron de Longueuil had not been named Governor of New France, suggesting that if he had, "le système canadien aurait prévalu, et personne ne se serait oublié: les guerres sauvages auraient eu lieu tant qu'on aurait pu."⁷⁷ By this, Bigot was referring to the tendency of Canadian officers to privilege policies that maintained the delicate "system" of Indigenous alliances they had built in the *pays d'en haut* and that upheld the neutrality of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy above all else.⁷⁸ Indeed, in April, Bigot had given Longueuil access to Jonquière's papers and encouraged him to follow metropolitan orders to drive the British from the Ohio Valley. Longueuil, however, had

⁷⁶ ANOM, C11A, V.98, f.354-354v, « Lettre de Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil au ministre, » 20 août 1732; Pierre-L. Côté, "Duquesne de Menneville, Ange, Marquis Duquesne," in *DCB*, vol. 4, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed 17/12/2019, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/duquesne_de_menneville_ange_4E.html.

⁷⁷ ANOM, C11A, V.98, f.271v, « Lettre de Bigot au ministre, » 26 octobre 1752

⁷⁸ « Lettre de Bigot au ministre, » 26 octobre 1752

preferred to dedicate his attention to more local, Canadian crises, attempting to put an end the recent attacks by the Miami on French posts along the Wabash River by sending over nine hundred men, led by his brother, to winter in the region.⁷⁹ For the intendant, therefore, Duquesne's arrival heralded a return to a government that put metropolitan ambitions before Canadian concerns, ensuring that the colony played its role in the overarching imperial strategy. Longueuil *fils* hence also reached a plateau in his career, returning to resume his local functions as Governor of Montreal. Meanwhile, Governor Duquesne continued to pursue imperial ambitions in the Ohio Valley, aggressively working to drive the British out of the region. Before long, his policies would spark the Seven Years' War, but Longueuil would play no role in this decisive imperial conflict, dying on January 17th, 1755, years before the colony and the Le Moyne estates were lost to the British.

“La confiance et le credit qu’il S’est acquis parmy les Sauvages luy seront d’un grand Secours” : Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville, Governor of Louisiana

On September 2nd, 1732, Bienville was officially named as Governor of Louisiana. During his seven-year absence, the colony had fallen into chaos. On November 28th, 1729, the Natchez attacked Fort Rosalie, protesting a decade of encroachment on their traditional lands. In response, Governor Étienne Périer, who had replaced Bienville in 1726, marched an army of militiamen and Indigenous allies against the Natchez, intending to punish them as “rebels.” Before long, the French campaign forced the Natchez to flee their homelands and seek refuge

⁷⁹ This campaign would not take place due to a lack of supplies. Instead, Charles Langlade attacked Pickawillany in June 1752. ANOM, C11A, V.98, f.335-337v, « Lettre de Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil, administrateur intérimaire de la Nouvelle-France, au ministre, » 26 avril 1752; ANOM, C11A, V.98, f.350-353, « Lettre de Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil au ministre, » 18 août 1752; ANOM, C11A, V.98, f.86-95, « Lettre de Bigot au ministre, » 6 mai 1752 ; ANOM, C11A, V.98, f.86-85, « Lettre de Bigot au ministre, » 10 octobre 1752. For more on the conflict between the French and the Miami see Jacob F. Lee, *Masters of the Middle Waters: Indian Nations and Colonial Ambitions Along the Mississippi* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2019), p.114-117.

and protection amongst the Chickasaw. Frustrated, P  rier rallied his Indigenous allies against the Chickasaw, in an attempt to force the nation to give up the perpetrators of the so-called “Natchez Revolt.”⁸⁰ Within weeks, a bloody conflict engulfed the entire Lower Mississippi Valley, creating chaos and fear on both sides. In Louisiana, many suspected that the British had been behind the “revolt” and watched on anxiously as their traders exploited the disruption to make inroads amongst France’s allies, particularly the Choctaw. Before long, fears of Indigenous attacks, enslaved resistance and a possible British invasion gripped the colony, plunging it into a cycle of continual warfare and terror.⁸¹ In January 1731, the *Compagnie des Indes* decided to wash their hands of this situation and retroceded Louisiana to the crown.⁸² Eager to restore royal authority, Maurepas recalled the disgraced P  rier and turned to Bienville to bring back peace to the colony, hoping that “La confiance et le credit qu’il S’est acquis parmy les Sauvages luy seront d’un grand Secours pour reprendre a ses esperances.”⁸³

Since his recall, Bienville had been promoting such a reputation in France, hoping to secure his reappointment in Louisiana. In 1725, he published a lengthy *m  moire* outlining how, over the last two decades, he had been able to assume “absolute control” over France’s Indigenous allies in the Lower Mississippi Valley.⁸⁴ In particular, he emphasised the system of governance he had established amongst the Choctaw, where he had installed a “Great Chief” in

⁸⁰ On the Natchez War see Arnaud Balvay, *La r  volte des Natchez* (Paris: F  lin-Kiron, 2008), George Edward Milne, *Natchez Country: Indians, Colonists, and the Landscapes of Race in French Louisiana*, (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2015) and Elizabeth N. Ellis, ‘The Natchez War Revisited: Violence, Multinational Settlements, and Indigenous Diplomacy in the Lower Mississippi Valley’, *The William and Mary Quarterly* 77, no. 3 (2020): 441–72.

⁸¹ Sophie White, “Massacre, Mardis Gras, and Torture in Early New Orleans,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 70, no.3 (July 2013): 497-538.

⁸² Khalil Saadani, *La Louisiane fran  aise dans l’impasse: 1731-1743* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2008), p.15-30.

⁸³ ANOM, B, V.57, f.805, « M  moire du Roy pour servir d’instruction au S^r de Bienville, Gouverneur de la Province de la Lot  isienne, » Marly, 2 septembre 1732.

⁸⁴ “Memoir on Louisiana, the Indians and the Commerce that Can be Carried on With Them,” in Dunbar Rowland and Albert Godfrey Sanders eds., *Mississippi Provincial Archives 1704-1743: French Dominion* (Jackson, MS: Press of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1932) V.III, p.499-539. See also ANOM, C13C, V.1, f.362-374, « M  moire sur la Louisiane, » [1725].

1707, whom he claimed to control through the distribution of presents from France, creating a hierarchy of dependence with himself at the top.⁸⁵ Whilst Bienville's "system" was never as effective as he claimed, it appealed to many in France for the way it mimicked the familiar patrimonial sinews that tied together the French Atlantic World. As a result, many contrasted Bienville's rhetoric of control to the chaos caused by P  rier's failure to "manage" his Indigenous alliances.⁸⁶ In 1726, the *Compagnie des Indes* had employed P  rier for his loyalty and not his experience in colonial affairs. Ever since, his unfamiliarity with Indigenous cultures had seen him systematically unwind Bienville's web of dependence by offering presents, scalp bounties and medals to anyone who took up arms against the Natchez and Chickasaw. By 1733, P  rier had placed almost 150 different *micos* and warriors on the French payroll, which had diffused authority away from the Great Chief and raised annual diplomatic expenses from 12,000 to 50,000 *livres*.⁸⁷ Buying into Bienville's narrative, many called for P  rier's dismissal and a return to the heyday of Franco-Choctaw relations. In 1732, therefore, Maurepas brought Bienville out of his forced retirement, finally fulfilling his ambitions of becoming Governor of Louisiana.⁸⁸

Maurepas' decision suggests the importance Louisiana held in his new imperial vision.

Fearing that the British would target the weakened colony should another war break out in

⁸⁵ For more on Bienville's system, see Richard White, *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), p.49; Patricia Galloway, "The Medal Chiefs' Grosse Lettre: A Chapter in French Indian Management Policy," in Patricia Galloway, *Practicing Ethnohistory: Mining Archives, Hearing Testimony, Constructing Narrative*. (Lincoln : University of Nebraska Press, 2006) : 292-310, p.296.

⁸⁶ Alexandre Dub  , "Les Am  rindiens sous le regard des bureaux de la Marine (1660-1760). Quelques pistes de r  flexion sur un objet administratif," in Gilles Havard and Micka  l Augeron eds., *Un continent en partage: Cinq si  cles de rencontres entre Am  rindiens et Fran  ais*. (Paris: Les Indes savants, 2013) :153-175, p.168.

⁸⁷ Khalil Saadani, *Dons et strat  gies coloniales: La Louisiane fran  aise au XVIIIe si  cle* (Casablanca: Laboratoire Maroc et Mondes Orientaux, 2012), p.107, 115-116; White, *Roots of Dependency*, p.53; Galloway, "The Medal Chiefs' Grosse Lettre," p.296.

⁸⁸ ANOM, C13A, V.9, f.345, « Boisbriant au ministre, » 13 mars 1726; ANOM, C13A, V.10, f.44, « Fr. Raphael de Luxembourg, sup  rieur des capucins, » 18 mai 1726; ANOM, C13A, V.10, f.138-141, « M  moire en faveur de MM. de Bienville et de Ch  ateauguay, » [1726]; ANOM, C13A, V.14, f.177, « R  sum   d'une lettre de P  rier au ministre du 6 avril 1732, » 6 avril 1732.

Europe, the minister had already begun to send more money and troops from 1731.⁸⁹ When King George II authorised the founding of Georgia in June 1732 and dispatched the first fleet of colonists that November, Maurepas' fears were heightened, and he made peace in the Lower Mississippi Valley a matter of the utmost urgency.⁹⁰ With few resources at his disposal, however, the minister knew that Louisiana could not face this threat alone. Instead, the colony would have to place its security in the hands of the Choctaw, the only nation powerful enough to counterbalance both the British and Chickasaw. Whilst Bienville's reputation for self-interest meant that he was far from Maurepas' first choice for governor, Périer's troubled tenure had proven that his influence amongst the Choctaw was not something that could be easily recreated. Moreover, Bienville's shortcomings made him more amenable to serving the minister's ambitions. Indeed, when Bienville opportunistically requested his promotion to *capitaine de vaisseau* and the right to wear a red sash, Maurepas used this to influence him, promising that he would receive these honours if he brought "le retablissement de la tranquillité dans la Colonie que J'attends de votre Zele et du crédit que vous avez sur les Nations Sauvages."⁹¹

Keen to prove himself to the minister, Bienville spent most of his first year in power attempting to rebuild his reputation amongst the Choctaw. Much of this involved reforming Périer's policies, eliminating what Bienville called the "abus qu'on a laissé introduire chez elle à notre prejudice."⁹² For instance, when Bienville first met with the *micos* of each Choctaw village to reaffirm their alliance in spring 1733, he made a show of gifting them the presents Périer had formerly set aside for the warriors, and encouraged them to redistribute the gifts as they saw fit,

⁸⁹ Rule, "Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux, Comte de Pontchartrain et Maurepas," p.370-371.

⁹⁰ Rebecca Ann Lapezynski, "The Beginnings of the Colony of Georgia," *International Social Science Review* 73, n.1-2 (1998): 37-43.

⁹¹ ANOM, B, V.57, f.859, « Lettre à M. de Bienville, » 14 octobre 1731.

⁹² ANOM, C13A, V.16, f.207-207v, « Résumé d'une lettre de Bienville au ministre, » 15 mai 1733.

which he believed would give them back “l’authorité qu’ils avoient perdüe par une conduite opposée.”⁹³ In return, the *micos* agreed to the new trade prices set by Bienville and promised to reject any British overtures. As for the warriors, Bienville declared that those who did not fight the Chickasaw would be scratched from the payroll and their gifts redistributed to those who proved themselves in battle. He also overturned the previous policy of paying for any scalp in full, regardless of size, which certain warriors had exploited to claim several payments for a single trophy. By April 1734, he boasted to Maurepas that his reforms had been so effective that he could count on the Choctaw to bring a swift end to the conflict, without the colony having to deploy any soldiers, or risk any lives.⁹⁴

One *mico*, however—known variously as Soulouche Oumastabé, Shulush Houma or, most commonly, “Le Soulier Rouge”—proved a thorn in Bienville’s side.⁹⁵ A veteran of the Natchez War, Le Soulier Rouge had risen to prominence as a result of the gifts he had received from Périer for his service. Meeting with Bienville in 1733, he sought to leverage his past actions to demand not only his expected presents, but also those he had not received for the past two years. Bienville downplayed the *micos*’ protests, claiming to Maurepas that the other Choctaw headmen had chastised Le Soulier Rouge for this behaviour, telling him that “il ne me falloit pas

⁹³ ANOM, C13A, V.19, f.134, « Bienville au ministre, » 15 mars 1734.

⁹⁴ ANOM, C13A, V.19, f.134, « Bienville au ministre, » 15 mars 1734; ANOM, C13A, V.18, f.153-165v, « Bienville au ministre, » 23 avril 1734; ANOM, C13A, V.18, f.177-187, « Bienville au ministre, » 26 août 1734; ANOM, C13A, V.18, f.159-159v, « Bienville au ministre, » 23 avril 1734 ; Michael J. Forêt, “War of Peace? Louisiana, the Choctaws, and the Chickasaws, 1733-1735,” *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 31, no.3 (Summer 1990): 273-292, p.280-281; James R Atkinson, *Splendid Land, Splendid People: The Chickasaw Indians to Removal* (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 2004), p.39-40.

⁹⁵ Patricia Galloway speculates that “Soulouche Oumastabé” was a ceremonial title referring to the Choctaw practice of wearing red moccasins during the initiation ceremony for new warriors. Meanwhile Richard White suggests that it was a specific title that this particular *mico* earned for killing Chickasaw warriors, whilst Shulush Houma, or “Red Shoes” was a general title given to the highest-ranking Choctaw warrior. Either way, the French use of “Le Soulier Rouge” seems to apply to only one *mico*, prominent in the Choctaw nation between 1731 and 1747; Patricia Galloway, “Choctaw Names and Choctaw Roles: Another Method for Evaluating Sociopolitical Structure,” in Galloway, *Practising Ethnohistory*, 202-222, p.216; Richard White “Red Shoes: Warrior and Diplomat” in David G. Sweet and Gary B. Nash eds., *Struggle and Survival in Colonial America* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1981), 49-67.

parler comme a mon predecesseur.”⁹⁶ But in reality, their words had done little to assuage the outspoken *mico*. Perhaps fearing that Bienville’s reforms would undermine his influence in the nation, Le Soulier Rouge explored his options, travelling to Charles Town the following summer to discuss an alliance with Governor Robert Johnson of South Carolina. Well received, he returned from the British colony bedecked in fine clothing and accompanied by a caravan of packhorses laden with gifts, which he used to amass a small anglophile faction on the fringes of the Choctaw nation. Fearing that their allies would soon become their enemies, many in Louisiana complained about Bienville’s lack of attention to this matter, their faith in his claims to influence over the Choctaw utterly shaken.⁹⁷

Once word reached Maurepas, he also blamed Bienville for the diplomatic debacle.⁹⁸ Indeed, as far as the minister was concerned, Le Soulier Rouge’s overtures towards the British could not have come at a worse time. In October 1733, the War of the Polish Succession had been declared in Europe, which tied up valuable French resources, preventing Louisiana from competing directly with British traders. Taking advantage of this, newly settled Georgians had begun making inroads with the Chickasaw and Choctaw, further challenging French influence in the region.⁹⁹ Maurepas thus believed that if France wished to reassert its authority in the Lower Mississippi Valley, all threats, including the Chickasaw, needed to be removed. Leveraging the promise of promotion, he encouraged Bienville to make war on the nation, suggesting that “La defaite des Chicachas en Seroit Une bien favorable pour engager S. M. a vous donner de

⁹⁶ « Bienville au ministre, » 23 avril 1734.

⁹⁷ ANOM, C13A, V.19, f.95-98, « Salmon au ministre, » 4 novembre 1734 ; ANOM, C13A, V.19, f.123-125v, « Diron au ministre, » 15 juillet 1734 ; White, “Red Shoes,” p.58-60 ; Forêt, “War or Peace?,” p.286-287.

⁹⁸ ANOM, B, V.61, f.692, « Lettre à M. de Bienville, » 1 octobre 1734.

⁹⁹ ANOM, C13A, V.20, f.114, « Bienville et Salmon au ministre, » 1 septembre 1735; See also in Edward J. Cashin, *Guardians of the Valley: Chickasaws in Colonial South Carolina and Georgia* (Columbia, S.C: University of South Carolina Press, 2009), p.19-36.

nouvelles marques de Sa Satisfaction.”¹⁰⁰ These orders, however, took months to arrive in Louisiana. In the meantime, Bienville continued to work towards the peace the minister had originally desired. In October 1734 he met with four Chickasaw *micos* and arranged a three-month ceasefire, during which time the *micos* promised to expel the Natchez who still lived amongst their nation.¹⁰¹ Ignorant of Maurepas’ change of heart, Bienville believed that he would soon be able to accomplish the minister’s original goals, boasting that “je ne crois plus d’inconvenient à terminer cette guerre qui coûteroit considerable au Roy.”¹⁰²

But in April 1735, the Chickasaw forced Bienville’s hand. Whilst out raiding the Illinois, a war party of 240 Chickasaw and Natchez warriors stumbled upon ten French soldiers who had been sent to retrieve a cache of gunpowder left at the Arkansas outpost. As the warriors approached, the French panicked and fired upon them. In the ensuing firefight, the Chickasaw and Natchez killed nine of the Frenchmen and captured their lieutenant, taking him back to their village with the supplies he had been sent to recover. Unable to let such an affront to French honour stand, Bienville mustered the colony’s forces for war.¹⁰³ By April 1st, 1736, he had assembled 900 *troupes de la Marine*, Swiss soldiers, militiamen, freedmen and slaves at Fort Condé, ready to strike a decisive blow against the Chickasaw. Word was also sent to the Illinois Country, where Pierre d’Artaguette rallied a force of 145 Frenchmen and 326 Haudenosaunee, Arkansas, Illinois and Miami warriors to join the expedition. Many contemporaries and historians have recounted this disastrous campaign in great detail, and, as such, it does not bear repeating here. At a cost of twenty-four French lives and over 122,000 *livres* and yielding few

¹⁰⁰ ANOM, B, V.61, f.692v, « Lettre à M. de Bienville, » Versailles, 1 décembre 1734.

¹⁰¹ Lee, *Masters of the Middle Waters*, p.101.

¹⁰² ANOM, C13A, V.20, f.39, « Bienville au ministre, » 14 avril 1735.

¹⁰³ ANOM, C13A, V.20, f.159, « Bienville au ministre, » 20 août 1735 ; ANOM, C13A, V.21, f.1-1v, « Bienville et Salmon au ministre, » 3 février 1736 ; ANOM, B, V.63, f.630-634, « Lettre à M. de Bienville, » Versailles, 27 décembre 1735 ; Atkinson, *Splendid Land, Splendid People*, p.42 ; Lee, *Masters of the Middle Waters*, p.101-104.

tangible results, most involved agreed that the campaign was a humiliating and wholly unacceptable failure.¹⁰⁴ Of course, to save his reputation, Bienville pinned the blame for this failure on anyone but himself, but this did little to convince Maurepas, who staunchly rebuked him for his lack of oversight, attention and caution. Needing the conflict to end soon, however, Maurepas was obliged to give the governor a second chance and pledged over 750 *troupes de la Marine* for a second, and final, campaign. This time though, he ordered Bienville to pay more attention to its preparation, subtly threatening that this would be best for “la conservation Entiere de la Colonie, et *pour vous même en particulier*.”¹⁰⁵

By 1737, Bienville’s reputation balanced on a knife-edge. As Governor of Louisiana, he only had two responsibilities—war and diplomacy—and he was failing at both. To make matters worse, the French defeat had profoundly undermined his reputation amongst the Choctaw, and Le Soulier Rouge used this to his advantage, convincing many in his nation that “les Francois ne Scauroit nullement la maniere de faire la guerre.”¹⁰⁶ Taking matters into his own hands, Le

¹⁰⁴ For detailed contemporary accounts of the 1736 campaign see ANOM, C13A, V.21, f.22-22v, « Relation de la défaite de l’armée française partie des Illinois sous le commandement de M. D’Artaguet, » [1736]; ANOM, C13A, V.21, f.164-167, « Relation de la guerre des Chicachas, » 1 avril 1736 ; ANOM, C13A, V.21, f.187, « État des troupes et milices qui ont fait la Campagne des Tchikachas, » [1736]; ANOM, C13A, V.188-203v, « Bienville au ministre, » 28 juin 1736; ANOM, C13A, V.21, f.207-212, « Bienville au ministre, » 28 juin 1736; ANOM, C13A, V.21, f.228-228v, « Relation véritable de l’attaque des Français contre les Chycachas sauvages revoltés retraités dans leurs cabanes par DuTetre, » [1736]; ANOM, C13A, V.21, f.250-252v, « Salmon au ministre, » 24 avril 1736; ANOM, C13A, V.21, f.269-280v, « Salmon au ministre, » 15 juin 1736; ANOM, C13A, V.21, f.361-364, « M. de Beauchamp au ministre, » 18 juin 1736; ANOM, C13A, V.21, f.370-375, « Le Breton au ministre, » 15 juin 1736 and Dumont de Montigny, *Regards sur le monde atlantique*, p.267-289. For more modern analysis of the campaign and battles see Atkinson, *Splendid Land, Splendid People*, p.43-61; Lee, *Masters of the Middle Waters*, p.104-107 ; Charles R. Cobb, et al., “Ackia and Ogoula Tchetoka: Defining Two Battlefields of the 1736 French and Chickasaw War in Southeastern North America,” *Journal of Field Archaeology* 42, no. 5 (2017): 423–36; Joe Wilkins, “Outpost of Empire: The Founding of Fort Tombecbe and De Bienville’s Chickasaw Expedition of 1736,” *Proceedings of the Meeting of the French Colonial Historical Society* 12 (1988): 133–53; Joseph L. Peyser, “The Chickasaw Wars of 1736 and 1740: French Military Drawings and Plans Document the Struggle for the Lower Mississippi,” *Journal of Mississippi History* 44, no.1 p.1-25; Saadani, *La Louisiane française dans L’Impasse*, p.232-234.

¹⁰⁵ ANOM, C13A, V.22, f.70-73, « Bienville au ministre, » 15 février 1737; ANOM, B, V.64, f.526, « Lettre à M. de Bienville, » 26 octobre 1736; ANOM, B, V.64, f.526, « Lettre à M. de Bienville, » 26 octobre 1736 [Emphasis mine].

¹⁰⁶ ANOM, C13A, V.22, f.225, « Diron au ministre, » 8 mai 1737; Lee, *Masters of the Middle Waters*, p.107

Soulier Rouge met with Governor Johnson in early 1738; the latter brokered a peace between the Choctaw and Chickasaw, cutting the French entirely out of the negotiations. Many in the colony feared for the future of Louisiana, but Bienville again refused to acknowledge that this was his fault, arguing that it was simply “un de ces Evenements que la prudence humaine ne pouvoit prevenir ny mesme prévoir.”¹⁰⁷ But for Maurepas, this was the last straw. More determined than ever to defeat the Chickasaw, the minister relieved Bienville of his martial authority, granting command over both the regular and colonial forces (and, should Bienville die, the entire colony) to Louis d’Ayme de Noailles, a metropolitan *capitaine de vaisseau* whom he deemed to have “les talents et l’expérience nécessaires pour le commandement.”¹⁰⁸

With this, Maurepas effectively reduced Bienville to a diplomatic figurehead, only kept on to ensure the loyalty of the more francophile Choctaw. As he awaited Noailles’ arrival, Bienville thus re-focused his efforts on diplomacy, perhaps hoping to salvage his reputation by proving to the minister that he could still be useful. Abandoning the organisation of the upcoming campaign to Salmon (much to the *ordonnateur’s* chagrin) he travelled to Mobile with his nephew Gilles-Augustin de Noyan in a last-ditch attempt to secure Choctaw support.¹⁰⁹ Once in Mobile, he sent Noyan to the western Choctaw villages, where support for the peace with the Chickasaw was more limited, to establish a faction that could oppose Le Soulier Rouge. In Chickasawhay, Noyan met with Alibamon Mingo, the village’s *mico* and an influential figure amongst both the Choctaw and Alabama, who agreed to stand with the French against the

¹⁰⁷ ANOM, C13A, V.23, f.63, « Bienville au ministre, » 28 avril 1738.

¹⁰⁸ ANOM, C13A, V.23, f.54-55v, « Mémoire du Roy au Sieur de Bienville sur les opérations de l’entreprise qu’il doit faire contre les Chicachas, » [1738] ; ANOM, B, V.66, f.361-364v, « Mémoire du Roy au S^r de Bienville sur l’expédition qu’il doit faire contre les Sauvages Chicachas, » Versailles, 16 décembre 1738; ANOM, B, V.66, f.366, « Lettre à M. de Noüailles d’Aymé, » Versailles, 16 octobre 1738; ANOM, B, V.66 f.366v, « Lettre à Salmon, » Versailles, 16 octobre, 1738.

¹⁰⁹ ANOM, C13A, V.25, f.189v-190, « Salmon au ministre, » 29 juin 1740; Michael J. Forêt, “The Failure of Administration: The Chickasaw Campaign of 1739-1740,” *Revue de Louisiane / Louisiana Review* 10-11 (1981-82):49-60, p.56-7.

British. Writing to Maurepas, Noyan proclaimed Alibamon Mingo as the new Great Chief of the Choctaw, hoping to show that his uncle's "system" had finally been restored.¹¹⁰ Meanwhile, however, Bienville had found that his reputation amongst the Choctaw had been threatened by the recent murder of a Choctaw couple by two brothers—Philippe-Alexandre and Henri Barthelemy—who had believed that the colony was at war with the nation. Eager to show that their alliance was still strong, Bienville promised swift and brutal justice for the crime. Following French protocol, had the brothers formally tried in New Orleans, where they were found guilty, but then had them returned to Mobile, where ordered them to be publicly executed by firing squad, much to the satisfaction of the assembled Choctaw.¹¹¹

For a brief moment, it seemed that Bienville had regained his influence amongst the Choctaw. With the rise of Alibamon Mingo, a faction opposed to the British-brokered peace began to gain confidence, making small moves against the Chickasaw. Attempting to prove his value, therefore, Bienville promised Maurepas that, despite what his critics claimed, the Choctaw would willingly join him on the warpath that autumn.¹¹² Behind the scenes, however, Bienville was not so confident. In late 1738, he begrudgingly asked Governor Beauharnois for a contingent of Canadians and northern Indigenous allies to help in the coming campaign.¹¹³ Believing that these northern allies might be the only Indigenous support he would receive, Bienville did everything he could to stall their arrival until his men were ready, dispatching several couriers to the contingent's leader—his nephew the Baron de Longueuil—encouraging him to delay their

¹¹⁰ ANOM, C13A, V.24, f.224-236v, « Noyan au ministre » 4 janvier 1739.

¹¹¹ ANOM, C13A, V.24, f.115-117v, « Salmon au ministre, » 12 janvier 1739; ANOM, C13A, V.24, f.190, « Louboey au ministre, » 14 janvier 1739; ANOM, C13A, V.24, f.246-246v, « Bizoton au ministre, » 9 mai 1739. Patricia Galloway gives a detailed analysis of the importance of this murder trial to Indigenous diplomacy in the Lower Mississippi Valley. Patricia Galloway, "The Barthelemy Murders: Bienville's Establishment of Lex Talionis as a Principle of Indian Diplomacy" in Galloway, *Practicing Ethnohistory*, p.245-258.

¹¹² ANOM, C13A, V.24, f.41v, « Bienville au ministre, » 25 mars 1739; ANOM, C13A, V.24, f.64v-65, « Bienville au ministre, » 20 mai 1739; Atkinson, *Splendid Land, Splendid People*, p.66.

¹¹³ ANOM, C13A, V.23, f.74-75v, « Extrait d'une lettre de Bienville à M. le Marquis de Beauharnois, » 5 mai 1738

journey.¹¹⁴ Fortunately for Bienville, these efforts proved unnecessary, as Alibamon Mingo encouraged one thousand warriors to march alongside the French.¹¹⁵

On June 14th, 1739, Nouailles arrived in New Orleans at the head of the reinforcements from France. Desperate to cling onto some form of military authority, Bienville feigned ignorance about the orders giving Nouailles command over the colonial troops and militias. After a heated debate, Nouailles eventually departed for Fort Assomption with the French troops on September 2nd, whilst Bienville followed ten days later at the head of the colonial forces. Meeting with Longueuil's contingent, by November they had assembled almost 1200 Europeans and 2400 Indigenous warriors—the largest army Louisiana had ever seen. Once again, many have described the ensuing campaign in depth, so I will only summarise here. Plagued by poor weather, logistical issues and disease, the French were forced to entrench themselves at Fort Assomption for months, making no moves against the Chickasaw. On February 9th, 1740, Bienville convened a Council of War, where he argued that there was no way to attack the Chickasaw without dishonouring France, an opinion his fellow councillors shared. Meanwhile, the Chickasaw attempted to assassinate Le Soulier Rouge during an embassy, which roused the Choctaw back to war. In an effort to appease their allies, the councillors ordered Joseph de Céloron (in the place of the Baron de Longueuil, who had fallen ill) to lead the Canadians and Northern Indigenous warriors on a raid with Choctaw against the nearby village of Ogoula. Harassing the settlement for several weeks, the war party eventually forced the Chickasaw to sue

¹¹⁴ ANOM, C13A, V.24, f.91, « Bienville au ministre, » 4 septembre 1739; ANOM, C13A, V.24, f.97v-98v, « Résumé par un commis des lettres de Louisiane, » [1739]; ANOM, C11A, V.69, f.236-239v, « Lettre de Hocquart au ministre, » 30 septembre 1739; ANOM, C11A, V.71, f.36-36v, « Lettre de Beauharnois au ministre, » 30 juin 1739; ANOM, D2C, V.48, f.44, « Liste suivant l'ancienneté des officiers destinés pour la campagne contre les chicachas sous le commandement du Baron de Longueuil, » 21 juin 1739 ; ANOM, D2C, V.48, f.46, « Copie de la liste du Marquis de Beauharnois des officiers qui ont fait la campagne des Chicachas, » [1739].

¹¹⁵ ANOM, C13A, V.25, f.207-207v, « Louboey au ministre, » 4 janvier 1740.

for peace. On April 1st, 1740, peace was concluded at Fort Assomption, finally bringing an end to the Chickasaw Wars.¹¹⁶

Once again, everyone involved in the campaign blamed Bienville for its disastrous conduct and exorbitant expense. Bienville himself blamed bad luck, and even tried to argue that it had not been the disaster that many suggested, since, at the very least, “la Gloire des armées du Roy n’en a pas souffert.”¹¹⁷ Pre-empting Maurepas’ disappointment, however, Bienville also requested his retirement, alluding to exhaustion and ill health in an attempt to return to France with some dignity. Maurepas, however, wanted to take advantage of the newly declared conflict between the English and Spanish, known as the War of Jenkins’ Ear (1739-1748), and refused to let Bienville retire. Indeed, it seems that the minister still trusted Bienville’s influence amongst the Choctaw, because he encouraged the governor to use the nation to destroy the Chickasaw, which would rid the region of British influence once and for all.¹¹⁸ Bienville reluctantly followed the minister’s orders, likely hoping that achieving these new objectives would allow him retire with his reputation intact. Between 1740 and 1742, therefore, he worked to dismantle the diplomatic system he had worked to build amongst the Choctaw, showering their warriors with gifts, bounties and rewards, inadvertently laying the groundwork for the Choctaw Civil War.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ ANOM, C13A, V.25, f.45, « Bienville au ministre, » 6 mai 1740; ANOM, C13A, V.25, f.82-85, « Bienville au ministre, » 1 juin 1740; ANOM, C13A, V.25, f.62-62v, « Bienville au ministre, » 6 mai 1740; ANOM, C13A, V.25, f.126-132, « Résumé par un commis des lettres de la Louisiane, » [1740]; ANOM, C13A, V.25, f.134-134v, « Salmon au ministre » 2 janvier 1740 ; ANOM, C13A, V.25, f.148-150, « Copie de la lettre de Mr de Broutin, » 18 février 1740; ANOM, C13A, V.25, f.204-242, « Louboey au ministre, » [1740]; ANOM, C13A, V.25, f.259, « Beauchamp à Salmon, » [1740]; ANOM, C13A, V.25, f.278-285, « Vergès, ingénieur, au ministre, » mai-juin 1740; ANOM, C13A, V.25, f.286-340 « Extrait et précis du Journal du Sieur de Vergès, ingénieur du roi, » 23 juillet 1740 ; ANOM, B4, V.45, f.363v-364, « Lettres et journal de M. de Nouailles d’Aymé: expédition contre les Chicachas, » 1 juin 1739; AM, B4, V.50, f.118, « Lettres de M. De Nouailles d’Aymé, de Louisiane, » [1741]; Atkinson, *Splendid Land, Splendid People*, p.67-73; Lee, *Masters of the Middle Waters*, p.108-109 ; Peyser, “The Chickasaw Wars of 1736 and 1740;” Saadani, *La Louisiane française*, p.236-240.

¹¹⁷ « Bienville au ministre, » 6 mai 1740 ; Forêt, “The Failure of Administration,” p.54-56.

¹¹⁸ ANOM, B, V.72, f.481-481v, « Lettre à M. de Bienville, » Versailles, 16 octobre 1742.

¹¹⁹ Patricia Galloway, “Choctaw Factionalism and Civil War, 1746-1750,” in Galloway, *Practicing Ethnohistory*, p.259-291.

By March 1742, Bienville believed he had done enough to satisfy Maurepas' desires and again requested his retirement. Looking back on his career, he acknowledged that his failures:

ma souvant fait perdre le fruit de mes travaux, et peut être une partie de la confiance de votre Grandeur, Je n'ay donc pas cru de voir me raidir plus longtems contre ma mauvaise fortune; Je souhaite que l'officier qui Sera Choisy pour me remplacer soit plus heureux que moy.¹²⁰

Maurepas agreed with this assessment. For the minister, Bienville's appointment had always been a means to an end, and now that the Choctaw seemed to be firmly back within the French sphere of influence, he could begin the search for a more traditional governor. Fortunately for the minister, in 1740, his faithful client Pierre de Rigaud de Vaudreuil had returned to France to take care of his recently deceased mother's estate and was open to promotion in Louisiana. Maurepas saw Vaudreuil as the ideal candidate to command in the newly re-ordered colony: he was experienced in colonial affairs, came from a prestigious family, and most importantly, had a strong personal loyalty to the minister. On October 8th, 1742, therefore, Maurepas authorised Bienville's retirement. With no more need for his talents, he also finally granted him the promotion to *capitaine de vaisseau* that he had coveted for over a decade.¹²¹ Boarding the *Charente* on August 17th, 1743, Bienville left Louisiana for the last time, bound for "une vie douce et tranquille et bien réglé" in Paris.¹²²

Living out his final decades close to the centre of French imperial power, residing only a short walk from the Palais Royal and the offices of the *Compagnie des Indes*, Bienville remained involved in the politics of the French Atlantic World.¹²³ Benefitting from Maurepas' patronage, he often lobbied for the promotion of his many nephews and grand-nephews, with whom he

¹²⁰ ANOM, C13A, V.27, f.52-52v, « Bienville au ministre, » 26 mars 1742.

¹²¹ ANOM, B, V.74, f.637, « Lettre à M. de Bienville, » 22 octobre 1742.

¹²² LAC, MG18, H14, V.2, p.31, « Lettre de Bienville au Baron de Longueuil, » Paris, 8 avril 1755.

¹²³ Charles Edwards O'Neill, "The Death of Bienville," *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 8, no. 4 (1967): 362–69, p.363.

maintained a frequent correspondence from Paris. Once Maurepas fell from grace, however, Bienville urged his kinsmen to make their own relationships with the new minister, likely fearing that with the loss of his former patron he would also lose his influence.¹²⁴ Fifteen years later, this proved itself true. In 1765, Bienville's relatives from Louisiana tried to embroil him in their intrigues to overthrow the Spanish regime installed by the secret Treaty of Fontainebleau, but, having faded into obscurity, Bienville was not able to secure a meeting with the monarch, nor convince the Étienne François, Duc de Choiseul—the new *ministre de la Marine*—to overturn the decision. Witnessing his life's work abandoned, he allegedly broke down in tears.¹²⁵ Two weeks later, he penned his will, “persuadé que je suis de la nécessité de mourir.”¹²⁶ Indeed, having outlived his necessity to the crown, his kinsmen and his colony, Bienville lived peacefully for the next two years, passing away in March 1767.

“Exactement l’homme qu’il fallait à la colonie :” Antoine Le Moyne de Châteauguay, Governor of Cayenne

On July 9th, 1738, Antoine Le Moyne de Châteauguay arrived at Cayenne, the principal port and capital of French Guiana, to serve as the colony's governor. Within a week, he had met with the *Conseil Supérieur*, met with all of the colony's military officers and discussed their activities and promotions, inspected the supplies that had arrived aboard the *Gironde* several weeks earlier and reviewed the port's dilapidated artillery emplacements and fortifications.¹²⁷ By the end of the summer, he had toured almost the entire colony, inspecting the lands and settlements beyond Cayenne and even travelling as far inland as the rapids of the Oyapock River

¹²⁴ LAC, MG18, H14, V.2, p.20-27, « Lettre de Bienville au Baron de Longueuil, » Rochefort, 24 mai 1749.

¹²⁵ Powell, *Accidental City*, p.160-161. For the connections between Bienville and the ringleaders of the Louisiana Revolt see Emilie Leumas, “Ties That Bind: The Family, Social and Business Associations of the Insurrectionists of 1768,” *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 47, no.2 (Spring 2006): 183-202.

¹²⁶ “Testament de Bienville” cited in Jodoin and Vincent, *Histoire de Longueuil*, p.135.

¹²⁷ ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.4-5, « Lettre de Châteauguay, » Cayenne, 15 juillet 1738.

where he had held councils with the local settlers and leaders of the neighbouring Indigenous nations.¹²⁸ Amongst the colonists, this flurry of activity did not go unnoticed. In fact, so remarkable was the new governor's proactivity that Jacques-François Artur, the recently appointed *medicin du roi*, recorded in his extensive chronicle of the colony's history that "M. De Chateaugué était exactement l'homme qu'il fallait à la colonie."¹²⁹

For over two decades, Châteauguay had been trying to step out of his older brothers' shadows and forge a career of his own in the French Atlantic World. Brought to the Lower Mississippi Valley from Hudson Bay at fifteen years old, Châteauguay had had little choice in his career and had been continually forced to follow his brothers' orders and live with the consequences of their actions. Implicated in his brothers' fraudulent activities in Louisiana and Nevis, Châteauguay had also seen his advancement stalled after 1706, even though Pontchartrain had suspected that he was less directly involved than his older siblings. After he was captured at Pensacola in August 1719, therefore, Châteauguay wrote to Bienville from prison in Havana to express his relief that he was leaving Louisiana, informing his brother that:

si je trouve mieux en france je ne retourneray plus dans cette colonie, cette prise icy me coute beaucoup, vous scavés avec quel repugnance Jy suis venü, La seule raison etoit celle qui m'est arrivé, Il est bien triste de se trouver Commandant dans de pareille postes comme je vous l'ay toujours dis.

As soon as he was recalled to France with Bienville in 1725, therefore, Châteauguay used his proximity to the halls of power to seek reappointment far from Louisiana.¹³⁰ In 1727 he secured reassignment as a *lieutenant du roi* in Martinique, filling the vacancy left by the death of Sieur

¹²⁸ ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.289-291, « Lettre de M Régis du Roulet, » 6 mars 1739 ; ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.8-12, « Lettre de Châteaugué, » Cayenne, 8 septembre 1738.

¹²⁹ Jacques-François Artur and Marie Polderman, *Histoire des colonies françaises de la Guianne* (Guyane: Ibis Rouge Éditions, 2002) p.513.

¹³⁰ According to Giraud, Bienville and Châteauguay lived in the parish of Saint-Germain L'Auxerrois from 1725-1728. Marcel Giraud, *A History of French Louisiana: Volume 5, The Company of the Indies, 1723-1731* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1991), p.36.

du Rioux at Fort Saint Pierre.¹³¹ Located at the heart of the French Antilles, this lieutenancy offered far more connections and opportunities than those found in Mobile. Passage through the lower ranks of Martinique's leadership was generally considered a prerequisite for those hoping to secure more prestigious commands elsewhere in the Caribbean. More importantly, however, the appointment offered Châteauguay a chance to develop a broader understanding of the world beyond Canada and Louisiana, acquiring skills and experience that could later help him climb the ladder of the colonial administration.

Less than six months after arriving in Saint Pierre, Châteauguay underwent a literal trial by fire in colonial governance. On November 7th, 1727, a powerful earthquake and terrible storms tore through Martinique, levelling buildings and fortifications across the colony, destroying plantations and devastating local industry.¹³² In Saint Pierre, Châteauguay reported that "il est peu de Batimens de Maconnerie dans St Pierre qui n'ait essuyé des dommages."¹³³ In total, reports dressed by Châteauguay and his fellow *lieutenants du roi* evaluated damages across the entire colony to be in excess of 8 million *livres*.¹³⁴ If that was not enough, in the wake of the disaster, rumours began to spread of potential slave uprisings, leading to the cancelation of all religious holidays, an increase in slave patrols, the billeting of soldiers in remote areas and the

¹³¹ The position was first offered to Gabriel de Clieu, *lieutenant du roi* at Fort Royal, but he chose to remain in his position due to the disorder of his personal affairs; ANOM C8A V.37 f.301-301v « Lettre de M. de Feuquières au ministre » 29 mars 1737; ANOM, C8A, V.37, f.345, « Lettre de De Clieu au ministre, » 9 juin 1727; ANOM, C8B, V.9, No.48, « Décision nommant lieutenant de roi à la Martinique le sieur le Moyne de Châteauguay, » 11 janvier 1727.

¹³² ANOM, C8A, V.39, f.199- 201v, « Note sur le tremblement de terre survenu à la Martinique le 7 novembre 1727, » [1727]; ANOM, C8A, V.39, f.201-202, « Relation du tremblement de terre arrivé à la Martinique le 7 novembre 1727, » ANOM, C8A, V.39, f.132-132v, « Lettre de Nadeau du Treil à M. Legeneral, » 7 novembre 1727; ANOM, C8A, V.39, f.121-131, « Lettre de Feuquières et Blondel, » 9 novembre 1727; Robert W. Harms, *The Diligent : A Voyage through the Worlds of the Slave Trade (New York : Basic Books, 2002)*, p.341-342

¹³³ Most of the wooden buildings survived, however. ANOM, C8A, V.39, f.58-72v, « Extrait des procès-verbaux de visite faits par MM les lieutenants de roy de l'isle Martinique, » 13 avril 1728.

¹³⁴ The total damage reported by Governor and Intendant was 8,385,840 *livres 10 sols*, a figure which included the value of the lost cacao trees. In Saint Pierre, Châteauguay reported total damages of 407,300 *livres* and the loss of 381,400 cacao trees; ANOM, C8A, V.39, f.52, « Lettre de Champigny de Noroy et Blondel au ministre, » 13 avril 1738; « Extrait des procès-verbaux, » 13 avril 1728.

enforcement of curfews within the cities, all of which was overseen by Châteauguay and his colleagues.¹³⁵ Finally, each of the lieutenants was also tasked with overseeing the repairs of the extensive damages to the fortifications and military infrastructure of their respective jurisdictions, co-ordinating with the local engineers to ensure a timely reconstruction.¹³⁶ Working labouriously, Châteauguay earned himself a reputation for leadership, and by 1734 was nominated for promotion to Governor of Grenada, lauded as the officer “plus propre à rendre heureux ce Peuple et faire fleurir cette Colonie.”¹³⁷

But even with his experience, Châteauguay did not obtain this promotion, losing out to Jean-Léon Fournier de Carles de Pradine, son of the former Governor of Martinique and a close relative of Jacques-Charles Bochart de Champigny, the Governor of the Îles de Vent.¹³⁸ Three years later, however, his reputation brought him to Maurepas’ attention for another posting where his experiences could be useful. Preoccupied with expanding colonial commerce, the minister had long been disappointed with the progress being made in Guiana.¹³⁹ Located on the periphery of the empire and embroiled in intermittent warfare with its Dutch and Portuguese neighbours, the colony had failed to live up to imperial aspirations for another plantation colony in the Caribbean. In 1735, the census reported that only 197 white settlers lived in the entire colony, alongside a population of 10 *mulâtres*, or freed slaves, and 2700 enslaved Africans.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁵ ANOM, C8A, V.39, f.184-198, « Lettre de Blondel au ministre, » 13 janvier 1728.

¹³⁶ The repairs to the batteries in Fort Saint Pierre would be estimated to cost 19,192 *livres*. ANOM, C8A, V.40, f.45, « Lettre de Champigny de Noroy et Pannier d’Orgeville au ministre, » 19 avril 1729.

¹³⁷ ANOM, C8A, V.45, f.263v-264, « Lettre de Pannier d’Orgeville au ministre, » 29 novembre 1734.

¹³⁸ ANOM, E, 341, « Jean Léon, Fournier Carles de Pradines. »

¹³⁹ Maurepas would spell out his disappointment with the colony in his instructions to Châteauguay, writing that “Il est vray qu’il a été troublé en differens têmes par les guerres, que la France a Essuyés, mais il ne l’est que trop aussy que la Colonie n’a pas tiré de la paix qui regne depuis longues années avec les puissances Maritimes tous les avantages qu’il y avoit lieu d’en esperer, et que les autres Colonies françoises en ont effectivement ressenti.” ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.130-141, « Mémoire du Roy pour servir d’instruction au S^r Lemoine de Châteauguay Gouverneur pour Sa Majesté à Cayenne et en la province de Guyanne, » 23 décembre 1737.

¹⁴⁰ “Etat des habitants de la colonie en 1736, dressé par monsieur d’Albon,” in Artur, *Histoire*, p.494-495 ; Marie Polderman, *La Guyane française, 1676-1763 : mise en place et évolution de la société coloniale, tensions et métissages* (Guyane: Ibis Rouge Éditions, 2004), p.281, 363-370.

Meanwhile, metropolitan policies intended to ensure that the local Indigenous communities were “subordonnés au gouverneur de Cayenne” had proved impossible to carry out, as these groups continually fought to retain their independence, with several nations, including the Tikouyou, Aroas, and Palikur repeatedly playing the French and Portuguese off against one another.¹⁴¹ Epidemics had also devastated the Indigenous populations living closer to Cayenne—namely the Galibi, Palikour, Yayo, Karipoun—whilst Portuguese slave raids had driven many Maraone, Aroua and Tikouyou peoples from Brazil towards the French colony.¹⁴² In response, the Jesuits had founded missions at Kourou, Sinnamary and Oyapock but they had had limited success introducing Catholicism to the Indigenous inhabitants.¹⁴³ Looking to create a more stable plantation colony, Maurepas was thus in the market for an energetic officer who could oversee the reinvigoration of Guiana, increasing its white and enslaved populations, agricultural output (especially sugar) and commercial activity whilst maintaining martial discipline and repairing the long-neglected fortifications to better protect the colony from an inevitable war with Britain.¹⁴⁴

Guiana, however, had long been maligned by French officials. Boasting a high mortality rate and lacking the prestige of other Caribbean colonies, it was seen by many, often literally, as a final resting place for their careers.¹⁴⁵ In 1715, Marie-Henri de Béthune (the younger brother of Louis) had even turned down an appointment as Governor of Cayenne, viewing it as beneath his

¹⁴¹ ANOM, C14A, V.62, f.265, « Règlement de monsieur d’Orvilliers, gouverneur de Cayenne, concernant les Indiens, avec l’ordre du Roy en réponse du 22 février 1722, » 30 novembre 1787 [copie]; Silvia Espelt-Bombin, “Frontier Politics: French, Portuguese and Amerindian Alliances between the Amazon and Cayenne, 1680-1697,” in Sarah Wood and Catriona MacLeod eds., *Locating Guyane* (Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2019).

¹⁴² Jean-Marcel Hurault, *Français et Indiens en Guyane, 1604-1972* (Paris, Union générale d’éditions, 1972); Jean Hurault, « La population des Indiens de Guyane française. I. Vue historique générale, » *Population* 20, no.4 (1965); Jean Hurault, « La population des Indiens de Guyane française. (Deuxième article), » *Population* 20, no.5 (1965).

¹⁴³ Polderman, *La Guyane française* 159-268.

¹⁴⁴ ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.130-141, « Mémoire du Roy pour servir d’instruction au S^r Lemoyne de Châteaugué Gouverneur pour Sa Majesté à Cayenne et en la province de Guyanne, » 23 décembre 1737.

¹⁴⁵ Louis Henry and Jean Hurault, “Mortalité de la population européenne de Guyane française au début du XVIII^e siècle,” *Population* 34, no. 6 (1979) : 1087–1100.

station. Recognising the colony's lack of appeal, the *Conseil de Marine* had thus taken a more lenient approach to its governorship, overlooking an officer's colonial origins if they were apt for command. Indeed, Béthune was succeeded by Claude Guillouet d'Orvilliers, the first colonial-born governor in the French Atlantic World. Born in Saint Christopher, d'Orvilliers was the son of Rémy Guillouet d'Orvilliers and grandson of Antoine Le Febvre de la Barre, both of whom had previously served as Governor of Cayenne.¹⁴⁶ Like Châteauguay, d'Orvilliers *filis* had a wealth of colonial experience, having served in Canada, Rochefort and on supply missions to the Caribbean.¹⁴⁷ Taking over his father's position, he applied this experience to his command and had expanded the colony's frontiers by establishing creating outposts on the Approuage and Oyapock rivers, designed to attract the trade of the Tikouyou, Maraone, Maparouane and Koussari populations fleeing Portuguese slavery.¹⁴⁸

Once Orvilliers died in 1729, however, Maurepas replaced him with a metropolitan career officer, Henri Dussault de Lamirande, perhaps in an attempt to bring some new blood into the colony after many decades under the same family. But with the navy having started offering incentives to metropolitan officers serving in the colonies, Lamirande seems to have treated his appointment in Guiana as a way to temporarily enrich himself whilst waiting for a better position

¹⁴⁶ For the career of Rémy Guillouet d'Orvilliers see Céline Ronsseray, "'Administrer Cayenne': Sociabilités, fidélités et pouvoirs des fonctionnaires coloniaux en Guyane française au XVIIIe siècle," (PhD diss., Université de La Rochelle, 2007), p.92, 150, 177, 252-253 ; Étienne Taillemite, "Guillouet d'Orvilliers, Rémy" in *DCB*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 8/1/2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/guillouet_d_orvilliers_remy_2E.html and Polderman, *La Guyane française*, p.281-283. For Antoine Le Febvre de la Barre, see Polderman, *La Guyane Française*, p.124; William A. S. Brown, "Learning to Colonize: State Knowledge, Expertise, and the Making of the First French Empire, 1661-1715" (Unpublished PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2016), p.97-126 and R. La Roque de Roquebrune, "Le Febvre de la Barre, Joseph-Antoine," in *DCB*, vol. 1, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 8/1/2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/le_febvre_de_la_barre_joseph_antoine_1E.html. Coincidentally, Antoine Lefebvre de La Barre was also Châteauguay's godfather and probably namesake, standing in at the ceremony whilst Governor of New France in 1683.

¹⁴⁷ Étienne Taillemite, "Guillouet d'Orvilliers, Claude," in *DCB*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 8/1/2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/guillouet_d_orvilliers_claude_2E.html;

¹⁴⁸ Ronsseray, "'Administrer Cayenne,'" p. 113, 242-3, 262-4; Hurault, *Français et Indiens en Guyane*, p.105-113.

in the metropole.¹⁴⁹ One incentive offered in Guiana was that the governor could own landed property. Taking full advantage of this, Lamirande purchased a large roucou plantation, joining the ranks of what Céline Ronsseray has dubbed as the “administrateur-planteurs”—officials in Guiana who generally favoured their own economic interests over those of the colony, contributing to its stagnation.¹⁵⁰ Once Lamirande died, therefore, Maurepas began looking for someone with few connections or financial interests in the colony. In Martinique, Châteauguay had earned a reputation for financial integrity, having refused to complain about the limited salaries on offer and even agreeing to temporarily live in the fort at Saint Pierre to save money. In 1734, Governor Champigny brought this reputation to the minister’s attention, recommending Châteauguay as an “homme vray et sincere, d’un probité et desinteressement.”¹⁵¹ With a reputation for disinterest, experience in Caribbean command and a proven track record of economic revitalization, Châteauguay thus seemed like an ideal candidate for command in Guiana, encouraging Maurepas to overlook his colonial origins so that he could finally bring the colony back in line with the rest of the empire.

On his arrival, Châteauguay attempted to live up to the minister’s expectations by distinguishing himself from his predecessors and acting as a proper governor worthy of his metropolitan contemporaries. Forgoing the opportunity to purchase a plantation, he instead established his household in the official gubernatorial residence in Cayenne’s Place d’Armes, bringing with him his wife Marie-Catherine de Marseille—they had married in Martinique in 1727—their two children, Jean-Baptiste and Marguerite, and several domestic servants brought

¹⁴⁹ Michel Vergé- Franceschi, “Les gouverneurs des colonies françaises,” p.114-116 and “Fortune et plantations des administrateurs coloniaux aux îles d’Amérique aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles,” in Paul Butel, *Commerce et plantation dans la Caraïbe, XVIIIe et XIXe siècles: actes du colloque de Bordeaux, 15-16 mars 1991* (Bordeaux: Maison des Pays Ibériques, 1992).

¹⁵⁰ Ronsseray “Administrer Cayenne” p.312, 327.

¹⁵¹ ANOM, C8A, V.37, f.301-301v, « Lettre de M. de Feuquières au ministre, » 29 mars 1727; ANOM, C8A, V.43, f.104, « Lettre de Champigny de Noroy au ministre, » 14 mars 1732.

over from Martinique.¹⁵² Besides a few passing remarks, little is known about Marie-Catherine, but she was likely the daughter of Pierre de Marseille, the *doyen* of Martinique's *Conseil Supérieur*.¹⁵³ Moving with her husband from Fort Saint Pierre to Cayenne, Marie-Catherine represented Châteauguay's commitment to his new command. Indeed, as Céline Ronsseray has suggested, the arrival of women in a developing, male-dominated colonial society such as that at Cayenne was often seen as the advent of a new future for the colony, where families and households could flourish.¹⁵⁴ Of course, Marie-Catherine was far from the first wife of a governor to arrive in Guiana, but in establishing her household in the centre of Cayenne, she became a prominent symbol of Châteauguay's intentions to reinvigorate the colony and build a new settler-colonial society more akin to the Caribbean, or even his native Canada.

More than a symbol, however, Marie-Catherine was also an active participant in her husband's career. In Martinique, she had played a key role in building Châteauguay's reputation and status as the *lieutenant du roi* of Saint Pierre. Bringing a dowry that was said to be "très considerable," Marie-Catherine enabled her husband to overcome the financial limitations of his

¹⁵² So little is known about Marie-Catherine that several historians have mistaken her for her daughter-in-law, Marie-Jeanne-Émilie Jaham Desfontaines, who married Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Châteauguay on May 12th, 1755. Even the date of her marriage to Châteauguay is unclear, as genealogists have claimed that the wedding occurred on November 9th, 1726, but this was a full two months before Châteauguay was even appointed to serve as *lieutenant du roi* in Martinique. ANOM, État Civil, Martinique, Le Marigot, « Mariage de Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Châteauguay et de Marie-Jeanne-Émilie Jaham des Fontaines, » 12 mai 1755; See also Yves Drolet « Tables généalogiques de la noblesse québécoise du XVII^e au XIX^e siècle, » (Montreal, 2009) —, accessed 17/12/2018 at : <http://www.shrt.qc.ca/PDF/20070317.pdf>. For reference to the domestic servants, see C8A V.48 f.264v « Lettre de Pannier d'Orgeville au ministre » 25 décembre 1737.

¹⁵³ For mentions of Pierre de Marseilles, see ANOM, C8A, V.21, f.332, « Arrêt du Conseil supérieur de Martinique décidant que le doyen de Marseille aura préséance sur les conseillers honoraires, » 8 novembre 1712 ; ANOM, C8A, V.21, f.321, « Mémoire de quelques difficultés sur le service entre le doyen du conseil supérieur de la Martinique et le commissaire de marine, » 27 mars 1716 ; ANOM, C8A, V.21, f.128, « Mémoire du sieur de Marseille, » 15 mai 1716 ; ANOM, C8B, V.5, No.27, « Décision du Conseil de Marine accordant les provisions de conseiller honoraire aux S^{rs} Girardin et de Marseille, » 22 mars 1718.

¹⁵⁴ Céline Ronsseray, "Entre pouvoir, argent et traditions familiales : le rôle des femmes dans l'ascension sociale des administrateurs coloniaux en Guyane française au XVIII^e siècle," *Outre-Mers. Revue d'histoire* 95, no.358-359 (2008) : 187-204.

office, using much of this money to “soutenir dignement son Employ.”¹⁵⁵ As the daughter of a prominent local figure, Marie-Catherine would have been well aware of the cultural expectations placed on administrators in the Caribbean. In Saint Pierre, the couple had likely used her wealth to maintain a household, residence and lifestyle befitting of their status as nobles and colonial officials. Once in Cayenne, this seems to have continued, for the couple were said to have frequently opened their home and dinner table to the town’s officers, militia captains, councillors and *habitants* and even put their staff at the disposal of Cayenne’s sick and needy.¹⁵⁶ In Guiana, however, they were less dependent on Marie-Catherine’s wealth, since, as governor, Châteauguay was afforded a generous allotment of supplies from the *magasins du roi* and received a much larger salary than he had in Martinique. Nevertheless, such hospitality would have required considerable work, most of which would have fallen to Marie-Catherine.¹⁵⁷ Her efforts to bring decorum and prestige to her husband’s office did not go unnoticed, however, for Artur noted that Châteauguay was “le premier gouverneur qui ai vécu en gouverneur.”¹⁵⁸

Gradually, the couple turned the Governor’s residence into a small colonial court, which encouraged the local elite to spend more time in the once scarcely populated capital. This proved particularly beneficial to Châteauguay’s reforms of the colony’s long-suffering military. For years, many officers had been neglecting their duties, preferring to live on their rural plantations than tend to their companies, leaving them ill-disciplined, under-equipped and poorly trained. Châteauguay thus ordered at least half of the colony’s officers to reside in Cayenne at any one time, only permitting them to switch every three weeks. He also prohibited them from marrying widows or serving as *procurateurs* for minors, both of which might encourage them to shirk their

¹⁵⁵ ANOM, C8A, V.43, f.104, « Lettre de Champigny de Noroy au ministre, » 14 mars 1732.

¹⁵⁶ Artur, *Histoire*, p.514; Ronsseray, “Administrer Cayenne,” p.299-300, 323.

¹⁵⁷ Polderman gives a complete list of supplies provided to the governor. Polderman, *La Guyane française*, p. 125

¹⁵⁸ Artur, *Histoire*, p.514.

duties in the pursuit of their own financial interests.¹⁵⁹ For those who followed his orders and attended his colonial court, however, Châteauguay made sure to offer his patronage, promoting them to Maurepas based on merit and not personal loyalties.¹⁶⁰ He also turned to the lower ranks, procuring the soldiers more weapons and hammocks, better uniforms, an upgraded barracks and a chaplain to cater for their spiritual needs. After two years, these reforms had improved moral to the point that Châteauguay could boast that “il n’y a point eu D’Epuis mon arrivé aucune desertion, Je me flatte qu’il en aura peu à l’avenir la bonne Dissipline y Contribue Beaucoup.”¹⁶¹



Fig. 6.1 : “Cayenne, 1733,” from François Frenau de La Gataudière *Plan de la ville de du fort Saint-Michel de Cayenne dans l’état où je l’ay trouvé au mois de janvier 1733*. [?: 1733] Map. ANOM, 14DFC52B.

http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ulyse/notice?id=FR_ANOM_14DFC52B.

K marks the « Gouvernement » where Châteauguay and Marie-Catherine established their household.

¹⁵⁹ ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.8-12, « Lettre de Chateaugué, » Cayenne, 8 septembre 1738; Artur, *Histoire*, p.513.

¹⁶⁰ Châteauguay was said to have a reputation for distinguishing “les honnestes gens, et les gens de mérite, dont ils sçut faire le discernement malgré les idées fâcheuses qu’on voulut luy donner des plusieurs.” Artur, *Histoire*, p.514. See for example his reasons behind various promotions in ANOM, C14A, V.18, f.3-5v, « Lettre de Châteaugué » 6 janvier 1741; ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.25-27, « Lettre de Châteaugué, » 17 mars 1742.

¹⁶¹ ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.41v, « Lettre de Châteaugué, » 26 octobre 1739

Châteauguay also took an active role in Guiana's economy. Artur lauded the governor's interventions, recalling that "il encouragea autant qu'il put les habitants," visiting their plantations frequently and enforcing the Code Noir. Again, Artur's praise seems to have come from a place of surprise, because few former governors had cared for anything outside of their own plantations. Châteauguay, however, attempted to undertake some lasting economic reforms. Overseeing the distribution of plantations, he requested that Maurepas send a master surveyor to assess the existing plantations and prevented colonists from acquiring any more land before they developed that which they already owned.¹⁶² But despite these measures, the agricultural reinvigoration that the minister desired still proved difficult. By 1740, Châteauguay was forced to deem the mostly flooded and rocky farmlands unfit for cacao production. Many planters, however, had recently turned towards producing indigo, and Châteauguay encouraged their labours. He even claimed to Maurepas that he would "en faire une autre Louïsiannie" in Cayenne, likely referencing the small successes experienced by several indigo planters near New Orleans since 1737. Indeed, by emphasising his experience and knowledge of other colonies, Châteauguay sought to show the minister the value of his expertise, perhaps hoping that this would secure him more prestigious projects in the future.¹⁶³

Before long, however, Châteauguay's attempts to take the initiative were stalled by frequent clashes with the *ordonnateur* Paul Lefebvre d'Albon. Originally born into the *noblesse d'épée*, Albon had elected to instead pursue a career as a bureaucrat, securing an appointment as

¹⁶² ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.17-19, « Lettre de Châteauguay et d'Albon, » 8 novembre 1738 ; ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.49v-50, « Lettre de Châteauguay, » 8 mai 1740 ; ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.54-55v, « Lettre de Châteauguay et d'Albon, » 9 mai 1740.

¹⁶³ ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.56-59, « Lettre de Châteauguay et d'Albon, » 9 mai 1740. For the brief indigo boom in Louisiana between 1737 and 1740, see N. M. Miller Surrey, *The Commerce of Louisiana during the French Regime, 1699-1763* (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 2006), p.192-193 and Jack D. L. Holmes, "Indigo in Colonial Louisiana and the Floridas," *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 8, no.4 (Autumn 1967): 333-334.

an *inspecteur de marine* in Cayenne in 1706 where he had remained ever since, promoted to *ordonnateur* in 1712, and first councillor of the *Conseil Supérieur* six years later. Over his long tenure, the *ordonnateur* had earned a reputation for probity, though many remarked that he lacked many of the necessary technical competences for his job. Even so, he had more than made up for this by shrewdly consolidating his power in the *Conseil Supérieur*, which was almost entirely under his control by 1737.¹⁶⁴ Allegedly, however, this combination of experience, seniority and civil authority made Albon especially unwilling to work with others. According to Artur, who later took Châteauguay's side in the disputes, the *ordonnateur* believed that he was "supérieur en capacité à ceux qui se trouvaient au dessous de luy qu'il l'était par son rang."¹⁶⁵ After a long career in the colony, it is unsurprising that Albon had little respect for the carousel of career officers who passed through Cayenne in search of better appointments and left him to do most of the administration work. It was perhaps even inevitable that Albon and Châteauguay clashed, especially since the latter sought to assert his authority by involving himself in local affairs that previous governors had scarcely bothered to touch.

Matters ultimately came to a head over the repairs of the fortifications, barracks and guardhouses in Cayenne, a task the governor and *ordonnateur* had been explicitly instructed to oversee together.¹⁶⁶ In September 1740, Châteauguay complained of the "Non Chalance ordinaire de Mr D'albon," whom he accused of refusing to buy the necessary wood for the repairs. With considerable past experiences in repairing fortifications after the earthquake in Saint Pierre, Châteauguay had apparently suggested to Albon that "cela doit être icy comme à la Martinique," where the purchase of supplies was left to an experienced engineer instead of the

¹⁶⁴ Ronsseray, "'Administrer Cayenne,'" p.167. 466, 482-483; Pritchard, *In Search of Empire*, p.437, 440, n.82.

¹⁶⁵ Artur, *Histoire*, p.367.

¹⁶⁶ ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.147v, « Instructions données par le roi à Châteauguay, gouverneur, et d'Albon, ordonnateur, » 6 janvier 1738.

ordonnateur. Perhaps perceiving this as a slight on his authority, however, Albon preferred to oversee this task himself, which ultimately delayed the project for an entire year. Frustrated by the *ordonnateur*'s unwillingness to adapt, Châteauguay explained to Maurepas that “si la Colonie n’est pas dans Un meilleur Etat, s’est la faute de mon dit S^r D’albon” whose highly localised career had rendered him “nullement au fait des Colonies.”¹⁶⁷

Much of Châteauguay’s anger seems to have come from having his ambitions beholden to the whims of an *ordonnateur* who claimed seniority in local affairs. In the same year that Châteauguay was promoted to Governor of Cayenne, his counterpart at Fort Royal, Gabriel de Clieu, secured the far more prestigious position of Governor of Guadeloupe. This had reportedly greatly frustrated Châteauguay, for Artur claims that the colonists in Cayenne had to attempt to convince him of the value of his appointment in Guiana, and the “espèce d’indépendance” it offered from the Governor of the Îles du Vent.¹⁶⁸ Indeed, due to its peripheral location, Cayenne effectively answered directly to the *ministre de la Marine*, offering Châteauguay an opportunity to demonstrate his merit and leadership potential to Maurepas in the hopes of securing other, more prestigious appointments. By 1739, however, Cayenne had offered Châteauguay few occasions to prove himself, so he looked for a new posting, having his nephew Pierre Joseph de Sérigny petition for him to become the new Governor of Martinique.¹⁶⁹ Maurepas, however, turned down this proposal, claiming that he was still needed in Cayenne. Reluctant to have Albon stall his career any further, Châteauguay thus challenged the value of the *ordonnateur*'s seniority, claiming that his

¹⁶⁷ ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.72-73v, « Lettre de Chateaugué, » Cayenne, 2 septembre 1740 ANOM, C14A, V.18, f.13-14, « Lettre de Chateaugué, » Cayenne, 15 juillet 1741; ANOM, C14A, V.18, f.23-24v, « Lettre de Chateaugué, » Cayenne, 22 août 1742.

¹⁶⁸ Artur, *Histoire*, p.500.

¹⁶⁹ ANOM, B, V.69, f.121, « Lettre à M. De Sérigny, » 29 septembre 1739.

memory had begun to slip in his old age. He also argued that since the *ordonnateur* was no longer able to properly fulfill his functions, Maurepas should put the construction project in his hands, allowing him a chance to prove his worth.¹⁷⁰ It appears that Maurepas agreed with Châteauguay, for the following year he reprimanded the *ordonnateur* for his failure to co-operate, earning Châteauguay's gratitude.¹⁷¹

Whilst frustrating, the confrontation with Albon was perhaps the most interesting aspect of Châteauguay's tenure in Cayenne. Between 1739 and 1743, his letters betrayed a sense of boredom, for he began each dispatch with the monotonous remark that "Il ne s'est rien passé de remarquable dans cette colonie d'Epuis le Depart de la flûte du Roy."¹⁷² Many in Cayenne sympathised with Châteauguay, and Artur reported that "tout le monde s'empressait à luy procurer de l'amusement," inviting him to join them on their plantations or for dinner in an attempt encourage him to stay in the colony.¹⁷³ But Châteauguay rarely took up these invitations, and instead requested leave in France to recover from the ailments that had been plaguing him for almost a decade.¹⁷⁴ Artur, however, later speculated that Châteauguay was in fact anxious to be recalled before another war broke out with Britain, not wishing end his career in disgrace should they capture Cayenne.¹⁷⁵ Whatever the case, at sixty years old, Châteauguay was more than ready to retire on his own terms after a long career of colonial service.

¹⁷⁰ ANOM, C14A, V.18, f.5-5v, « Lettre de Châteaugué, » Cayenne, 1 janvier 1741.

¹⁷¹ ANOM, C14A, V.18, f.18, « Lettre de Châteaugué, » Cayenne, 14 mai 1742.

¹⁷² ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.40, « Lettre de Châteaugué, » Cayenne, 26 octobre 1739 ; ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.72, « Lettre de Châteaugué, » Cayenne, 2 septembre 1740 ; ANOM, C14A, V.18, f.13, « Lettre de Châteaugué, » Cayenne, 15 juillet 1741 ; ANOM, C14A, V.18, f.23, « Lettre de Châteaugué, » 22 août 1742.

¹⁷³ Artur, *Histoire*, p.542.

¹⁷⁴ ANOM, C8A, V.42, f.106, « Lettre de Champigny de Noroy au ministre, » 3 mai 1731 ; ANOM, C8A, V.42, f.281, « Lettre de Pannier d'Orgeville au ministre, » 9 novembre 1731 ; ANOM, C8A, V.43, f.104-105, « Lettre de Champigny de Noroy au ministre, » 14 mars 1732 ; ANOM, C8A, V.49, f.239-239v, « Lettre de Pannier d'Orgeville au ministre, » 13 mai 1738 ; ANOM, C14A, V.17, f.40v-41, « Lettre de Châteaugué, » 26 octobre 1739.

¹⁷⁵ Artur, *Histoire*, p.542.

In June 1743, the aptly named *Canada* arrived to take Châteauguay back to France. According to Artur, his departure was “le spectacle le plus touchant,” as the governor was waved off by “toutte la colonie, blanc et nègres, qui le pleurait comme son père, et luy-même ne pouvait retenir ses larmes.”¹⁷⁶ As with much of his account, however, Artur’s retelling of this event was likely exaggerated to give the impression that royal appointments in Guiana were just as prestigious as those elsewhere French Antilles, thereby boosting his own status by association. Nevertheless, such an account does suggest that Châteauguay had succeeded in distinguishing himself from his predecessors and had earned a reputation for command, even in a difficult and less glamorous posting. But whilst this would have been useful in his early career, now that he wanted to retire, such a reputation proved a double-edged sword. Indeed, with a war on the horizon, Maurepas was reluctant to waste Châteauguay’s talents. Given that he had already succeeded in turning around one run-down garrison, Maurepas saw him as the ideal candidate to replace the recently deceased Governor Jean-Baptiste Prévot Du Quesnel at Louisbourg. On January 1st, 1745, Châteauguay was thus formally relinquished of his command at Cayenne and commissioned as Governor of Île Royale.¹⁷⁷

Though technically a promotion, this appointment risked taking Châteauguay out of the frying pan and into the fire. In 1744, the Louisbourg garrison was on the brink of mutiny and the British had set their sights on the fortress.¹⁷⁸ Fortunately for Châteauguay, however, he was too ill to take up the position as governor. In May 1744, the War of the Austrian Succession reached North America, and a year later, the British besieged Louisbourg. Since

¹⁷⁶ Artur, *Histoire*, p.542.

¹⁷⁷ ANOM, E, 76, « Antoine Le Moyne de Châteauguay » ; ANOM, C11A, V.84, f.190, « Bordereau des fonds à ordonner pour acquitter ce qui reste dû des dépenses faites à l’île Royale pour les différents besoins du service pendant l’année 1745, » 27 août 1746 ; ANOM, C11A, V.125, f.525, « État des paiements faits et à faire aux officiers et autres employés servant ci-devant à l’île Royale, » février 1748.

¹⁷⁸ ANOM, B, V.81, f.33, « Le Président du Conseil de Marine à M. de Beauharnois, » 26 avril 1745; Allan Greer, “Mutiny at Louisbourg, December 1744” *Histoire Sociale / Social History* 10, no. 20 (1977).

Châteauguay was still recovering in Rochefort, Maurepas sent Antoine-Alexis Périer de Salvert—the younger brother of Étienne Périer, the former Governor of Louisiana—to Louisbourg at the head of the largest fleet France had ever sent to North America in hopes of breaking the stalemate. Arriving after the British had already captured the fortress, however, Périer was forced to retreat and returned to Brest in October. The following year, further efforts to recapture the fortress were also disastrous. Louisbourg remained in British hands until the end of the war and was exchanged for Madras in the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.¹⁷⁹

Meanwhile, Châteauguay's health worsened and, on March 21st, 1747, he died a miserable death from dropsy (or edema) in Rochefort aged sixty-three. From Paris, Bienville petitioned for a pension of 300 *livres* on behalf of his niece and nephew Jean-Baptiste and Marguerite, who had accompanied their father back to Rochefort.¹⁸⁰ On June 22nd, the Châteauguay siblings used their inheritance to jointly purchase the seigneurie of Ardigny, about twenty-five miles from Rochefort, from Louis-Elie Millain, the *commissaire-général* of Nantes.¹⁸¹ It does not seem that the siblings intended to settle down on the estate, however, but rather saw it as an investment in property and status. Indeed by 1759, Marguerite had entered the convent of the *Hospitalières* in Rochefort, whilst Jean-Baptiste had returned to Martinique, where he married into the prominent Jaham clan, wedding Marie-Jeanne-Émilie Jaham des Fontaines in May 1755.¹⁸² Turning the tables on traditional colonial investment patterns, Jean-Baptiste lived in Martinique as an absentee metropolitan *seigneur*, whilst

¹⁷⁹ ANOM, B, V.81, f.8, « Le Président du Conseil de Marine à M. de Chambon, » 21 mai 1745; ANOM, B, V.82, f.88v, « Mémoire du roi pour servir d'instruction au Sieur Perier de Salvert, » 15 mai 1745. James Pritchard has documented the 1746 campaign in detail. James Pritchard, *Anatomy of a Naval Disaster: The 1746 French Expedition to North America* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014).

¹⁸⁰ ANOM, B, V.86, f.105v, « Lettre à M. de Bienville, » [1747] ; « Antoine Le Moyne de Châteauguay ».

¹⁸¹ ACM, 3^E, 1670-2, f.323-324, « Bail par Marguerite Lemoine de Châteauguay à André Venant, » 23 mai 1759.

¹⁸² « Mariage de Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Chateauguay et de Marie-Jeanne-Émilie Jaham des Fontaines, » 12 mai 1755.

Marguerite acted as his *procuratrice* in Rochefort, renting out the estate to Andre Venant, a local merchant, for a small income. When Marguerite died in August 1764, Jean-Baptiste inherited the estate in full, but decided to sell it to Jean de Juglart in 1771, using some of the profits to pay off his sister's debts.¹⁸³ He then spent the rest of his life in Martinique, following in his father's military footsteps and serving as a militia colonel and the mayor of Grande-Anse until he was killed leading the colony's nobles against the revolutionary uprising of 1791.¹⁸⁴

Treading his own path, Châteauguay had used his wealth of experience in both Canada and Louisiana to make a name for himself in the French Atlantic World. Gradually advancing through the colonial hierarchy, he had secured military appointments in Martinique, Guiana and Île Royale. Whilst these commands were not always the most desirable or prestigious, like many of his metropolitan peers, Châteauguay approached them as steppingstones to higher commands. Once appointed, he continually strove to fulfill the expectations of his office, consciously modelling his actions on those of his metropolitan contemporaries to prove his worth to his superiors at Versailles. All the while, he continued to build connections across the Caribbean, creating a legacy that allowed his children to advance their own social status and become metropolitan seigneurs and notable colonists in Martinique. Thus, though the youngest of the Le Moyne brothers, Châteauguay managed to step out from his brothers' shadows and establish his own branch of the Le Moyne dynasty in another corner of the French Atlantic World.

¹⁸³ « Bail par Marguerite Lemoine de Châteauguay à André Venant, » 23 mai 1759; ACM, 3^E, 1672-2, f.408 « Baillette par Marguerite Le Moyne de Châteauguay à André Venant, » 24 novembre 1761; ACM, 3^E, 1682-1, f.59-66, « Arrentement par Jean Baptiste Le Moyne de Châteauguay à Jean de Juglart, » 9 février 1771.

¹⁸⁴ ANOM, C8A, V.89, f.121-122, « Copie d'une lettre du comte de Châteauguay, commandant de la noblesse de la Martinique, à M. de Vioménil, » 16 octobre 1789 ; ANOM, C8A, V.96, f.3-4, « Copie de la lettre écrite par les officiers municipaux de la Grande-Anse à M. De Châteauguay, maire au sujet des événements survenus dans la paroisse, » [1790].

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For the Le Moyne brothers, the path to governance was an uphill battle. Whilst they had the finances, experience and reputations to contend with their metropolitan contemporaries, this was not always enough. Bringing a renewed emphasis on patrimonial governance, Maurepas effectively controlled the flow of promotions in the French Atlantic World, prioritising the advancement of officers he believed could bring about his ever-changing imperial vision. Early in his career, this meant that the minister favoured ambitious, metropolitan officers, who would be dependent on him alone, and not any local, colonial networks. Placing these men across the French Atlantic World, he thus bided his time, waiting for the day that they would rise to the top of the *Marine*. Gradually, however, as another war with the British loomed on the horizon, Maurepas began to change his priorities, realising the value of employing officers with specific skill sets who could quickly resolve the many crises that emerged during his tenure. For a brief moment, therefore, he overlooked his preference for metropolitan officers, bringing in colonial-born officers like Bienville and Châteauguay to solve issues no-one else could. Once they had fulfilled his ambitions, however, the minister turned back to other more traditional candidates, bringing their careers to an end on his terms.

But as we have seen, whilst influential, Maurepas did not always have the last say. Making the most of their various traits, the Le Moyne brothers were each able to negotiate their positions within the empire in different ways, manipulating horizontal networks of kinship, marriage and alliance to reduce their dependence on the vertical networks of patronage that dominated the French Empire. Though the Le Moyne family had spread out across the French Atlantic World, each of the brothers continued to use whatever power and

influence they could secure to negotiate the advancement of their nearest kinsmen. By the mid-eighteenth century, however, this meant promoting the interests of a new successor generation and advancing the careers of their sons, nephews and in-laws, diffusing the family's dynastic ambitions. Over time, this created new, distinct branches of the Le Moyne family as the brothers developed new inter-generational networks within Canada, France and Martinique each with their own interests, desires and ambitions. By the time the Le Moyne brothers died or retired, therefore, their prestige and influence had become more and more spread out, but together they had managed to use their power and influence to establish a lasting dynasty that stretched across the entire French Empire, fulfilling the ambitions that their father had held over a century earlier.

Conclusion: **A New World**

On March 7th, 1767, at 10 o'clock in the evening, the eighty-six-year-old Bienville succumbed to the illness that had been plaguing him for the last two months. As soon as he died, one of his household servants alerted the local authorities. Within an hour several officials from the Châtelet de Paris had gathered outside his apartment on Rue Vivienne, ready to formally declare the death of the former Governor of Louisiana and prepare his property for the division of his estate. Leading these men was Bienville's nephew, Paul-Joseph Le Moyne, Chevalier de Longueuil, who lived on Rue du Chantre, only a ten-minute walk from his uncle's residence. Taking the officials upstairs to Bienville's small, shabby home, Longueuil identified the body in the bed as his uncle, confirming that he was indeed dead. Then the officials began taking an inventory of Bienville's possessions and had his household staff swear oaths that nothing had been taken since their master's passing. Before they finished, another nephew—Pierre-Jacques Payen de Noyan—arrived at the apartment, for he also lived only a short walk away on Rue Nicaise. Together, Longueuil and Noyan oversaw the proceedings and signed as witnesses to the official's work, agreeing to the placing of a seal of their uncle's property and possessions, which was to be guarded by his valet, François Devraigne.¹

One month later, another of Bienville's nephews, Pierre-Jean-Honoré-François-Xavier Le Moyne de Sérigny, arrived from Rochefort, having been sent word of his uncle's passing by Devraigne. Brandishing a letter that Bienville had sent him only a few months earlier, Sérigny declared that he had been named as the executor of his uncle's will and requested that the seal

¹ BAnQ, P1000, S3, D2727, « Documents concernant la famille Lemoyne. » See also "Testament de Bienville, 1765" in Alex Jodoin and J. L. Vincent, *Histoire de Longueuil et de la famille de Longueuil*, (Montreal: Imprimerie Gebhardt-Berthiaume, 1889), pp.135-137 and Charles Edwards O'Neill, "The Death of Bienville," *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 8, no. 4 (1967): 362–69.

placed on the apartment be lifted so that he could carry out this task. That same day, however, Jean Martin, a local tailor, filed a formal opposition to any lifting of the seal before his client, Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Châteauguay—another of Bienville’s nephews who had returned to his native Martinique a decade earlier—could arrange for a lawyer to be present. One week later, on April 13th, the seal was formally lifted in the presence of Sérigny, Longueuil, Noyan and Maître Jean Claude Gouillart, who represented Châteauguay as well as Étienne Roland Payen de Charoy—the last of Bienville’s nephews who was otherwise occupied at his family’s estates in Avranches. Together, the cousins, their lawyers and the Parisian officials broke the seal placed on Bienville’s desk and recovered the will that he had written two years earlier. Two days later, they oversaw the division of their uncle’s estate, redistributing his wealth across the Atlantic World according to his wishes.²

Mundane and sombre, this episode illustrates the new realities the Le Moyne family faced after 1763. Over two generations, the family had adapted to the changing currents of the French Atlantic World. They had offered their services, skills and connections in return for reward. They had also taken advantage of the turbulent formation of this French imperial space for their own gain. But once the ink had dried on the Treaties of Paris and Fontainebleau, the currents had changed once again, as a new imperial order came into being. Giving away both Canada and Louisiana—the Le Moyne family strongholds—to the British and Spanish respectively, officials at the *bureaux de la Marine* attempted to reorganise France’s Atlantic Empire, ridding it of peripheral spaces where claims to imperial sovereignty were tenuous at best. Instead, they chose to focus on the highly productive plantation colonies they already possessed in the Antilles—Martinique, Guadeloupe and Saint Domingue—and explore new,

² AN, Y, V.15654, p.1, « Lettre à Monsieur Le Lieutenant Civil, » 13 avril 1767 and AN, Y, V.15654, p.3-50, « Scellés du 7 mars 1767 sur les effets laissés par Mr de Bienville, » [avril 1767].

lucrative markets in the Indian and Pacific Oceans.³ Taking this new direction, successive naval ministers privileged the services and schemes of merchants, planters, financiers and entrepreneurs over those with increasingly less pertinent talents in frontier warfare and Indigenous diplomacy.⁴ As a result, the Le Moyne family would have to adapt once again, reinventing themselves amidst this imperial reformation.

As the assembly of Bienville's nephews in Paris shows, by 1767, many members of the Le Moyne family chose to remain under the auspices of the French Empire, either migrating towards the imperial centre or remaining in the colonies that metropolitan officials deemed the most valuable. Once Montreal fell to the British in 1760, the Chevalier de Longueuil and Pierre-Jacques de Noyan—who had both served as senior officers in the *troupes de la Marine*—were deported to France as prisoners of war. Formerly the *commandant* at Fort Frontenac, Noyan was briefly sent to the Bastille for his small part in the *affaire du Canada*, where he was fined a total of six *livres* for his negligent verification of the fort's inventories.⁵ Meanwhile, the Chevalier de Longueuil, who had been the Governor of Trois-Rivières, rose as the leader of the exiled Canadian community in France. Appointed as the *major de place du Canada*, Longueuil found a way to continue using his Canadian titles, talents, experience and connections in the metropole, as he oversaw the *troupes de la Marine* forced to live out the rest of the war in Touraine, easing their temporary transition to French life and making sure they posed no threat to the kingdom.⁶

³ Helen Dewar, "Canada or Guadeloupe?: French and British Conceptions of Empire, 1760-1763," *Canadian Historical Review* 91, no.4 (December 2010): 637-660.

⁴ Christian Ayne Crouch, *Nobility Lost: French and Canadian Martial Cultures, Indians, and the End of New France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014), p.161. See also Pernille Røge, *Economistes and the Reinvention of Empire: France in the Americas and Africa, c.1750-1802* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

⁵ Donald Chaput, "Payen de Noyan et de Chavoy, Pierre Jacques," in *DCB*, vol. 4, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 28/5/2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/payen_de_noyan_et_de_chavoy_pierre_jacques_4E.html.

⁶ Crouch, *Nobility Lost*, p.132-134.

Once the Treaty of Paris was signed, both Longueuil and Noyan decided that there was little left for them in Canada under a British regime, and instead chose to take a chance on life in France. In 1763, therefore, Longueuil acquired permission to return to the Saint Lawrence Valley, where he settled his outstanding affairs, selling one of his *seigneuries* to a Scottish officer, Gabriel Christie, before returning to Paris in 1766.⁷ Shortly after Bienville's death, he returned to Tours, where he lived until his death in 1778. Meanwhile, Noyan's wife, Louise-Catherine d'Ailleboust de Manthet, also sold their family's estates to Gabriel Christie and another officer, John Campbell, in 1764, before crossing the Atlantic to join her husband in Paris. But even the money earned from these sales proved insufficient to live on in the metropole. Together they lived in relative poverty, relying heavily upon Noyan's pension of 1200 *livres* until his death in 1771, whereupon Louise-Catherine petitioned for a pension of her own worth 1000 *livres* in honour of her husband's service.⁸

For those branches of the family already living in what remained of the French Atlantic Empire—including the descendants of Iberville, Sérigny and Châteauguay—there was little immediate change after the Treaty of Paris. In fact, once France began pursuing a policy of *revanche* against its British rivals under the Duc de Choiseuil, more money was poured into the naval infrastructure, providing many new opportunities for those family members with experience in the *Marine*. Indeed, a handful of Le Moyne kinsmen returned to North America to fight in the naval campaigns of the War of American Independence, receiving promotions and distinctions for their service.⁹ Only once the French Revolution swept the Atlantic World were

⁷ Rodger, "Le Moyne de Longueuil, Paul-Joseph, Chevalier de Longueuil" in *DCB*. V.4.

⁸ For the couple's pensions, see ANOM, E, 332, « Payen de Noyan, Pierre Jacques, dit de Chavoy, capitaine des troupes, lieutenant de roi aux Trois-Rivières, mort en 1771, » [1771] ; Chaput "Payen de Noyan et de Chavoy, Pierre-Jacques" in *DCB* V.4.

⁹ For instance, Iberville's great-grandson, Michel-Henri Froger de l'Éguille was promoted to *lieutenant de vaisseau* in 1776, fought in the Battle of earned his Croix de Saint-Louis in 1785 and was promoted to *capitaine de vaisseau*

these branches forced to re-evaluate their position within the French Empire. Both Michel-Henri Froger de L'Éguille—Iberville's great-grandson—and Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Châteauguay were killed defending their family's noble status during this upheaval, whilst the family estates of Ardillières and Loire-les-Marais were confiscated and sold by the new revolutionary regime.

Many other family members, however, were either unable or unwilling to pursue opportunities in the metropole or elsewhere in the French Empire. In Canada, the Seven Years' War had left the Barony of Longueuil without a legitimate heir. On September 8th, 1755, Charles-Jacques Le Moyne de Longueuil—the third Baron de Longueuil—was killed in the Battle of Lake George, but was not formally declared dead by his wife, Marie-Anne-Catherine Fleury Dechambault, until 1759.¹⁰ Charles had no male heirs, but had fathered twin girls, one of whom survived to adulthood. As a result, his closest living male relative, the Chevalier de Longueuil, claimed the title of Baron of Longueuil until at least 1776.¹¹ Marie-Anne-Catherine, repeatedly contested the Chevalier's claims, seeking the legal clarification in France that her surviving daughter, Marie-Charles-Joseph Le Moyne de Longueuil, was the rightful heir to the title. Between 1771 and 1776, leading jurists in France finally delivered three decisions confirming Marie-Charles-Joseph as the dowager baroness of Longueuil, repudiating the claims of her great-uncle.¹² Meanwhile, however, Marie-Anne-Catherine had married the Jacobite *émigré* William Grant—son of the Laird of Blairfindy—on September 11th, 1770, perhaps in the

in 1787. See Jacques Daniel, « Froger de l'Éguille (Michel-Henry) », in François Julien-Labruyère (dir.), *Dictionnaire biographique des Charentais et de ceux qui ont illustré les Charentes* (Paris, Le Croît vif, 2005), p.552.

¹⁰ Many wives of soldiers or militiamen in Canada experienced difficulties formally declaring the deaths of their husbands during the Seven Years' War. Louise Lainesse, "Composer avec l'incertitude: les « presque veuves » à l'heure de la Conquête, 1754-1760" (Master's thesis. Université Laval, 2018).

¹¹ A passport issued to the Chevalier de Longueuil by Louis XV in 1767 addressed him as the "Baron de Longueuil." This letter was auctioned off by A.H Wilkens Auctions & Appraisals on September 24, 2019. "Louis XV Issuing Passport to Baron de Longueuil," in A.H. Wilkens Auctions & Appraisals, Historical Documents of Quebec's Le Moyne Family Barons de Longueuil, Tuesday September 24, 2019, at 11:00 AM, p.12—, accessed 28/5/2020, https://ahwilkens.com/catalogues/20190924/September24thDOCUMENTS_2019.pdf.

¹² Jodoin and Vincent, *Histoire de Longueuil*, p.248-249.

hope that the British Empire might recognise her daughter's claims.¹³ For the next decade, William managed the seigneurie of Longueuil on behalf his step-daughter with the help of his nephew, David Alexander Grant.¹⁴ On May 7th, 1781, Marie-Charles-Joseph and David Alexander were married in Quebec, with their contract stating that the barony would pass to their eldest son.¹⁵ Born in 1782, Charles William Grant became the fifth Baron of Longueuil in 1841. With this the title passed into the British peerage—the only French colonial title still recognised by the British crown.

Finally, whilst the Le Moyne kinsmen in Canada chose to adapt to the new world order, those left in Louisiana resisted it. Many in New Orleans openly opposed the secret Treaty of Fontainebleau, which signed Louisiana over to the Spanish in 1762. Mostly, frustration was felt amongst wealthy creole planters and merchants, who wanted to continue trading freely with their contacts in the French colonies, rather than being forced to adapt to the mercantile system of the Spanish Atlantic World. In 1768, a group of creole elites plotted to overthrow the new regime, taking advantage of the minimal Spanish presence in the colony since the end of the war. Amongst them was Jean-Baptiste Payen de Noyan—known as “Bienville” after his great-uncle—who connected to many of the most prominent conspirators by kinship and business.¹⁶ Initially, the rebels were successful and managed to force the Spanish Governor Antonia de Ulloa into exile and take temporary control of Louisiana. In July 1769, however, Madrid sent a new governor, Alejandro O'Reilly, to put an end to the rebellion. Arriving with over 2000

¹³ UdeM, P0058A3/68, (mf.131), “Contrat de mariage de William Grant et Marie Catherine Deschambault, veuve de Charles Lemoine de Longueuil” 11 septembre 1770.

¹⁴ David Roberts, “Grant, William (1744-1805),” in *DCB*, vol. 5, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed 21/5/2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/grant_william_1744_1805_5E.html; Jodoin and Vincent *Histoire de Longueuil*, p.245-246.

¹⁵ UdeM, P0058A3/75, (mf. 133,134, 135), “Contrat de mariage de David Alexandre Grant et Marie Charles Joseph Lemoine de Longueuil,” Québec, 5 mai, 1781.

¹⁶ Emilie Leumas, “Ties That Bind: The Family, Social and Business Associations of the Insurrectionists of 1768,” *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 47, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 183-202.

soldiers, O'Reilly rounded up the ringleaders and had them arrested on August 21st. By October 25th, they had been tried and found guilty of treason. Some were sent to jail in Havana, but the five most prominent—including the young Noyan—were executed by firing squad the following day. With this, the Le Moyne connection to Louisiana came to a swift and brutal end.¹⁷

Within a century of Charles Le Moyne's death, therefore, the Le Moyne family saw their influence peak and trough, as they struggled to renegotiate their position with the new imperial formation. Whilst Le Moyne had laid the foundations that allowed his children to expand their lives, careers and influence far beyond the Saint Lawrence Valley, the same could not be said for the generations that followed them. Since 1645, the Le Moyne family had been able to make the most of their talents as soldiers, interpreters, privateers and fur traders, but by the late eighteenth-century, the world had changed almost entirely, leaving little space for these talents. At the very least, their descendants could claim a position amongst the colonial nobility but, as the regimes changed, this status proved as tenuous as it had been in 1668, if not even more so. The future generations of Le Moyne family would thus return to the fringes of imperial authority, continually attempting to adapt to new realities to stay relevant.

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Viewing the French Atlantic World through the lens of the Le Moyne family, *Brothers in Arms* has shown that traces of “empire” can indeed be found across the French colonies in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Challenging the prevailing views of Pritchard and Banks, the narrative of the Le Moyne siblings demonstrates that the “French Empire” should not be considered as an elusive entity “chased” by officials in the *bureaux de la Marine*, but

¹⁷ On the Louisiana Revolt, see Shannon Lee Dawdy, *Building the Devil's Empire: French Colonial New Orleans* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), p.220-232 and Lawrence N. Powell, *The Accidental City: Improvising New Orleans* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012), p.143-152.

rather as an evolving imperial formation that was lived and shaped by the experiences of those within it. Moving between Canada, Newfoundland, Acadia, Hudson Bay, Louisiana, Saint Domingue, Martinique, Guyana, and France, the Le Moyne family embodied the circum-Atlantic mobility experienced by many colonial elites in this period. Travelling not only between metropole and colony, but also between the colonies themselves, the Le Moyne brothers served as key agents in empire, carrying legal cultures, understandings of subjecthood and imperial authority with them wherever they went. Meanwhile, they also pursued their own agendas, exploiting their newfound imperial authority to fulfil their personal and dynastic ambitions of wealth, status and glory. But whether serving imperial or personal interests—or indeed both at the same time—the Le Moyne siblings were continually defining, testing and pushing the formation of empire in certain corners of the French Atlantic World.

Over six decades of service in the *Marine*, the Le Moyne brothers were directly implicated in establishing and defending their monarch's claims to sovereignty in the French Atlantic World. Beginning their careers as privateers, several of the brothers enacted extra-territorial justice on the fringes of imperial influence, defending the commercial privileges of the *Compagnie du Nord* in Hudson Bay and French merchant houses in Newfoundland through sanctioned maritime violence. Later, they would do the same in the Caribbean, protecting the monopolies of the *Compagnie de l'Asiento* during the War of the Spanish Succession. Meanwhile, as cross-cultural diplomats, they attempted to defend the monarchy's claims to sovereignty in North America through the creation or maintenance of Indigenous alliance networks in the *pays d'en haut* and the Lower Mississippi Valley. Manipulating their fictive kinship relationships, they also sought to impose hierarchies within these networks which not only privileged, but also protected, French interests. Finally, as colonial officials certain Le

Moyne brothers were tasked with either establishing or enforcing French legal cultures on the periphery of the empire. Bringing with them differing notions of law from the metropole, they imposed martial order and systems of justice that mostly resembled those in France, but with minor differences which reflected their colonial environments. Like many agents in empire, the Le Moyne family thus lived lives that were not only shaped by, but also helped shape, the currents of French imperialism in the Atlantic World.

But whilst acting as agents in empire, the Le Moyne siblings also pursued their own agendas and ambitions. For the most part, imperial, personal and dynastic interests aligned, and were the driving force behind the formation of empire, especially in the Lower Mississippi Valley. Indeed, between 1685 and 1745, the naval ministry frequently found itself lacking funds, its treasury exhausted by the Wars of the League of Augsburg and Spanish Succession and the collapse of John Law's financial system. As a result, subsequent *ministres de la Marine*—especially Jérôme de Pontchartrain and Maurepas—actively fostered the ambitions of the Le Moyne brothers if this meant they would invest their substantial capital in colonial or privateering ventures or use their talents with the Indigenous nations of North America to benefit French imperial ambitions. Far from “rogues,” therefore, Le Moyne brothers were amongst a number of enterprising “free agents” given license to profit from the formation of empire, provided that their private interests did not interfere with imperial ambitions.

Pursuing personal profit, however, the Le Moyne siblings openly opposed many of the claims to sovereignty that they were meant to defend. In Hudson Bay, Newfoundland, Louisiana and Nevis, they deliberately subverted the commercial privileges they were tasked with defending in order to profit from the lucrative trade in furs, fish, slaves or silver on offer. Whilst financial and political restraints meant that metropolitan officials were generally incapable of

severely punishing the family for these actions, after the *armement d'Iberville* Pontchartrain was able to limit their actions for many years by withholding his patronage. Indeed, throughout their careers, the Le Moyne brothers were continually dependent on ministerial patronage, whether to sanction their profiteering or offer them new opportunities for advancement. Without the support of the minister they floundered, relying on horizontal patronage networks to keep them afloat. Thus, whilst it may appear that agents in empire had the upper hand in the continually negotiated relationship between metropole and colony, the narrative of Le Moyne family also highlights the importance of patronage in structuring this relationship in the French Atlantic World, keeping the two in a delicate balance.

Kinship also played a significant role in the Atlantic World experienced by the Le Moynes during this period. Leaving their native Canada, the Le Moyne siblings forged connections of kinship, marriage, alliance, business, military service and mutual interest across the French Atlantic World, knitting together various cities, ports, colonies and regions into an intimate, personal space. Well established in Montreal, La Rochelle, Rochefort, Mobile and Fort Saint Pierre, the brothers had multiple bases from which they could pursue their careers and fulfill their personal ambitions. Much of this was made possible by the Le Moyne women—especially Marie-Thérèse La Combe de la Pocatière, Marthe-Élizabeth Héron and Marie-Catherine de Marseille—who all supported their husbands financially, legally and socially throughout their career, ensuring that they could travel freely around the Atlantic World. Moreover, this family network provided the foundations upon which an empire could take form, as its bonds of kinship and patronage structured the delegation of imperial authority. This was especially the case in Louisiana, where the colony's commerce, judiciary and military were

initially defined almost entirely by Le Moyne kinship, and where connections to the family had legacies that even outlasted French influence in the Lower Mississippi Valley.

Furthermore, as a channel for information, knowledge and expertise, the Le Moyne network permitted its members to conceive of the empire as a coherent space, even if its colonies each had their own distinct cultures or characteristics. This dissertation has revealed how, on multiple occasions, the Le Moyne brothers translated the concepts, theories and practices they encountered in certain colonies to others across the Atlantic World. First, Iberville and Sérigny adapted the customs of the *boucaniers* of Saint Domingue to the commercial warfare in the North Atlantic, using the codified pursuit of profit to motivate their Canadian recruits in Hudson Bay and Newfoundland. Later, in the Lower Mississippi Valley, Iberville, Bienville and Châteauguay used diplomatic protocols developed in the *pays d'en haut* in their interactions with Mississippian nations, which allowed them to form close alliances based on a perceived understanding of the mutual obligations of adoption and fictive kinship. Meanwhile, in New Orleans, Bienville attempted to blend concepts of nobility, landholding, and slavery from France, Canada, Saint Domingue to create his own interpretation of colonial nobility, establishing a unique Louisianan “seigneurie” on his personal estates. Finally, in Cayenne, Châteauguay drew inspiration from his service in Louisiana and Martinique to reform the colony’s economy, military and government, earning him the recognition of colonists and metropolitan officials alike. Taken together, these examples show that those living in the French Atlantic World were well aware of its many commonalities and differences, but still understood the empire as a common project. Applying their collective knowledge and experiences across these colonies, agents in empire like the Le Moynes helped to build an imperial space that was much more cohesive than “elusive.”

But whilst showing the French Atlantic World to have been more cohesive than previously thought, this dissertation has also revealed just how porous it could be. Both trans-imperial and cross-cultural, the Le Moyne network existed at once within and outside of a “French” Atlantic World, questioning the utility of such a spatial concept. Making connections with merchants, colonists and officials in Veracruz, Havana and Pensacola, the brothers subverted imperial monopolies for their own gain and laid the groundwork for what became the Mississippi-Caribbean World—a fluid, trans-imperial space beyond the control of both the French and Spanish Empires. Moreover, in forging bonds of fictive kinship and alliance with Indigenous peoples in the Saint Lawrence Valley, the Great Lakes and the Lower Mississippi Valley, many of the brothers also had a foot in the Indigenous worlds of North America. Their place in these worlds was delineated by the Indigenous nations themselves, but through fictive kinship and the careful performance of alliance, the brothers earned recognition, connections and influence in these communities that were far beyond European control. In this way, the Le Moyne family experienced an Atlantic World defined more by kinship, mutual interest and shared identity than ambiguous cultural or legal boundaries. Part of both a formal and informal “empire,” the Le Moyne family network highlights the inherent fluidity of empire in the Atlantic World, showing that despite metropolitan claims to influence and authority, it was those on the ground that created, defended, and sometimes subverted empire.

Appendix A : **The Le Moyne Family**

Pierre Le Moyne

Born: ?

Died: 1656-8 [Dieppe]

Spouse(s): Judith Duchesne (m. 1618)

Children: Jacques Le Moyne de Saint-Marie (1622-1690)

Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil et de Châteauguay (1626-1685)

Jeanne Le Moyne (1636-1682)

Anne Le Moyne (1638-1725)

The Dieppe Generation

Jacques Le Moyne de Saint-Marie

Born: August 25th, 1622 [Dieppe]

Died: December 4th, 1690 [Montreal]

Spouse(s): Mathurine Godé (m. November 12th, 1658)

Children: Françoise Le Moyne (1659-1687)

Jacques Le Moyne (1660-?)

Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Martigny et de la Trinité (1662-1709)

Marguerite Le Moyne du Saint-Esprit (1664-1746)

Catherine-Le Moyne (1665-?)

Nicolas Le Moyne (1666-__)

Jeanne Le Moyne de Saint-Charles (1668-1703)

Marie Le Moyne (1669-1670)

Charles Le Moyne (1670- ?)

Louis Le Moyne (1672-?)

Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil et de Châteauguay

Born: August 2nd, 1626 [Dieppe]

Died: February 1685 [Montreal]

Spouse(s): Catherine Thierry Primot (m. May 28th, 1654)

Children: Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil (1656-1729)

Jacques Le Moyne de Sainte-Hélène (1659-1690)

Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville (1661-1706)

Paul Le Moyne de Maricourt (1663-1704)

François Le Moyne de Bienville (1666-1691)

Joseph Le Moyne de Sérigny (1668-1734)

Marie-François Le Moyne (1670-1687)

Catherine-Jeanne Le Moyne (1673-?)

Louis Le Moyne de Châteauguay (1676-1694)

Marie-Anne Le Moyne (1678-1744)

Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville (1680-1767)

Gabriel Le Moyne d'Assigny (1681-1701)

Antoine Le Moyne de Châteauguay (1683-1747)

Jeanne Le Moyne**Born:** 1636 [Dieppe]**Died:** November 8th, 1682 [Quebec]**Spouse(s):** Jacques Le Ber de Senneville (m. January 7th, 1658)**Children:** Louis Le Ber de Saint Paul (1659-1692)

Jeanne Le Ber (1662-1714)

Jacques Le Ber de Senneville (1663-1735)

Jean Leber dit Duchesne (1666-1691)

Léon Leber (1667-?)

Pierre Leber (1669-1707)

Anne Le Moyne**Born:** July 26th, 1638 [Dieppe]**Died:** July 15th, 1725 [Quebec]**Spouse(s):** Michel Messier dit Saint-Michel (m. February 25th, 1658)**Children:** Catherine Messier (1659-?)

Jeanne Messier (1661-1699)

Marie Messier (1665-1751)

Anne Messier (1668-1669)

Anne Messier (1670-1720)

Gabrielle Messier (1672-1682)

Jean Messier (1674-1705)

Margueritte Messier (1676-1741)

François-Michel Messier de Saint-François (1679-1751)

René Messier (1681-1758)

The Atlantic Generation**Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil****Born:** December 10th, 1656 [Montreal]**Died:** June 7th, 1729 [Montreal]**Spouse(s):** Claude-Élisabeth Souart d'Adoucourt (m. May 7th, 1681)Marguerite Legardeur de Tilly (m. September 17th, 1727)**Children:** Marie Élisabeth Le Moyne *dite* de L'Enfant Jésus (1684-1711)

Gabrielle-Charlotte (1685)

Charles Le Moyne (1686)

Charles Le Moyne II, Baron of Longueuil (1687-1755)

Gabriel-François (1688-1704)

Étienne-Auguste d'Adoucourt (1693-1716)

Nicolas Le Moyne (1696-1724)

Paul-Joseph, Chevalier de Longueuil (1701-1778)

Jacques Le Moyne de Sainte-Hélène

Born: April 16th, 1659 [Montreal]

Died: December 4th, 1690 [Quebec]

Spouse(s): Jeanne Dufresnoy Carion (m. February 7th, 1684)

Children: Marie-Jeanne (1688-1757)

Jacques Le Moyne de Sainte-Hélène II

Agathe-Françoise (1691-1768)

Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville

Born: July 20th, 1661 [Montreal]

Died: July 9th, 1706 [Havana]

Spouse(s): Marie-Thérèse Pollet de la Combe (m. October 8th, 1693)

Children: Marie (1694)

Pierre-Louis-Joseph Le Moyne d'Iberville (1694-1716)

Jean-Baptiste (1698)

Marie-Thérèse d'Iberville (1699-?)

Marie-Thérèse Le Moyne d'Iberville (1700-1743)

Jean-Charles

François-Jean Le Moyne d'Ardillières (1705-1720)

Jeanne-Geneviève* (1686-1721) [Illegitimate]

*Mother- Jeanne-Geneviève Picoté de Belestre

Paul Le Moyne de Maricourt

Born: December 15th, 1663 [Montreal]

Died: March 21st, 1704 [Montreal]

Spouse(s): Marie-Madeleine Dupont de Neuville (m. October 29th, 1691)

Françoise-Aubert de la Chesnaye (m. February 3rd, 1704)

Children : N/A

François Le Moyne de Bienville

Born: March 10th, 1666 [Montreal]

Died: June 7th, 1691 [Repentigny]

Joseph Le Moyne de Sérigny

Born: July 22nd, 1668 [Montreal]

Died: September 12th, 1734 [Rocheport]

Spouse(s): Marthe-Élisabeth Héron (m. November 21, 1699)

Children: Pierre-Joseph-Charles-Antoine Le Moyne de Sérigny (1700-1753)

Jean-Honoré-François-Xavier Le Moyne de Sérigny (1702-1792)

Catherine-Élisabeth Le Moyne de Sérigny (1705-?)

Marie-François Le Moyne

Born: October 5th, 1670 [Montreal]

Died: September 21st, 1687 [Iroquoia?]

Spouse(s): N/A

Children: N/A

Catherine-Jeanne Le Moyne

Born: July 20th, 1661 [Montreal]

Died: ? [France]

Spouse(s): Pierre Payen de Noyan (m. December 8th, 1694)

Children: Marie Payen de Noyan (?-1747)

Pierre-Benoit Payen de Noyan (1694-1716)

Rolland Payen de Noyan (?-1769)

Pierre Payen de Noyan (1695-1771)

Gilles-Augustin Payen de Noyan (1705-1758)

Louis Le Moyne de Châteauguay

Born: January 4th, 1676 [Montreal]

Died: October 4th, 1694 [Hudson Bay]

Spouse(s): N/A

Children: N/A

Marie-Anne Le Moyne

Born: August 13th, 1678 [Montreal]

Died: May 9th, 1744 [Trois-Rivières]

Spouse(s): Jean-Baptiste Bouillet de la Chassaigne (m. October 28th, 1699)

Children: N/A

Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville

Born: February 23rd, 1680 [Montreal]

Died: March 7th, 1767 [Paris]

Spouse(s): N/A

Children: N/A

Gabriel Le Moyne d'Assigny

Born: November 13th, 1681 [Montreal]

Died: 1701 [Cap Français]

Spouse(s): N/A

Children: N/A

Antoine Le Moyne de Châteauguay

Born: July 17th, 1683 [Montreal]

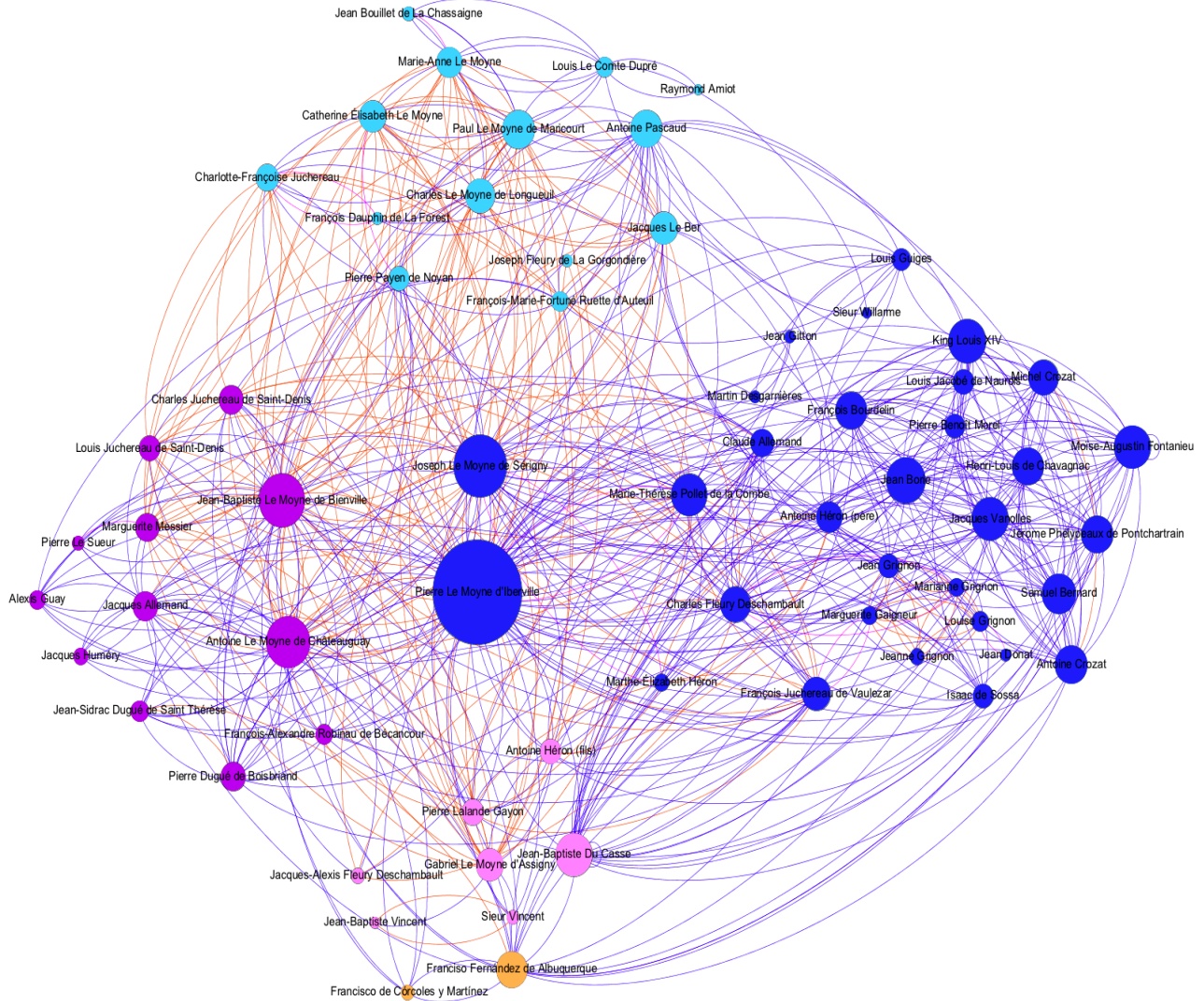
Died: March 21st, 1747 [Rochefort]

Spouse(s): Marie-Catherine de Marseilles (m. 1727?)

Children: Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Châteauguay (1728?-1791)

Marguerite Le Moyne (-1764)

Appendix B : The Le Moyne Network, 1698-1713



Above is a Social Network Analysis of the Le Moyne Network as described in Chapters III and IV, performed using the software *Gephi*. Each node represents a different member of the network, and their connections to the other members are represented by edges coloured according to the most prominent relationship between the two, whether Kinship (Orange), Marriage (Pink) or Business (Blue). Meanwhile, the colour of the node itself represents the

region of the Atlantic World in which the member of the network was most active during the period in question, including France (Dark Blue), Canada (Light Blue), Louisiana (Purple), the French Antilles (Pink), and Spanish America (Orange). Finally, the size of each node directly corresponds to the number of edges, of any variety, connecting it to other nodes. The largest nodes are therefore those with the most connections, and the smallest are those with the least.

Unsurprisingly, the largest and most connected node in the Le Moyne Network is Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville. By centring Iberville's node, the visualisation shows how Iberville acted as a nexus between the various regions of the Atlantic World, for whilst he was based in France, his node is directly connected to others in each of the regions displayed. Following Iberville, the next largest nodes are (in descending order) Joseph Le Moyne de Sérigny, Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville, Antoine Le Moyne de Châteauguay, Paul Le Moyne de Maricourt and Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil. Like Iberville, each of these brothers appears as a central point within their own region, and through mutual connections of kinship, they create a web of interconnected regional networks. It must be noted, however, that due to their familial connections to at least eight other siblings, the nodes representing the Le Moyne sibling may appear slightly larger than intended, which could imply that they had a greater significance and reach than may actually have been the case. This is particularly the case for Gabriel Le Moyne d'Assigny, who appears as a rather large node in the French Antilles, even though his career was too short-lived to make a significant impact on the growth of the Le Moyne network. Likewise, the nodes for both Marie-Anne and Catherine-Élisabeth Le Moyne appear particularly large due to their connections to their brothers, but without much documentary evidence concerning their other personal connections in Canada, it is difficult to assess how representative this is of their actual roles within the Le Moyne network.

This is not the case, however, for the size of the node representing Marie-Thérèse Pollet de la Combe. As shown in Chapters III and IV, Marie-Thérèse was a vital part of the Le Moyne family network, both connecting them to the Juchereau family and involving herself directly in the business enterprises of the family in La Rochelle. In contrast, however, whilst we know that, Marthe-Élizabeth Héron also played an essential role in maintaining the Le Moyne Network's connections in La Rochelle, she does not feature as prominently in this visualisation, but appears as an important bridge indirectly connecting the Le Moyne family to the extremely interconnected investors in the *armement d'Iberville* (Crozat, Bernard, Naurois, Morel Sossa etc.) through her relationship to her father Antoine Héron.

In the visualisation, these investors appear to dominate the French branch of the Le Moyne network. This, however, is mostly because many of the investors had business connections to one another outside of the *armement*, which skews the relative size of their nodes. The connections between these investors also seem relatively contained to France, but the image shows that a few investors like Pontchartrain, Bernard and Crozat had connections with people in Spanish America and the Antilles—such as Du Casse and Albuquerque—mostly through their mutual interests in the *asiento*. Iberville is nevertheless still the common denominator in the French network, as almost all of the *armateurs* based in France had a direct business connection to him. This demonstrates success of Iberville's lobbying, campaigning and commercial activities in La Rochelle and the wider Atlantic, which allowed him to penetrate the close-knit mercantile networks of Paris and Versailles.

Interestingly, two smaller family networks also emerge within the Le Moyne Network. First, we see an interesting cluster formed by the Juchereau clan, located mostly in Canada and Louisiana. Linked to the Le Moynes through both business and marriage, their smaller network

includes some of the most connected nodes outside of the Le Moyne siblings themselves. The second family network is comprised of the members of the Grignon, Gaigneur and Deschambault clans. In comparison to the Juchereau network, which is connected to the wider Le Moyne Network through marriage, family and business connections, the Grignon-Gaigneur-Deschambault network is only connected by “Business” edges, save for a single marriage connection forged by François Juchereau de Vaulezar. This small cluster thus represents a vital, albeit parallel, network of people who aided the members of the Le Moyne network whilst also pursuing their own ambitions. These two networks thus remind us not only that the members of different networks depended on one another immensely for their success, but also that marriage alliances played an essential role in bringing people together for a common cause.

Finally, for the sake of clarity, this Social Network Analysis does not include the myriad of smaller actors with whom the members of the Le Moyne Network also conducted their business, such as nameless Indigenous traders, settlers, fur traders and *coureurs de bois* of Canada and Louisiana, *armateurs*, suppliers and naval bureaucrats of La Rochelle and Rochefort, planters, colonists and company agents in the French Antilles and officers, merchants and officials at Veracruz, Havana and Pensacola. It is thus not truly representative of the extent of the cross-cultural and trans-imperial relationships which undergirded the commercial successes of the Le Moyne family in the early eighteenth century. As detailed in Chapter III, these relationships were often those which proved to be the most lucrative for the Le Moyne family, and should thus not be completely ignored, even if the available records and new technologies cannot yet accurately piece together a complete vision of such a vast, complicated and overlapping network.

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- C11D Correspondance générale : Acadie
- C11E Correspondance générale : des limites et des postes
- C11G Correspondance générale: Canada et divers
- C13A Correspondance générale : Louisiane
- C13B Correspondance générale : Louisiane- supplément
- C13C Correspondance générale : Louisiane- divers
- C14A Correspondance à l'arrivée : Guyane
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TL3 Fonds Juridiction royale des Trois-Rivières
TL4 Fonds Juridiction royale de Montréal
ZF42 Fonds famille Lemoyne
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MG1-G3 Notariat de Terre-Neuve
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