Luis De Unzaga and Bourbon Reform in Spanish Louisiana, 1770--1776.

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<tr>
<td>AEA</td>
<td>Annuario de estudios americans</td>
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<td>AGI</td>
<td>Archivo General de Indias, Seville</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>Papeles procedentes de Cuba</td>
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<td>Hac</td>
<td>Secretaría de Hacienda</td>
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<td>Audiencia de Santo Domingo</td>
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<td>Arkansas Historical Quarterly</td>
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Abstract

Previous histories of the establishment of Spanish rule in Louisiana have centered primarily on its first two officials, Governor Antonio de Ulloa and Captain-General Alejandro O’Reilly. This work focuses on Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga, governor of Spanish Louisiana from 1770 to 1776. It challenges previous interpretations of Unzaga’s tenure which have traditionally viewed the Bourbon Reforms as detrimental to the colony and viewed the governor as merely benign and transitional in the colony’s history.

Comparison of shipping records and governor’s records from Cuba and Louisiana indicate that the colony actually maintained the same volume of shipping with Havana that other portions of empire did and that it often received exceptional freedoms unavailable to the remainder of empire. The colonial documents show that Unzaga integrated the colony’s economy into the new reforms and that he fostered domestic industry. Treasury records also attest to the governor’s stewardship which filled Louisiana’s failing coffers.

An exploration of the judicial records and correspondence of the post commandants points to a stabilized population re-oriented toward the rule of Spanish law because of the governor’s conciliatory diplomacy. Unzaga’s abilities also aided in establishing alliances with formerly hostile Indians and maintaining peace with the British under difficult circumstances. This dissertation argues that effective implementation of the Bourbon Reforms in Spanish Louisiana took place not in 1769-1770 with Alejandro O’Reilly, but in the arduous seven-year administration of Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga.
Borderland's history is not a new topic in the study of Latin American history. For U.S. historians, its roots lie in the work done by Herbert Eugene Bolton. He taught at the University of California at the beginning of the twentieth-century, writing on Spain's North American hinterlands, which he called the “Spanish Borderlands.” Bolton's 1921 seminal work, The Spanish Borderlands: A Chronicle of Old Florida and the Southwest, began a drive to awaken U.S. historians to the integral part Spain played in the early history of the United States. From 1911 to 1935, Bolton worked to give his students a vision of what he called "Greater America." During that time he published over a dozen major works on his beloved borderlands and passed on that interest to over three hundred masters students and more than a hundred doctoral students who continued his scholarship. Bolton's

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1In his biography of Bolton, John Francis Bannon indicates that Bolton used a term from several titles offered by his editor. John Francis Bannon, Herbert Eugene Bolton: The Historian and the Man (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1978), 120-21.


students went on to train new borderlands historians and the combined efforts of these two generations of scholars have filled journals and library shelves.4

Despite continual scholarship, extensive research and an extraordinary variety of topics explored in Borderlands studies, historiographically it remained a marginal topic to Latin American programs across the country until the last two and a half decades. Many Latin American historians deemed it more a U.S. Colonial topic. This was a peculiarly ironic idea since the borderlands contain some of Spain's first settlements in the Americas and its last, beginning with San Miguel de Gualdape in 1526 and ending with the founding of San Francisco in 1776.5

Bolton focused, as did other early Latin Americanists, on exploration, biographies and political histories of the establishment and administration of Spanish institutions in the borderlands. More recently, borderlands historians have added breadth and depth to the historiography following the Annales approach of studying such topics as ethnohistory and historical archeology, ecology and historical geography, demography and disease. Scholarly works include ecological histories by Timothy Silver, A New Face on the Countryside: Indians, Colonists, and Slaves in South Atlantic Forests 1500-1800 and Albert E. Cowdrey, This Land, This South: An Environmental History, as well as studies on the role of disease in demographics such as Henry F. Dobyns, Their Numbers Became


There have also been numerous archeological examinations of the explorers' routes, and studies of city planning including Gilbert R. Cruz's *Let There Be Towns: Spanish Municipal Origins in the American Southwest 1610-1810*.

Borderlands research is complicated by the very richness of the area's history, and the fact that it includes several different colonies. Adding to this complexity is the tendency of its historians to focus their studies exclusively on either the eastern borderlands (Louisiana and Florida) or the western borderlands (Alta California and Spanish Texas). Only John Francis Bannon's *Spanish Borderlands Frontiers, 1513-1821* and David J. Weber's, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* have sought to give a comprehensive vision of the area since Bolton's first volume.

The Louisiana territory entered the Spanish borderlands during the reign of Spain's fourth Bourbon Monarch, Charles III. Despite the fact that it was originally explored by Hernando de Soto in the 1500s, Spain failed to settle the area and by the end of the seventeenth century it fell into the hands of the French through re-discovery and

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subsequent settlement. While Spain never relinquished her ownership she did little to reclaim the region. By the time the Spanish did regain control of the Louisiana borderlands in 1763, it held little in common with the rest of Latin America. Louisiana offered no profitable mineral deposits, no large, sedentary Indian populations with exploitable mineral wealth, and the colony was already populated by non-Iberian Europeans, as well as Africans. The new colony also entered Spain’s empire at a time when, as David J. Weber so aptly puts it, “Spain came to regard its North American [borderlands] colonies as defensive money-losing outposts.” Consequently, the Spanish crown never invested the men or money in Louisiana that it had in its earlier colonial endeavors.

Despite the territory’s complex problems, Charles III strove to develop his Louisiana borderlands through the introduction of the Bourbon Reforms. These imperial reforms promoted centralizing administrative and military reorganization, lightened commercial regulations, and enhanced agriculture and immigration to the Louisiana borderlands. While Louisiana historians have decried the effects of Spanish mercantilism on Louisiana’s trade, the colony was one of the first to receive and later benefit from the new trade regulations, a centralized government, the establishment of the rule of law enforceable by colonial authorities, and enlightened economic reforms which worked to create domestic industry and markets. Although the colony struggled with the reforms in its early years under Spanish control, by the end of the Bourbon period trade became less restricted and one-third of the ships coming into the port of New Orleans remained

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*Weber, Spanish Frontier, 175.*
Spanish in origin. In an age when Britain ruled the seas and the Anglo-American trade dominated the Mississippi River, maintaining Spain’s presence at that level was a remarkable feat of perseverance.

An abundant bibliography exists on the Bourbon Reforms. Earlier works include such publications as Troy S. Floyd's edited study-text, *The Bourbon Reformers and Spanish Civilization: Builders or Destroyers?* which furnished students with essays and questions on the problems of the reforms, its monopoly systems, the disposition of older ideas like *fueros* (grants of privilege by the crown), the effects of the reforms on the independent spirit of Americans, and the progress of material wealth in the colonies.

There are a number of monographs which cover different aspects of the reforms, including economics, the military and political and administrative changes. Such works include books on economics like Roland Dennis Hussey's, *The Caracas Company 1738-1784: A Study in the History of Spanish Monopolistic Trade*, David Anthony Brading's, *Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico 1763-1810*, Brian Hamnett's, *Politics and Trade in Southern Mexico 1750-1821*, Jacques A. Barbier and Allan J. Kuethe's edited work, *The North American Role in the Spanish Imperial Economy 1760-1819*, and Keuthe's work with G. Douglas Inglis in "El consulado de Cadiz y el reglamento de comercio libre de 1765."9

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The largest portion of work on the Bourbon era involves the military and political reorganization and includes such publications as Christian I. Archer's, *The Army in Bourbon Mexico, 1760-1810*, Leon G. Campbell's, *The Military and Society in Colonial Peru, 1750-1810* and Allan J. Kuethe's two works, *Military Reform and Society in New Granada, 1773-1802* and the more recent *Cuba, 1753-1815 Crown, Military, and Society*.  

Jacques A. Barbier and Mark A. Burkholder with Dewitt Samuel Chandler offer insight into the administrative reforms with their respective works *Reform and Politics in Bourbon Chile, 1755-1796* and *From Impotence to Authority: The Spanish Crown and the American Audiencias, 1687-1808*. The reactions of the colonists can be found in John Leddy Phelan's *The People and the King: The Comunero Revolution in Colombia, 1781*. Additionally, there are several studies on the Intendant system such as Lillian Estelle Fisher's seminal work, *The Intendant System in Spanish America* and John Lynch's, *North American Role in the Spanish Imperial Economy 1760-1819* (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 1984); Alan J. Kuethe and G. Douglas Inglis, "El consulado de Cadiz y el reglamento de comercio libre de 1765," *Jornales de Andalucia y América* IV (Seville, 1985).  

Spanish Colonial Administration, 1783-1810: The Intendant System in the Viceroyalty of the Rio de La Plata.11

Louisiana's place in the Bourbon Reforms has been discussed, if at all, largely in the work of biographers and institutional historians. Louisiana's historians have traditionally focused on the reforms, primarily as a local topic rather than placing the colony in the imperial perspective, though there are such exceptions as Paul Hoffman's 1992 synthesis Luisiana. A great number of biographies exist on its earliest Spanish leaders, especially on governors, Antonio de Ulloa, and Bernardo de Gálvez, as well as Captain General O'Reilly who is often referred to as the colony's second governor. Other popular biographies exist on major characters in the colony's Spanish period, such as Francis Bouligny and Gilbert Antoine de St. Maxent. Institutional works on the Intendant system and the Cabildo include Brian Coutt's work on Martin Navarro, and Gilbert C. Din and John Harkins recent volume on the Cabildo.12


Perhaps the worst offense is in the introduction to the archival documents for Santo Domingo by Earnest J. Burrus which completely ignores Unzaga's administration with the words "Alejandro O'Reilly came in 1769 with enough military might to make opposition unthinkable and to introduce Spanish institutions into the colony. Within a year he was able to hand over the command of a peaceful colony to Luis de Unzaga. A capable governor reached Louisiana during the year 1779 in the person of Bernard de Gálvez." José de la Peña y Cámara, et al (ed.), Catálogo de documentos del Archivo General de Indias, Sección V. Gobierno Audiencia de Santo Domingo sobre la Epoca Española de Luisiana (Madrid, Spain: Dirección General de Archivos y Bibliotecas and New Orleans: Loyola University Press, 1968).
History of Louisiana and Alcée Fortier, A History of Louisiana, paid attention to Unzaga's tenure as governor. Charles Gayarré devotes some sixty-pages out of four volumes to the governor's pacification of the French colonists, his disregarding contraband and illegal commerce, and his conciliatory work between the religious orders. Gayarré's description of contraband British goods aboard what he calls "floating warehouses" can be found in many later studies of the period including Fortier's. Unfortunately, both Gayarré's and Fortier's portrayal of Unzaga as the conciliator is too shallow.14

The majority of the next generation of Louisiana's historians covered even less of Unzaga's term in office. In his work Les Dernières Années de la Louisiane Française, Marc de Villiers du Terrage devoted almost no space to Spain's government in Louisiana, much less Unzaga's administration. Vicente Rodriguez Casado's, Primeros años de dominación española en la Luisiana stops with the end of O'Reilly's administration in 1770.15

14Charles Gayarré's, History of Louisiana, was published in several separate volumes before 1885. Volume one came out as Louisiana: its Colonial History of Romance (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1851); Volume two was listed as Louisiana: its History as a French Colony (New York: J. Wiley, 1852); Volumes three and four were published between 1854 and 1866 as part of a full series know as History of Louisiana (New York: Redfield, 1854-66). A complete edition of four volumes was finally available in 1883. Alcée Fortier, A History of Louisiana 4 vols., especially volume two The Spanish Domination (New York: 1904).


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The history of Unzaga's tenure in Louisiana has found its way into a number of book and articles. Among the books are Herbert Eugene Bolton's *Athanase de Mézières and the Louisiana-Texas Frontier 1768-1780*, John Walton Caughey's biography of Bernardo de Gálvez, John G. Clark's discussion of British merchants in his *New Orleans 1718-1813: An Economic History* and Din and Harkins' 1996 volume on the New Orleans Cabildo, Light Townsend Cummins', *Spanish Observers and the American Revolution 1776-1783* and Paul Hoffman's, *Luisiana*.16

The abundant writings of Jack D. L. Holmes and Gilbert C. Din involve Louisiana during the Unzaga era, but none deal specifically with the governor himself. Other notable articles discussing narrow topics during his administration are Brian E. Coutts and Henry P. Dart on the tobacco and indigo industries, respectively; Bjork on education; Dart on fire protection; and Laura Porteous on torture and debtors prison.17


A broader, more thorough investigation of Unzaga's career remains to be done. I examined his term briefly in my M.A. thesis, "Effective Inefficiencies" using research from the microfilm copies of Unzaga's correspondence in the Archivo de Indias: Papeles procedentes de Cuba, and the Audiencia de Santo Domingo; the W.P.A. translations of the Dispatches of the Spanish Governors of Louisiana and the Archives Nationales, Paris, France: Archives des Colonies.¹⁸

Like most earlier writing on colonial Louisiana, my thesis also concentrated on Unzaga as a Louisiana governor, rather than a Spanish official in the empire. This study hopes to correct that mistake. I have focused primarily on Unzaga's capable administration of Charles III's commercial reforms and their effect on Louisiana. In order to give the work a larger perspective I chose to add to my original investigations by comparing Louisiana to Havana in the records of the Spanish archives. Studying in the

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¹⁸I examined microfilm of the legajos from the Archivo General de Indias in the Center for Louisiana Studies, at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and the Hill Memorial Library at Louisiana State University. The W.P.A. papers were typescript copies in the Hill Memorial Library.
Archives in Seville allowed access to Cuba’s shipping records and the correspondence of Governor and Captain-General in Havana, the Marqués de la Torre. While in Spain I also explored the Secretaria de Guerra legajos in the Archivo General de Simancas, as well as the Biblioteca Nacional. Working with the letters of Louisiana’s post commanders also opened new avenues of investigation into the effects of the Bourbon Reforms on the colony and the effectiveness of their implementation. Lastly, a perusal of the colony’s judicial records allowed a more exacting vision of the governor’s authority and the application of Spanish law.19

The documentary evidence on Louisiana clearly shows that Unzaga used his office to enhance and stabilize the colony at the time of its most difficult transition into empire. Exploration of the documents on Havana's shipping records indicates that Louisiana, with the exception of one or two years, maintained the same volume of trade with Havana that other portions of empire did and that she often received exceptional freedoms unavailable to the remainder of empire. This particular study shows that under Unzaga's capable government Louisiana's declining population stabilized; its commerce became integrated in the new mercantilistic reforms, formerly hostile Indians were brought under Spanish influence if somewhat tenuously, military defenses were maintained and fortified by Unzaga's use of espionage. Lastly, his stewardship filled Louisiana's failing coffers leaving in the hands of the next governor, a stable, growing colony, reconciled to Spanish rule. It

19My research also included extended study of the microfilm found in the Hill Memorial Library, at Louisiana State University; the Center for Louisiana Studies at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette; the Historical New Orleans Collection and the Notary Records in New Orleans.
is evident, then, that effective Spanish colonial control of the Louisiana borderlands was not created solely by Alejandro O'Reilly, but in the arduous, seven-year administration of Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga.
Chapter Two

Spanish Louisiana: The Fruit of the Mameyes

"Now is the hour of the mameyes!"
(Warning used by the Habañeros for an impending crisis)

At exactly ten o'clock, on the morning of June 7, 1762 the English surged ashore at the River Cojimar, east of Havana. Under the protective fire of their ships, 3,963 Redcoats overran the fort near the river and the following morning advanced westward to the small village of Guanabacoa, which they took "in time for lunch." Admiral (Sir) George Pocock then directed a flanking move to the west of the city, conquering the promontory of the Cabaña. By early July, the English were besieging the massive fortifications of Morro Castle. It took forty cannon and mortars on land, three ships firing from the bay, and mines to breach the walls; but on July 30th the British broke through and the Morro fell, killing Havana's greatest hero, Luis de Velasco, in the process.

As this last bastion collapsed, fresh reinforcements from North America arrived to aid the British, turning their guns on the city. On the 13th of August the unthinkable happened—Havana, the key to Spain's wealth and power in the Caribbean, surrendered to the hated British. Henceforth, the citizens of Havana referred to any impending crisis as


the "hour of the mameyes," a red fruit with black shiny seeds representing the uniforms of the Redcoats and their devastation of the city.  

It was the second time the British had defeated Charles III, *el Ilustrado*. In the summer of 1742, during the War of Austrian Succession, when Charles was still King of the Two Sicilies, some six-thousand English troops under Maximilian Brown had surprised his army at Velletri, and threatened to bombard his palace in Naples forcing Charles to briefly abandon his brother Philip in the North of Italy. While Charles eventually won at Velletri, the British affront to his sovereignty while King of the Two Sicilies made the capitulation at Havana, while he was King of Spain, even more embarrassing.  

Spain and England were old enemies and the Wars of Spanish Succession (1701-1713) and Austrian Succession (1744-1748) had done little to mitigate the conflict. Still, when Charles came to the throne in 1759, he had not been anxious to involve Spain in the Seven Years War (Polish Succession). His first order of business was to ensure the Italian and Spanish successions. Too, he had inherited diplomatic problems in the Caribbean where the British were logging in Spanish territory and smuggling in various Spanish

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3Barclay, 1993, 123.


5Carlos' son, the future Charles IV had not been educated in Spain and without the approval of the Cortes could not become king. Carlos also placed Don Felipe, his third son on the throne over the Italian possessions so that more hostilities would not ensue in the peninsula, Enciso Recio, *Los Bourbones*, 608.
ports. Despite the King's dislike of the British, he offered his services as a mediator between the warring parties in Europe and was promptly rebuffed by William Pitt's government. Charles took British rejection as a personal insult to the Spanish throne and to the Bourbon dynasty.⁶

Irrespective of British insolence in this instance, Spain's final entry into the Seven Years War (1756-1763) was determined by other factors—primarily the existence of a series of familial alliances between the thrones of France and Spain. The Bourbon crowns of France and Spain had already created two family compacts and a third was not unthinkable. The Minister of the Indies, Zenón de Somodevilla, Marqués de la Ensenada, attempted, through secret negotiations, to create an alliance against British influence at the Spanish Court in 1754. Ensenada's overzealous actions cost him the king's favor and his post.⁷ At the time, Spain's Minister of War, Sebastián Eslava, and Ricardo Wall, Minister of State, kept Spain neutral, but not for long.

In 1756, the hostilities between England and France had developed into a full-blown conflict. Within the next three years, France's losses in the Americas and Asia, and her impending defeat in Germany, occasioned another attempt at a family coalition with Spain. Several key elements determined Spain's actual entrance into the conflagration. As Charles III became monarch in 1759, Sebastián Eslava died. The following year the

⁶Ibid, 609.

⁷Ensenada had not only overstepped his office by entering into diplomatic negotiations, he had given an order to put the Spanish fleet on stand by because of hostilities over Colonia do Sacramento. Ensenada was deprived of his ministry and promptly sent into retirement. John D. Bergamini, The Spanish Bourbons: The History of a Tenacious Dynasty (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1974), 82.
young king recalled Ensenada, who soon overshadowed Ricardo Wall's stubborn neutrality. The King's Francophile leanings might have been tempered by his Queen, María Amalia of Saxony, but she died on September 27, 1760. Ultimately, Charles' forbearance broke when Britain ignored Spain's requests that she stop illegal logging in Honduras and smuggling from Jamaica.\(^8\)

Events moved quickly. Charles secretly signed the Third Family Compact on August 15, 1761 and declared war on Great Britain May 1, 1762. It was a costly move. Precisely one year after signing the compact, Spain stood defeated. Worse, the court soon received news that Manila had capitulated to English forces on September 24\(^a\). The only bright spot for Spain was the capture of Colonia do Sacramento from the Portuguese with an added bonus of twenty-six English ships "richly loaded with merchandise and military stores amounting to more than £4,000,000 sterling."\(^9\)

At the peace table in November, the British reigned. The terms of the treaty were a crushing defeat and an economic disaster for the French. Great Britain took all of France's possessions in India and Canada and the Gulf Coast. France retained only a few sugar Islands in the Caribbean. The British forced Spain to renounce its fishing rights off the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, legitimize British logging in Honduras, and submit disputes on the high seas to British admiralty courts. The Spanish regained Havana only

\(^8\)Spain's investigations in 1759 showed British smuggling in Jamaica cost her upwards of six-million pesos per year. Enciso Recio, *Los Bourbones*, 611.

\(^9\)There were other successes in South America and Europe but none of this caliber. David Knuth Bjork, "The Establishment of Spanish Rule in the Province of Louisiana, 1762-1770,"(Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkely, 1923), 15.
by ceding Florida to Britain and granting navigation rights on the Mississippi River. The sudden proximity of the British in North America threatened the silver mines in New Spain (Mexico). Through another series of secret negotiations with France, Spain gained the huge province of Louisiana as the sole barrier between her wealth in the New World and the acquisitive English.\textsuperscript{10}

Charles had little time to spend on his newest possession. His first concern was to implement a series of reforms aimed at restructuring the administration, finances and defenses of the Indies. The most imperative reforms were defensive as it had become painfully apparent that the American armies were for the most part undermanned, the militias "without arms, organization, or training" and the fortifications were impoverished.\textsuperscript{11} Havana appeared to be the heart of the problem.

After the Treaty of Paris had been officially executed (February 10, 1763), the King summoned Cuba's governor, Juan de Prado y Portocarrero Malleza, and the members of his war council to face charges in Spain.\textsuperscript{12} As the Conde de Aranda began


\textsuperscript{11}Allan J. Kuethe, \textit{Cuba}, 24; this idea is supported in Archer's, \textit{The Army in Bourbon Mexico}, Campbell's, \textit{The Military and Society in Colonial Peru, 1750-1810}, and Kuethe's, \textit{Military Reform and Society in New Granada, 1773-1808}.

Prado's court martial, his cousin, Ambrosio Funes de Villalpando, the Conde de Ricla, sailed for Cuba. Ricla, now Captain General of Cuba, went to his new post with a full battalion of soldiers, engineers, a support team of technicians and laborers and emergency funds. Accompanying him was his close friend, Field Marshal Alejandro O'Reilly, an accomplished soldier with orders to reorganize the defenses at Havana.

O'Reilly and Ricla proceeded to implement the King's order to rebuild Havana so that there would be no repetition of the ignominy of 1762. In a relatively short period of time O'Reilly restructured the fixed battalion and the artillery corps, improved their skill and manpower and reduced their cost some 200,000 pesos per year. He also built a larger militia of creoles and pardos with the added inducement of the fuero militar. By 1765 O'Reilly's militia reforms had become regulation.

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13 Royal order of appointment, Buen Retiro, March 16, 1763, cedula of appointment, March 25, 1763, AGI, SD 1211.

14 There are numerous definitions of the world Creole, in this work, as within the Spanish empire, the word Creole stands for anyone of European blood born in the Americas, and usually does not represent a person of mixed heritage.

15 Pardo refers to persons who were of African descent, free blacks or mulattoes, who were literally "pardoned of their blackness" by the crown so that they might serve in the military or marry someone of a higher social status. This was necessary because the crown had established laws regarding limpieza de Sangre or the cleanliness (Europeaness) of blood being a prerequisite for such positions.

16 This gave the soldiers similar protection and advantages to the regular Spanish forces and allowed them the chance at upward mobility, Kueth, Cuba, 45; It is this particular action, argues Lyle McAlister, that created the creole army which ultimately freed portions of Latin America during independence (though not in Cuba), see McAlister, The Fuero Militar: for O'Reilly's regulations see "Reglamento para las milicias de infanteria, y caballeria de la Isla de Cuba," Havana, 1765, AGI, SD 2120.
Ricla, meanwhile, focused on rebuilding the fortifications and restructuring finances. He ordered that the Mexican subsidy to Cuba’s treasury be used exclusively to rebuild the fortifications, and in 1764 levied new taxes on the creole population in Havana to assist in the project. O’Reilly filed an additional report on the condition of the rest of the island recommending economic development and more effective government. He suggested that the crown reduce the taxes on commerce (especially the slave trade) and open new ports to stimulate the economy. In October, at the behest of both Ricla and O’Reilly, the Cubans drafted a petition to the crown outlining the commercial reforms they felt necessary to restructure their economy and ultimately their defenses. This petition helped convince Charles III that commerce in the Indies needed reform and reorganization appointing a committee to investigate problems with commerce in Empire.17

The military reforms at Havana impressed the King enough that he extended similar techniques to the reorganization of the armies in the rest of the colonies. In 1764, the crown also reorganized its ministries, placing military expenditures under Esquilache as Minister of War rather than the Ministry of the Indies. Working on O’Reilly’s recommendations, Esquilache then established an intendente de guerra which helped centralize the army’s administration in Havana under crown officials. With reorganization underway and the proper administrative infrastructure in place the Minister of War turned to commercial reform to finance his military needs.18

17Ricla to Esquilache, Havana, Dec. 14, 1763, AGS, Hac 2342.

18Kuethe, Cuba, 70.
At Esquilache's suggestion Charles III appointed a special committee to investigate the problems affecting commerce within the Empire. The commission reported that there were eight major causes for the "decay" in colonial trade. They pointed to the Cadiz monopoly, high export duties and shipping costs, expensive and restrictive licensing practices, smuggling, the neglect of agriculture, and the diversion of silver specie to colonial ports before it reached the metropole. In response to the report and the petition from Havana, the Crown opened several major Caribbean ports in Cuba, Puerto Rico, St. Domingue, Margarita, and Trinidad, to trade with eight Spanish cities (Cádiz, Seville, Alicante, Cartagena, Málaga, Barcelona, Santander, La Coruna, and Gijón), discontinued licensing and lowered other duties and fees, replacing them with a small "impost of six or seven percent ad valorem."\(^{19}\)

Havana immediately benefitted from the reforms of 1765. As legal trade increased, Cuba's revenues soared, reaching 375,000 pesos annually during the 1760s and 562,500 during the 1770s.\(^{20}\) Ricla's hard work and foresight regenerated the colony's administration and O'Reilly's military reforms invigorated its defenses, giving the Habañeros a new sense of prestige in the empire and primacy in the Caribbean. Charles rewarded Ricla with an appointment at court and O'Reilly with an assignment to begin reform in Puerto Rico.\(^{21}\)

\(^{19}\)The ordinance of 1765 was actually extended to Louisiana by decree in 1768. John G. Clark, *New Orleans*, 171-173.


\(^{21}\)Torres Ramirez, *Alejandro O'Reilly*, 49, 55-94.
Charles III tried to create the same transformation in his colonies on *tierra firma* but with varied success. He appointed José de Gálvez as visitor general (an overarching administrative and investigative position) of New Spain and the borderlands territories, with instructions to "check procedures in law of the audiencia judges, reform the collection of revenue, improve public order, and work with the Viceroy, the Marques de Cruillas, and the military inspector, Juan de Villalba, in organizing defenses." Additionally, the Comanche and Apache tribes were committing new atrocities in the northwestern borderlands and Charles ordered Gálvez to reorganize the mission-presidio system and protect the colonists or move them to safety.

Despite his competence, Gálvez was not particularly popular, especially since he was part and parcel of the Crown's eviction of the Jesuits in the Americas (1767). He had also recently replaced the then current viceroy of New Spain and the military inspector in an effort to root out official corruption. Alan Kuethe notes that the people and bureaucracy of New Spain resisted his reforms, sometimes to the point of violence. Violence and contention also darkened the reforms in Peru, Chile and Central America.

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22 The mainland colonies of the Americas.


24 A system by which the crown first sent missionaries into Indian territory and if they survived followed up with soldiers to establish a local garrison known as a presidio.

Gálvez and his mission were only part of the larger plan by the Crown to shore up its defenses in North America, which were being undermined in several places. In addition to fending off Indian attacks, Charles III was increasingly concerned with invading Europeans along the Pacific Coast. He was aware that Russian trappers and traders searching for pelts along the coast of Alaska could easily occupy the islands along the California coast. They might also quietly erect military posts with little fear of Spanish intervention. Complicating matters was the British claim to the port of San Francisco as New Albion. This stirred Charles to action because Spain held territorial sovereignty in the area based solely on historical precedence, but Great Britain and Russia might easily claim the territory through effective settlement.

Spain’s monarch also faced European intrusion elsewhere in the Empire. In 1764 the French and the British had established settlements in the Malvinas (Falklands). The British in the Pacific were contesting Spanish rights to the rich port of Manila. Despite the fact that it had returned Manila to Spain in the Treaty of Paris, Great Britain claimed the territory “by virtue of Spain’s abandonment of the Philippines.” Once again, lack of Spanish settlement might rob Spain of its territory.

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27 Petrie, King Charles, 137-38.

If problems with the hated British in the Malvinas and Manila weren't enough, by 1765, France again began to agitate affairs in the Atlantic. Britain was temporarily distracted from European matters by dissension in her Atlantic colonies and she was also busy with the usual dismantling of the armed forces after her victories in war. France took the opportunity, while British backs were turned, to burn the naval arsenals at Plymouth and Portsmouth—to more or less speed up British disarmament. Although Spain had not taken part in the plot, her alliance with France had not ceased after the Treaty of Paris. Not only was Spain expected to provide “quiet cooperation” for France's machinations, Charles also faced the very real possibility of new problems with Britain in Europe, as well as the Americas.29

At the same time Charles struggled with empire he became embroiled in a war of wills with the Madrileños over “proper” dress. Esquilache, the King's favorite but the most unpopular minister with his subjects, had prompted the monarch to try and decrease the demand for wool so that more land could be converted to grain production. Charles and his minister reasoned that by banning the use of long coats, extravagant dress and wide brimmed hats they could discourage crime in the city and lower the demand for wool cloth at the same time (long coats hid swords and the hats hid criminal faces). Actual enforcement of his minister's ideas produced a full-blown riot in Madrid in 1766 which Charles barely escaped by dismissing both Esquilache and Ensenada and retreating with his family to the palace at Aranjuez.30

29Petrie, King Charles, 138.

30Petrie, King Charles, 121-123.
Ultimately, the king blamed failure of his domestic reform on the general intransigence of the Jesuits toward change. Charles' anti-clerical opinions were well known and he had already dismissed an Inquisitor General for anti-reformist actions in 1761.

In 1767, he gave the order for the expulsion of the Jesuits in the Indies. It was an unfortunate and unpopular decision for the colonies. The King's own actions now hampered those of his visitor general. To ensure defensive Spanish settlement in California and the Southwest, Gálvez needed the mission-presidio system precisely when Charles ordered it emptied of the Jesuits. Instead, the often less capable and less experienced Franciscans and Dominicans arrived to press into the frontier.31

Thus preoccupied with imperial ambitions and domestic frustrations, Charles had little time to consider the fate of his latest colony in the borderlands, although Louisiana's importance to Spain had never truly diminished. As early as 1761, Spain had received reports from the Quereteran missions in Texas that the English presence in Louisiana endangered their position.32 Later, in the Seven Years War and its ensuing treaty, the Spanish monarch's willingness to negotiate was due, in part, to a desire to gain the territory of Louisiana as a buffer zone. Spain's minister informed the French court that it


32Bolton, DeMezieres, I, 68.
was not "free to dispose of possessions, the right to which Spain, as the legitimate owner, has never conceded." Instead he suggested that a neutral zone be established below Southern Canada and west of Georgia but was rebuffed by the British, who wanted the Mississippi. The French cession of Louisiana to Spain only alleviated problems with the British for a short while.

The Treaty of Paris actually marked the beginning of a determined Anglo advance toward the Mississippi, despite the Line of Demarcation drawn in the Appalachians. Indeed, as early as 1763 the British proposed that two colonies be established in the Northwest territories on the Ohio and Illinois Rivers and a third at Natchez. Robert Farmer entered Mobile by July of 1763 and that same month George Johnson was commissioned to occupy Pensacola with a Major Loftus who would take control of the Illinois district. In the vastness of the Louisiana territory west of the Mississippi and the proximity of the British on its long, open borders, Spain again faced the interminable problem of creating a defensive barrier against encroachment and of establishing effective Spanish settlement in the area.

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35 Farmer took official control of Mobile whose western borders were stated as the Mississippi River, to the Iberville River, across lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain and out to the Gulf. AN, Col., C13A, 43: 234. George Johnstone didn't arrive until 1765.

Map of Spanish Louisiana
Louisiana presented the Spaniards with a number of puzzles. The first was the areal extent of the colony. The colony’s huge territory was essentially bounded on the east by the Mississippi River with the exception of the Isle of Orleans, bounded by a line which flowed Southeast from the mouth of the Iberville River, through Lakes Pontchartrain and Maurepas, creating a boundary with western Florida. Above the Iberville it extended northward, along the river through “Indian territory” to an area surrounding the previously French town of St. Genevieve (St. Louis was founded later). The north-south expanse of the colony was so vast that the Spanish referred to everything above the mouth of the Arkansas River as Upper Louisiana and everything below it as Lower Louisiana. Above the French settlements and toward the northwest it was difficult to tell where Spanish Louisiana ended and British Canada began. Fur traders and Indians dominated that uncharted territory and neither had forts west of the mouth of the Missouri River. In the Southeast Louisiana’s boundaries started at the Rigolets, moving westward across the Gulf of Mexico and ending at the boundary of Spanish Texas, marked only at the forts of Natchitoches and Los Adaes and the Sabine River. The area between the two colonies was so uncertain that it was called “no-mans” land for the next century, harboring many miscreants and criminals who sought to escape the authorities in Texas and/or Louisiana. North and west of the Sabine there was no certain western border and much of the territory was still uncharted. It was extremely difficult for Spain to guard such ambiguous and far flung boundaries.37


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The second puzzle was how to bring about Spanish settlement. The colony held no particular draw for Spaniards seeking life on the hacienda (large estates) or rich urban towns. The lack of mineral wealth, no large and wealthy, sedentary Indian communities, and a small population of African slaves was further complicated by the fact that Louisiana also held groups of non-Spanish colonists who had been established there for over half a century.

Louis XV’s behavior toward his old colony did not make Spain’s burden any easier. The French king had deliberately let the colonists in Louisiana believe that he had “only entrusted the colony to his Bourbon cousin Carlos to satisfy the honors of all the kings involved.” This belief and Spain’s tardiness in claiming her last colony led many of the French in New Orleans to convince themselves that the transfer had not actually taken place. In fact, by 1764 they believed that the peace between England and France was just another lull in the continual wars of the eighteenth-century and that France was merely waiting to retake the colony at the end of another war. The following year, to force

1961) regarding the southwestern strip between the two colonies. Also see Eugene Morrow Violette, “Spanish Land Claims in Missouri,” Washington University Studies 8 (1921): 167-200, for problems with the confusing boundaries of Spanish Louisiana which extend into the nineteenth century.

Thomas Neil Ingersoll, Old New Orleans: Race, class, sex, and order in the early Deep South, 1718-1819. (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1990), 404.

Charles’ hand, Louis told his cousin that Spain must take possession of Louisiana or consider giving it back.

Charles III moved, perhaps not in the direction Louis had hoped. In May of 1765, he appointed Don Antonio de Ulloa to implant a Spanish government in Louisiana. Ulloa, who was in Havana, began gathering men and provisions. He also wrote a letter to the Superior Council in New Orleans, to announce his arrival, telling them that he had been instructed by the king “to take possession of it [Louisiana] in his name, and in conformity with the Orders of his Most Christian Majesty” and had taken a moment to “acquaint” them with his mission.

Ulloa was an adept diplomat and had previously served the crown in delicate situations both in the Indies and Europe. In the 1740s he had exposed the corrupt conditions of the Viceroyalty of Peru and again in that colonies’ mercury mines at Huancavelica in the 1760s. The unhappy, corrupt officials had ousted him from the colony. Ulloa had arrived in Havana in 1765 expecting to be recalled to Spain, but his analytical and observational skills, not to mention his fluency in French, meant a governorship in Louisiana instead.

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40 Ulloa’s appointment and instructions are in AGI, SD 2542.


Provisioning his ships and gathering men took longer than expected and Ulloa's retinue did not reach the Mississippi River until March 5, 1766. Even then, the Spanish arrival was not awe-inspiring. A single frigate anchored off New Orleans just as a torrential downpour struck. Even less impressive was the slight figure of the governor and his small contingent of ninety soldiers.

The new governor's orders were to take possession without changing the existing colonial order. While Louisiana was to be strengthened militarily, resistance against the British onslaught was not to be achieved through the normal mission-presidio system. Instead he was to create and maintain a group of Indian allies, populate the border at the Mississippi and bolster the military by putting the French soldiers on an equal footing with the Spaniards. He also faced the unpopular task of dissolving and replacing the existing French government.

The colony's reception of their new governor was at best lukewarm. Some of the elite in New Orleans eventually became friendly with Ulloa but, for the most part, they

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43 The expeditionary force of a hundred men sent to Louisiana did not reach Havana until December of 1765. By then it had been reduced in strength by death and illness on the way over to a meager force of ninety men. Krouse, Ulloa, 2; and John Preston Moore, Revolt in Louisiana: The Spanish Occupation 1766-1770 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1976).

44 Ulloa was short and extremely thin. The Spanish government had equipped him with the bare minimum of two companies of infantry, and he was accompanied by Loyola, the commissary of war and intendant, by Esteben Gayarré the new comptroller and by Martin Navarro, the treasure. Bjork, "Establishment of Spanish Louisiana," 84. In Louisiana, Ulloa's contingent of ninety men were soon reduced to seventy-five by disease and desertion. Caughey, Bernardo de Gálvez, 9.

45 Bjork, "Establishment of Spanish Louisiana," 84.
remained aloof and even mocking. At the time Ulloa took command, the colony was on the verge of collapse from the malfeasance of its officials and neglect by the crown. Neglect had left the colonists unruly, distrustful of government, and independent-minded. Ulloa realized the impossibility of his position and tried to make the transfer as painless as possible. Without raising the Spanish flag he retreated with his ship to the mouth of the Mississippi, where he established his fort at Balize. There he met quietly with acting French governor Charles-Philippe Aubry to complete the exchange. With few troops and fewer officials he decided to leave the Superior Council intact for the moment and turned to building forts along the Mississippi while he waited for more troops and money. During his tenure in Balize, Ulloa began to collect information so the government in Madrid could decide what to do about Louisiana.

The colonists were insulted and confused. Paradoxically, they feared Spain's mercantilistic regulations on commerce, yet they entertained dreams of Spanish silver flooding the colony to replace their own paper currency, now depreciated to one-fourth of its face value. Unfortunately, Ulloa had little money to spend on the colony. The crown had given him only 34,030.38 pesos for expenditures in 1766. The situado for regular expenditures, supplies, and salaries amounted to 28,490.25 pesos and extraordinary funds of 3,333.25 pesos had to pay for lodging the troops, rents on housing for the officials, and debts incurred by the French officials. Only 2,204.13 pesos could be expended on naval stores, docks, and rations for sailors. Ulloa had nothing for población y amistad de
Indios, the normal funding for new immigrants and gifts to the Indians. These funds were hardly the flood of Spanish silver the colonists expected and after expenditures left little to save the floundering currency of the colony. Thankfully, Spain did send more funding. By 1767, Ulloa convinced the Spanish government to agree to increase the annual appropriation, but it was never enough. Over the next two years Spain's investment in Louisiana grew, though the monies were often misdirected as the following figures indicate. In 1767 the crown increased expenditures from the 34,030.38 pesos originally sent with Ulloa to 145,771.65 pesos, including 7,536.5 pesos for settling immigrants and buying Indian gifts. By 1768 it raised it expenditures to 155,397.25 pesos but the new monies were directed toward the Marina (the navy, its men, ships and ports) and troops and Ulloa found it increasingly difficult to deal with immigrants and Indians.

With Ulloa at Balize, Aubry stayed on as acting governor under orders from his king. Louisiana fell under dual French and Spanish rule. Aubry hoped the French crown would ease the situation but in the summer of 1766 he received a royal order that the French would make no more payments on bills of exchange. The colonists were contemptuous and rebellious. Both governors were embarrassed and disappointed.

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46 This last oversight by the crown was particularly damaging because Ulloa was supposed to continue the French policy of giving gifts to the Indians to win them as allies. Without gifts it would be difficult for him to win the favor of Indians who previously had been Spain's enemies. Figures in a letter from Navarro to José de Gálvez, July 18, 1787, AGI, SD 2684.

47 Rodriguez Casado, Primeros años, 116-29. Accounts of the Royal Treasury in a letter from Martín Navarro to José de Gálvez, July 18, 1787, AGI, SD 2684.

48 Bjork, "Establishment of Spanish Rule," 88; Caughey, Bernardo de Gálvez, 10; Arthur Preston Whitaker, "Antonio de Ulloa," 155-95; Moore, "Antonio de Ulloa: A
Despite the tense situation in the colony Ulloa endeavored over the next thirty months to continue on as ordered. He tried to appease the troops by offering French soldiers the same pay as the Spaniards, which required that the Spanish soldiers take a reduction of one-fifth of their normal pay. In protest, the Spaniards deserted and the French unanimously refused. Spain sent replacements, but slowly and in small numbers. The governor attempted to establish a fort at the mouth of the Mississippi, one on the Red River, one opposite Natchez, one on the Iberville opposite Fort Bute, as well as two in Missouri, giving Captain Riu strict orders to resist to the “uttermost” and English interference or claim to the northern side of the Missouri River.

Indian problems plagued the governor, the French gave them brandy and the English bribed them with presents that Ulloa couldn't match. Trade with the Indians was confined to licensed traders, primarily the firm of Laclede and St. Maxent. Only a few

Profile,” 189-318; see also Rodriguez Casado, Primeros años.

49 Common soldiers supposed to be paid 8 pesos per month but actually received only 5 pesos and 2 reales because the rest was used to pay for their clothing and “maintenance” a common occurrence in Borderland's posts and a common reason for desertion since maintenance included food and drink. Pay also often came late during Ulloa's tenure, another reason for dissent. Abraham P. Nasatir, “Government Employees and Salaries in Spanish Louisiana,” LHO, 29 (1946): 890-91.

50 Gilbert C. Din, “Protecting the 'Barreda’,” 184-92. All replacements stopped in Havana for training before they arrived in Louisiana to enter what eventually became the Fixed Louisiana Infantry Battalion.

soldiers could be sent to the outlying forts and Aubry wrote Choiseul in March that he feared the forty men sent to Illinois would "make little impression on the Indians or the English." 52

The governor also placed immigrants at strategic points along the Mississippi to form a defensive line of settlements, often a difficult task since newcomers often wanted to stay near already settled families (often relatives) and resented the governor's interference. Also, these families needed at least two years worth of provisions at the expense of the Spanish government. 53

Ulloa's attempts to control commerce met with continual failure. French discontent grew because his licensing of Indian trade appeared to be a monopoly for Laclede and St. Maxent. The Indians were not impressed with the governor's forts, soldiers or gifts. He tried to curb smuggling and control prices by issuing a decree in September of 1766 requiring all merchants to have licenses or passports from his officials and sought to control the slave trade. The merchants either ignored him or grew furious when they had to comply. Throughout 1767 they worked against Spanish rule with a mounting distrust of Ulloa and his officials. The governor wrote to the Captain-General in

52 Bjork, "Establishment of Spanish Rule, 97.

53 Ulloa to Grimaldi, September 29, 1766, AGI, SD 2585. The governor was denounced on more than one occasion for interfering with the Acadians settlement plans. Rodriguez Casado, Primeros años, 104-105. For further information on Ulloa and the Acadians see Richard E. Chandler, "End of an Odyssey: Acadians Arrive in St. Gabriel Louisiana," LH 18 (1977), 69-87.
Havana desperately seeking money and warning that everything seemed to cause “revolts and seditions” in Louisiana.\(^\text{54}\)

The governor's unbending insistence on Spanish regulations further soured relations and provoked Aubry to note that had he but treated the French with a little “douceur” (sweetness) it might have helped. He also warned the French crown that the colonists and Indians were angry enough over the transfer that they were considering offering the colony to Great Britain.\(^\text{55}\) Ulloa's notable absence in the community made resistance easier and by 1768 when he returned from an inspection of the lower colony he was confronted with open opposition under the leadership of Attorney General Nicolas Lafrénière.

In 1768 the Spanish crown promulgated new and restrictive commercial regulations. Ironically, Louisiana was the first Spanish colony to receive almost unrestricted trade with other Spanish ports but the order forbade trade, with non-Spanish ports and required the use of Spanish owned ships. (This also included colonial ships.) The French in Louisiana were used to a much larger zone of trade including the Islands of the West Indies. While the duties Louisianians were to pay were reasonable, the threatened disruption of their normal trade patterns both frightened and infuriated them. When Ulloa proclaimed the new royal order, the colonists rebelled. During the revolt, the


\(^{55}\)Aubry to Praslin, March 30, 1767, Archives Nationales, AC, C13a, 47:6-9.
Superior Council banished Ulloa in an act of defiance. Thus Louisiana's first Spanish governor left without taking effective control of the colony.  

The motivation of the rebels was complex. Many believed that the revolt would oust Spanish rule completely and that when Ulloa's ship, the *Volante*, sailed for Havana they might convince either Great Britain or France to take possession. Neither did. The colonists were even more disappointed when it became apparent that Spain was still interested in her rebellious colony. As the colonial authority descended into chaos the colonists grew nervous waiting for some "good king" to take them under protection. They did not have to wait long.

As the colonists pleaded for help in France, Spain's ministers debated the appropriate reaction. Suggestions flew in the capital as to what might be done and what might happen. One Swiss mercenary who remained in the colony suggested that it might become a republic. Others knew Charles III would make no such agreement. Spain must answer Louisiana's challenge. Ulloa arrived in Spain in February and delivered a report

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58 Ingersoll, *Old New Orleans*, 1: 430, indicates that both England and French Saint-Domingue suggested a republic jointly governed by the Bourbon thrones but there is no evidence to support this claim. England did not want to get involved in the conflict and told colonial representatives as much when they visited London. For other suggested solutions to the "Louisiana problem" see Moore's *Revolt in Louisiana*. 

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to Grimaldi on the rebellion, including the names of its key leaders. In response to Ulloa’s report, Grimaldi immediately admonished the French for not punishing the Louisiana delegates present at their court. The Ministry of the Indies then met to discuss the situation, and with the exception of treasurer Don Miguel de Muzquiz, decided to keep Louisiana after comparing the cost of retaking the colony and to the cost of losing it to the British. Added to these reasons was the danger that the idea of revolution might spread to other Spanish colonies—a reasonable fear considering the rising independence of many creoles within Spain’s empire.

The King acted quickly. He ordered Don Alejandro O’Reilly to recover the colony, punish the ringleaders of the rebellion and install Spanish government, including a new governor. A Royal Cedula dated April 21, 1769, identified that new governor as Lieutenant Colonel Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga, an officer with a reputation as a good commander and organizer, then serving in Havana.

By June of 1769 Louisiana had its answer. Spain was still interested. In response to requests for funding from Aubry, Captain-General Antonio Maria Bucareli sent situación funds from Havana to pay the troops, buy gifts for the Indians and support what

59 Ulloa to Grimaldi, February 14, 1769, AGI, SD 80.

60 Muzquiz was convinced that Louisiana would never equal in worth what it would cost the Spanish to defend it.


38
was left of the Spanish officials in the colony. That same month O'Reilly arrived in Havana where he selected troops, equipment, supplies and support personnel and contacted Unzaga. In a fortnight O'Reilly organized his expedition and early on July 6, 1769 he and Unzaga set sail for Louisiana. This time there would be no expulsion, for waiting beneath the sails of their twenty-one ships were 2056 troops, firearms and ammunition.

The fruit of mameyes in Havana secured a new colony for Spain and produced Louisiana's first three governors. Ulloa, sadly dismissed from his post by his own citizenry, had given valuable information to the crown about its newest colony. Within a year, O'Reilly set in place the structure of government and military defense. Effective control of the Louisiana borderlands, however, came after seven long years of government in the capable hands of Luis Unzaga y Amezaga.

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Aubry wrote to Bucareli in February requesting money for medical personnel, interpreters, and government employees, as well as gifts for the Indians. Aubry to Bucareli, February 24, 1769, AGI, Cuba 1054. Bucareli sent some 12,783 pesos, 3 reales to New Orleans, 8,000 of which was for the troops, Indian gifts and officials. Bucareli to Aubry, June 22, 1769, AGI, Cuba 1054.

Bucareli to Grimaldi, June 24, 1769, AGI SD 80, fol. 1130.

O'Reilly also carried 150,000 pesos to cover unexpected expenses. Bucareli to Arriaga, July 7, 1769, AGI SD 80, fol. 1135.
Chapter Three

O'Reilly

"There is nothing that makes a government milder and more respected than to render to each misdeed the justice which is due it."  Alejandro O'Reilly

In 1769, Charles III, sent one of his most capable officers to Louisiana to subdue the rebellion of its colonists and firmly establish Spanish rule. The crown afforded O'Reilly far more troops, money and munitions than it originally sent with Ulloa. In short, swift strokes O'Reilly stopped the rebellion and planted the Spanish flag. Working toward the goals of the Bourbon Reforms, over the next year he redistributed the meager troops in a defensive barrier around the colony and built a colonial militia along the same lines as the one in Havana. At the same time he established a new framework of Spanish government, enforced Spain's economic decrees, encouraged agriculture through immigration, and establish a Spanish ecclesiastical presence in the colony. It was a tremendous task but the King had chosen wisely.

O'Reilly's ship the Volante reached the mouth of the Mississippi in two weeks but he delayed his entrance into New Orleans due to inclement weather. He did send notice to Aubry of his arrival. When the news of the Spanish presence leaked to the general populace of New Orleans, many of them, notably a number of the rebels, came to meet with the captain-general at Balize to plead their case. He listened but was stern and evasive in his answers. Finally, the captain-general and his ships appeared at dawn off New Orleans on August 17, 1769. Numerous cannon volleys announced his presence to

1Bjork, "Establishment of Spanish Rule," 136.

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the startled town. Again O’Reilly waited, this time for a day before he made his dignified entrance, ceremoniously lowering the French flag and replacing it with that of Spain.²

After taking formal possession, the Spaniards turned their attention to the matter of the rebellion. Three days later O’Reilly invited the ringleaders to his house where they were arrested. He then posted a general clemency for the city and ordered all adult males in the colony to sign an oath of allegiance to Charles III. After a lengthy trial O’Reilly convicted and passed sentenced on the leaders of the revolt. He appointed a commission headed by Treasurer, Martín Navarro to dispose of their estates appropriately. The ensuing executions so shocked New Orleans that afterwards its citizens referred to the Field Marshal as Butcher or Bloody O’Reilly.³

There still remained the matter of the merchant class in New Orleans who posed a distinct threat to both Spanish authority and its intended commercial policies. O’Reilly began by expelling approximately two dozen merchants and their families, a number of them English Protestants and Jews who refused to abjure their religion. It has been suggested by Thomas Ingersoll, in his recent dissertation on New Orleans, that with this move O’Reilly effectively purged the French elite that stood against Spanish authority. Other historians disagree. The first problem was that the merchant class was not the only French elite. There was also a landed, slave-owning planter class who distrusted the


³A more lengthy discussion of the trial and convictions can be found in John Preston Moore, Revolt in Louisiana and Rodriguez-Casado, Primeros años, 328-43. A good biography of Navarro can be found in Brian E. Coutt’s dissertation, “Martin Navarro.”
Spanish government and constantly tried to circumvent Spanish laws and regulations, especially concerning slavery. Second, the remaining Superior Council was filled with decidedly anti-Spanish members. Gilbert C. Din notes, in his recent work on the New Orleans Cabildo, that French planters and merchants competed for offices in the Cabildo's government where they could continue to apply the law for their own benefit. Where the remaining merchants are concerned, Margaret Fisher Dalrymple's work on John Fitzpatrick indicates that a number of New Orleans French merchants continued to covertly funnel illegal trade and money to ousted English merchants during 1769 in direct disobedience to O'Reilly's orders. Lastly, it should be noted that many of the elite families, both planters and merchants, wanted a stable government in Louisiana and were not adverse to Spain's presence. The French elite never truly lost its power, it merely continued the fight through different channels. O'Reilly believed, however, that he had removed any overt challenge to Spanish authority and that the remaining populace would gradually acquiesce.³

With the first of his goals met, during October O'Reilly began an assessment of the rest of the colony and turned his attention to the military and government. His remaining orders required not only that he establish Spanish control, but that he create a suitable defense against the British, and finally that he make prosperity in Louisiana possible so

³Ingersoll, Old New Orleans, I, 433; See the introduction to Margaret Fisher Dalrymple's, Merchant of Manchac: The Letterbooks of John Fitzpatrick, 1768-1790, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978) and peruse the list of names for the officials in Din and Harkins', New Orleans Cabildo. Also see Din's recent volume Spaniards, Planters and Slaves (College Station, TX: Texas A&M Press, 1999) who indicates that the French planters continually resisted the imposition of Spanish law.
that eventually it would pay for itself. In a letter to Arriaga, dated October 17, 1769, he listed what he considered the necessary steps to bend Louisiana to Spanish rule. He requested that Louisiana be subject to the same laws as other Spanish colonies and that all official proceedings be done in Spanish. Additionally, he felt justice would be best served by a new tribunal of judges who spoke both French and Spanish and that the Captain-General’s court in Havana should serve as the Court of Appeals, followed by the Council of the Indies in Spain. The Crown agreed. The new law was an abridged version of the Recopilación de Leyes de las Indias, which, combined with parts of the French Code Noir, became known as the “Code O’Reilly” and included an unprecedented system of strict enforcement of the law, equally new in the laissez-faire community.

The next step was to remove French opposition in government, more precisely the Superior Council, which was a nest of wealthy, French planters. The council had originally been a court but over the years had assumed both administrative and legislative powers and the attorney general dominated local politics and law. Despite its importance, most of the councilors had no law degrees and many members had become complacent about their duties. Ulloa had originally been ordered to abolish the council but his orders


5 O’Reilly to Arriaga, October 17, 1769, AGI, SD 87, Folio 5.

were changed to establish a judicial tribunal with a legal advisor, a French and a Spanish clerk, and the governor as chief judge. Because he did not have enough troops or political power, he left the Council unaltered, which created further havoc during his governorship. O'Reilly didn't hesitate; he abolished the Council and replaced it with a Spanish cabildo.7

The cabildos of Spain's borderlands varied greatly in size and power. With the exception of San Antonio, military officers controlled the courts which thus had limited independence. In Louisiana, the governor as President, ex officio, controlled the cabildo and the governors were military officers whose authority was theoretically limited only by the crown.8 Beneath him in descending order were the voting members which included two alcaldes ordinarios, or judges who were elected annually; six regidores perpetuos, or permanent councilors, five of which held additional duties (see Table 1) and a sixth as Regidore perpetuo sencillo. The nonvoting members of the Cabildo included an annually elected Sindico Procurador General or mayordomo de propios (guardians of city properties), and the escribano, a permanent clerk of court who also acted as the court recorder and registrar of mortgages 9

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7Orders to abolish the Superior Council are in Ulloa to Bucareli, August 28, 1767, 57, SMV I, 32; Din, Cabildo, 43.

8There were, however, checks on any capricious behavior by these strong governors. Louisiana's governors as others posted bond against possible malfeasance in office and were compelled to undergo a residencia or official review of is term in office. Additionally, the Cabildo could send records and grievances directly to the crown if threatened with unscrupulous behavior on the part of their governor.

9Din, Cabildo, 56-60, Jo Ann Carrigan, “Government in Spanish Louisiana,” LS 11 (1972): 216-217; for information on borderlands cabildos see Weber, Spanish Frontier, 322-25; also see Cruz, Let There Be Towns; Marc Simmons, Spanish Government in New Mexico (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1968); and Florian F. Guest, 44
Ironically, O'Reilly only tempered the control of the French elite. As stated before, many of them remained as perennial *regidores* whose offices became inheritable personal property and the ambiguous nature of their duties allowed them far greater control than other colonial officials in Spanish America. Prime examples of this power are Nicolas Forstall, whose time in office covered thirty-one years, and the Ducros family, which maintained control of the office of *regidor-depositario general* throughout the entire Spanish period. The only factor which limited Louisiana's creoles from building huge empires through government office was the short duration of Spain's rule in the colony.10

The duties of the New Orleans Cabildo were deliberately ambiguous. Within the heirarchy of the Spanish Empire, the cabildo was merely a government of local authority, in this case for New Orleans and its environs. In order of importance and power it stood at the bottom of the Spanish governmental system, which was multi-layered and overlapping (see Table 2). In addition to being limited by the governor, the Cabildo also shared its power with the office of the Treasurer or *Intendant* and church officials. The office of Intendant, however, was not active in Louisiana until Martín Navarro received title in 1780.11 The Cabildo under O'Reilly and Unzaga, therefore, in reality did not share power


11 In theory the office was extant in 1766 but it was not officially given duties until Navarro whose intendancy can be found in Coutt's "Martín Navarro." From 1766 to 1780 the duties of the intendent were shared by Juan José de Loyola, Esteban Gayarré, and Martín Navarro, as well as Governors Luis de Unzaga and Bernardo de Gálvez.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Duties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governor or his agent</td>
<td>President, <em>ex officio</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Voting Members of the Cabildo**

- **Alcaldes ordinarios**
  - *Alcalde de Primer Voto* Annually elected judges who were senior voting members of the council
  - *Alcalde de Segundo Voto*

- **Regidores perpetuos, with collateral offices by order of rank**
  - *Alférez Real* Royal Standard Bearer
  - *Alcalde Mayor Provincial* Chief Provincial Magistrate
  - *Alguacil Mayor* City Magistrate and Warden of the Royal Jail
  - *Depositario General* Custodian of Properties and Funds
  - *Receptor de Penas de Cámara* Receiver of Court Fines

- **Regidores perpetuos sencillos**, without collateral offices. Only one present until 1797, when six new *regidores* were added, ranked according to seniority.

**Nonvoting Members of the Cabildo**

- *Sindico Procurador General* and *mayordomo de propios* Annually elected, both had executive functions

- *Escribano of the Cabildo* Permanent clerk of the council; also court recorder
  - And registar of mortgages

**Lesser Employees**

- Porters, public crier, public printer, *serenos*, Appraisers, interpreters, inspector of weights and Measures, jail employees, keeper of fire pumps, etc.

**Lesser Elective Offices include**

- *Alcaldes de Barrio* and syndics of the New Orleans District (*síndicos de distritos*) and *serenos* Justices of the Peace in the city (*de Barrio*) and outlying districts (*de distritos*). The *serenos* acted as night watchmen.

**Sources:** Gilbert C. Din, *The New Orleans Cabildo*, 57.

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*Síndico Procurador General* was responsible for protecting public rights and investigating municipal problems. It was perhaps the most demanding and challenging position of all.
# Table 2

**Latin America's Administrative System**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>King</th>
<th>Council of the Indies</th>
<th>Viceroy</th>
<th>Captain-General</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
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</table>

**Audiencia**

(Courts of Law whose President was often the Viceroy) and the Judges (*Oidores*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corregidores</th>
<th><em>alcalde mayors</em></th>
<th><em>gobernadores</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Municipal councils)</td>
<td>Judges for minor crimes and (governors)</td>
<td>Mayors of local towns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corregidores de Indias</th>
<th>Cabildo</th>
<th>Municipal Councils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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14The closest Viceroyalty to Louisiana was that of New Spain, but O'Reilly placed the colony under direct control of the Captaincy-General in Havana.

15The title of Captain-General could be confusing. True Captain-Generals held political and military power over certain strategic locations such as Havana and Guatemala. The title captain-general was also offered to men like O'Reilly who took care of military disturbances in the colonies before turning them back to the officials. In some cases the captain-general could be subservient to the viceroy and in others the degree of disturbance warranted the crown giving him supreme command. In some cases the captain general, as a trouble shooter, stood above all other officials, but in others had no power over treasury officials or the Intendant.

16Corregidores where often found in large, rural provinces and their powers differed from colony to colony. They were sometimes accompanied by *Corregidores de Indios* whose duties lay solely with the Indian population.
with an intendant, but they worked with the Treasury and annually had to submit their expenditures and accounts to a treasury official who then forwarded it to the Treasury office in Havana. The judicial responsibilities of the Cabildo were also checked by similar and sometimes shared fiscal responsibilities with the Treasury especially that concerning the circulation of money in the colony.\(^{17}\) Louisiana's chain of command went from the King, through the Council of the Indies, to the Governor and Captain-General of Havana, and then to Louisiana's Governor and finally the Cabildo.

The other reciprocity the Cabildo shared was with the church. The Cabildo held the surprising power of appointing the steward of the St. Louis church in New Orleans. Additionally it might question the fees charged by church officials. The members of the Cabildo were required by the Code O'Reilly to attend church on special feast days as an example to the rest of the community. In return the church presided over and blessed official ceremonies.\(^{18}\)

Funding the Cabildo was another matter. The Spanish government sent far more money with O'Reilly than Ulloa but expenditures were also larger. O'Reilly wrote to Arriaga in November that he had a balance of 1,930,186 reales in the royal treasury, but that the bills stood at over 750,000 reales. The Cabildo must be supported from New Orleans, not Spain. O'Reilly then levied duties on shops, taverns, gaming houses and other money making establishments to help meet expenses. Inns were taxed twenty pesos

\(^{17}\)Din, Cabildo, 96.

\(^{18}\)For further information on the church see Roger Baudier, The Catholic Church in Louisiana (New Orleans, 1939).
per year, taverns forty pesos, and billiard halls forty pesos which added 840 pesos annually to the city's finances. He also taxed imported brandy and butchers. He also ordered the collection of rent on government properties. These funds were put to use paying city officials and offsetting the expenses of public festivals. The citizens of New Orleans acquiesced.18

Unlike many cabildos, the Cabildo in New Orleans theoretically held legislative power over the entire province of Louisiana, but given the colony's size this was impossible. Din and Harkins maintain in their work on the New Orleans Cabildo, that the only real powers which the Cabildo extended beyond New Orleans were the regulations concerning levee maintenance outside of New Orleans proper and those on slavery, but the latter were limited to the lower colony.19

To administer the huge expanse of provincial Louisiana outside New Orleans, O'Reilly, Unzaga and military personnel next visited the various posts, taking loyalty oaths and gathering information. O'Reilly sent Captain Don Eduardo Nugent and Don Juan Kelly to Opelousas and Natchitoches. He and Unzaga went personally to Pointe Coupee. During these proceedings O'Reilly always introduced Unzaga as their governor, carefully keeping in the background. The captain-general then solicited separate reports on Upper Louisiana from Captain Riu and Don Pedro Piernas.20

18 O'Reilly to Arraiga, November 10, 1769, AGI, SD 80 and again December 10, 1769, AGI, SD 80.

19 Din, Cabildo, 81.

20 O'Reilly to Arriaga, December 10, 1769, AGI, SD 80, Folio 18.
Using information collected from these visits, O'Reilly decided to split provincial Louisiana between two Lieutenant Governors. Pedro Piernas at Illinois would serve as Lieutenant-Governor in Upper Louisiana and the southwestern territory would fall under Don Athanazio de Mézières at Natchitoches. O'Reilly established nine smaller districts under the supervision of French militia lieutenants and commandants. (See Table III for his appointments).

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lieutenants Governors</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ylinueses (Illinois) District- Captain of Infantry,-Don Pedro Piernas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacing Captain Riu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natchitoches-Captain of Militia-Don Athanazio de Mézières</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post Commanders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acadian Coast or La Fourche de Chetimachas Captain of Militia, Don Luis Judice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atakapas (Opelousas)-Don Gabriel Fuselier de la Claire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First German Coast or St. Charles – Captain of the Infantry, Don Francisco Simard de Bellisle who replaced Chevalier D'Arensbourg (1734-1769)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second German Coast or St. John's - Captain of Militia, Don Roberto Robin de Laugni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(sometimes spelled Logny)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santiago de los Alemanes (St. James Parish, Cabanocey) - Captain of Militia, Don Nicolas Verret (continuing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natchitoches - Don Luis Borme who replaced Balthazar de Villiers (1766-1769)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point Coupée - Captain of Militia, Don Francisco Allain and Balthazar de Villiers, transferred from Natchitoches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapide - Don Estevan Mardefret Layssard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Geneviève-Captain of Militia, Don Francisco Valé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Carlos III de Arkansas - Don Alejandro De Clouet (continuing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Report by O'Reilly, February 4, 1770, AGI, Cuba, 1055; and Derek Noel Kerr, “Petty Felony, Slave Defiance and a Frontier Villainy: Crime and Criminal Justice in Spanish Louisiana, 1770-1803.” (Ph.D. diss., Tulane University, 1983), 409-412.
A small junta (or committee) under the auspices of Unzaga then examined the conditions of the forts and their strategic strengths. They decided that Ulloa's Fort Real Catolica at the mouth of the river was not of strategic importance and cost too much to maintain. At their suggestion O'Reilly evacuated the fort and re-established the troops at French Balise, Pointe Coupée, New Orleans, and Natchitoches. He also terminated Fort St. Luis de Natchez, opposite British Natchez, and agreed to allow the Acadians there to move to the Iberville district opposite Fort Bute. The remaining forts stood at St. Genevieve and St. Louis.

By maintaining Frenchmen in important official posts, O'Reilly created a smooth transition of power in the province, despite his insistence on loyalty oaths and the use of Spanish language in official business. On the conditions of the forts in general, O'Reilly wrote to Arriaga that it was "impossible to construct anything but a moat and a palisade" around most forts and that the moats were constantly filled "with mud brought down by the winter floods" and the wood of the palisades rotted quickly.22

Defense of Louisiana, O'Reilly surmised, could not rest entirely on the forts and a small number of Spanish troops. Louisiana already had a fixed infantry battalion created under Captain-General Bucareli in Havana. Pulled from various units in Europe, four hundred and fifteen men stood ready to defend the colony. Many of the troops were stationed in New Orleans, but detachments sent to surrounding forts had thinned their number. In October one-hundred and seventy-nine men of the Lisbon Regiment chose to

remain in Louisiana. but to build troop strength and cut costs, O'Reilly focused his attention on organizing militia units for Louisiana as he had done in Havana. 23

In February of 1770, O'Reilly conscripted 1,040 men, dividing them into thirteen militia companies who were drilled by regular army officers and supplied from the royal warehouses. He stationed four units at New Orleans and one unit at the other posts. While the crown absorbed the initial costs for training the militia the soldiers themselves were to be responsible for their equipment and future supplies. O'Reilly made the post commandants responsible for the maintenance of their palisades, an ongoing problem.24

The troops under O'Reilly had handled themselves well in Louisiana and the colonists had warmed to their respectful behavior. O'Reilly hoped that this mood would allow an esprit de corps to develop within the militia. Pursuant to that hope, he had the militia drill on Sundays. Drills included marching and shooting practice. Because Spain was then engaged in a conflict over the Falklands with Britain, General Gage (in charge of the English forces in America) grew suspicious of these maneuvers. O'Reilly, however, had given the commanders along the Mississippi different orders than Ulloa. Where Ulloa had instructed them to prepare for a British offensive and to attack if threatened, O'Reilly's instructions were to maintain peace with the British and retreat to New Orleans if

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23 Bucareli, Havana, May 2, 1769, AHN, Estado 3883; O'Reilly to Arraiga, December 19, 1769 in Kinnaird, SMV 1:144-48.

24 O'Reilly to Arriaga, December 19, 1769 ibid, Folio 25; Jack D. L. Holmes, Honor and Fidelity, (Birmingham, AL: Louisiana Collection Series, 1965), 18-19; O'Reilly to Bucareli, November 10, 1769, AGI, Cuba 1055, Folio 38.
necessary. O'Reilly wrote to Gage, informing him of Spain's peaceful intent and Gage informed his superiors, which relieved the tension along the Mississippi for the moment.²⁵

With an embryonic militia and a skeletal line of forts in place, O'Reilly turned to creating a series of Indian alliances. He continued the French practice of gift giving and distributing medals to the small tribes ("petite nations") in the Lower Mississippi Valley. He gave Lieutenant-Governor Athanase de Mézières the task of dealing with the western Indians, many of whom were decidedly unfriendly to the Spanish. He directed the French commandant to pacify hostile bands of Indians, license all traders and forbid any trade with unfriendly tribes. He gave similar instructions to Pedro Piernas at St. Louis, making sure that Piernas did not antagonize the British by enticing friendly Indians to migrate into Spanish territory.²⁶

British sensibilities were not important, however, where contraband was concerned. English traders had often crossed into French territory to trade with the Indians and Spain was aware of the British propensity for using Indians against its enemies. He was determined to restrict contraband at its hot spots in New Orleans, along the Mississippi, especially at the new settlement at St. Louis, and on the border with Spanish Texas where the fort at Los Adaes had a long history of contraband with Natchitoches. To reinforce his directives, the captain-general ordered Lieutenant-General Piernas at St. Louis to build a prison with jailkeepers, and allow residence only to


²⁶Caughey, Bernardo de Galvez, 37-38; Correspondence between O'Reilly and de Mézières in Bolton, Athanase de Mézières, 1: 130-137.
colonists with special permission from the Governor. No trade with the English was to be allowed. As an added check he was to give annual reports to the governor on the amounts of flour and skins in the district.\textsuperscript{27}

At Natchitoches, O'Reilly attacked the problem differently. Relations with the post at Adaes and with the viceroy of Mexico were not to be strained. In fact he asked that de Mézières give them aid if necessary. In order to keep the colonists from "straying" O'Reilly authorized the commandant to license two "cabarets" at Natchitoches to sell wine and taffia,\textsuperscript{28} and to use the money from those sales to police the area. There was, however, to be no trade with Spanish Texas, as it was a separate colony, and no whiskey or guns were to be sold to the Indians.\textsuperscript{29}

New Orleans received even stricter measures. O'Reilly reinstated the Ordinance of 1768 which had caused Ulloa's ouster. While he decreased the export tariff on Louisiana's goods, he did not allow the colony to export good cash crops like tobacco to Havana because of their poor quality. He tore at the main fabric of the colony's trade and heavily enforced the new mercantilistic rules, expunging British smugglers in New Orleans, as well as Manchac (across from British Manchac) and enforcing the law with troops. The merchants and traders involved in contraband found themselves abruptly expelled from the colony and their ships and goods confiscated to prevent their return.

\textsuperscript{27}Instructions to Piernas, November 24, 1769, AGI, Cuba 187.

\textsuperscript{28}A coarse alcoholic drink like aguardiente.

\textsuperscript{29}Instructions to Athanase de Mézières in Bjork, "Establishment of Spanish Rule," 174, Approval of plan in Royal cédula dated August 17, 1772, AGI, SD 86.
With the British gone, O'Reilly hoped to end a booming illicit trade which absorbed approximately ninety percent of the money circulating in the colony. To buttress his efforts he refused anchorage to British ships in Louisiana ports. This last effort struck heavily at the colony's economy.

Changes in New Orleans and problems for its planter elite had not hindered the outlying provinces until O'Reilly came to Louisiana. The reason for this was that outside the environs of the capital the colonial hinterlands were entirely another world. There the colonists, their slaves and Indian neighbors had created a subtle network of trade and alliances unhampered, until now, by colonial officials. Commercial agriculture in a large portion of the colony was limited by a lack of population, slaves for labor, and inadequate financing by the French crown. Instead, those settlers spawned a "frontier exchange economy," of small farms augmented by hunting, fishing and trapping. These pioneers constantly enhanced their meager lifestyle by smuggling and illegal inter-colonial trade.

The Indians often taught new settlers to hunt and fish and came to their aid during times of famine since Louisiana's climate and soil were not always hospitable. Colonists also intermarried with the Indians, moved into deserted Indian villages or used abandoned fields and frequently developed the same woodland economy. Native Americans also

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29 Clark, New Orleans, 175.

30 For further information please see Daniel H. Usner, Jr., Indians, Settlers, & Slaves in A Frontier Exchange Economy: The Lower Mississippi Valley before 1783, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992); The French slave trade failed in Louisiana. Slave shortages inhibited commercial agriculture, made worse by the shortage of currency. Slave traders often kept their slaves against a better time but this worked against both them and the colonists by continuing the cycle of shortages. Clark, New Orleans, 133.
furnished transportation for goods and messages between colonial settlements, even across colonial borders. They also collaborated with the Europeans in the Indian slave trade. In order to maintain alliances the colonists often furnished their Indian friends with guns and ammunition, as well as European trade goods.\(^{32}\)

Despite the introduction of plantation agriculture and black slavery in the 1720s, the hinterlands were changed little by the arrival of the Spanish. Black slaves were such a precious commodity that they often became part of the local community and its families. Many were given guns to help augment the meager agriculture of their owners and allowed to trade with the Indians as well. Indian tribes along the frontier had developed a new set of trade linkages, exchanging “salt meat, hides and furs, bear's grease and buffalo suet, for European (especially British) trade goods, guns, powder and shot.” These products had also attracted tribes from the west—the Witchita and the Comanche who now immigrated to the Red River area. These particular tribes often smuggled horses, mules, and cattle from Spanish Texas for the promise of European products. By the time O'Reilly took control regular routes for contraband such as the Sante Fe Trail existed between Louisiana and the Spanish southwest. The settlements at Natchitoches, Arkansas and Opelousas frequently received such contraband. Natchitoches also had a relationship with the post of Los Adaes which served to funnel illicit goods to Louisiana.\(^{33}\)


The posts along the Mississippi also experienced the same trade between Indians and colonists. On the eastern bank British traders, the Chickasaw and Choctaw trafficked contraband items to Louisiana where they made their way westward into Spanish Texas and New Mexico. British settlements at Manchac and Natchez also supplied Louisianians with accessible markets and ready credit. Trade between Spanish and British Manchac was so common that the term "going to Little Manchac" was synonymous with smuggling.34

Before 1769, settlers, Indians, and slaves collectively prospered, often oblivious to the troubles of their fellow colonists in New Orleans. Indeed the self-supportive system had continued in relative peace and harmony until the advent of captain-general, Alejandro O'Reilly. His onslaught against the British now sent ripples through Louisiana's frontier economy, upsetting the sensitive balance in the hinterland between the Indians and the European colonists.

O'Reilly was concerned with the colonists in the "imperial sense." He saw them as part and parcel of the defensive structure of Louisiana. As a Bourbon official he sought to encourage domestic agriculture by encouraging farmers in the colony. He believed the


34Clark, New Orleans, 169; Usner, Indians, Settlers & Slaves, 122; Caughey, Bernardo de Galvez, 11.
influx of farming families would improve the economy and provide a denser population, able to act as a defense against the encroaching British. To promote the goals of agriculture and population, he brought order to the chaos of settlement, fixing the extent of land grants and regulating land enclosures so that cattle could be penned in during the summer. Aware of the problems inherent in Louisiana’s environment he compelled Louisiana’s inhabitants to keep their bridges, roads and levees in good repair and ordered that colonists who settled along the river must build levees within the first three years.

Wishing to create permanent, good sized settlements, O’Reilly ordered that landowners could not sell or give away their land until they had owned it for three years, and only then with permission from the governor general.35

To take care of his colonists’ religious needs, O’Reilly created thirteen parochial districts and assigned eighteen priests who spoke both French and Spanish to them. (See Table 4) He also encouraged the colonists to build churches because he felt that they had received little “spiritual nourishment” under the French system.36

By the end of November, O’Reilly deemed his work finished. He had already evacuated the troops, and now it was time to yield control of Louisiana to its new governor, Luis de Unzaga. On December 1, 1769, O’Reilly installed Unzaga as governor with an annual salary of 6,000 pesos. By letter on February 23, 1770, O’Reilly delivered the crown’s instructions, his own reports and correspondence to Louisiana’s new

35Bjork, “Establishment of Spanish Rule,” 180-183; Reglamento de 1770, AGI, PC 652.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>O’Reilly’s Assignment of the Clergy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of New Orleans and Environs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German Coast, St. Charles and St. John’s Parish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabahannose and Fourche de Chetimachas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iberville Parish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punta Cortada (Pointe Coupee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opelousas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rapids Parish and the Apalache Indians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natchitoches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois District, St. Louis and St. Genevieve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number of Regular Clergy Needed for Louisiana</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Coutts, “Martin Navarro,” 59; Enclosure No. 1, Reglamento de 1770, AGI, Cuba 652.

governor. In March, O’Reilly sailed for Havana and after the required paperwork officially relinquished command of the colony.³⁸

³⁷The Apalache tribe, refugees from the collapse of the Spanish missions in Northern Florida, had been converted in the late 1600s.

³⁸Unzaga's appointment by the crown dates from April 21, 1769, though O'Reilly remained in control until December first. Confusion over the inception of Unzaga's government has arisen because the instructions and papers were not sent to Unzaga until February of 1770, and O'Reilly didn't officially relinquish control on paper until October. Also confusing to scholars is the difference between the act and its acceptance. Unzaga accepted his appointment in a letter to Don Juan Gregorio Muniaín on December 1, 1769 but the crown's acceptance did not come until January 28, 1771. Unzaga's acceptance,
O'Reilly had previously been part of a team that had successfully reorganized the defenses and economy of Havana. In 1770, O'Reilly believed he had also succeeded in executing similar orders, as well as saving the crown money in Louisiana. He had created a defensive barrier of forts and colonial settlements against the British and set the colonists on the path for commercial success within empire. The colony’s success, however, lay in a different direction and took place under another governor's hand. O'Reilly created a Spanish infrastructure in Louisiana. He hispanicized the government and military but not the people. Colonial reorganization, then, had not created colonial reorientation. That remained for Louisiana's new governor, Don Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga.

December 1, 1769, AGI, SD 86; O'Reilly's delivery of the instructions and correspondence in "Inventario que explica los papeles relatives al Gobierno general de esta Provincia que entregó hoy día de las fechas a mi sucesor el coronel Don Luis de Unzaga", February 23, 1770, AGI Cuba 2357. Pezuela, Jacobo de la, Dicionario Geografio, 38; Holmes, Honor and Fidelity, 20; Dawson, Louisiana Governors, 53.
Chapter Four
Economic Problems and Solutions

“It is not as it has been described, and only needs labor to increase production, especially indigo.”

Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga, July 8, 1770

Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga faced three mandates from his predecessor, defend the border, create orderly and loyal citizens and make the colony economically successful. Although the Spanish crown focused its attention on defenses against the growing British presence in the Caribbean, in 1770, it was apparent to Unzaga that he would not be able to comply with the requests for loyalty and defense if he did not correct the economic woes of the colony. Louisiana’s historians have commonly pointed to Unzaga’s use of illegal commerce with the British as the cause of economic recovery. Illegal trade alone, however, did not enable Unzaga to correct the colony’s commerce, nor increase the colony’s treasury, which he had accomplished by the end of his administration.

The following discussion views Louisiana’s economic problems as an extension of the crown’s reforms in Havana and places them within the spectrum of the Bourbon empire. It shows that Unzaga worked steadily within the structure of Spanish government to organize and expand the colonial economy while addressing Louisiana’s pressing domestic problems. During the early 1770s, Unzaga and his superiors in Havana balanced the needs of empire and of their colonists by adopting a policy of observation and quiet resistance to the British advance while focusing on internal economic concerns.


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In Spain, Minister of the Indies Julian Arriaga had warned the Crown, as early as 1764, that the "haughtiness" of the British commanders and governors in the Caribbean left him no assurance that they would honor their peace with the Spaniards, nor abide by Spanish law in the New World.\(^2\) Recent British movements into the Caribbean and growing reports of British ships in Havana threatened Spain's wealthy colonies in Cuba, Cartagena and possibly Mexico.

Bucareli reported to Arriaga that increasing amounts of British ships were "stopping" in Havana and other Caribbean ports for questionable reasons. Despite Spanish mercantilistic laws against trade with foreign ships, in January a British merchant ship was reported to have boldly entered the port of Veracruz, although port officials said they asked it to leave—a few days later and probably after quietly disposing of illegal goods.\(^3\)

This sort of behavior increased in 1770. While the Captain-General constantly decried the open attempts at smuggling in his reports to Spain, he was forced at the same time to aid British ships according to diplomatic necessities. For instance, when a British ship sank in the Colorados, Bucareli sent help, losing a Cuban ship in the process, but saving the British crew and successfully sailing them to Jamaica. He mentioned to the British that it might be appropriate to reimburse the captain of the lost Cuban ship but was

\(^2\)Arriaga to the Conde de Ricla, September 22, 1764, AGI, SD 1194.

\(^3\)Bucareli to Arriaga, February 6, 1770, AGI, SD 1214, Folio 1353.

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Other ships in less distress, or those merely seeking to enter Havana's bay, were rebuffed during the last two years of Bucareli's tenure.

Toward the end of 1770, the pace quickened. Carlos III landed troops from Buenos Aires in the Malvinas (Falklands) and evicted the British from Port Egmont. Diplomatic negotiations ensued to prevent the outbreak of hostilities. Bucareli took to detaining and confiscating illegal ships, British or French, and ordering Spanish officials in New Spain, Louisiana, and elsewhere to follow suit. The only exception was a British merchant ship whose crew had mutinied and whose captain was injured. It took only one evening in port, however, for the Cubans to tend to his wounds, give the crew victuals and send them on their way the next morning. Bucareli would not chance leaving a merchant ship laden with British goods in port. By 1771 with war between Spain and England a distinct possibility, the confiscation of illegal ships increased and in February four British ships were taken because of illicit commerce and their crews returned to the British in Pensacola.

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4 Bucareli to Arriaga, March 9, 1770, AGI, SD 1214, Folio 1353; Bucareli to Arriaga, June 4, 1770, AGI, SD 1214, Folio 1438.

5 Caughey, Bernardo de Gálvez, 44.

6 British ships often stopped and tried to enter Havana, and Bucareli dutifully reported every attempt, for example in both July and October of 1770 he rebuffed a British merchant and a frigate respectively, though he did send a ship out to meet the frigate and retrieve a message. Bucarelli to Arriaga, July 10, 1770, and October 15, 1770, AGI, SD 1214, Folios. 1467 and 1563; reports of British ships captured in illicit commerce from ibid, Bucarelli to Arriaga, August 1, 1770, Folio 1482 (Puerto Príncipe), August 3, 1770, Folio. 1486, November 10, 1770, Folio 1575, January 6, 1771, Folio 1663, February 4, 1771, Folio 1691, and May 10, 1771, Folio 1805. The mutinied ship was reported in Bucarelli to Arriaga, December 8, 1770 and December 9, 1770, ibid, Folios 1628 and 1629.
What really concerned the Captain-General of Havana, however, were financial
difficulties and the rebuilding of Havana. In February of 1770, Bucareli replaced Unzaga
with Don Juan Dabar, Lieutenant Colonel of the Fixed Regiment. He then focused on the
return of O’Reilly and his Louisiana troops who must be housed and fed. There were also
the expected requests for money and aid from Unzaga. Troops began arriving from the
new colony as early as January. O’Reilly himself, arrived in March and set up
housekeeping in Havana in order to gather his papers and report to the king.7

By August, Bucareli received notice that Spanish reinforcements for Louisiana
would also be victualed in Cuba on the way to their new post. Bucareli finally
complained. His finances, never enough in the first place, were now strained to the
breaking point by the affairs in Louisiana. Havana was still rebuilding its defenses and
city from the confrontation of 1762. Additionally, Havana’s commerce had experienced
difficulties under the Bourbon reorganization, especially in the transportation and
packaging of its exports.8

Before the Seven Years War tobacco and hides had been Cuba’s principle revenue
producing goods. The first Bourbon kings had granted Havana commercial monopolies
which helped the economy recover, but the creation of a royal monopoly on tobacco with
its fixed prices and quotas discouraged investment in that crop. By 1770 sugar had
become Cuba’s main export but that also had problems. Cuba, like other Spanish ports

7Bucareli to Arriaga, February 18, 1770 (replacement of Unzaga), and June 6,
1770 of Captain-General O’Reilly and troops, in AGI, SD 1214, Folios 1347 and 1445.

8Bucareli to Arriaga, August 30, 1770, Reservada, AGI, SD 1214, Folio 1529.
suffered from a lack of legal markets and the oppression of the Consulado (merchant monopoly) in Cádiz. Transportation and packaging were made more difficult because the population of Cuba was increasing and with it the consumption of wood used for housing. This usage of Cuba’s limited forests was in direct competition with both the sugar growers who needed wood for shipping boxes and the Royal Navy which reserved large trees for ship masts and spars. The Crown had promised during Ricla’s administration in the late 1760s to aid the Cubans and make concessions for Cuba’s exports if they would consent to higher taxation. The Cubans had accepted higher taxes with the expectation of the crown’s reciprocity.9

During both Ricla’s and Bucareli’s administrations, however, crown concessions had never met Cuban expectations. Royal funds sent to Ricla and O’Reilly to rebuild the military and the militia were reduced during Bucareli’s government and despite the fact that situado funds often reached over 900,000 pesos annually they were never adequate to cover on-going expenses. The Crown also “designated” much of its funding, and situado monies had to be split between the Navy or the port and its expenses, specified amounts used to buy tobacco (a crown monopoly), and “atención de tierra” or the ongoing rebuilding of Havana.10 Lastly, situado funds were sent first to Veracruz for reallocation to Havana and its subsidiaries. The Viceroy of New Spain notoriously siphoned monies from the Caribbean’s situado funds and a frustrated Bucareli told O’Reilly, that “The debts increase and the creditors clamor . . . The Viceroy (Carlos Keuthe, Cuba 1753-1815. 53-54.

10AGI, Cuba 149-A, Folios 20, 22, and 29.
Francisco de Croix) does not dare address me on the matter, and is content with informing
the Intendant that on this occasion he can send nothing... The funds which arrive do not
cover loans and troops and salaries... My letters to the Viceroy are pathetic."11

To make matters worse, the Kings’ latest mercantilistic rules made Louisiana more
dependent on Havana as an outlet for her commercial goods and Unzaga frequently wrote
to Bucareli asking for extra money or aid with the colony’s failing economy. The added
strain of Louisiana, its revolt, and now its commercial exigencies led Bucareli to ask
Arriaga to inform the king that he (Bucareli) could no longer command the island
“efficiently” on the funds allotted, saying:

I’ve been the head of government for five years and the same
number [of years] I have suffered the continuous lack of funds and lack
the spirit to endure the pressure of not doing my duty as we agreed. All
this has injured my health to the point of wishing that the pity of the king
would take me from this command and return me to Spain to finish my
duties as a soldier of his Majesty.12

Poor Bucareli did not go home as he entreated, instead the King rewarded his “untiring
efforts” to the crown by appointing him Viceroy of New Spain in 1771.

While Havana wrestled with its financial problems, Luis de Unzaga, the new
governor of Louisiana, took stock of his surroundings. As military and political
commander of the new colony, for the first time in his career Unzaga was no longer
second in command. He settled into government housing with his servants (slaves brought

11Bucareli to O’Reilly, August 30, 1770, in Bernard Bobb, The Viceregency of
Antonio Maria Bucareli in New Spain 1771-1779, The Texas Pan-American Series,

12Bucareli to Arriaga, August 30, 1770, Reservada, AGI, SD 1214, Folio 1529.
from Havana), and pondered O’Reilly’s orders to keep the unruly colonists subservient to his majesty and Spain, to make the colony profitable to Spain and to defend the “Barrera” as historian Gilbert Din calls the Louisiana borderlands.\(^\text{13}\)

Loyalty alone would be a difficult task as Unzaga later confided to Arriaga:

“... although this is a Spanish province... I cannot flatter His Majesty so much to say that the people have ceased to be French at heart, and that in them is not to be found the spirit of independence which causes resistance to oppressive laws.”\(^\text{14}\) The oppression seemed to come from the same O’Reilly’s insistence on adhering to Spanish mercantilistic laws. The governor decided to assess the problem among his citizens by socializing with prominent members of the community.

Compared to Havana, New Orleans must have seemed to Unzaga like the backwater of empire it has often been called. Settled in a place that flooded regularly, the city was often filled with mud despite the levee built in 1729. Less than five-hundred houses sprawled only four streets back from the river. Most were one story affairs, made of colombage (brick between wooden posts and sometimes stuffed with mud and moss), built on posts approximately eight feet above the ground as flood insurance and enhance with kitchen gardens and fruit trees. The homes themselves were in a sorry state of

\(^\text{13}\)Din, “Protecting the ‘Barrera’”, 184.

\(^\text{14}\)Unzaga to Arraiga, September 12, 1773, in Fortier, History of Louisiana, 15.
disrepair caused by the shortage of money and drop in real estate value after the Seven Years War.\textsuperscript{15}

Down river from Unzaga's quarters a casa capitular was under construction to house Louisiana's new Cabildo. In the center of town stood the ruined remains of St. Louis church which had rotted in the sweltering city to the point where church services were being held in one of the local warehouses. The ubiquitous dampness ruined even brick buildings like the Capuchin monastery and often made fortifications a mockery, rotting wooden palisades and rusting the iron and brass weaponry. Only the guardhouses and the jail had escaped destruction. The wooden palisades and shallow ditch which served as a moat must have appeared a joke compared to the stone towers of Morro Castle and paved plazas in Cuba. The actual doors of the fort would have been useless in a real attack because one of the French matrons had built a smaller door into the gates so that she could reach her garden outside the palisades more easily. Thus, the fort around New Orleans did little other than deter the local Indians. Regardless of the city's problems Unzaga was a prudent and patient man who desired to make Spain's "experiment" in Louisiana function effectively\textsuperscript{16}


\textsuperscript{16}Din, Cabildo, 5; Pittman, \textit{Present State of Settlement}, 11-12; The matron in question was Madam Rochemore, the wife of an \textit{Ordonnateur}, who often defined French military and political authorities to get her way. For more on Madam Rochemore see 68
In the busy city streets he noticed a complex population of French, Canadian, German, Swiss, Creole, African and Indian descent. According to O’Reilly’s census, in 1769 the city contained some eighteen-hundred white homeowners, businessmen and laborers (Creoles and Europeans), juxtaposed to approximately eleven-hundred slaves (black and mulatto). Less than one-hundred free persons of color ran shops and provided skilled labor for the city’s inhabitants. Slaves and free people of color lined the streets with small open-air markets and had coopted a small market (previously Indian), located along Bayou St. John. They also manned the famous Congo Market behind the city where under the Spanish principle of *coartación* many slaves worked to sell excess produce and acquire money to buy their freedom.

Unlike the many other Latin America’s colonies, however, Indian slaves (sixty-one in the census) were a minority among the workers. In keeping with the Crown’s policies O’Reilly had outlawed future Indian slavery but had not removed those already in servitude. There were also the men (coming and going) who formed the infantry battalion, small groups of sailors who frequented the city, and of course, foreign merchants—despite their illegal presence. At the time New Orleans supported at least a quarter of the colony’s whole population.17

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Life in New Orleans was frequently "hot and tiring." There was little for the elite to do. There were no theaters, operas or local museums to attend. The first theater company wasn't created until just after the Seven Years War. Many of the town's citizens were not particularly literate. To quote Gilbert Din, "colonial New Orleanians suffered from boredom because of isolation and ignorance." Public schools did not exist and the Ursaline convent only "educated" young women. Although some private libraries existed there were no booksellers in the city and the first newspaper wasn't printed until 1794. Indeed, entertainments were few and far between, consisting of dances and dinner parties at wealthier homes, visits to neighbors, picnics along the river, gossiping, drinking, fighting and visits to the city's brothels. As Unzaga took office, taverns, billiard parlors, and even lemonade stands sold alcoholic drinks to help citizens "forget" the dirt and heat. Even trials and public hangings were considered entertainment.18

Local Indians occasionally created a popular diversion in the town's "Communes de la Ville" (or Congo Plains) with games similar to Lacross which the French called *raquettes*, and various dances. Sometimes even their public drunkenness supplied a

spectacle. Slaves also broke the monotony of long hot evenings with songs and dances in Congo Square, many of which worked their way into Louisiana’s folksongs.\(^{19}\)

Despite its hardships many women fought to build “townhouses” in the city as it was more tolerable than the boredom of the plantations around New Orleans. After the last harvest of the year whole families “removed” themselves to the city for the winter until they had to return for Spring planting. There they entertained each other with dinner parties and balls. The local gentry were happy to wine and dine their new governor, which offered them an opportunity to air their grievances. These discussions were often spearheaded by the prominent Gilbert Antoine de St. Maxent whom Unzaga had met earlier with captain-general O’Reilly.\(^{20}\)

The colonists most immediate concern was the failing economy. The necessity of economic revitalization, however, made the application of O’Reilly’s instructions all the more difficult. It became obvious to Unzaga that defense rested upon loyalty and colonial prosperity was the first step toward converting the colonists into loyal Spanish citizens. This posed a knotty problem because the crisis in the Malvinas had worsened Louisiana’s economic crisis by forcing governor Unzaga to apply his limited capital to the colony’s security. Spain’s belief that the closeness of the British would make Louisiana’s defense


\(^{20}\) Between 1762 and 1763 a local plantation wife, Madame Pradel built a house in New Orleans which she frequented more than her real home. King, New Orleans, 168-169.
expenditures a problem had been anticipated by Secretary Miguel de Muzquiz in 1769 who maintained that to preserve Louisiana Spain would have to expend up to 300,000 pesos annually.\textsuperscript{21} The real figures worked out to approximately $87,500 +$ pesos per year until the end of the Spanish occupation, somewhat less than Unzaga's situado, but never enough.\textsuperscript{22}

Undermanned and underfunded, Unzaga informed Grimaldi in Spain that he could not defend the colony in its present condition, especially since in June a thousand British troops had arrived to reinforce Pensacola. Grimaldi could only send a small contingent of one-hundred soldiers and equipment to fortify the colony. Realizing Unzaga's untenable condition, he counseled the governor to defend himself with the militia, and retreat if the situation grew worse. He also sent secret orders to Unzaga to maintain a strict surveillance of all British movements in the area. Unzaga, like Bucareli in Havana, continued a quiet vigilance while focusing on more pressing economic concerns.\textsuperscript{23}

Unzaga faced another conundrum in trying to revive Louisiana's commerce. He must abide by the crown's restrictive commercial reforms and mercantilistic policy which disallowed foreign commerce in Spanish ports, while at the same time fostering trade between New Orleans and Havana. Even O'Reilly, had pragmatically tempered his own orders regarding foreign merchants, allowing Oliver Pollock, an Englishman, to sell flour

\textsuperscript{21}Moore, Revolt in Louisiana, 190.


\textsuperscript{23}O'Reilly to Grimaldi, June 8, 1770, AGI SD, 2543; O'Reilly to Grimaldi, September 30, 1770, ibid; Grimaldi to Unzaga, October 24, 1770, ibid.

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in New Orleans because it was desperately needed and the man's prices were reasonable. The captain-general had also modified the Crown's laws by allowing five ships from Louisiana to trade with their traditional markets in the French West Indies until he could notify the king. These moderations, O'Reilly had felt, would at least leave the colonial economy viable until it profited from trade within the Bourbon reforms.24

King Carlos III, however, intended to enrich Spain under his reforms, not the colonies. The reforms restricted colonial trade to Spain and a few choice ports, continued crown monopolies and favored exporters in larger cities with ties to the Spanish merchant class. Louisiana found no advantage in trade with the new metropole. The colony exported, in order of importance: indigo, tobacco, lumber and furs. Spain required neither furs nor lumber and her markets were flooded with the preferred Guatemalan indigo. Tobacco was the colony’s second most import money maker, but Havana held a monopoly on the tobacco trade with the crown. In April of 1770, O’Reilly had further injured Louisiana’s trade when he banned shipments of tobacco to Havana because it was of “inferior quality and its introduction to [the] island [of Cuba] would have grave consequences.”25

Despite these problems, Unzaga and his merchants struggled to avoid the impending economic disaster and abide by the new reforms. Trade with Havana, however,

24Clark, New Orleans, 174.

25The merchants in Havana were afraid the mixing Louisiana’s tobacco with Havana’s would lessen the desirability and the price of their product on the Spanish market. O’Reilly to Unzaga, April 3, 1770, Dispatches; Clark, New Orleans, 176; Usner, Indians, Settlers & Slaves, 117.
did not help the situation and often exacerbated it. Merchants who risked such trade reaped little or no profit. They often netted losses of up to ten percent in Cuba and sometimes up to twenty-five percent when they tried to re-sell Cuban goods in New Orleans. Havana desperately needed lumber for building material and for the sugar industry but expected to pay low prices for lumber shipped across a dangerous patch of water and refused to entertain ideas of raising prices because of the cost to New Orleans merchants. There was also little to do if a boat and its cargo were lost at sea. For example, one letter from Bucareli to Arriaga tells the sad tale of a French Balandra carrying boards and tar lost on the coast of Cuba in February of 1771 on its way to Gaurico. Sales of indigo also fared poorly and at least one shipment was sold at a loss. There seemed little good about the trade with Havana.26

Loss of capital, goods and ships continued into 1771 and discouraged the production within the normal export economy, at the same time encouraging merchants to seek other avenues of trade, including those that were illegal. Economic historian John G. Clark indicates that the years 1770 to 1771 were the worst years New Orleans merchants experienced during peace time. Things couldn’t seem to be any worse until New Orleans received a copy of the Royal Cedula, dated January 26, 1770, which extinguished what little faith the colonists and Unzaga held in the benefits of Spain’s Bourbon Reforms.27

26Clark, New Orleans, 174; Bucareli to Arriaga, December 10, 1770 and February 7, 1771, AGI, SD 1214 Folio 1640 shows the boat stopping in Cuba and Folio 1711 tells Arriaga of the shipwreck.

27Paul E. Hoffman, Louisiana, 118; Clark, New Orleans, 176.
This latest Cedula denied Louisiana O’Reilly’s special allowance for licensed trade with French islands in the West Indies or with any other Spanish colonies. Unzaga met with the Cabildo and encouraged them to petition the king. Although O’Reilly had abolished the Superior Council which consisted mainly of members from the planter and merchant class, many of the same people now sat in the Cabildo. The Cedula threatened their business and their lifestyle. In July of 1770 the Cabildo had asked the King to lift the commercial restrictions on trade with the French West Indies, resolving to live with the rest of his restrictions. Madrid responded with a refusal in June of 1771. By November the Cabildo tried again to reason with the monarchy. The merchants’ requests outlined their difficulties by comparing the benefits of Louisiana’s traditional trade patterns against the collapse of the economy in 1768 and again in 1770. They clearly stated that restoration of trade with the French West Indies was the only alternative to the growth in illegal trade with the British. Despite O’Reilly’s ouster of British merchants residing in and doing business in New Orleans, the Mississippi was open to traffic by British ships and their merchants, who began to reappear along the Mississippi in 1770. Their only competition in Louisiana had been the French West Indies. Once Spain rendered such trade illegal the British were once again practicing a vigorous trade. The Crown still responded negatively.

As the Cabildo struggled with the King’s reforms, their governor realized that the solution to Louisiana’s economic disaster might lie with the British rather than with Spain.

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28Din, Cabildo, 59-61.

29Ibid, 167; Caughey, Bernardo de Gálvez, 50; Hoffman, Louisiana, 118-119.
It was a hard choice because continuation of the old “illegal” trade at places like Manchac actually helped depress legal commerce. But something had to be done, trade continued to drop throughout 1771 and treasury reports show that “official” trade in the colony, including British ships, dropped severely. The number of ships passing through the fort at Balize dropped from 144 in 1770 to 97 by 1771.\textsuperscript{30} Interestingly, Unzaga was not alone in his fight. The years 1770 and 1771 show a general depression in commerce in the Caribbean. Louisiana's drop in shipping is matched by declines in the value and number of “embarkations” in such ports as Caracas, Maracaibo and Cumaná and some ports in Spain like Barcelona. Ironically, the shipping at the monopoly ports of La Coruña and Cádiz increased.\textsuperscript{31}

Shipping between Havana and New Orleans, unfortunately, did not increase substantially during Unzaga's administration. After the hard years of 1770-1771 it looked as though commerce might improve. The following year ships from New Orleans accounted for 22 of the 158 ships entering and 22 again of those leaving, but as shipping at Havana increased commerce from New Orleans did not follow (See Table 5). It must be pointed out, however, that it didn't decrease appreciably either.

Another important point is that within the Caribbean New Orleans “entradas” into Havana were not that far below other ports. For instance, during 1772 ships from New Orleans only equaled 22 out of 158, but Campeche only sent 14 ships, Cartagena de Indias

\textsuperscript{30}Hoffman, \textit{Luisiana}, 122.

sent 6 ships, and even Veracruz, the main port for New Spain sent a scant 31 ships including those for mail, silver and the slave trade (See Appendix 2). Veracruz was also a rallying point for items from other parts of the Empire before going to Havana which would have increased the amount of trade going to Havana. A better comparative figure is 22 ships returning to New Orleans compared to 14 to Veracruz (See Table 6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Ships Entering Havana</th>
<th>Total Ships Leaving Havana</th>
<th>New Orleans Ships Entering</th>
<th>New Orleans Ships Leaving</th>
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<td>158</td>
<td>166</td>
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<td>131</td>
<td>106</td>
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<tr>
<td>1776</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
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Sources: Shipping figures from AGI, Cuba 1216, Folio 277; ibid 1217, Folios 305, 347, and 437; ibid 1219, Folios 594, 603, 623, 636, 659, 674, 698, 719, 733, 760, 779 and 807; ibid 1220, Folios 829, 844, 865, 876, 892, 912, and 959; ibid 1221, Folios 977, 995, 1014, 1046, 1059, 1096, 1118, 1155, 1198, 1216 and 1259.

32These figures are lower because the records from February to May are missing from the Legajos.
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<th>Port</th>
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<th>Exits</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barcelona</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barlovento</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>Cádiz</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartagena</td>
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<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santo Domingo</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampico</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veracruz</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: AGI, Cuba 1216, Folios 277 and Legajo 1217, No. 305

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33 Includes a flota and troop transports (only three ships)

34 Ships from La Coruña to Havana carried the mail but also harina (flour) while the majority of the ships leaving Havana for La Coruña only carried mail, with the exception of an occasional troop transport.
Spain's trade with her colonies in Latin America still dominated shipping in Havana (especially that from Cádiz and La Coruña) as was expected under mercantilistic law and definitely under the Bourbon reforms (See Table 6). In perspective, shipping figures through the port of Havana show that New Orleans did not have the lowest amount of shipping moving through Havana. New Orleans was second only to Veracruz in New Spain which frequently transported mail, troops and silver. The problem with Louisiana's commerce was her products, not the amount of shipping allowed by the crown.\footnote{AGI Cuba 1216, 1217, 1219, 1220, and 1221. See Table 6 for specific folio numbers.}

It was obvious that trade with Havana had little benefit for Unzaga's colonists at the moment and that their products would never be sold in the metropole. He could not offset the trade deficit by buying goods and storing them to help the prices or by using funds from the royal treasury. Louisiana's treasury was one of the smallest in the Caribbean, even by 1775, only the tiny frontier port of Cumaná received less in situado funds (See Table 7). As stated before, Situado monies were forwarded to Veracruz, then portioned out by the Viceroy, parcelled out to the Captain-General in Cuba and finally to the rest of the Caribbean. Because of this formality, the money frequently arrived late (sometimes months after it was sent to Havana) and was always just barely enough. After funding O'Reilly's expenses to quell the rebels, the Spanish crown (as it had in Cuba)
lowered Louisiana’s *situado* expenses to 120,000 pesos annually and again on Viceroy Bucareli’s advice in 1773 to a little over 115,000 pesos per year (see Table 7).36

Unzaga, furthermore, did not want to use government funding to assuage the pains of the colonial economy as it was also his duty to build the government’s treasury in the same manner that he was charged with restoring the economy. Another way must be found to promote commerce.

The governor began his development by trying to improve Louisiana’s foundering tobacco industry. To do this he requested aid from New Spain’s viceroy, the Marquis de Croix (Bucareli did not arrive until late 1771). In November of 1771 the Viceroy sent the governor ten-thousand pesos fuentas (a special *situado*) to buy raw tobacco for the royal government under the newly formed Renta de Tabaco, a royal monopoly formed by José de Gálvez. Unzaga then had his colonists gather all the tobacco possible (some 98,000 pounds) and send it to Nachitoches to be shipped aboard the *El Santo Cristo de San Romas* to the port of Veracruz.37 The Crown sent its immediate approval of Unzaga’s actions but Unzaga’s victory was short lived. No additional requests for tobacco came from New Spain until the end of his administration.38

36 AGI Cuba, Legajo 149-A, numbers 20, 22 and 29-Marqués de Croix to Unzaga; and 35, 62, 65-66, 67, 7071, 72-72, 74, and 76 Bucareli to Unzaga, and AGI Cuba 1219 Bucareli to Arriaga, June 3, 1774, no. 661.


Table 7

Situados for Louisiana 1771-1776

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 4, 1771 to 3, 1772</td>
<td>Marqués de Croix to Havana 4 February 1771</td>
<td>120,000 pesos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Havana to Louisiana 16 April 1771</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>120,000 pesos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 4, 1772 to 3, 1773</td>
<td>Bucareli to Havana 10 April 1772</td>
<td>120,000 pesos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arrived Louisiana 11 July 1772</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 4, 1773 to 3, 1774</td>
<td>Bucareli to Havana 31 March 1773</td>
<td>115,722 pesos, 6 tominos, 3 granos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reached Havana 31 July 1773</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arrived Louisiana 27 August 1773</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In Moneda Menuda del Nuevo Cuño</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>En la de 4 rrs (quarros?) 1,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>En la de 2 rrs (doses) 4,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>En la de 1 rrs (reales) 300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>En la de ½ rrs (medios) 1,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>total</td>
<td>6,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 4, 1774 to 3, 1775</td>
<td>Bucareli to Havana 13 Abril 1774</td>
<td>115,322 pesos, 5 tominos, 9 granos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In Moneda Menuda del Nuevo Cuño</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>En la de Doses 4,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>En la de Reales 1,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>En la de Medios 1,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>total</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 4, 1775 to 3, 1776</td>
<td>Bucareli to Havana 27 March 1775</td>
<td>115,722 pesos, 6 tominos, 8 granos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In Moneda Menuda del Nuevo Cuño</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>En la de Doses 4,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>En la de Reales 4,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>En la de Medios 1,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>total</td>
<td>9,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued Following Page

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39 Includes 1,230 pesos for widow Doña Francisca Cullange de Villemont who wasn't receiving her husband's pay.

40 Bucareli noted that this was the amount believed necessary to support the colony.
**Attached Treasurer's report for 1775 (Table 7 Cont'd)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contadura General de el Exercito y Provincia de la Luisiana</th>
<th>Pesos y Reales de Plata</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Account of the monies and expenditures up to September of 1775</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-On the account formed due to the corte de cajas and the additions applied by the treasurer Don Bernardo de Otero on the 4th of May of this year, resulting in an existing</td>
<td>132,605.7.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Entered into the caja from then on for the situado for Oct/75 to Oct/76</td>
<td>115,722.6.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Item of the product of others</td>
<td>1,358.0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>249,686.6.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spent from the 4th of May until now: 24,367.2.28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We suppose we’ll spend from now until end of September</td>
<td>29,095.2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>53,458.5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diferencia</td>
<td>-53,458.5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaxa (Minus)</td>
<td>196,228.5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money set aside for the residencia of the governor (like a deposit)</td>
<td>3,000.0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There should exist:</td>
<td>193,0228.1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Plus the situado for one year:</td>
<td>115,322.5.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less obligations assigned to said situado</td>
<td>-123,569.5.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New jobs</td>
<td>5,908.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other expenses</td>
<td>750.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unforseen expenses</td>
<td>1,585.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resulting in the following in one year of</td>
<td>-8,243.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>69,662.3.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**October 4, 1776 to October 3, 1777**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bucareli to Havana 17 January 1776</th>
<th>115,322.5.9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moneda menuda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>En la de Doses</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>En la de Reales</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>En la de Medios</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Marqués de Croix to Unzaga, AGI, Cuba 149-A, Folios 20, 22, and 29; 76-Bucareli to Unzaga, ibid, Folios 35, 62, 65-66, 67, 70-71, 72-73, 74
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Havana</td>
<td>Por Cuenta de las atenciones de tierra</td>
<td>300 000..</td>
<td>910.000.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Por Cuenta para las de Marina</td>
<td>300 000..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Por Cuenta de la consignación para compra de tabacos</td>
<td>310 000..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santo</td>
<td>Por su situado que cumple en fin de Abril</td>
<td>194 457.3.5</td>
<td>247.474.6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domingo</td>
<td>Para comprar tabacos</td>
<td>250 000..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Para Pago del 6% a la Guarnición</td>
<td>250 682.1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Para la satisfacción de otro 6% al Vecindario</td>
<td>1 835.2.3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Para la casa cuna</td>
<td>500.000..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>Por su situado de todo el año antecedente</td>
<td>278 857.7.6</td>
<td>487.858.7.11½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Por la consignación anual para obras de fortificación</td>
<td>100 000..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Por la consign. Para el propio efecto</td>
<td>50 000..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Para la extinción de lo que se dijo de Embiar en el año del 1770</td>
<td>58 001.0.5½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Por la limnosa concedad por una vez al convento de Carmelitos</td>
<td>1 000.0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumaná</td>
<td>Por el situado correspondemement a toda el año anterior</td>
<td>40.235.5.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>Por un año de situado que empieza en 4 de Oct del corriente</td>
<td>115.722.2.1½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,801.292.2.1½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** In this quantity is included 300,000 pesos en *Moneda menuda* with the following distributuion:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dolores</th>
<th>Reales</th>
<th>Medios</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Havana</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atenciones de tierra</td>
<td>50 000..</td>
<td>7 000..</td>
<td>6 000..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Para las de Marina</td>
<td>50 000..</td>
<td>7 000..</td>
<td>6 000..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Para Tabacos</td>
<td>60 000..</td>
<td>10 000..</td>
<td>7 000..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santo Domingo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32 000..</td>
<td>10 000..</td>
<td>8 000..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 000..</td>
<td>6 000..</td>
<td>4 000..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumaná</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 000..</td>
<td>3 000..</td>
<td>1 000..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 000..</td>
<td>4 000..</td>
<td>1 000..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>220 000..</td>
<td>47 000..</td>
<td>33 000..</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Bucareli to Arriaga AGI, Cuba 1219, Folio 661
The lack of follow-up orders from New Spain is unexplained, but had there been Louisiana might not have been able to meet them because of labor shortages. While it required less slave labor than indigo, to grow tobacco in large amounts one needed more labor, either vagrants or slaves.\footnote{Clark, New Orleans, 186.} French Louisiana’s planters who had enough wealth to maintain large amounts of expensive African slaves, usually produced indigo. Furthermore, Louisiana’s depressed economy had already begun to drive out many merchants and planters. The shortage of labor, then, slowed the production.

Prior to the Spanish period tobacco was grown primarily north of Lake Pontchartrain. In 1770, at Unzaga’s urging, settlers began expanding tobacco production in Natchitoches, Opelousas, Pointe Coupée and Attakapas. By then these settlements had over thirteen-hundred and fifty people, having been increased by a number of Acadian refugees who arrived in 1765 and 1770.\footnote{In Usner, Indians, Settlers & Slaves, 119-120: Ulloa reported that they could not cultivate indigo or tobacco without slaves and would never get beyond producing “wood, indigo of very poor quality, and tobacco in small quantities and of ordinary quality.”; Coutts, “Boom and Bust,” 292-295: This is even clearer in the late 1770s and 1780s when Louisiana was unable to keep up with New Spain’s demands despite financial assistance from the Crown, Martin Navarro to José de Gálvez, September 12, 1782, Informe 127, AGI, SD 2633, Folios 219-222.} Still, the production of tobacco expanded slowly.

Part of the slowness was due to the fact that it was far more lucrative for the planters to sell smaller harvests to British merchants for higher prices. In July of 1770, merchant John Fitzpatrick in Manchac (the heart of smuggling territory), wrote to his dealers in Mobile that he had Natchitoches tobacco for sale and that they should hold on

\footnote{Clark, New Orleans, 186.}

\footnote{In Usner, Indians, Settlers & Slaves, 119-120: Ulloa reported that they could not cultivate indigo or tobacco without slaves and would never get beyond producing “wood, indigo of very poor quality, and tobacco in small quantities and of ordinary quality.”; Coutts, “Boom and Bust,” 292-295: This is even clearer in the late 1770s and 1780s when Louisiana was unable to keep up with New Spain’s demands despite financial assistance from the Crown, Martin Navarro to José de Gálvez, September 12, 1782, Informe 127, AGI, SD 2633, Folios 219-222.}
to their own tobacco because New Spain’s viceroy had purchased the rest of Louisiana’s stock. If they would just hold on to what they had, he said, in a few months the product would become scarcer and even more valuable. In August he observed that his predictions had been correct and the planters at Point Coupée had grown only enough for personal consumption. By 1773 he had run completely out of tobacco and had to send to New Orleans to his distributors.43

Another problem that both New Spain and Louisiana faced was transportation and packaging. Although it might be shipped out of Natchitoches to Veracruz with relative ease, the tobacco then had to be hauled overland to factory warehouses in New Spain. Louisiana normally shipped its tobacco in large containers which made land transportation difficult. Only planters with larger labor forces could afford to transform the leaf tobacco into the andullos or rolls commonly used in Havana and easily turned into cigarros in New Spain. Most of the tobacco producers in Louisiana, however, used vagrants to harvest tobacco and so used the easier method of pressing tobacco into toneles or hogsheads. The labor and packaging problem made transportation harder and also made the process of creating cigarros more difficult. Both of these issues had to be settled before the tobacco trade could flourish.44

43John Fitzpatrick to McGillvray and Struthers, July 23, 1770, Fitzpatrick to Peter Swanson August 30, 1770, October 31, 1770 and June 30, 1773, Dalrymple, Letterbooks, 90, 94 and 97, 152.

44Informe, Martin Navarro to José de Gálvez, September 12, 1782, AGI, SD 2633, Folios 219-222.
Unfortunately between 1772 and 1773 Louisiana experienced a hard winter followed by a severe hurricane. The hurricane was the last straw for many French merchants and planters and they left the colony in droves during 1773.45 The planters who stayed had to settle both the transportation and production issues before the tobacco trade could flourish. It never did during Unzaga’s tenure. By 1779 there were only 138,808 pounds of tobacco available for Veracruz because of trade with the British, poor labor and transportation.46

The governor's work was not totally in vain. He did stir growth in Louisiana’s tobacco industry. As he left office New Spain forwarded another request for tobacco and royal contracts to assist Louisiana’s growers. Spain also officially opened trade between Louisiana with its traditional markets in France and the French West Indies. Spanish officials had been impressed by British production of tobacco in the Natchez area of British West Florida during the 1770s. With Royal subsidies and a flood of new orders, Louisiana actually experienced an economic “boom” in the tobacco trade in the 1780s. It was not to last. Within the decade Seville built-up a surplus of the leaf. The Crown followed by lowering production limits and limited all future shipments from Louisiana. The surplus in Seville created a glut in New Spain’s market, and the Viceroy quickly set ceilings on tobacco importations in the 1790s. For Louisiana, the results were disastrous. Many planters had purchased slaves and land as they speculated on the tobacco trade.

45 Archives Nationales, Paris, France, Archives des Colonies, Louisiana: General Correspondence, C 13A.

Most of them were bankrupted by the new limits on production. Few had little choice but to return to frontier economies and illicit trade with the British.47

Disappointed with the results of his tobacco “experiment” Unzaga focused on Louisiana’s other exports. Indigo would not bring money to Louisiana. It cost too much to produce and other Latin American colonies produced a better product for the money. In fact, the governor and his officials (treasurer Martín Navarro in particular) tried to steer their colonists away from indigo production toward other products. The colonists didn’t agree and did not diversify their agriculture markedly during the 1770s. Unzaga would have to find other products to enhance the failing economy.

The governor considered the fur trade briefly. Furs had been a mainstay of French Louisiana’s economy. Trappers funnelled their trade from the hinterlands in the southeast and the northern Mississippi Valley, along the various rivers that fed the Mississippi and down the great waterway to New Orleans. By the time Unzaga took office, unfortunately, the fur trade had been disrupted by population growth on the eastern bank of the Mississippi and war. Traditionally, the majority of the furs came from rich riverine areas of the southeast and the primary trappers had been the southeastern tribes. Boundary changes during the Seven Years War had disturbed the normal hunting and trapping areas along the rivers. The English had changed the balance of trade, disturbing some areas with settlement and pushing one tribe against another.48

47 Coutts, “Boom and Bust,” 293-309; Clark, New Orleans, 184.

Tensions between the Spanish and English along the new boundary of the Mississippi also disrupted the normal markets. French fur traders and Indians alike turned to the incoming English colonists making their way across the country west of the Alleghenies and into the Mississippi river valley for profits. New Orleans now competed with English Indian agents and settlers for furs. This might have been a larger problem had Unzaga really needed commerce in the product, but Spain did not need furs, neither did any of the legal ports open to New Orleans.49

In 1772 Unzaga decided that lumber and naval stores might be the real answers to his colony's commerce. Louisiana produced forests of oak and cypress and other wood useful for building. Like the neighboring colony of Florida, it also contained large stands of pitch-pine which produced tar, resin, pitch and turpentine used in shipbuilding and repairs. Naval stores had never been a profitable industry in Louisiana. The French crown had frowned upon the quality of Louisiana's tar and refused to pay for shipments until they reached France. The colonial government had taken to paying at least half the price of such shipments to guarantee their merchants at least some return on their investments. Toward the end of the French period naval stores continued to be shipped along with agricultural products, furs and wood but financially they accounted for just over one percent of the total monies received.50

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49 Clark, New Orleans, 185.


88
The merchants’ anxiety had not diminished when Spain took control of the colony. Part of the protest against Ulloa had been an argument that Cuban pitch and tar produced on the Isle of Pines would ruin Louisiana’s trade.\footnote{Memorial of Merchants and Planters of Louisiana on the Events of October 29, 1768, in B. F. French, ed., Historical Collections of Louisiana, Embracing Translations of Many Rare and Valuable Documents Relating to the Natural Civil and Political History of that State 5 vols. (New York, 1853), 5: 221, 228.} O’Reilly assured the merchants he would help them and expeditions into the colony’s interior showed the potential of Louisiana’s untapped forest resources.\footnote{O’Reilly to Arriaga, October 17, 1769, in Kinnard, SMV, 1:13-104 and the report of Nugent and Kelly, January of 1770 in AGI, Cuba 81.} Merchant fears were realized when, during Unzaga’s administration, naval stores continued to be a low income item.

New Orleans had additional competition from the governor of Florida who asked the Spanish government to subsidize his industry to furnish naval stores for the Havana Company in Cuba.\footnote{Jack D. L. Holmes, “Naval Stores in Colonial Louisiana and the Floridas,” Louisiana History, (Winter, 1968), 303; and John Jay TePaske, The Governorship of Spanish Florida, 1700-1763 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1964) 106.} That made matters worse because Florida was closer to Cuba and could undersell New Orleans’ tar and pitch. The Spanish government, furthermore, never sought to actually subsidize naval stores as a commercial export in either colony until the 1780s.\footnote{Jack D. L. Holmes, “Naval Stores,” 304.}

Because the naval stores industry appeared only so promising, Unzaga tried create a new timber industry, of sawmills, shipyards and cut boards for the Havana market. Louisiana’s cypress was in demand because of the wood’s strength, availability and ability
to withstand the weather. Many French planters used cypress for their homes because of its longevity. The governor was also aware of the success of men like Richard Carpenter, William Dunbar and James Brown in British Natchez who had made a profit of lumber through making staves for delivery. In 1771 Dunbar had already produced 100,000 staves for market.\textsuperscript{55}

Unzaga began his attempts at subsidizing the colony's timber industry through Havana. Correspondence between the governor and the new Captain-General of Cuba, the Marquis de la Torre, indicates that Spanish officials were willing to contract with Louisiana business men to transport cut lumber to Havana. This would ease the tension between Cuba's sugar producers and the royal navy over wood for boxes to transport sugar.\textsuperscript{56}

The scheme was shared with several of Louisiana's prominent citizens, planter Santiago Beauregard, his son Luis Toutant Beauregard, and Santiago's brother Bartolomé Toutant Beauregard. Prior to Unzaga's agreement with de la Torre, Santiago had begun to prepare for a new venture. In August of the previous year he had mortgaged his property, slaves, livestock and household goods to a friend and business associate, Francisco Pascale de Le Barre for 9,200 pesos over a three year period. Five thousand pesos of the mortgage was to be paid to Beauregard in the form of wood which Beauregard would use to complete his ship. It is not clear in the notarial records if de La

\textsuperscript{55}Clark, \textit{New Orleans}, 184-185.

\textsuperscript{56}Marquis de la Torre to Unzaga, September 26, 1772, \textit{Dispatches}; Unzaga to Toree, October 14, 1772, ibid.
Barre was also helping him build the ship or not. Santiago apparently was setting up to transport his own goods and others rather than stay a planter. In the same month he also sold his slaves in return for goods he could sell, rather than money.57

Poor weather and bad harvests forced de La Barre to resell the land to Beauregard in December of the next year, but Santiago was convinced he could make the timber/merchant business work and leased the land to de Le Barre for 800 pesos per year. That same month Unzaga completed his arrangements with the Captain-General in Cuba and Santiago sent his brother, Bartolomé, to Havana with power of attorney to represent him in contractual arrangements to ship planks for sugar boxes. He also gave Bartolomé the right to mortgage his (Santiago’s) house and property in New Orleans for up to 20,000 pesos if needed. According to the contract between Bartolome and the “gentlemen owners of sugar mills near Havana,” he mortgaged Santiago’s New Orleans’ home (a 10-room house on Royal and St. Anne streets), and 21 blacks (slaves) who worked in Santiago’s “ingenio [sugar mill] in Chapitulas.” By June 25, 1773 the Beauregards and Habañeros had struck a deal.58

57New Orleans Notarial Archives (hereinafter called Notarial Archivess), Juan Bautista Garic, Notary, Acts January-December 1771, Sale of Land to de Le Barre, August 16, 1771; sale of female slave to Don Jan Anoul for 250 pesos to be paid in quintals of “clean cotton with no seeds” at 15 pesos per quintal, August, 1771.

58Notarial Archives, Juan Bautista Garic, Notary, Acts January-December 1772, Resale of land and consequent lease of same to Francisco Pascalis de Le Barre and wife December 29, 1772, Power of Attorney to Bartolome on December 30, 1772, and in Acts January-December 1773, Juan Bautista Garic, Notary, the contract between the Beauregards and sugar producers in Havana, June 25, 1773.
Unzaga’s work and his colonists labor seemed to work. In 1773 four ships carried half of the colony’s commerce with Havana in the form of wood for sugar boxes. By September, an excited Santiago contracted with a friend, Juan Villanova, to build a saw mill, placing Juan in charge of the mill’s operations. Again Santiago put up some thirteen arpents of land, slaves, and tools as his portion of the contract. The contract is replete with the hopes Beauregard and Villanova had for their new venture and it reads “may we never cheat each other, may our children never cheat each other, and may we both work diligently.”59 By 1774 Beauregard began to buy and sell properties to expand the mill and free up cash.60

Within a year, however, Cuban sugar planters began to complain that they didn’t want to have to build their own boxes. Instead, wrote de la Torre, they want to receive pre-made boxes so that all they have to do is fill them with sugar and send them on their way to Europe.61 Other planters contracted with Beauregard to carry not only wood, but pre-made boxes. A single contract, with Don Francisco de Levy and Don Juan Baptiste,

59 Notarial Archives, Juan Bautista Garic, January-December, 1773, September 13, 1773 contract between Santiago Toutant Beauregard and Juan Villanova.

60 Shipping information, AGI Cuba, Legajo 1217, Nos. 347-437; Notarial Archives, Andres Almonaster y Roxas, Acts January - December 1774, contracts made by Beauregard to sell the property of deceased friend who owed him money, Act 120; bought property from Louis Ramon near the city for the expansion of the mill, Act 132.

61 Unzaga to Torre, January 28, 1773, Dispatches; Ibid, March 7, 1773, March 23, 1773, April 29, 1773, May 17, 1773, June 25, 1773, July 1, 1773 and August 27, 1773.
asked for 2,600 boxes “bien acondiciodanas” (in good condition) with specific measurements which had to be “in fully usable condition” upon delivery.6 2

Unfortunately, Cuba’s sugar producers were vague about their measurements. They sent the amount of sugar each box should contain and expected boxes of similar width and height. Louisiana’s lumber mills, however, built boxes with a similar internal capacity, but not always the same measurements in height or width, not thinking it would be harder to ship such boxes. Some of the boxes were refused openly and had to be replaced, others were left standing on the docks because the fickle Habaneros had purchased cheaper boxes elsewhere. Despite the inconsistency in dealing with Havana, the lumber business continued to thrive and made up a large percentage of the commerce between Louisiana’s struggling merchants and Havana (See Table 9). By the beginning of the 1800s Louisiana had 30 sawmills producing lumber for sugar boxes.6 3

One point of interest remains in the lumber trade between Havana and Louisiana. At the end of Unzaga’s tenure, Captain-General de la Torre wrote letter after letter from Cuba to the government in Spain about Cuba’s wood shortage and the conflict between homebuilders and the Marina. The question must be asked historically, why did de la

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6 2 Notarial Archives, Andres Almonaster y Roxas, Acts January-December 1774; contract in Act 91; another obligation between Dezellet and Beauregard for 2,600 boxes; Act 82.

6 3 Dispatches, Unzaga to Torre, October 31, 1774; February 14, 1775; the conflict continued into the Galvez administration; Ervin Mancil, “Some Historical and Geographical Notes on the Cypress Lumbering Industry in Louisiana,” LS, 8 (1969), 18.

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Torre simply not contract with Louisiana for more wood for building purposes as well as the “cortes de cajas” for sugar boxes?\textsuperscript{64}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ships Carrying Wood</th>
<th>Total Ships From New Orleans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1772</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1773</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1774</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1775</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1776</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Figures from AGI, Cuba 1216, Folio 277; ibid 1217, Folios 305, 347 and 437; ibid 1219, Folios 594, 603, 623, 636, 659, 674, 698, 719, 733, 760, 799 and 807; ibid 1220, Folios 829, 844, 865, 876, 892, 912, and 959; and ibid 1221, Folios 977, 995, 1014, 1046, 1059, 1096, 1118, 115, 1198, 1216, and 1259.

Frequently frustrated with attempts to sell Louisiana’s products, Unzaga even attempted to make money by sending a boat to Havana with wood, rice, tar, pitch, corn, indigo, cotton, lard, and hides plus two-thousand pesos. He asked Bucareli to sell the goods wherever possible and use the money from the sales along with the two-thousand pesos to buy sugar. The sugar was then to be sold in Cadiz and the money from the sales of sugar to be returned to Louisiana. It was a round about way to try and get some return.

\textsuperscript{64}Torre to Arriaga, November 21, 1774, February 24, 1775, and March 6, 1776 AGI, Cuba 1220, Folio 841.
on Louisiana’s products. Unfortunately Bucareli did not have time to “tend” to Louisiana’s commercial problems and the deal fell through.\footnote{Unzaga to Bucareli, January 15, 1771, AGI, Cuba 1055, Folio 137.}

Despite his limited successes with legal commerce, the vicissitudes of working with the Spanish bureaucracy and being at the mercy of Havana’s merchant monopoly prompted governor Unzaga to believe that his first assumptions had been correct. It would be the British, not the Spanish, who were the answer to Louisiana’s commercial problems. Indeed, the increase in exports of tobacco, indigo, timber and skins in Louisiana had “more to do with the exceptions made to commercial restrictions by Spanish officials than with any real change in market or availability.”\footnote{Girouard, “Unzaga,” 49; Clark, New Orleans, 179}

Paul Hoffman, aptly states that the reality of the situation was:

“Louisiana’s unique characteristics meant that Spain and her empire, by itself, and however equipped with new laws and commercial institutions, could not provide a context within which the colony could prosper, although it might survive in poverty. . . . In effect, consolidation of Spanish rule in economic terms meant at least a short-term adjustment of imperial norms to Louisiana realities.”\footnote{Hoffinan, Louisiana, 113.}

The stringent mercantilistic policies in place during Unzaga’s governorship meant he must use unorthodox means to deal with his colony’s realities and make it profitable for Spain. The records at Balize and the Treasury records indicate that Unzaga carefully husbanded Louisiana’s economy by applying his assets properly and keeping official funds in the treasury. A look at the fees imposed at Balize on ships entering and leaving the

\footnote{Hoffinan, Louisiana, 113.}
Mississippi River, indicates the volume of British shipping on the Mississippi and shows how relatively little of all shipping tied up at or departed from New Orleans. Between 1773 and 1777, however, the Almojarifazgo tax levied on legal imports at New Orleans, increased from 2,240 pesos to 16,558, shows a growth in shipping, as well as government intake (See Table 10).

| TABLE 10 |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Commerce of Louisiana, 1773-1777 |
| Imp. Baliza (Pesos) | 209.5     | 147       | 161.5     | 157       | 133       |
| Est. Round Trips    | 104       | 73        | 80        | 78        | 66        |
| Nuevo Orleans, entrances | 9       | 30        | 23        | 11        | 9         |
| Nuevo Orleans, exits | 12       | 34        | 20        | 17        | 9         |
| Nuevo Orleans, Total | 21       | 64        | 43        | 28        | 18        |
| Nuevo Orleans, % Baliza | 10%     | 44%       | 27%       | 18%       |
| Almojarifazgo (pesos) | 2,240    | 4,238     | 16,690    | 16,558    |
| Estimated Goods (pesos) | 89,600  | 169,520   | 667,600   | 662,320   |

Sources: Table 4.2 from Hoffman, *Louisiana*, 133.

What is confusing is a comparison of the ships entering and leaving Havana, from and for New Orleans. There are discrepancies which require more investigation than this study encompasses. For example, Tables 10 and 11 show that, in 1774, a total of 34 ships left New Orleans and only 31 ships reached Havana. In 1775, however, there are only 20 ships leaving New Orleans, but 23 are registered in Havana. Which bookkeeper are we to believe? Perhaps there are ships coming from other ports in Louisiana, or the extra ships are of those who "knew someone" and slipped through Balize without paying fees. There are some interesting choices to pursue (See Table 11).
The governor tried every possible means to make Louisiana’s economy viable. In 1773 while he pushed lumber and tobacco he also investigated a mine which had been discovered some 250 leagues from New Orleans. The mere possibility that it might be a silver mine warranted a guard and a letter to the Viceroy in New Spain. In his letter, Unzaga asked Bucareli for more men to guard the mine and a royal mining expert from Coahuila to assay the minerals. The letter does not indicate in what direction from New Orleans the mine was found but Bucareli’s reply hints that it was north and near the Mississippi. The Viceroy did not send a specialist or troops, instead he told Unzaga that “... we don’t have the manpower to mine or guard it, and that sustaining such an operation would not be advisable because we do not want to attract the attention of our immediate neighbors on the Mississippi.”  

\[\text{Source: Shipping figures from Hoffman, *Louisiana*, 133 and AGI, Cuba 1216, 1217, 1219, 1220, 1221.}\]

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\[\text{Unzaga to Bucareli, January 28, 1773, AGI, SD 2582, Folio 31; Bucareli to Unzaga, April 26, 1773, ibid.}\]
Unzaga ignored the Viceroy's concerns and investigated the mine himself. The rewards, he felt, would far outweigh the danger if the mine turned out to hold silver. After investigation, unfortunately, the mine turned out to be one of the numerous lead mines. Bucareli was not happy with the governor's disobedience. In August the Viceroy addressed his concerns about the British to the Crown. The Minister of the Indies reprimanded Unzaga's actions and maintaining that the mine was not to be worked, it was not silver, and bore no further investigation. Since, however, the governor had already drawn attention to the area he must now send annual reconnoiters through the area against encroachments or probes by the English. 

Unzaga's struggles also included attempts at creating cottage industry and a domestic market for Louisiana's handicrafts. In his first two years he encouraged new settlers to produce products like cotton which would allow Louisiana to become independent of her "illegal" trade. The governor also encouraged a domestic market. He wrote to post commanders asking them to send various products produced by their posts which might be sold to the citizens of New Orleans or traded to other posts. Arkansas sent game, especially woodcocks which he felt might add to New Orleans' larder. Unzaga also ordered gloves and stockings from local weavers and encouraged his officers to do the same. Cotton became a limited product during Unzaga's tenure.

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69 Bucareli to Arriaga, August 9, 1773, AGI, SD 2582; Arriaga, March 8, 1774, Aranjuez, ibid.

70 Encouragement of local industry can be found in Judice to Unzaga, October 19, 1770, AGI, Cuba, 188-A, Folio 1-d/32; Unzaga to Judice, October 22, 1770, Ibid. Cotton production and its problems are discussed in Unzaga to Verret, June 1, 1772, AGI, Cuba 189A, Folio137.
because it was often planted in the wrong locations. Another problem was that many of the inhabitants of New Orleans, especially the elite chose to buy European goods because of their social status.

The foregoing discussion on Louisiana's commerce has left out a large expanse of colonial Louisiana's territory, Spanish Illinois, but not without reason. The exports from Spanish Illinois (Missouri) were primarily flour, lead and furs. In the decade between Spanish possession of Louisiana and the last years of Unzaga's governorship, the colonists at Illinois only produced 1,200 and 2,500 barrels of flour. Only thirty percent of the flour ever reached New Orleans. The rest went to domestic consumption and feeding the troops, traders and trappers in northern Louisiana. Lead production diminished as the years went on and never exceeded 60 tons per year. Furs, disrupted by the English forts along the eastern bank of the river and a steady influx of troops and English merchants were reduced to approximately 100 to 300 packs per year. English merchants competed with the settlers in Vincennes, Cahokia and Kaskaskia. The remainder of their exports included small amounts of tobacco and salt, never enough for the New Orleans market or its shipping business.71

It was not until after Unzaga left Louisiana that the Crown responded to Louisiana's realities. In 1776 they re-opened trade to the French Islands. As mercantilistic rules weakened, trade quickened. New Orleans reoriented itself to the foreign market and by the end of the Spanish period 31 of the 81 ships which passed through the Mississippi

71Clark, New Orleans, 182, 211-212.
were actually from Spain. By all appearances, in 1799 the commercial reforms of Carlos III were a success for Louisiana.\textsuperscript{72}

Although the Crown responded too slowly to Louisiana’s requests for freer commerce to assist Unzaga, there is hard evidence that his foregoing struggles to fill the treasury were somewhat successful. Historians have often confused personal economic gain on the part of Louisiana’s citizens with the public monies collected from taxes, tariffs and husbanded by the governor and his treasury officials. The treasurer’s reports for Louisiana during Unzaga’s tenure reflect tremendous stewardship by a governor under such duress. The accounts, according to Martín Navarro and his replacement, Bernardo de Ortero, show a steady increase from year to year, beginning with 927,839.2 reales/maravedis (115,979.88 pesos) in 1770 and ending with a surplus of 1,876,856.29 reales/maravedis (234,607 pesos). While the rate of increase, 118.628 reales over seven years, a rate of 16,946.86 pesos/year, is not spectacular compared to other colonial Latin America treasuries, it is incredible given the circumstances.\textsuperscript{(See Appendix A)}

The governor’s endeavors at improving Louisiana’s commerce were complicated by the re-appearance of the British along the Mississippi and domestic concerns. Unzaga’s predecessor, O’Reilly, had been quite belligerent toward illegal commerce with Britain and expelled the majority of its merchants from New Orleans in 1769. Most of these men merely moved upriver to British Manchac or Natchez and continued business as usual.

\textsuperscript{72}Shipping figures from Spanish Judicial Records, Historical Center, Louisiana State Museum, Report of Juan de Castanedo, Permanent Alderman and Royal Treasurer regarding the ships entering through Bayou St. John, lists and anchorage fees. Document no. 1799123103. December 31, 1799.
usual. Some even continued business in New Orleans through Louisiana firms which acted as middle-men for the colonists and their illegal clients. In 1770 British ships quietly began to reappear on the Mississippi bringing goods upriver to the “expatriate” enclave. Within a year merchants like John Fitzpatrick and Thomas Bently had recreated their lucrative, but illegal trade in Louisiana.73

Fitzpatrick and others began a new chain of contacts across the Spanish-English border through the Amite river. There they did a booming business not only with merchants in New Orleans, but with local farmers and planters in both Spanish Louisiana and British Florida. They also received and sold goods coming down the Mississippi from Spanish Illinois.74 New Orleans’ merchants felt the familiar sting that such illicit trade inflicted on their commerce. In November of 1771, merchant François Marie Reggio complained that the British were taking advantage of the depressed economy and had completely “encompassed” the fur trade to the point that “all the pelts which previously appeared in this capitol, now come there only in their barges and boats.”75 British merchants, like James Jones and his brother Evan even resided in New Orleans, continuing business with no complaint from Spanish officials as long as “trade” was continued on the river and not in the city.76

73 John Fitzpatrick, Letterbooks, 13.

74 Ibid, 20.

75 François Marie Reggio to Monseigneur, November 22, 1771, Reggio Family Papers, Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Louisiana State University.

76 Fitzpatrick, Letterbooks, 21.
Illicit trade with the British also exacerbated the shortages of supplies and money in New Orleans. It also exposed the lack of integration between the economy in New Orleans and its hinterlands. For example, in 1770 New Orleans suddenly experienced a famine. By August there was a shortage of corn and rice, both staples. A shortage of wheat the governor could understand, but not crops commonly raised by most farmers. Realizing that the farmers were selling to illicit merchants to circumvent tariffs and price constraints in New Orleans and to get better prices and/or items manufactured by the British, the governor notified the post commandants of his extremity, and requested that their grain be sent immediately to New Orleans. Amused, the local commandant at Pointe Coupée, François Allain, explained the dearth of grain in his region. He informed the governor that no rice was grown at his post and that the local corn crop had been damaged by rain and would not mature until October.

Unzaga then politely requested that Allain produce a report with the projected agricultural production for each farm in his jurisdiction. He added, that the report should contain the amount of food each farmer required for home consumption. Any surplus must be sent to New Orleans to alleviate the ongoing emergency. Instead of sending the report, Allain replied, rather smugly, that all future correspondence from the governor (normally in Spanish) must be accompanied by a French translation so that he could avoid misconstruing any official orders. Not undone by his Commandant’s obstreperous

77Unzaga to Commandant François Allain, Pointe Coupée, August 16, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A.

78Allain to Unzaga, September 5, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A.
behavior the governor gently reminded him that he was now a Spanish official and must either learn Spanish or secure his own interpreter. Allain, refused to budge, replying that he could not learn a new language because of his “advanced age” and there were no trustworthy translators at the Post. Instead, he requested permission to resign his post.79

There are no future letters from Allain on the subject, but he continued his post and Unzaga quietly “did battle” with his other commandants to feed hungry New Orleans. While he battled with Allain, he also send requests to Commandant Dutisné in the Iberville District, as well as Verret on the German Coast requesting food for his hungry citizens in the Crescent City. Both denied any illegal traffic with the British and replied that they also had a shortage of grain because of the weather.80

By the end of 1770, Unzaga’s solutions began to alleviate the scarcity of food in New Orleans and the failing economy in the colony. The French commandants finally responded favorably to Unzaga’s patient insistence. The colonists harvested another corn crop by the end of 1770 and the commandants began to keep an eye on smuggling between their residents and the British. Commandant Berard even sent a list of Acadian farmers who had surplus corn. (See Table 12)81 Slowly the frontier economy of

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79Unzaga to Allain, October 13, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Allain to Unzaga, November 4, 1770, ibid; Unzaga to Allain, November 14, 1770, ibid; Allain to Unzaga, November 30, 1770, ibid.

80Unzaga to Dustiné, August 11, 1770, AGI, Cuba 193-B, Folio 281 another letter apparently went to Verret who replied on August 27, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 1-d, 44.

81Verret to Unzaga, September 25, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 1-d/46; Commandant Descoudreaux to Unzaga, November 1, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-B, Folio 182, Berard to Unzaga, December 5, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 19.
Louisiana's hinterlands began to acclimate itself to Spanish control though it never completely centered on New Orleans.

Giving way to the exigencies of Louisiana's frontier did not encourage regular commercial growth through New Orleans, in fact it actually helped suppress that trade. Daniel Usner contends that frontier markets continued to resist the new economic order. Furthermore, British settlements east of the Mississippi devastated the local game and confiscated the local fur trade. Officially, Unzaga lamented "even our new subjects sell those [furs] which they acquire from the Indians in our own lands [to the British]." Treasury reports show that official trade in Louisiana, including British ships dropped severely between 1770 and 1771, from 144 ships through Balize to 97 in 1771, but trade began to climb afterwards.

Ironically, as trade began to assert itself along the Mississippi, the New Orleans merchants experienced worse hardships. Another bad harvest in 1772 hurt trade and the citizens New Orleans as they depended on food from the surrounding countryside. The hurricane of 1773 further injured both the planter and merchant classes of the city. Famine and economic woes often created circumstances which prompted less than honest action among the colonists. In fact, between 1772 and 1773 a number of men became extrordinarily wealthy, buying up the homes and lands of less fortunate citizens. Among these men was the well known Notary and member of the Cabildo, Andres Almonester y

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\(^{22}\) Unzaga to Bucareli, July 8, 1770, Dispatches.

\(^{33}\) Usner, Indians, Settlers & Slaves, 107; Hoffman, Louisiana, 122.

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TABLE 12

Excerpt from letter of Jean Baptiste Berard, at La Belle Pointe on Wednesday, December 5, 1770 which includes a list of his Acadian farmers with corn surpluses during the famine of 1770

"... en consequence des ordres de monsieur le gouverneur. J'ait fait faire une assemble de tous les habitants de ce quartier comme vous me marque ou chaque'un a fait faire un declaration du maye qu'ils a a vendre."

("... because of the orders of the governor, I assembled all the inhabitants of this region as you asked me to where each one made a declaration of the corn they had to sell.")

Noms et note de ceaux qui ont due maye a vendre au atacapas. Le toute en epie.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noms</th>
<th>Note (Barils)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michel Bernard</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Guilliebeau</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francois Guilliebeau</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon Le Blanc</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claude Martin</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francois Broussard</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rene Traans (Trahan)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Broussard</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean Dugas</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pierre Dugas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Dugas</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michel Doucet</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptiste Hebert</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptiste Semer</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michel Maut</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firmien Landry</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>505</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Berard to Unzaga, December 5, 1770, AGI Cuba 188-A, Folio 5, No. 19

Roxas who besides obtaining a lucrative treasury post in the colony, also acted as an attorney for the city. In that position, as a notary for power of attorney and wills, he used...
his knowledge to gain a fortune. By the next decade he would be one of the wealthiest men in Louisiana and the Floridas.\(^4\)

Unzaga could do little to prevent this kind of behavior but he did try and protect his colonists in another instance. Some of the planters who did not leave for Cap Français after the hurricane of 1773 needed debt relief. Others, whose crops were not ruined and did not need help, took advantage of the situation, conspiring to get government dispensations for their debts also. The ringleader of this last group was Gilbert Antoine de St. Maxent (Unzaga's new father-in-law), who felt he at least could expect favorable treatment. St. Maxent, like the other would-be moochers, completely misjudged their governor. Unzaga felt responsible for all his colonists and acted impartially toward the whole group. Those debtors who could not pay were granted delays, but not excused from their debts. Those who had tried to cheat the system were required to satisfy their creditors immediately.

Unzaga's fairness and impartiality gained respect not only for his governorship but for the Spanish system. He also stimulated the economy with his actions because the merchants realized they would now be able to collect debts and were also more inclined to provide their fellow colonists with credit. Additionally, the planters and merchants lost in the 1773 emigration to Cap Français removed the last rebellious element from the New Orleans population. Those families who had been tied to the mutinous rebels of 1768 left

with the last ship in 1773 and those who were left were far more inclined toward Unzaga and the new Spanish government.85

While the economy in Louisiana's hinterlands recovered quickly with the prompting of British trade, New Orleans limped along until 1774 when trade between the hinterlands and the city surged. Corn, beans, wheat and even beef moved downriver to New Orleans which by that time had built slaughterhouses. Some farmers even took to slaughtering their neighbors' cattle for profit.86 Complete economic recovery, however, came after Unzaga's tenure when Louisiana became more fully integrated into the Spanish empire. Meanwhile, his equitable treatment of the colonists had begun to stir a sense of loyalty toward the new government. His persistence with the French commandants won him grudging respect and helped integrate the economies of the capitol and the rest of the colony. There was, of course, still the British to consider.

Mercantilistic trade rules notwithstanding, Unzaga had orders to report British movements to Spain. He, therefore, had to maintain continuous contact with British settlements and/or British merchants along the Mississippi. The governor surmised that his surveillance could benefit Spain, the British and Louisiana. By keeping an eye on the "enemy," Unzaga could now officially facilitate trade and "contact" with British merchants by giving permission to unlicensed vessels to sail up river, delivering illicit goods and

85Gayarre, History of Louisiana, III, 98-99; Carl Brasseaux, The Road to Louisiana: The Saint-Domingue Refugees 1792-1809 (Lafayette, LA: Center for Louisiana Studies), 133-many of the last to leave died en route to Cap-Français.

86LeDee to Unzaga, April 18, 1774, AGI, Cuba, 189-A, No. 38; and DeClouet to Unzaga, August 30, 1774.
information. Meanwhile, the governor and the Commandant at Balize gleaned as much news from their captains as possible, not to mentioned the taxes alluded to earlier.87

Interestingly, as Unzaga welcomed British ships along the Mississippi, the rate of incidences of British ships stopping for supplies and aid increased in Havana as well. Both Unzaga and de la Torre took advantage of these contacts with foreign merchants to funnel knowledge of England’s plans for war and settlement to the Spanish Court. Unzaga licensed illegal merchants and developed a system of British spies to suit Spain’s needs in Louisiana. Captain-general de la Torre, accomplished surveillance by questioning the captains of injured English vessels, capturing illegal slaving ships and sometimes by openly sending messages and requests to Jamaica via British merchant ships. Despite overtures of war in late 1770 and 1771, and again toward the end of their tenures, both governors took a stance of covert observation and peaceful resistence to the British intrusion into the Caribbean and the Mississippi Valley, a policy their king would adopt as the Revolution of 1776 approached.

In summary, Unzaga made his observation of British merchants both advantageous and profitable for the colony. He applied the king’s mercantilistic policies to commerce in New Orleans, trying the create remunerative enterprises from Louisiana’s meager exports. Working within the Bourbon reforms he began a lumber industry which would continue to flourish throughout the colonial period and into statehood. His attempts at tobacco

87Light Townsend Cummins, Spanish Observers and the American Revolution 1775-1783 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1991),14; Commandant Juan Delavillebeauvre (Balize) to Unzaga, December 28, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188; Unzaga to Delavillebeauvre, December 31, 1770, ibid.
proved profitable for a time, albeit after his governorship, and only for a short duration. Cotton, also, would become a cash crop for Louisiana in the future. He also stewarded public funds and managed to begin filling the colony's depleted treasury. Lastly, his peaceful and conciliatory attitude slowly began to reorient Louisiana's frontier exchange economy toward the colony's legitimate commerce and began to re-orient his colonists' loyalties toward their new king.

Much has been made of his "winking at" illegal trade along the Mississippi, however, the governor merely applied an old Spanish custom known as *Obedezco pero no cumplo* (I obey but do not follow through), to circumstances beyond his control. He followed Spain's imperial laws, within reason. If necessary, he bent them to Louisiana's unusual circumstances, excusing himself to higher officials and trusting in the just reasoning of the crown. Control of the British was another matter. He managed to use British merchants as a network of spies, but his unorthodox means of surveillance and stimulation of the economy meant he also had to constantly guard against contraband and illegal trade.
Chapter Five

Contraband

"Unzaga acted judiciously for the province and for Spain, when he disregarded the Chinese-like regulations which he was commanded to enforce, and when he winked at their violation."

Charles Gayarré, History of Louisiana

Charles Gayarré’s accusation that Unzaga turned a blind eye to illegal commerce misconstrues the nature of the governor’s true actions. The Bourbon crown’s reforms which opened new ports but eradicated Louisiana’s best trading partners reinforced the “informal” and often illegal network of trade that had always been present in the colony. In the huge, semi-wild territory, Unzaga’s few troops and little money could not stop the majority of Louisiana’s long entrenched, inter-colonial trade although he made examples of blatantly illegal activities which threatened Spain’s authority. Through the use of obedezco no cumplo, the governor pursued imperial goals by overlooking the colony’s informal trade, using it instead as an opportunity to enhance his stifled economy, maintain relations with the local Indian tribes and monitor any possible British threat to Louisiana.

Smuggling and illegal commerce were endemic to all colonial systems, not just Louisiana. Spain never developed adequate manufacturing to supply its own empire and consequently her colonists turned to illegal trade for items which were far less expensive from British or French smugglers than those bought second-hand from the metropole. A study of the governor’s letters at Havana and New Orleans shows that smuggling and illegal trade continued and were often useful occurrences despite the commerce reforms

1Gayarré, History of Louisiana, III, 46.
instituted during Unzaga's tenure. Indeed, given the size and geography of the Spanish empire in the Americas, no colonial Latin American governor or viceroy completely controlled all commerce in his region nor did he aspire to do so. As Margaret Dalrymple says in her work on John Fitzpatrick, "Spanish colonial officials, recognizing that this trade was essential to the prosperity and sometimes the very survival of their colonies, tended to ignore or even protect foreign traders, and the entire commercial process, although absolutely illegal, became a recognized and highly valued branch of the overseas commerce of several nations."²

Louisiana, straddled the mouth of a river upon which two colonial giants transported goods and communicated with two of the most infamous bodies of water in the history of American piracy and smuggling--the Gulf of Mexico and its sister the Caribbean.³ The constant and aggressive piracy that was the nemesis of Spain's treasure ships had generally disappeared by the eighteenth-century for a number of reasons. Under Colbert, the French reorganized their empire and took greater control of its economy. At the same time, Spain experienced a depression in its silver imports and a resulting drop in shipments of that commodity in many parts of empire (New Spain excluded). Also by the 1760s, England began to organize her newly-won empire in the Americas, reasserting mercantilist principles and limitations on colonial trade to replenish its diminished

²John Fitzpatrick, Letterbooks, 8.

treasury after the colonial wars. Buccaneers and their constant chaos were, therefore, no longer welcome and the European monarchies began to make treaties which included the elimination of organized piracy.⁴

Smuggling, however, continued practically unabated between the colonies of France, Britain and Spain. It was precisely because of the mercantilist policies practiced by the metropoles that their colonies used smuggling and illicit trade to circumvent the system and support their often meager existences. Of the three European giants, Spain practiced the most rigorous mercantilism, exemplified by its flota or fleet port system. This system required that all ships leaving the Americas for Spain gather at Havana once a year and travel together, while ships going to the Americas had to trade through selected ports. Unfortunately, Spain’s lack of an industrial basis forced it to import manufactured products from other Continental nations at exorbitant prices. These inflated prices were in turn passed on to American consumers. The fleet-port system left many colonies without favorable or even beneficial access to European goods. Inter-colonial smuggling, therefore, developed early in Latin America.⁵

Spain’s flota system was revived slightly in the 1700s and this event should have brought with it the dwindling of illegal smuggling. Instead, the opposite was true because

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⁴ Anti-piracy efforts date from the 1690s but by the middle of the eighteenth century were firmly in place and part of national policy.

the rules which limited official trade to select ports remained, enhancing business for the merchants in Cadiz and Seville and hurting colonial merchant houses.6

Latin American merchants who had ready-made family connections in the Iberian peninsula increased their business, while those who did not have those all-important connections did not do as well. Still, in the mainland colonies, (those to the south of the borderlands) the merchant class had managed, through official and unofficial means, to become a dynamic organization by the end of the eighteenth century. It did not matter, however, whether the colony was wealthy or destitute, contraband was always welcome in American ports.7

Societal change affected trade as well. By the mid-eighteenth century, most of Latin America’s frontier, conquest society and its attempts at recreating Spanish feudalism in the Americas had given way to a “commercially integrated system” of plantations, mining and merchant houses.8 During the late 1600s, African slave labor and sugar revived the depressed Caribbean economy and in time came to encompass tobacco, indigo, cochineal, cacao and other colonial products from the mainland. It was precisely

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6 In fact one of the principle chores of the committees under the Bourbon reforms was to change the monopoly system in Cadiz and reform the port-fleet system.

7 See D. A. Brading, Miners and Merchants for a discussion of alternative routes to wealth and the growth of the American merchant society and Roland Dennis Hussey’s, The Caracas Company for a look at monopolistic trade in the Americas.

8 Knight, Caribbean, 106.
this triangular trade in sugar, slaves and rum which engendered many new navigational acts in Europe, especially in Britain.9

The benefits of the sugar and slave economy were particularly dynamic in Cuba. They reinvigorated trade in the island which had long been eclipsed by the discoveries of the mainland and its abundant silver mines. Cuba’s primacy had barely been maintained by the flota or royal fleet system whose ships were forced to congregate at Havana. The island’s only other “claim to fame” within empire was its unique defensive position astride the Caribbean and Gulf. Sugar production reactivated the long island’s long suppressed economy. While it hardly reached the production of the French and British islands, Cuba’s sugar production more than doubled in the two decades between the 1740s and 1760s. (See Table 13). The new economy also re-intensified the smuggling between the French and Spanish islands.

Because of the increase in sugar and the new arrangement to purchase slaves from the British Antilles, in the late eighteenth-century Havana received many of the slaves sent to the Caribbean and redistributed them to the surrounding Spanish possessions. Prior to 1763, the slave trade had devolved through different Spanish ports. Santo Domingo was the foremost slave market until 1560. In the Papal Bull of 1493, the Spanish colonies were excluded from the African slaving coasts. After the middle of the sixteenth-century, when African slave labor became important to Latin America, an asiento, or the privilege to bring slaves into the Spanish empire, was given to various


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European countries. For a century after the *asiento* was installed, all slaves entering Spain's colonies had to come through the port of Cartagena de Indias in Colombia.¹⁰

### TABLE 13

Sugar Production in the Americas, 1741-1770

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colony</th>
<th>1741-1745</th>
<th>1766-1770</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French West Indies</td>
<td>64,675</td>
<td>77,923</td>
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<tr>
<td>British West Indies</td>
<td>41,043</td>
<td>74,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil (Portuguese)</td>
<td>34,000</td>
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<td>Virgin Islands (Danish)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>8,230</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suriname (Dutch)</td>
<td>9,210</td>
<td>6,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuba (Spanish)</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>5,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


At the end of the War of Spanish Succession, when the Bourbon dynasty took over Spain, the British received the *asiento*. The British were forced to give it up after the War of Jenkins Ear (1748). Charles III tried to create a Spanish monopoly slave trade based on Puerto Rico that would compete with the slaves coming from British Jamaica but it failed because the Spanish colonists did not welcome the change in their “system,” and also didn’t want to pay the King’s 40 peso tax on Spanish slaves. After that, the Crown contracted with foreigners to import slaves. This encouraged the British and French islands of the Caribbean to smuggle slaves and other contraband to Cuba and other Spanish possessions. Cuba’s coast was replete with tiny, hidden bays and coves which could conceal the small boats used to bring illegal slaves, and contraband into the island. Slaves were a particularly expensive commodity and could bring smugglers a quick and lucrative return on their investments. By the mid-eighteenth century, Havana’s French neighbor, Saint Domingue became the richest sugar producer and the largest slave island, thereby adding to the general smuggling of slaves in the Caribbean.

Slavery also became a high lucrative and legitimate industry. Introduced by the English who brought 10,700 African slaves into Cuba during 1762, the base population of 10,000 in 1770 slaves grew to 44,300 in 1774. Licensed ships left Havana regularly for Jamaica as early as 1772 carrying Spanish silver to exchange for flour and slaves.


12 Entradas and Salidas, AGI Cuba 1216, Folio 169.

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Spain managed to license the slave trade but smuggling in general continued. Sugar and slaves brought wealth to Havana. As Cubans grew wealthier they sought to accumulate foreign goods and opportunistic merchants were more than willing to chance bringing contraband goods into the island. It is a great irony that the one man, Martín de Araña, who knew in advance of the British invasion of Havana was a Cuban smuggler who was promptly jailed upon his return to the island before he could warn the governor.¹³

Vigorous entrepreneurs from France and Great Britain also attempted to enter Havana’s harbor under the pretense that their ships were damaged or taking on water or needing food before they continued their journeys. Some ships which initially required only minor repair managed to stay docked for over a month. Ships which stayed for over a week were quite possibly involved in illegal commercial transactions because other ships with similar problems made their way back to the Gulf almost overnight.¹⁴

The Cuban governor’s reports during the tenure of the Marquis de la Torre (1772-1776) speak more of illicit commerce discovered at sea and the Circum-Caribbean than of domestic smuggling and de la Torre allowed far more ships to enter the port than did

¹³Klein, African Slavery, 86-87; Barclay, Havana, 103.

¹⁴Entradas and Salidas from AGI, Cuba 1220 and 1221; by 1775 and 1776 some of this pretense may have been used by the British to observe what was going on in Havana as well. An inspection of the cargo aboard ships which sat for a month in harbor might provide further answers to the length of stay but at present that information is not available.
Bucareli. This may be because de la Torre intended to use them as weathervanes for English activity or because he, like Unzaga, found them economically useful.\(^\text{15}\)

In contrast to Havana’s economic recovery, the dearth of supplies and settlers in the borderlands meant that French and Spanish settlements in those areas remained small, often isolated and even more dependent on illicit trade. Smuggling was deeply rooted in real necessity. The Spanish in both St. Augustine and Pensacola traded regularly with French Mobile and New Orleans for supplies. St. Augustine even bought or traded for weapons and ammunition from the English in Carolina, regardless of the state of hostilities between the colonies. The market in St. Augustine was so good that even when their mother countries were at war, many Carolina merchants refused to attack St. Augustine for fear they would disrupt their profitable exchange. Indeed, merchants as far away as New York and Providence exchanged British goods for “gold, silver, deerskins, and oranges from Florida.”\(^\text{16}\)

Sometimes war produced money-making opportunities. During the colonial wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, British merchants entered French New

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\(^{15}\)Reports range from captured French and English boats to reports of illicit commerce at other islands like that of the local official at Santiago de Cuba who reported to Captain-General de la Torre that the English were illegally doing business in Puerto Rico, Juan Antonio Ayano de Urete to Torres, April 21, 1774, AGI, Cuba 1144, No. 198; or the regular reports of English and French ships which “needed assistance” in the port of Havana and stayed anywhere from overnight, to a week and even to a month before they left, Entradas and Salidas, AGI, Cuba 1216, 1217, 1220, 1221.

Orleans under a system called “flags of truce.” These merchant parlérentaires, as the French called them, were commonly used to exchange military prisoners. Colonial governments allowed the ship captains to offset the expense of transporting the prisoners by allowing them to sell otherwise “illicit” goods in enemy ports. New Orleans and Mobile afforded such a lucrative operation that by the late 1750s, “British mercantile houses . . . came to dominate the trade of the Gulf Coast . . . .” Many Englishmen even settled in New Orleans.¹⁷

In colonial Louisiana, French settlers, slaves and Indians alike welcomed all opportunities to obtain European goods and food. During the French regime this necessity was so acute that the French fought with the English over the southeastern Indian trade, often pitting one tribe against another. Trade at places like Natchitoches and the Arkansas Post disturbed the balance of power in the west by bringing new Indian groups down from the Great Plains and into the Red and Mississippi River Valleys, who were in search of better hunting grounds, European dry goods and weapons. In the process, they disturbed other groups like the Big and Little Osage, setting off a number of intertribal wars. Spanish officials harangued French settlers who gave the Indians guns because too often those same arms were turned against Spanish settlements, yet the Spanish were not above arming the Indians themselves if the need arose.¹⁸


Unzaga, like other governors in Spain’s borderlands, found smuggling and illegal commerce firmly entrenched in Louisiana. Even after Ulloa’s arrival, the frontier economy of Louisiana’s hinterlands had remained oblivious of the changes in the Atlantic trade. Indians, settlers, and slaves continued their frontier exchange of contraband goods, resisting change and prospering collectively in relative peace and harmony. Despite O’Reilly’s dismissal of the British merchants in New Orleans, the informal system of trade in the frontier struggled to remain intact, hoarding goods until better times returned, and seeking other outlets. Although Unzaga slowly turned the domestic economy toward New Orleans and legal commerce, his colonists found new “outlets” for their goods.

The Louisiana province was a sieve. Major apertures were at Spanish Illinois (Missouri) along the Northern Mississippi; British Manchac, approximately 1500 yards north across the narrow Bayou Manchac, which connected Lakes Pontchartrain and Maurepas to the Mississippi through the Amite River; the Arkansas Post at the junction of the Arkansas and Mississippi rivers; New Orleans; and Natchitoches, just across the border from the fort of Los Adaes in Spanish Texas. The smaller holes of the sieve, furthermore, could be easily entered and exited by Indians, experienced traders and trappers, or any settler with a pirogue (or a horse to reach Los Adaes).

British Manchac was one of the worst offenders in contraband. It had developed on the abandoned ruins of old Fort Bute. Named after the Earl of Bute, George III’s tutor and unpopular secretary of the treasury, the fort had originally been positioned to guard the entrance to the chain of lakes and waterways that ran east from the Mississippi. After the 1766 the British government abandoned it. The Lieutenant Governor of British West
British West Florida, Montfort Browne, in 1768 recommended that his government establish a town there to deflect the fur trade going to New Orleans.¹⁹

During Unzaga’s tenure, British merchants believed that the settlement at Manchac would entice many people not only to trade with them, but also to emigrate from Louisiana to British West Florida. The British government concurred, and in 1771 drew up plans for such a settlement although the town was never officially built. The settlement grew nonetheless. Manchac was not a pleasant place to live. It was low and swampy and flooded regularly. Still, as early as 1770, British merchants like John Fitzpatrick, Isaac and Manuel Monsanto, and Thomas Bentley moved in, cannibalizing wood from the old fort to build homes and stores and using the fort for a warehouse.²⁰

Settlers from the areas around Point Coupé, Natchitoches, Attakapas, and Spanish Illinois favored Manchac because it cut ten days off the normal trip to New Orleans and the British paid better prices for furs and produce. Manchac was a magnet for contraband. As has been noted, Unzaga faced continued smuggling with the few British merchants at the old fort during the New Orleans “famine” of 1770. While Unzaga argued with his post commandants over the supposedly devastated corn crops, the Acadian farmers in the Iberville district and the German Coast were caught, not once,


²⁰James Jones, (a New Orleans Merchant) wrote to General Frederick Haldimand in 1770 that he believed the abandonment of Fort Bute was a mistake and that a town there would entice many Louisianaians to come across the river to British West Florida, Fitzpatrick, Letterbooks, 13, 15 and 19
but twice, smuggling with the British at Manchac. The farmers found it useful to tell the
commandant that the first crop had failed, or the seed had rotted in the ground. Even
more common was the deliberate miscalculation of how much they produced. The
frustrated and angry governor chastised both commandants Dustindé and Verret because
the Acadians and other farmers were selling their corn and rice to the British for good
prices in exchange for otherwise unavailable manufactured items. Even worse, the
Acadians in the St. James district were giving gunpowder and lead shot to the Tensas and
Houma Indians.21

British merchants continued to do well in Manchac. In 1772 merchant Rufus
Putnam passed through the settlement noting that there were a number of good homes
with “very good gardens.” He also noticed the absence of any soldiers, a strange
occurrence for a frontier settlement. Manchac’s famous swamp still plagued the
settlement, however. When it was not flooding, the swamp dried up and the fish died,
giving off an almost intolerable stench.22

Swampy land notwithstanding, Manchac continued to pose a problem for Unzaga.
British merchandise also attracted a large number of Indians and the merchants tried to
entice other, supposedly Spanish-allied tribes, into trade with British West Florida. They

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21Unzaga to Dustiné, August 11, 1770, AGI, Cuba 193-B, Folio 281; Judice to
Unzaga, August 28, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 1 d/21. Unzaga to Verret, August 30,
1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 44a.

22Albert C. Bates, ed., The Two Putnams, Isreal and Rufus, in the Havana
Expedition 1762 and in the Mississippi River Exploration 1772-73 with some account of
the Company of Military Adventurers (Hartford, CN: Connecticut Historical Society,
1931), 174, 245. The lack of soldiers would be “fixed” in the late 1770s.
did not have a hard argument. Their wares included "knives, axes, scissors, combs, blankets, shirts, hats, and cloth, as well as firearms, gunpowder, and flints." Liquor added fuel to the fire and the merchants often deliberately enticed their Indian patrons with alcohol, a practice decried by both British and Spanish officials. It appears that some of the alcohol consumed at Manchac was actually brought by Unzaga’s colonists. In 1772, a series of letters between Descoudreaux and Unzaga discussed the continual occurrences of smuggling between the Acadians and Manchac. In a letter dated February 6th the Post Commandant at the small Spanish fort across from Manchac indicates that the boats also carried beer, as well as foodstuffs.

The merchants continued unabated and ungoverned in Manchac throughout Unzaga’s tenure. Any attempt by the British to apply “legal” restrictions was “dealt with summarily” by the merchants themselves. Such was the case with John Thomas, commissioned as an Indian agent and Justice of the Peace, who moved into Manchac in October of 1771. Thomas was pompous, dictatorial and thoroughly unpopular with both the merchants and the Indians. He abused his authority with the former and ignored custom and decorum with the latter (see Chapter 6). The merchants had no use for him.

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24Descoudreaux to Unzaga, January 15, 1772, AGI, Cuba 189-A, Folios 565-566 and Descoudreaux to Unzaga, February 6, 1772, AGI, Cuba 189-A, Folio 563. The letters continue into 1773 and 1774.

and in 1772 had him dismissed from his post, but not before Luis de Unzaga had a chance to uncover British plans to settle Natchez.

Both Unzaga and Thomas used Manchac as a source of information. Unzaga, recruited the help of James O'Kelly, an Irish Catholic from Manchac who requested Spanish citizenship for religious reasons. Through O'Kelly, the governor traced the whereabouts and plans of both British Indian agents, John Stuart and John Thomas. Thomas himself used the Indian tribes to glean information about Spanish fortifications at New Orleans. The disagreement between Thomas and Unzaga became so heated that the governor threatened to arrest him if he entered Louisiana.26

The liquor which flowed at the taverns and merchant shops in Manchac also created other problems for Unzaga. Frontier life was boring and tough and alcoholic drinks softened the dirt and grime of an otherwise brutal existence. Trappers, traders, settlers, slaves and Indians enjoyed drinking, often to excess. Manchac’s taverns encouraged the local settlers in St. James Parish to begin running their homes as cabarets where they could sell liquor, play cards and indulge themselves. As early as November 19th of 1771, Abraham Landry petitioned Post Commandant, Louis Judice, for a license to open such a cabaret in his home. Three days later the governor approved the licenses. Unzaga hoped that by licensing Spanish cabarets he might divert some of the drinking at Manchac, and also some of the smuggling.27

26Fitzpatrick, Letterbooks, 18; Cummins, Spanish Observers, 14-15.

27Judice to Unzaga, November 19, 1771, and Unzaga to Judice, November 22, 1771, AGI, Cuba 188-C, Folio 93.
Unzaga’s hopes to stop smuggling at Manchac were in vain, but the cabaret licenses became a hit with the locals. The next year home-cabarets were so popular that the governor decided he would auction off the licenses, thereby gaining another meager source of income for the government. Licensing was big business by 1775 and had spread to other parishes. Unzaga’s hopes to stop smuggling at Manchac were in vain, but the cabaret licenses became a hit with the locals. The next year home-cabarets were so popular that the governor decided he would auction off the licenses, thereby gaining another meager source of income for the government. Licensing was big business by 1775 and had spread to other parishes. Unfortunately, the cabarets led to gambling and other illegal activities which had to be either ignored or dealt with. It appears that Unzaga ignored such activities during his tenure, although later governors like Carondelet had to deal with citizens complaining about the gambling. For the moment the government turned a blind eye to the proceedings.

British contraband exacerbated Unzaga’s problems and added to the drain on empire. By the end of his tenure, in 1776, some twenty houses hugged the Mississippi at British Manchac. The New Orleans merchants ousted by O’Reilly had been joined by men like John Blommart, Thomas Barber and James Willing. These men tied London, Pensacola and even Jamaica to New Orleans, Natchitoches, St. Louis and sometimes even Santa Fe. They openly sold contraband goods and slaves to Louisiana’s colonists and drained the economy of coin. Indeed, Spanish pesos entered the colony in large amounts, large enough to offset many of the problems the colony faced. Much of the specie, however, immediately left the colony through the large hole called “little Manchac.”

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*Judice to Unzaga, September 20, 1772, AGI, Cuba 189-A, Folio 436 and Dutisné to Unzaga, June 23, 1775, 189-B, Folio 234.*


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The smuggling at Manchac was only a portion of what that entered Louisiana. Slaves and other goods from the Caribbean were commonly smuggled in along the Gulf Coast of Louisiana which contained the same kind of small coves that Cuba had. Moreover, the Louisiana coast was deltaic and possessed entrances to numerous rivers that flowed from the colony. This was prime smuggling country for slaves and contraband from the Caribbean and would continue to serve privateers and smugglers like Jean Lafitte well into the nineteenth century.

Slaves were never a large element of legal commerce in the first two decades of the Spanish period, although all three of Louisiana's first Spanish governor's backed slave importation. Indeed, slave sales to Louisiana lagged far behind those to the sugar islands of the Caribbean and even to the British colonies in North America. In fact, the only Circum-Caribbean colony with lower slave imports was Spanish Santo Domingo (See Table 14).

There are several explanations for this phenomenon. Sugar did not become a large portion of Louisiana's economy until Etienne Boré brought in a chemist from Saint Domingue to show the colonists how to properly granulate sugar in the 1790s. Louisiana, therefore, was never part of the eighteenth-century sugar boom in the Caribbean. Also, slave revolts in Saint Domingue during the Seven Years War retarded slave sales because Louisiana strictly forbade the importation of "domiciled slaves from the Antilles." Bruto or bozal slaves, those imported directly from Africa, were the only ones accepted.

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Slave traders, however, did not find Louisiana's sales large enough to justify the risky trip from Africa, across the northern Caribbean and then another hundred miles up-river to New Orleans. It was far easier to sell slaves to the sugar islands. Still, before O'Reilly removed them, several merchants established themselves in New Orleans and sold slaves to the planters.\footnote{See Abraham P. Nasatir and James R. Mills, \textit{Commerce and Contraband}, for a larger discussion of British merchants and slaves sales in New Orleans.} Sales were never extensive even though Ulloa had tried to encourage slavery in order to induce agricultural expansion. He even offered his "mark of protection" to English merchant James Jones of Pensacola if Jones would sell to Louisiana's planters on credit.\footnote{Ingersoll, "Slave Trade," 141.}

Unzaga encouraged African slavery. He wrote to Bucareli in 1770 that the colony might yield a number of crops and only needed the proper "labor to increase production, especially Indigo."\footnote{Unzaga to Bucareli, July 8, 1770, \textit{Dispatches}, vol. 2, 54-55} Still, the majority of Louisiana's colonists could not afford many slaves, especially during Unzaga's governorship. Only the planter elite along the lower Mississippi could purchase large numbers of slaves and their plantations did not expand until late in the Spanish period. Also, the colony's planters could draw from a number of labor resources, including vagrants, to harvest crops. Using such seasonal labor was less expensive than the purchase price, housing and feeding of slaves. Slaves were a precious commodity and smuggled slaves sold legally for three times their purchase price. The limited legal sales therefore also reflect the fact that smuggling Africans was still
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1701-1760</th>
<th>1761-1810</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>British Islands</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>180.4</td>
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<td><strong>French Islands</strong></td>
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<td>Santo Domingo</td>
<td>---------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
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<td>177.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>18.0</td>
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<td><strong>South America</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>959.6</td>
<td>931.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish Colonies</td>
<td>271.2</td>
<td>167.6</td>
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**Source:** Figures taken from Rogozinski, *Brief History*, 124.
profitable until well into the nineteenth-century when towns developed along the old slaving rivers used by Jean Lafitte.

The Mississippi offered many avenues for contraband, from Balize at the mouth of the river to the forts in Spanish Illinois. Contraband could come ashore at any number of places. One of the more favored locations was the Arkansas Post. Arkansas, which means “south wind” in the Algonquian language, had three locations during the colonial period.\textsuperscript{34} In 1756, the fort had been moved downstream and rebuilt on the northern bank of the Arkansas at the junction of that river and the Mississippi. The deltaic region contained abundant wildlife and natural resources. Elm, cedar, and cypress grew for building materials, and the loamy soil of the delta gave rise to huge canebrakes, reeds and thickets which hosted thousands of birds, rabbits and deer. Even remnants of the once plentiful buffalo still could be found on the Arkansas river. The move also made it more convenient to receive trade coming downriver from Spanish Illinois.\textsuperscript{35}

The choice had not been a wise one for several reasons. The new location was swampy and flooded, having none of the good agricultural land of the older site.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{34}Arkansas is an abberation of Ak a kon ce or south wind, sometimes seen as Akakanze the same Siouan tribe which produced the Kansas Indians, Samuel Morris Dickinson, “Colonial Arkansas Place Names,” \textit{Arkansas Historical Quarterly} (hereinafter called AHQ), 48 (Summer, 1989): 138.


\textsuperscript{36}Despite its defensive position the fort was relocated up river to the Grand Prairie grasslands in 1779 in hopes that it would finally grow and produce another barrier to the English. See Morris S. Arnold, “The Relocation of Arkansas Post to Écores Rouges in 1779,” \textit{AHQ}, 42 (Winter, 1983): 317, 319.
Settlers tended, therefore, to pursue their traditional trade in hunting and fur trapping rather than raising crops and the post remained relatively undeveloped. Instead of farming, most male occupants at the village eked out a living hunting, while their families depended on foodstuffs from the Indians, and grain (specially wheat) and drygoods from Spanish Illinois. The residents of Arkansas, to quote French commandant Alexandre de Clouet, were "not truly settlers," and "not a single resident had an outdoor oven."

In truth, the settlement at Arkansas never grew very large during the Spanish period. The census of 68 whites and 31 slaves taken in 1768 changed little within the next decade. In 1771 it read 62 whites and 16 slaves and by the end of Unzaga's term the count had dropped to 50 whites and 11 slaves. The families continued to hunt, trap and fish. Development was so slow that it there were no grist mills in the community before 1791, and the first sawmill didn't appear until after the Spanish period. Still, some hardy souls managed to produce small amounts of tobacco and send it downriver to New Orleans or better yet, to Concordancia.

37 Salted buffalo tongue was a big trade item for hunters. When wheat wasn't available, the residents turned to sagamite (boiled corn mush with bear oil and tallow) as a substitute accompaniment to their meal of birds eggs, wild game and buffalo tongue.

38 DeClouet to O'Reilly, October 6, 1768, AGI, Cuba 107 and Morris S. Arnold, "The Significance of the Arkansas Colonial Experience," AHO, 51 (Spring, 1992): 73.

39 Census material found in AGI Cuba 107 and 190 and Arnold S. Morris, Colonial Arkansas, 1684-1804: A Social and Cultural History, (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1991), Appendix II, 179-181. The census, of course, did not include solitary hunters who lived away from the post for the majority of the year and might number anywhere from 50 to 100 men.

Another problem was that the Indians objected to the move, and even more to the change of ownership—French to Spanish. The post commandants had been given monopoly rights to trade among the Quapaw but the removal of the fort stressed trade and the tribe petitioned the governor to allow them to move to a more suitable site on the Red River. This was a serious problem because many of the French and Spanish commandants were actually merchants who also happened to be officials. Some received their monopoly trade rights before they received their military commissions. The commandants at Arkansas post, therefore, often focused on the fur trade rather than agriculture.

Because of its isolation and position among the Indians, contraband had long been a part of business at Arkansas Post. During the Spanish administration, settlers not only traded furs illicitly they also had a large business in salted buffalo tongues which were extremely popular with the British. Then too, Arkansas attracted a great many men considered the “wrong element.” According to Athanase de Mézières the people who hunted and trapped around the Arkansas post were the lowest of scum, “hunters, murdengers, rapists, and fugitives from justice.” This was perhaps too harsh a judgment of the men at the Post, but many hunters did commit crimes. Hunters often did a double business—one with the Spanish colony and another with the Indians. In 1770 one hunter

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42Bolton, *Athenase de Mézières*, I, 166.
was caught not only selling illegal goods to the Indians but also acting as a gunsmith to
the local tribes. The Spanish government frowned heavily on arming the Indians and the
hunter lost his license, his possessions and his freedom.43

Some hunters fell into the trap of accepting powder and shot in exchange for a
contract to provide their “backers” (often post commanders or merchants from New
Orleans) with the first lien against the gross profits of their catch. Hunters at Arkansas
post frequently fell heavily into debt to their creditors due to poor hunting seasons or the
many accidents which befall men in the wilds. Hunters who owed too much money
sometimes just never returned to Arkansas post. They might contract out at another post
trying to recoup their losses before they returned home or they might just stay in the
wilderness living among the Indians. Those who stayed in the wilds frequently turned to
lives of desperation which included murder and thievery.44

The land west of Arkansas post and south toward Natchitoches was filled with
Indians, (Osage, Quapaw, Caddo and others), where a man could get lost. Among the
Indians one could find isolated hunters, and colonists who served the Indians by repairing
guns or giving them access to European goods. One could also find any number of
deserters from the military. Many ex-military men had already experienced smuggling
with the Indians or the British and chose to disappear among the tribes. These men,
indebted hunters, smugglers, criminals and deserters gave Arkansas Post its bad
reputation.

43Arnold S. Morris, Colonial Arkansas, 64.

44Faye, “Arkansas Post,” 637-638

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Post commandants and merchants also became debtors because of the hunting contracts. Commandants in charge of licensing hunters also invested in outfitting hunters. Some commandants like Captain de Villiers, appointed to the Post in 1776, had fallen into financial straits from such contracts and could barely make their payments on their loans. Because of the poor return on their investments, Arkansas post was subject to many changes of leadership. It was considered a hardship post and had the most changes in leadership of any post during Unzaga's governorship.45

The English settlement of Concordancia built on the Mississippi just across from the mouth of the Arkansas exacerbated both the Indian problem and contraband trade in furs and tallow. British manufactured goods and liquor soon lured the Indians and their vital corn and furs away from the Post. All the Spanish commandants had trouble halting the gradual migration of Indian trade into British territory. They had few gifts and smaller medals than the English and often had to make illegal deals with the tribes to give them whiskey in order to keep the Indians on the right bank of the Mississippi.

The French at the post thought liquor necessary to keep the Indians happy, an important point since many of the people at the post depended on them for food during hard times. O'Reilly had strictly forbidden liquor sales and the first Spanish commandant at Arkansas had refused to give the Indians liquor. In 1770 commandant DeClouet reported to Unzaga that one woman in Concordancia sold liquor to the Indians and had been known to enter Spanish territory with her assistants, traveling several miles up the

Arkansas to trade with the Indian villages. He also complained of an Englishman who had dared settle among the Quapaw, trading illegally and ridiculing the Spanish.46

By 1772, with increasing influence from the British, the Indians began demanding liquor from the little Spanish post at Arkansas. The tribe informed governor Unzaga that they preferred the French commandants who treated them better, and that Captain Fernando de Leyba, a Spaniard, didn’t even speak French, which was their language of trade. The Indians were also incensed because earlier that month Leyba had arrested Nicholas Labussièr, a favored French trader living with the Quapaw, for selling liquor and “other trade violations.”47

Unzaga defended his commandant but as time went on was forced to admit that it was probably wiser to license liquor dealers than to forbid liquor altogether. That rule seemed to maintain some peace at Arkansas Post although it never stopped the Indians from “double dipping” at Arkansas and at Concordancia.48

Illicit trade between the settlers, slaves and Indians of Arkansas Post and the British continued unabated by Spanish rule or attempts at law enforcement. It became such an important way to supplement colonial lives that in 1777 Athanase De Mézières

46Demasellière to O’Reilly, January 15, 1770, AGI, Cuba 107. The trader stayed among the Quapaw until 1774 when the new guns and fortifications at the Arkansas post impressed the Indians enough that they chose to believe the Spanish and evicted him. De Leyba to Unzaga, November 22, 1771, and October 26, 1773, AGI, Cuba 107; Orieta to Unzaga, July 14, 1774, Ibid. (See Chapter 5).

47Arnold, Colonial Arkansas, 155; Leyba to Unzaga, June 15, 1772, and Leyba to Unzaga, June 25, 1772, AGI, Cuba 107.

48De Villiers to Gálvez, September 15, 1779, AGI, Cuba 192.
reported to Unzaga's successor that the English at Concordancia had built a block house which could store larger amounts of trade goods.\textsuperscript{49}

South of Arkansas three posts guarded the western regions of lower Louisiana. On the Mississippi itself Pointe Coupée guarded the south bend of the river below the English fort at Natchez and traded among the small tribes. Its commandant presided over a number of the small Acadian settlements and coats built and occupied during Unzaga's tenure. North of Point Coupée, and into the wilderness along the Red, Black and then Quachita Rivers, was a small trading station among the Caddo that became known as Ouatchita Post. Farther west Natchitoches guarded the colonial boundary between New Spain and Louisiana. Together these posts controlled most of the Indian trade in the West. O'Reilly had given a Lieutenant Governorship to the commander at Natchitoches because of its sensitive location near the fort of Los Adaes in Spanish Texas.

Of the previous posts, Point Coupée and Ouachita carried no military significance to Captain-General O'Reilly, who appointed a series of \textit{tenientes particulares}, or militia captains who acted as government agents for such areas. In reality, during the 1770s, Ouachita post was merely a meeting ground for the French \textit{courier de bois} who went up the Ouachita River to trade with the Ouachita, Osage and Quapaw Indian. Unzaga's report to Arriaga, \textit{Noticia General de lo que produse la Provinacia de la Luisiana}, October 26, 1771, stated that the Ouachita lands afforded settlers little agricultural area and less in the way of wildlife. In fact, the only thing they yielded were

\footnotesize{{\textsuperscript{49}Bolton, \textit{Athanase de Mézières}, 2: 141.}}

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medical plants like fers for making cough medicine (syrop de capillare), sarsaparilla and ipecaguana, and except for foxes, few animals capable of making good pelts for sale. Most residents were semi-permanent, subsistence hunters whose sole property was a rifle and powder horn.

The Ouachita settlement stayed small and insignificant until 1785 when it was removed to a new location at present day Monroe and renamed Ft. Miro. Few works, other than Unzaga's report, describe the early colonists. Most discuss the life of Jean-Baptiste Filhiol, commandant at Ft. Miro who didn't reach the Ouachita country until 1782, after Unzaga's tenure. Still, by Filhiol’s time the people on the Ouachita River remained subsistence hunters and could not easily be coerced into agriculture. These men, he said, had the same reputation as the hunters at Arkansas Post. Many were fugitives and deserters, and their independence was more important than any loyalty to god or king.51

The post at Ouachita was probably rife with contraband, particularly goods the Indians might have been able to bring from Spanish Texas (northern New Spain). There are no records on the subject, however, and any military importance the post received happened only after its move down river during Miro’s time.52

50 Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga, Noticia General de lo que produse la Provincia de la Luisiana, AN (Havana), Cedulas y Ordenes, v. 284 in Faye, “Arkansas Post,” 635.


52 See James Fair Hardin, Don Juan Filhiol and the founding of Fort Miro the modern Monroe Louisiana (New Orleans: T. J. Moran’s, 1937) and E. Russ Williams, Spanish Post d'Ouachita: The Ouachita Valley in Colonial Louisiana 1783-1804 and Early American Statehood, 1804-1820 (Monroe, LA: Williams Genealogical Publications, 1995).
Unzaga disagreed with O’Reilly about the importance and leadership of Point Coupée. The post was situated only sixteen leagues south of the junction of the Mississippi and the Red River (across from present-day St. Francisville) which opened into the western frontier. Point Coupée regulated all river traffic and licensing in and out of the western area between the Mississippi and Natchitoches. In 1770, Unzaga replaced Captain of the Militia, Francisco Allain, with a military commandant, Captain Balthazar de Villiers, recently of Natchitoches.53

As the entrance into western Louisiana, the primary problems at Point Coupée surrounded the Indians, and English attempts to get through to the western tribes. On April, 1770, François Allain wrote Unzaga that the English had sent Chickasaw and Indians of “La grande nation,” (perhaps Creek) across the river into Spanish territory. These English-allied tribes “drank continuously” and in that condition perpetrated raids on the fort. It appears the Choctaw were also stirring up problems and Allain was delighted when they retired back into English territory. Both the Chickasaw and Choctaw continued to trouble Allain and his successor Devillier. They also continued going to Manchac for liquor before they began their campaigns of terror.54

Indian depredations hurt many Louisianans’. For example, Point Coupée continually had property damage and livestock stolen by such Indians. Even the British suffered at the hand’s of their erstwhile allies. Allain reported in September of 1770 that


54Allain to Unzaga, April 20, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 16 and Unzaga to Allain, April 26, 1770, Ibid., Folio 17. Allain openly accused the English of such offenses in 1771, Allain to Unzaga, January 4, 1771, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 24.
an Englishman named McIntosh sought refuge at the post because he feared death at the hands of the Choctaw.55

Smuggling at Point Coupee varied. The primary spots for smuggling near the post were the English settlements at Manchac and Natchez and both Allain and Devillier reported smuggling by the Acadians with the English across the river. Natchitoches also passed along contraband goods, especially horses, as well as certain criminal elements. As early as September of 1770, commandant Allain informed the governor that the post had received a number of mules and horses. Unzaga replied that he must check them carefully for those branded with a "B." That brand belonged to the Baron Juan Maria de Riperda which meant that the cattle might have been stolen from Spanish Texas, a common occurrence.56 Then too, as Point Coupee became a tobacco producing location, illicit trade in that item began.57 To date there has been almost no examination of the post and settlement at Point Coupee. Considering the importance of its location and the continued trade in illegal goods further investigation is warranted.

The Post at Natchitoches has elicited a number of historical works including the famous Bolton translations of the letters of Lieutenant-Governor Athanase de Mézières. De Mézières was a Frenchman who had been appointed commandant of Natchitoches by

55Allain to Unzaga, September 25, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 37
56Ibid.
57Unzaga to Allain, November 15, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 45.
O’Reilly in 1769. He continued to act as a diplomat and Indian agent under the Spanish regime until his death in the 1770s.58

Natchitoches had been an important fort in Louisiana since its founding by Louis Juchereau St. Denis in 1714. Originally called St. Jean Baptiste, its location near the Natchitoches Indians earned its present name. St. Denis felt that Louisiana would profit from trade with Spain’s borderland colonies despite the ban on inter-colonial trade. He even ventured into Spanish territory, winning a bride and an audience with the Viceroy. The outcome of that conversation was further Spanish movement into eastern Texas to place a buffer of four mission/presidio settlements between the French and New Spain. These settlements became a constant source of illegal trade between the French and Spanish. New Spain experimented with moving the missions around to remove their temptation, but nothing worked. Also, since both Spaniard and Frenchmen profited, and the settlements were in isolated locations, little was done about the inter-colonial traffic during the French period.

Increasing Indian attacks pressured New Spain into re-examining the missions in Texas and the Southwest. The crown ordered field-marshall, Marqués de Rubí, to inspect the area in the late 1760s. Accompanied by Spanish engineer, Nicolás de Lafora, Rubí toured the missions, reporting in detail the dilapidated conditions of the settlements east of San Antonio de Béxar (present day San Antonio). The missions frequently housed only one priest, and some had no Indian converts residing with them. The garrison at Los

58 Louis R. Nardini, No Man’s Land, 76; for a complete biography on de Mézières see Julia Vivian, A Cavalier in Texas, (San Antonio, TX: The Naylor Company, 1953).

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Adaes hosted only sixty-one ragged and shoeless soldiers. Between them the soldiers could produce only two working muskets and only twenty-five of their horses were healthy enough to be used. Part of the reason for these conditions was the post commander's embezzlement of the soldiers' supplies and pay. 59

Rubí recommended that the viceroy rearrange the presidios to form a string of strong fortifications between Bahía del Espíritu Santo in the east, and the Gulf of California in the west, with San Antonio and Sante Fe holding the middle-ground. This area he really felt was the border of empire and other mission/presidio holdings were "imaginary possessions." 60

In response to Rubí's recommendations the King issued a Royal Cedula which created a New Regulation of Presidios, dated September 10, 1772. The Regulations called for the redistribution of missionary and military personnel in northern New Spain and the abandonment of the easternmost presidio. The following year the viceroy of New Spain sent Lt. Col. Hugo O'Connor to officially reorganize the Provincias Internas, as the area was called. 61

While New Spain reorganized, Unzaga investigated the trade between Natchitoches and Los Adaes. The leader at the settlement of Los Adaes was army officer, Gil Y'Barbo, a notorious smuggler who had already been arrested for selling mules and 


61 Weber, Spanish Borderlands, 217.
horses, stolen from other presidios, to the French, in exchange for supplies and food.62 During Ulloa’s tenure, Viceroy Marquès de Croix, had written to Ulloa regarding contraband at Los Adaes. In 1770 the governor questioned De Mézières about such trade. De Mézières replied that Los Adaes was destitute and that the long established trade was humanitarian in nature. He also reported the exchange of supplies for mules and horses which Louisiana badly needed. The lieutenant-governor was bold enough to send a bill for goods (cloth) sent to Los Adaes in hopes that the governor would pay for his “lost” supplies. Unzaga, however, had already received notification from the Baron de Ripperda in Texas regarding the return of stolen animals. The governor gently chastised the commandant for the contraband. While the governor chided De Mézières about the horses, he applauded his efforts and recommended that any further “exchange” between the two settlements be in the form of “foodstuffs or humanitarian aid.” In regard to the bill, Unzaga reminded De Mézières that he could not spend the money from the treasury, though he would like to, because it was “against the order of His Majesty whose will he [was] to inviolably execute.”63 He also couldn’t pay for the bill because it was for goods being used in inter-colonial trade, an illegal activity he would be forced to report if De Mézières pressed his claim.

De Mézières reported the return of some horses, stolen from the Arkansas Indians by the inhabitants of Natchitoches. He again asked for money to pay courier Juan

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63 Unzaga to De Mézières, September 20, 1770, AGI, SD 81, Folio 216.
Baptiste Bieber’s expenses for returning them. A wily Unzaga congratulated his officer on keeping the peace with the Indians, but refused again to pay the bill from the treasury because he said “thieves and any other criminals must make restitution from their own interest.” He admitted that the Indians could not be expected to pay such expenses but the thieves could and should be charged the twenty pesos for the courier’s services, adding that “the monies of the King [were] a sacred deposit in the hands of his ministers and they may not be touched without his majesty’s express mandate and grace.”

Unzaga’s position on contraband with Spanish Texas was vacillating at best. Officially he condemned contraband of all kinds and only permitted humanitarian trade because the people in Los Adaes were, after all, Spanish. Reading the governor’s letters one gets the opinion that the man followed the rules, as closely as possible, and saved the king money at all cost.

Unzaga’s position on contraband depended on the situation at hand. In fact, he was not above such trade himself! The need for horses, mules and cattle led Louisiana’s governor to defy official policy in 1773. He authorized a colonist named Jean Hamilton and two “English carpenters” to penetrate Baron de Ripperda’s province and “keep an eye on things.” Hamilton actually began to engage in surreptitious trade for horses and cattle. The news of Hamilton’s deals reached the ears of the Baron who questioned Gabriel Fusilier de la Claire, then post commandant at Attakapas Post. The commandant replied that such rumors were greatly exaggerated. Unfortunately, Ripperda caught Hamilton and

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64 Unzaga to De Mézières, September 20, 1770, AGI, SD 81, Folio 215.

65 Ibid.
his spies and threatened to hang them. Louisiana's governor pleaded ignorance of the whole affair until Fusilier de la Claire found invoices and permits in the bottom of Hamilton's boat bearing Unzaga's signature.66

That same year Ripperda ordered the evacuation of Los Adaes and the other eastern missions. In a cruel forced march, the settlers abandoned their crops and homes with only five days to prepare for the long journey to their relocation in San Antonio. In their absence the Indians reclaimed the tiny settlement. Over the next two years Unzaga had to look elsewhere for horses, and the Indians frequently stole horses from one post to sell to another.67 In 1775, Unzaga tried another tack. Acting through Alejandro de Clouet, the current commandant at Atakapas, the governor sent five men to San Antonio with trade goods, hoping to exchange them for livestock. The Viceroy intervened this time circumventing the illegal trade and frustrating Louisiana's governor.68

With the loss of Los Adaes the main problems at Natchitoches consisted of increased disturbances among the Indians and intra-colonial difficulties between the hunters in the west and the settlers at the western posts. De Mézières spent his last remaining years in Louisiana bringing peace to the western tribes.

Unzaga's vacillating policies on contraband continued throughout his career in Louisiana. His real attention was drawn by the English on the Mississippi. Up-river in

66Fuselier to Unzaga, March 1, 1773, AGI, Cuba 189-B.


68Holmes, “Problems of Spanish Governors,” 528.
present day Missouri, Spanish Illinois, lay the two fortified settlements of St. Louis and Ste. Geneviève. Ste. Geneviève had been one of six small French settlements in Upper Louisiana near Ft. Chartres, before the advent of Spanish rule. French Illinois “was linked to the center of America by water routes: the Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee, and Illinois rivers and their tributaries.”69

Ste. Geneviève was perhaps one of the poorest and most ill-placed of the six towns. It suffered from constant flooding, a fact which prompted Pierre Laclède Liguest, and his partners in 1764 to found the settlement of St. Louis in a drier location just south of the mouth of the Missouri River. (See Chapter Six)70 O'Reilly had placed Lieutenant-Governor Pedro Piernas at St. Louis and given its merchants the monopoly on the fur trade with the Missouri and Osage. The two settlements also mined lead, produced food and, more importantly, flour for the colony.

Smuggling and contraband came to Spanish Illinois two ways. The French settlements had been a wealthy agricultural community known as Le Pays des Illinois. The colonists had been wealthy enough to buy their clothes from France and accumulate many material possessions prior to the Seven Years War. Their biggest difficulty had been labor, which they answered with the purchase of Indian and African slaves. With the transfer of Louisiana to Spain, Ste. Geneviève suddenly became Spanish and the

69The other settlements were Cahokia and St. Philippe, north of the Fort; Chartres and Prairie du Rocher, just to the south and Kaskaskia near the Indian village and fortress of the same name, across the river from Ste. Geneviève. Winstanley Briggs, “Le Pays des Illinois,” William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd series, 47 (1990): 33-34.

other, once French settlements, English. Many French settlers crossed the river to escape what quickly became English military rule. This influx was accompanied by Indians seeking trade with their usual partners. Cut off from its usual stream of manufactured goods and its normal market, Ste. Geneviève continued to trade with its French neighbors across the Mississippi. As the flow of European goods dried up, all of these small towns stagnated and the inhabitants of St. Louis and Ste. Geneviève were reduced to a frontier existence. By the time of Unzaga’s tenure, the two towns stood isolated in the North, dependent upon their own agriculture, lead mining and trade with the Indians. Piernas’ arrival stifled trans-Mississippi trade. Despite these problem, translations of Piernas’ letters in Louis Houck’s collection of documents related to Upper Louisiana, show that St. Louis and Ste. Genvie prospered on their own. New Orleans was dependent on their wheat, corn and flour.  

The contraband the Spanish couldn’t stop was trade with the Indians. Part of the problem was that the Big and Little Osage and the Missouri wanted firearms. The monopoly on trade in Spanish Illinois pushed many tribes like the Big Osage into a pattern of migratory behavior much like the normal seasonal round of mobile Indian tribes, except this one was based on predation. They arrived in Missouri in late winter and early spring, received their gifts and while they were there sold Indian slaves (despite their illegality), stolen horses, furs, tallow, and herbs. While in the north they also traded for illegal powder and munitions. Having finished, the Osage returned South, strafing

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Arkansas post on the way with a few raids, and then settling in for the summer near Natchitoches where they preyed on the Caddo Confederation and its association tribes. They stole everything possible, but favored horses and captives which they could sell. By fall they returned to Arkansas post just as the hunters set up camp along the river. There they took firearms and replenished their ammunition, taking captives and killing others. By late winter and the following spring they returned to St. Louis to repeat the cycle.72

The Spanish struggled to control the Osage’s contraband. However, the merchants at St. Louis continued to trade guns, powder and munitions to the Indians, making their predation possible. Even when, in 1774, Unzaga finally ordered that trade with the Osage must be cut off so that they would be forced into more peaceful ways, the merchants at St. Louis never stopped trading with them. Piemas reported in Spring of 1775, that although the Osage trade was forbidden it still accounted for over forty percent of the furs which arrived in St. Louis.73 Thus the problem of contraband at St. Louis was perpetuated by the merchants of that city in the same way that Arkansas perpetuated its problems by continuing to trade whiskey to the Quapaw. Unzaga’s orders from New Orleans had little impression on the lives of those at Arkansas Post and St. Louis; therefore contraband and Osage depredations continued.

72There were several different bands of Osage. The Little Osage and the Missouri stayed near St. Louis while bands of the Big Osage were more mobile. See Gilbert C. Din and Abraham P. Nasatir, The Imperial Osages, (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983) for a larger view of Louisiana’s problems with this group of tribes. See Chapter 6 for a larger view of Indian problems in St. Louis.

73Piernas’ report to Unzaga, May 19, 1775, AGI, Cuba 2358 in Kinnaird, SMV 1: 228 and Din and Nasatir, Imperial Osages, 96.
The easiest contraband for Unzaga to control was that aboard British ships when they passed by the pilot house at Balize. With O'Reilly's departure in 1770, British ships began gradually to reappear along the Mississippi, ostensibly bringing goods to the traders at Manchac. The British had the right to transport goods on the Mississippi as part of the Treaty of Paris. Once merchants passed New Orleans there was little the governor could do about trade with the plantations in lower Louisiana. Ships ascending the Mississippi fought against the current. They had to carefully hug the bank to avoid the faster waters of the main channel and navigate the numerous curves on the river. This often necessitated landing men on shore with ropes who literally helped to drag the ship upstream. At night, exhausted from the fight, the captain and crew took refuge at the nearest private dock, especially at local plantations. Once tied to the dock, a ship immediately became one of the floating warehouses described by Louisiana's historians. As long as the such ships had the right to transport goods on the river, British trade with the plantations and the settlers of the Acadian and German Coasts was inevitable. Louisiana's colonists deemed the trade a necessity.

Unzaga was frustrated but not defeated. He used several different strategies with these ships, keeping in mind the need to act solicitously toward the British. In July of 1770, he encountered two British vessels carrying food from West Florida who entered the Mississippi. At the same time he received a goleta (small Spanish ship) from Merida with letters from the governor and the cabildo requesting food (maize) because after a recent hurricane they were in "misery." They were especially concerned about the tribute

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Indians who had gathered into small bands and were disappearing into the interior, “eating the roots of trees to keep alive.” Many were dying, poisoned by their attempts to forage. The famine, they complained, had stripped away the people necessary to work for Royal Service. The captain of the goleta had instructions to find food in Louisiana and return as quickly as possible (within 15 days). Unzaga decided to furnish the British captains with letters of recommendation and send them to the colonists in the Yucatan. Food was already tight in New Orleans and the governor couldn’t spare any. He could, however, solve two problems at once, supplying the people in the Yucatan with food and preventing contraband trade along the Mississippi at the same time. Knowing that he had skirted official policy, the governor quickly excused himself on the grounds of expediency, writing to Bucareli, “I have freed myself from the interchange which these vessels would have made in this vast country, the English having great freedom in going to and fro through this river; it would have been almost impossible to avoid it.” He further excused himself reporting that the locusts were eating Louisiana’s crops and the langosta (crawfish?) were destroying the rice. The governor would have had to wait for other crops to come downriver to New Orleans before he could help the Yucatan. Surely the British were the most expedient answer to the problem.

In writing to Bucareli, Unzaga knew that his superior could not stop or reverse his fait accompli. In fact, he had deliberately resorted to the old colonial ploy obedezco pero

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75 Unzaga to Bucareli, July 8, 1770, AGI, Cuba 1055, attachment to Folio 112.

76 Unzaga to Bucareli, August 3, 1770, Dispatches and Unzaga to Bucareli, August 31, 1770, AGI, Cuba 1055, Folio 117.
no cumplo (I obey but do not carry out) to avoid laws which did not fit colonial reality.

Colonial correspondence from the colonies took months to reach Spain and months to return. Even mail to Havana and back had a slow turn around time. The very slowness of the Spanish system of command and correspondence allowed Spanish administrators like Louisiana’s governor to act first and seek permission later. Bucareli did little more than mildly reprimand Unzaga, admonishing him not to do it again.77

Turning two ships aside did little to stem the rush of the British to the Mississippi. By the next year more and more ships appeared, asking for passage by Balize and New Orleans. Unzaga wrote in frustration to Bucareli:

These same vessels, which from time to time pass in front of this city with the pretext of going to their settlements of Manchac and Nachez have no other object than that of obtaining what commerce they can on this river, and the purpose of finding out news, and in order to prevent this they cause me a lot of vigilance. These ships [are] going from one side of the river to the other in small groups, and I caution the captains of these ships to observe their conduct and their ships, not having other means to impede the free entrance which they have on this river and to preserve harmony with a nation so delicate and touchy.78

The governor’s frustration did not last long. He soon pieced together a plan to keep peace with the British merchants, limit the amount of contraband flowing through the mouth of the river and follow the imperial directive to keep a surveillance on the British. British merchants were now stopped twice on their way up river. At Balize the pilot house sent messages to the governor of the nature of a ship’s cargo and her captain.

77Fagg, Latin America, 167-71.

78Unzaga to Bucareli, January 22, 1771, Dispatches.
Upon receipt of the report, Unzaga could, if he wished, invite several of the captains into dinner where he could also carefully glean information from them about the British in Pensacola and the eastern seaboard. He could also stop them on the way back from Manchac to ask them about the progress there. For instance, in May of 1771, he dined with the captain of a British barge returning from the Illinois country. He noted the cargo of the barge and also extract information about the growing settlement at Natchez. By piecing together this news with reports from French and Spanish traders, as well as his commandants, Unzaga, in New Orleans, had a clearer view of the Mississippi and the movements of the British.

Unzaga also developed a network of spy/merchants like James O’Kelly who could enter and leave Manchac without suspicion. Many Irish Catholics preferred to live under the Spanish crown and Unzaga rewarded their “efforts” to spy on the British with the required papers for citizenship. Even after the Malvinas crisis passed, Unzaga in Louisiana and de la Torre in Havana continued to build their network of spies (See Chapter 8).^{80}

Unzaga appears to have continued using the merchants in New Orleans for more than surveillance. In May of 1775 he bought flour from British merchants in New Orleans because of the paucity of the commodity. He also continued to buy flour from Oliver Pollock, a merchant found “acceptable” even by O’Reilly. In September of 1776 he sought to explain himself to the new Minister of the Indies, José de Gálvez, explaining

^{79}Cummins, Spanish Observers, 15-16.

^{80}Ibid, 22;
that he knew he was not supposed to buy flour from foreigners, but "because of extreme need" he had done so. He promised not to do it again, adding that he would seek in the future to supply himself from Veracruz and Havana. 81

Not all of Unzaga's subordinates appreciated the governor's economic strategy. One such person was the treasurer, Martin Navarro. As a representative of the crown, Navarro wrote lengthy letters to the Minister of the Indies deploring Unzaga's pragmatic approach to Louisiana's economic woes. He agreed, however, that the colonoy needed immediate assistance, admitting that trade with Spain was not the answer to Louisiana's difficulties. Instead, he suggested ways to implement better control of contraband along the Mississippi. Unfortunately, the tone of Navarro's letters suggested that Unzaga's laxity concerning contraband and the British was also part of the problem. His plans, while interesting on paper, were not always practicable given the manpower and money available. It is also quite possible that Navarro was not appraised of the governor's plan to use merchants for secret surveillance of the British. Unfortunately, Unzaga was not tolerant of Navarro's penchant for "going over his head" and an enmity developed between the two officials which lasted until Unzaga's departure from Louisiana. 82

In contrast to Navarro's complaints, allowing trade with British merchants to help revitalize the economy in Louisiana and supplement the needs of his colonists did not mean that the governor accepted blatant disobedience. He must maintain order in the

81 Unzaga

82 For a larger discussion of the problems of Navarro and Unzaga, and of Navarro's plans, see Brian E. Coutts' previously mentioned dissertation on Navarro as treasurer, contador, and intendant of Louisiana between 1766 and 1788.
colony and continue to establish Spanish authority. Accordingly he chose certain cases to make an example of what happened to those who attempted overt smuggling. One such case was that of John Nash, a Rhode Island merchant caught selling merchandise to soldiers above New Orleans in 1774. Unzaga’s officials intercepted and arrested Nash, sending his belongings to New Orleans where they were sold. The British governor of West Florida interceded on behalf of Nash but the merchant only managed to retrieve part of his confiscated property. As the story of Nash’s misfortunes circulated, the severity of the penalty became magnified. One merchant at Natchez named Richard Carpenter, wrote a friend in Newport that five or six British ships had been confiscated.83

The amount of British ships and goods taken into custody was minimal compared to the smuggling that actually happened and British ships were not the only ones of which Unzaga made an example. Records indicate that many of Louisiana’s ships were also seized, their captains arrested or fined and the illegal goods confiscated, including slaves taken aboard an illegal French ship. Among those involved was prominent merchant Bartolomé Toutant Beauregard. Unzaga apparently did not favor even the most prominent citizen who overtly flaunted his disobedience. This list, again, is small, indicating only nine cases brought to trial between 1771-78. Even among his citizens Unzaga sought merely to make an example because he did not have the forces or the funds to do otherwise.84

83Unzaga to Arriaga, September 7, 1774, AGI, SD 2482; Testimonio del proceso contra Joseph Nach & Co., ibid; Hoffman, Luisiana, 137; Clark, New Orleans, 178.

84For an extensive look at testimony concerning the illicit commerce brought through New Orleans see Collección al Documentos Inéditos para la testimonia de
Louisiana historian Charles Gayarré states that the early economic reforms under Charles III, created an "oppressive system [which] was exceedingly foolish, as it could benefit neither the colony nor the mother country." His statement, while harsh, has been supported by others, most notably Clark's economic study of New Orleans. Unzaga, in charge of New Orleans, had to work within the empire and the imperial vision within which Louisiana was only one part and an impoverish one at that. In many ways, the reforms reinforced the smuggling and contraband trade already entrenched in the Gulf Coast if not the Caribbean. Indeed, as Havana's economy bloomed, Louisiana's began to wither, and its population turned to contraband and smuggling to survive. Unzaga strove to work within the confines of empire to maintain and revitalize Louisiana's failing economy and fight illegal commerce at the same time. Given his manpower and financial problems Unzaga could never have controlled the ingrained, inter-colonial trade, nor the illicit trade with the colony's Indians.

The historical records supports claims that Unzaga "winked" at illegal commerce and contraband but that comment is too narrow a vision of a complex problem. Unzaga rightly believed that attempts to disrupt the informal economic system would have angered not only the British but many of Louisiana's Indian allies as well. As his experience grew, he endeavored, instead, to use the colonial system to further imperial goals of colonial growth and security. He also circumvented impractical crown policy through obedezco pero no cumple, managing to help both Louisiana and empire. In

Hispano-America, AGI, Cuba, legajos 1389, 1393, 1396, 1398-99, 1401, 1405, 1410.

Gayarré, History of Louisiana, 44.
particular, he, like his superiors in Havana, took advantage of British ships passing through the capital to maintain a constant surveillance of the British. Through these merchants Unzaga gleaned important information for the Spanish crown regarding the British along the Mississippi, in Florida and the eastern seaboard. Unzaga's greatest frustration, and perhaps his greatest failure, was his attempt to control contraband and establish regulated trade through licensed traders and a system of post monopolies with Louisiana's Native American population.
Chapter Six

The Indians

"The Indians shift their loyalties to the person or persons that have most recently given them gifts, without paying any attention to what they had received before, even though it might have been a thousand times more."

Pedro Piernas, St. Louis, 12 June, 1771.

Spanish Louisiana's security was based on an informal defense system of militia men, small numbers of troops in a few strategically placed forts, and a stable population. Unzaga was also aware that only peace with neighboring Indian tribes, or at least a truce based on gift giving, would guarantee his colonists' safety. Native Americans also affected the economic progress of the colony as traders, trappers, customers and part of the population engaged in contraband.

Historian Patricia Galloway pointed out that a major part of Louisiana's narrative on Indians and Indian diplomacy was hidden away in the letters from various post commandants. Galloway was referring to French Louisiana, but the same holds true for Unzaga's time. This study of Louisiana's Native Americans, therefore, focuses on both the governor's and commandants' letters, with special attention to the latter. In them it appears that during the 1770s many American Indian tribes regrouped into various confederations to play encroaching groups of Europeans against each other. Despite treaties, truces and gifts, the Indians, not the Europeans, continued to hold the upper hand in the Trans-Mississippi West. Because of their power, freedom, and semi-sedentary

1 Piernas to Unzaga, June 12, 1771, AGI, Cuba 81.
natures, Louisiana’s Indian allies often frustrated Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga in his attempts to keep the peace, control contraband and defend his colonists.²

The Spanish inherited three separate Indian problems with the Louisiana territory. East of Mississippi the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek (the major tribes of the Muskogee language group who made forays into the colony), the Tallapousa and the “petite naciones” or “small tribes,” (the general term for a loose confederation of Indians living within a hundred-mile radius of New Orleans), were restive or in open conflict with each other. Northward along the Mississippi, Arkansas and St. Louis struggled with the Little and Big Osage and Quapaw whose continued depredations against each other and the posts kept the frontier in an uproar. These Native American tribes were also constantly engaged in contraband and illegal trade which stretched from Upper to Lower Louisiana. Finally, to the west there was trouble between the Osage and the Caddo Confederacy, as well as incursions by plains Indians pushed eastward from Spanish Texas.³

The colony's Indian problems began in the French period. From the last decades of the seventeenth century onward, colonization, slavery, disease and the colonial wars


uprooted, economically impoverished and/or eradicated many of the southeastern Indian nations. In the Mississippi Valley, the French maintained a policy of inter-marriage and trade, while at the same time encouraging intertribal warfare. Native Americans slowly elicited a “diplomacy” of gift giving with the French because they habitually engaged in trade and political alliances with the highest bidder, as represented by medals of recognition and annual gifts—preferably manufactured European goods.

In the first decades of the seventeenth century the French establishing missions and trading posts in the Mississippi Valley to monopolize the fur trade. Between 1703 and 1704 French missionaries founded a mission at the junction of the Kaskaskia and Mississippi Rivers (near present day Utica, Illinois). The missionaries Christianized the Illinois Confederacy and *courier de bois* intermarried with the tribes, making them steadfast French allies. Fur trappers, traders and missionaries brought with them the common European problems of disease and alcohol. Trade created factionalism in the Confederacy. Before mid-century a population of some six-thousand Indians was reduced to two thousand. As Canadians settled into French Illinois, expeditions headed by Bienville and others pushed northward from the mouth of the Mississippi following its tributary rivers westward.

As the French moved into the Mississippi Valley some tribes resisted. For example, in the north, the Fox Wars (1712-1736) decimated the Masquackies (Fox) and their allies the Sauk, Kickapoo and Dakota, setting off a decade of warfare around the Great Lakes. Eventually continued French depredations led the remaining Fox and their
allies to shift their fur trade to the English. In the South, the Natchez revolted (1727-1731) under their leader, Great Sun. The surrounding tribes refused to join the Natchez and some, like the Choctaw and the Tunica, fought on the side of the French. By 1731 the war had reduced a tribe of four thousand to approximately three hundred. The survivors were enslaved or scattered among the major tribes to the east—the Chickasaws, Creeks and Cherokees. Giving refuge to the Natchez in time increased existing friction between the Chickasaws and the Choctaw. War flared between the Chickasaws and the French from 1736-1739.

Following the Natchez revolt the French re-evaluated their Indian policy. Constantly underfunded and virtually unprotected from Europeans and Indian tribes alike, the French leadership in Louisiana, after 1731, realized that increased Indian diplomacy through gift giving was necessary for survival, especially against the encroaching English to the east. However, the ministers in France and the treasury officials they sent to the colony fought against expenditures on gifts for “savages.” The Indians understood the colonial official’s difficulties and often took advantage of the colony by selling their services to the highest bidder, which was frequently the English.

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The French also faced constantly changing Indian populations along the Mississippi, as groups moved west to avoid slavery and death at the hands of the British or Indians allied with them. Thus tribes from the British seaboard colonies moved into the Ohio Valley, displacing others who subsequently moved into the Mississippi Valley and across the river. In the southeast, the English, Spanish and French fought for control through their mutual Indian allies. The smaller tribes, the Biloxi, Alabama, and Pascagoula were pushed westward through the Gulf South to the Isle of Orleans. At the mouth of the Mississippi the portage area near Bayou St. John witnessed the extinction of the Tangipahoa and the Acolapissas. By the 1720s it became home to Biloxi and Houma who came seeking trade and were followed by other diminishing tribal groups. Those Indians, joined on occasion by the Choctaw, became migratory populations, appearing and disappearing on either side of the Mississippi. They followed seasonal game resources and attempted to stay away from danger, rather than settle in one area.

War and migration also brought with it an expansion of trade in European merchandise and weapons. The new availability of goods and weapons in turn changed traditional tribal politics and inter-tribal alliances. It created new chiefs, separated and dispersed tribes, and thus helped destabilize and decimate once stable groups. Smaller groups created confederacies to make up for their lack of strength. The Indians refocused their economies and lifestyles, using their greater mobility to take part in the changing market.

The changing population of the southeast was created primarily by the “diplomacy” of the British and their colonists along the eastern seaboard. This
“diplomacy” was based on trade, inter-tribal conflict and debt-slavery. At the end of the seventeenth century the English raided Spanish Georgia with the aid of Indian Allies. The inability of the Spanish to protect their mission Indians at Guale began the end of the Spanish mission system in Florida. Devastating raids in 1704 destroyed the Apalachee missions and caused them and Yamasee living with them to disperse in several directions. One group of Apalachee moved west across the Gulf South, eventually becoming one of the migratory tribes along the Mississippi. Some of the Yamasee moved northward to South Carolina in search of European products and trade.7

In 1715, unable to pay their debts to the English, the Yamasee lost their wives and children to debt slavery and revolted. In the ensuing conflict the English pitched their allies, the Creeks, against the Yamasee. The Creeks invited the Cherokee to join the war, believing that together they could turn the tables and push the Europeans (especially the English) out. Unfortunately, the British paid the Cherokee to murder the Creek and then cut off their ammunition. The Yamasee lost.8

Following the Yamasee war, a new problem appeared in the form of an increasing European population. Population pressure accelerated intertribal hostilities and competition among the Native Americans in the Gulf South. English families soon populated the Carolinas and pushed the Spanish southward towards what would become

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Georgia in 1733. War in Europe brought more immigrants into the Carolinas until, by the 1740s, South Carolina held ten times the European colonists who lived in Spanish Florida. Population pressure presented Native Americans with the additional problem of infectious disease. Typhus, dysentery, smallpox and other epidemics changed Indian demographics, wiping out whole tribes that had existed in the early 1700s. The remnants of many decimated tribes joined together forming new tribes and moving westward away from the devastation. By the mid-eighteenth century, these movements, and ensuing epidemics disrupted the trade network in deerskins and changed tribal warfare, as well as traditional Native America lifestyles and alliances. Once sedentary tribes became migratory gypsies who wandered steadily westward, appearing with more and more regularity in the Mississippi Valley.

During the first half of the eighteenth-century Native Americans along the Mississippi and to the west of the valley also experienced the same disruption in trade, lifestyle and alliances. Pressure from European populations and hostile tribes moving

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10Daniel H. Usner, Jr. “American Indians in Colonial New Orleans,” Powhatan’s Mantle: Indians in the Colonial Southeast. See also Henry F. Dobyns, Their Number Became Thinned, for demographic change due to disease in the Southeast.
across the river or pushing eastward from Spanish Texas was exacerbated by the demand for European trade goods, especially weapons. They sought the French along the Red River at Rapides and further west at Natchitoches to trade stolen horses for arms and ammunition. They used the arms to pursue their own political ventures either against the Spanish or each other and sometimes with Louisiana’s Caddo confederation, Witchita tribes or the Shoshonean Comanches who were new arrivals in the colony. European weapons increased intertribal warfare and disrupted the normal trading patterns among the western tribes as they had done in the east.

Further north the Arkansas Post, the Quapaw, the Big and Little Osage and the Missouri tribes offered the French both trade and trouble. The French offered trade and gifts for Indian allies, holding an annual gift giving ceremony for friendly tribes. The Quapaw quickly became dependent on French firearms and fire-water, moving out of their traditional trading patterns to obtain the desired European goods. Their villages and agricultural products subsidized nearby families throughout the French and Spanish.

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13Collectively these tribes were known to the French and Spanish as the “Norteños” or Northern Nations.
periods, but they often threatened the small fort on the Arkansas. The Missouri began raiding European settlements to gain merchandise the easy way and entered an uneasy friendship with the little Osage north of the post. Once again, shifting populations brought about shifting alliances. The Osage, however, were particularly predatory on both Europeans and other tribes. Europeans meant easy access to weapons which could be used against other Indian groups. As French trappers moved into the wilderness the Osage began to attack them for their weapons. The normal seasonal round, south in the winter, north in the summer now took on a different meaning for both the Osage and the people they attacked.\textsuperscript{14}

The Seven Years War and the consequent change of ownership in the Mississippi valley further disrupted Louisiana’s tribes. Tribes who had previously been Spanish enemies were now “Spanish” tribes subject to new boundaries and laws. Many of these tribes realized that the change in ownership meant they had lost their negotiating leverage between what had been French and Spanish communities. Previously legitimate French trading partners were now no longer “legal” and the Indians had to trade with “official” traders licensed by the Spanish government in New Orleans. Indian slavery was no longer a welcomed practice. Only the familiar annual gift-giving stayed the same because Antonio de Ulloa realized that the best method of benefitting from Louisiana’s Indians was to retain the previous French policy. Necessarily, however, he moved the annual

\textsuperscript{14}See Gilbert C. Din and Abraham P. Nasatir, \textit{The Imperial Osages} for comprehensive account of Osage problems.
presentation ceremonies from Mobile to New Orleans and ceased to court the Choctaw and Creeks unless they came to New Orleans.¹⁵

French allied Indians also scrambled to avoid British persecution east of the Mississippi. They flooded into Spanish Louisiana especially near New Orleans whose “petite naciones” were refurbished by Indians moving out of the previously French area of Mobile. In the north, French allies suddenly found themselves among the British and sought refuge on the western bank and its settlements. Some tribes moved across the river into Spanish territory and others fought against the British. The best example of the latter is Pontiac and his allies who tried to continue the war to gain land and expel the Europeans, but ran out of ammunition and had to halt the conflict.

Spanish rule between 1764 and 1769 was still uncertain, however, and while the tribes waited to see who gained control of the colony old tribal agendas emerged. In the east the Chickasaw and Choctaw became predatory on the “petite naciones” and in the west the Osage continued to steal horses from the Caddos and Wichitas, but now with smuggled British arms.¹⁶ An example of the conflict created during this time period can be seen at St. Louis which had held the monopoly on the trade with the Big and Little Osage under the French. The Indians were supposed to visit the post annually to receive their appropriate gifts and medals. In 1764 Pierre Laclède Liguest and the Chouteau family were established in the new town of St. Louis nestled at the entrance to the

¹⁵Usner, “American Indians,” 299. See Moore, Revolt in Louisiana, for a full discussion of Spanish Indian policy.

¹⁶Smith, “Indian Policy,” 286.
Missouri river and close to all the major Indian groups in the area. (See Chapter 5)\textsuperscript{17}

There he attracted trappers, traders and Indians. As the French began to evacuate Fort de Chartres and cross the river the Missouri Indians moved to the Mississippi where they treated with Louis St. Ange de Bellerive, the aging French commandant and Pierre Laclède to protect them from a band of some three hundred Osage who were marauding in the area. The two Frenchmen created a small peace between the two tribes but it was not the last the citizens of St. Louis would hear of the Osage and their depredations.

The Osage were supposed to be the sworn enemy of the English across the river from St. Louis. Like other tribes along the Mississippi, however, they clandestinely made alliances with British commandants in order to receive gifts on both sides of the river.\textsuperscript{18}

This double dealing proved troublesome for the Spanish who by 1767 were finally taking control at St. Louis under Captain Francisco Ruiz y Morales. Ulloa's orders were to license traders for the Indians, continue gift-giving and use the Indians as a weapon.

\textsuperscript{17}Laclède, a prominent partner of Maxent, Laclède and Company in New Orleans had been granted an eight-year monopoly on trade along the Missouri River including the Big and Little Osage. The French government eventually denied the monopoly but that news had not reached Laclède in 1763 when he left New Orleans. See Mémoire de Sieur Laclède, AE, Correspondence Politique, Espagne, IV; John Francis McDermott, “The Exclusive Trade Privileges of Maxent, Laclède, and Company,” Missouri Historical Review, 30 (July, 1936): 272-78; and Gilbert C. Din and Abraham P. Nasatir, The Imperial Osages, 52-53. The story of the founding of St. Louis can also be found in John Francis McDermott, “Pierre Laclede and the Couteaus,” Missouri Historical Bulletin, 21 (July, 1965): 279-83 and John Francis McDermott, “Myths and Realities Concerning the Founding of St. Louis,” in The French in the Mississippi Valley (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 1965).

against the English if necessary. Rfu immediately began the military reorganization of Upper Louisiana, directing the building of two forts on either side of the mouth of the Missouri, much to the consternation of St. Ange. The British, who by now had an organized Indian policy under William Johnstone, were busy regaling the Osage and Missouri with medals and gifts, and promises of more in the future. Local tribes who visited the new Spanish leader in St. Louis were suitably un-impressed with his gifts and said as much.19

In 1768, Ulloa made a critical mistake concerning the Osage and other Indians in Upper Louisiana. He chose to cut expenditures by keeping traders away from the Indians villages along the Missouri and tried to keep the gift-giving at a minimum by keeping the Indians away from the posts. His policy allowed the licensing of traders only out of New Orleans. This upset both the merchants in St. Louis and the Indians. Worse, the meager Spanish gifts insulted other tribes who came to treat with the Commandant at St. Louis. The necessity of the moment overrode Ulloa’s orders and Rfu wrote to the governor explaining that if they did not give good merchandise to the Indians they would probably

take it by force. Ulloa acquiesced, allowing merchants who had already been licensed to trade that year, stating they would have to go through New Orleans the following year. Clearly neither the Spanish, nor the French held the upper hand on the Missouri.20

Rfu was an argumentative and overbearing commander, whose leadership promoted insubordination among his troops and disorder among the civilians. His manner was so harsh that twenty soldiers and the fort's storekeeper deserted in the first year of his command.21 Ulloa then appointed Captain Pedro Piernas to replace him but when Piernas arrived at Fort San Carlos el Principe in March he was forced to turn the fort over to St. Ange because of the French insurrection.22 Spanish leadership did not return until 1770. In the meantime the Indians had developed a system to play the English, French and Spanish against one another for the benefit of the Indians.

With the absence of Spanish authority in the north between 1769 and 1770, the Osage had made it a point to visit the Arkansas Post repeatedly to ask for gifts and trade, despite the monopoly held by St. Louis. Arkansas Post was a haven for illegal traders, especially the British, who openly traded guns and whiskey to the Indians. Both of the items lured the Osage to the Arkansas River where they threatened the Quapaw.

Commandant, Le Chevalier Alexandre DeClouet, found it impossible to keep the Osage

20Din and Nasatir, Imperial Osages, 62-63; Rui to Ulloa, June 25, 1768, AGI, Cuba 109; and Nasatir, Indian Trade, 25.

21Rfu to Ulloa, December 13, 1767, AGI, Cuba 109.

22Nasatir, Indian Trade, 24; Din and Nasatir, Imperial Osages, 67-68. Rfu's report is dated October 29, 1769 and Piernas' is dated October 31, 1769, both in AGI, Cuba 2357.
out of the Arkansas River valley. Worse, they began to attack other Indians in the area. DeClouet had written earlier in July of 1769 that the trade in liquor must stop, and the British be expelled or the Osage would continue their depredations.23

The confusion over leadership in the colony stopped in 1769 when Alejandro O'Reilly firmly re-established Spanish rule. He then initiated a firm program of licensed traders, agents and laws against Indian slavery.24 He also hosted diplomatic meetings with the tribes in Lower Louisiana in the fall and assigned both Athanase de Mezières and Pedro Piernas as Indian Agents in their respective territories. These men, in turn, licensed traders in their areas to bring annual gifts and to trade with the Native Americans for pelts, crops or other items. O'Reilly's policy was to use friendly Indian tribes to prevent English intrusion along the Mississippi and to maintain peace in Louisiana's western territories. His main concern was that the Louisiana tribes did not set off conflicts with the British whom he saw as a far greater threat. Further, he felt that a formal policy of licensed traders and post monopoly systems would gradually evolve into a peaceful coexistence between the colonists and the tribes. In that he was wrong.

O'Reilly began with ceremonies of recognition and gift giving among the eastern tribes. From September 1769 through the following year he and Governor Unzaga received delegations from the Tunicas, Taensas, Pacanas, Houmas, Bayogoulas, Ofogoulas, Chaouchas, Ouachas, Chitimachas, Chatos, Biloxis, Pascagoulas, Mobilians

23DeClouet to Ulloa, February 27, 1768, AGI, Cuba 107; DeClouet to Monsieur, July 14, 1769, ibid.; and DeClouet to O'Reilly, September 1, 1769, ibid.

and finally the Quapaws. In respect to the west, both Captain-General O'Reilly and the new governor of Spanish Texas, the Baron de Ripperda, agreed that peace with their mutual Indian allies must be preserved. The experienced commandant at Natchitoches, Athanase de Mézières, suggested to Louisiana's leaders that an alliance with the influential Kadohadachos was the key to peace in the west. O'Reilly agreed and allowed the lieutenant-governor to begin annual gift-giving ceremonies at Natchitoches and to license experienced traders to visit their villages. By April of 1770, the Caddo formally became Louisiana's allies.

As stated before, O'Reilly's Indian policy was far more conciliatory than Ulloa's. He authorized Piernas to license traders in Spanish Illinois and allowed him to distribute gifts to the Indians annually at St. Louis. He also ordered Piernas not to incite the Indians against the British and prohibited licensed Spanish traders in British territory. O'Reilly wanted no trouble with Gage and Great Britain. Piernas took O'Reilly at his word and all seemed tranquil in Spanish Illinois because he reported no disturbances with the Osage for over a year. It was an illusion. The Osage had merely moved to a better vantage point near the Arkansas post. To combat the Osage O'Reilly replaced the aging DeClouet with [Kinnaird, SMV, 2:185, 258 and 3: 141-43. Many of these tribes wanted to continue their familiar practice of meetings with the post commandants. Both O'Reilly and Unzaga instructed the commandants on the German Coast, the Acadian Coast, Point Coupée and elsewhere that all tribes must go to New Orleans and meet with the governor to swear their allegiance to Spain. See Unzaga to Allain, order for the Tunica, November 14, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio: 1g/45 and Unzaga to Dustiné, regarding the Tensa and Alabama Indians, December 24, 1770, ibid:1c/11.]

[O'Reilly to De Mézières, September 23, 1769 in Bolton, Athanase de Mézières, 1: 130-131. De Mezières to O'Reilly]
Captain Francois Demasellières, who stayed at the post through the end of 1770 although Captain Joseph de Orieta became active commandant on July 21, 1770. Arkansas received a large number of Spanish commandants but none were able to deal appropriately with the Osage.  

By the time of his departure O'Reilly had firmly instituted Spanish policy regarding the Indians in Louisiana. He had befriended and, he felt, suitably impressed the "petite naciónes" of Lower Louisiana. Through his Lieutenant-Governor, Athanase de Mézières, the important Caddo confederation had become allies in the West. Finally in the north, the Osage and the Quapaw traded under a monopoly system of licensed traders from Arkansas Post and St. Louis. Spanish policy, however, was not always Spanish reality in its American colonies and Louisiana was not an exception.

As he took office, Unzaga found O'Reilly's policy problematical. O'Reilly's main goals, it will be remembered, were to establish gift-giving ceremonies to maintain alliances, to enhance trade through a series of licensed agents, to end Indian slavery, and most of all to keep peace among the tribes and not endanger the tenuous peace with the English along the Mississippi. The new governor divided his problems into three geographical areas: the lower Mississippi inhabited by the petite naciónes; Upper

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27 Demasellières was governor of the Arkansas Post from December of 1769 to December of 1770. He was replaced in December of 1770 by Lieutenant Josef Orieta. See Morris, Colonial Arkansas, Appendix I. 178; See appointment of other commandants in Table III; on O'Reilly's position regarding the Indians and the English see O'Reilly to Lieutenant-Governor of Illinois district, February 17, 1770 and O'Reilly to Arriaga, March 1, 1770, both in AGI, SD 80.
Louisiana whose main tribes included the Quapaw, the Big and Little Osage and the Missouri; and finally the Caddo, Wichita and Shoshone in the West.

He focused first on the “petite naciónes” residing near New Orleans, whose ranks by now encompassed the Apalaches, Taensas, Pacanas, Mobilians, Biloxis, Chahtos, Pascagoulas, Houma, Chitimacha, and Tunica, most of them previous French allies. The smaller nations who crossed the river into what was now Spanish Louisiana strung out in a long line starting in New Orleans and the German Coast and then northwest along the Mississippi into the Acadian Coast, Pointe Coupée, and Rapides on the Red River. Settlements of Apalachee, Mobile and Alabama resided at Rapide Post and were later joined by the Pascagoula and wandering bands of Choctaw. Pointe Coupée and the Acadian coast played host to shifting villages of Täensa, Pacana and Hoctchaya Alabama, and Houma. Other Pascagoula, Houma and the Chitimacha settled closer to New Orleans. The Mobile and the Choctaw pushed across the Mississippi near the Amite River to gain access to the best of both worlds, the English at Manchac and the rich lands of the Acadian and German Coasts.28

With their normal fur trade activities disrupted by war and migration, the “petite naciónes” created a seasonal cycle of activities designed to enhance their position and opportunities. Native Americans supplied New Orleans with a number of necessary trade items including game, bear fat, deerskins, and other furs, as well as woven items, herbs

and firewood. They also provided a source of inexpensive labor, entertainment and gambling. 29

Gift-giving was necessary and individual Indians loved wearing Spanish medals and vying for European recognition which legitimized their own power in the tribe. Like the French, unfortunately, the Spanish in Louisiana never received “awe-inspiring” merchandise for Indian presents. This was especially deplorable considering the importance of gifts in maintaining alliances. When the governor received an Attakapas delegation in April of 1770 the importance of gifts became startlingly clear. They wore English medals and demanded the Spanish produce a better product. 30 He could never really be sure of the “loyalty” of his tribes without the appropriate merchandise, especially since many of them contrived to play the Spanish in Louisiana off the British in West Florida or in the Ohio Valley area. Native American alliances with Europeans, therefore, continually shifted during Unzaga’s tenure.

Another problem in the lower Mississippi was how to keep the peace among his allied Indian tribes and protect them from the depredations of the British and their allies. Across the river in British West Florida, Unzaga contended with a particularly callous English Indian agent named John Thomas for the loyalty of the “petite naciónes.”


30 Unzaga to Judice, April 9, 1770, AGI, Cuba, 188-A, Folio 1 d/1.

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Thomas' scandalous treatment of Indians and colonists caused Louisiana a great deal of trouble. He encouraged English tribes to prey upon tribes who were Spanish allies. Because of Thomas' continued actions against the Spanish allied tribes, Unzaga decided that peaceful neutrality was no longer the best diplomacy. His concern was heightened by the growth at the English settlement at Manchac which sold liquor and guns to the local tribes and by the enlarging English settlements around Natchez. Manchac and the English also exacerbated inter-tribal conflict by funneling contraband into Louisiana and instigating attacks on Spain's allied tribes. They frequently fed the Choctaw and Tallapousa whiskey, driving them into murderous rages against Louisiana's colonists and its Indian allies.

As his commandants dealt with Indian problems along the lower Mississippi, in 1771 Unzaga began a concerted effort to entice the English tribes over to the Spanish side of the river. It seemed to the governor that Indian allies in Louisiana might also help create a buffer against the English. At the same time he invited Lt. Thomas to visit him in New Orleans where he assured the British agent that the Spanish had no interest in "his" Indians. Thomas left unaware of the conspiracy but soon became enraged when he found Spanish gifts and medals among tribes on the eastern bank of the river. He angrily protested to several Spanish commandants but his threats accomplished nothing. Thomas' unfeeling attitude toward the tribes in his jurisdiction eventually cost him their loyalty.

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32 Unzaga to Judice, April 9, 1770, AGI, Cuba, 188-A, Folio 1 d/1.
and respect. Many “petite naciónes” transferred their allegiance to Spanish Louisiana because they preferred its licensed traders and its prohibition of Indian slavery.\textsuperscript{33}

English allied tribes also kept alive the constant threat of Indian attack on Native Americans and Europeans alike. This forced more tribes into Lousiana. For example Unzaga contended with Choctaw aggression against smaller tribes. The Pacana and Otcheangas (?) sent delegations to visit the governor in New Orleans asking his permission to relocate their families to Opelousas because they feared the Choctaw.\textsuperscript{34}

In reality the Choctaw remained torn between Louisiana and British West Florida and troubled both colonies. As former allies they attempted to remain friendly with familiar French traders in Louisiana. In British territory they suffered mistreatment by abusive Indian agents and domination by the now powerful Creek whose trading zone extended from Georgia to Mobile.\textsuperscript{35} Frustrated and denigrated, the Choctaw sometimes even robbed local settlements in West Florida. When “liquored-up” however, they carried out depredations on both sides of the river. The Spanish tolerated the Choctaw in their territory because they acted as a counterbalance against their mutual enemy the Osage, whose predation had by then reached the Red River territory.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{33}Rea, “Redcoast and Redskins,” 34-35.

\textsuperscript{34}Judice to Unzaga, April 10, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio1 d/6.

\textsuperscript{35}See Kathryn Holland Braund, Deerskins & Duffels: Creek Indian Trade with Anglo-America, 1685-1815, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), especially chapter five on trade.

\textsuperscript{36}For more on the Choctaws in Spanish Louisiana see Lawrence Kinnaird and Lucia B. Kinnaird, “Choctaws West of the Mississippi, 1766-1800,” Southwestern Historical Quarterly 63 (1980): 349-370.
Trouble with another group called the Talapoussas (Creeks) became incessant in Lower Louisiana. In June of 1771 both Commandants Descoudreaux and Dutisné wrote the governor that they were having trouble with colonists because of hostile incursions by that tribe. The next year Commandant Judice informed Unzaga that his colonists and the Houma Indians in his district at Cabannoce were growing more afraid of Talapoussa assaults and that he was fortifying the post against such an attack. All the residents of the Acadian and German coasts feared them and their depredations increased. The following June Spanish Manchac asked Judice for aid against the same tribe and he detached thirty men to aid the fort. Unlike the Choctaw, the Talapoussa never became friendly to the Spanish.

The “petite naciónes” who moved in Spanish territory were not always peaceful and immigrants didn’t always get along. Native Americans traded with each other, stole from one another and vied for land. Several post commandants reported murders among the tribes. The settlements of the Houma and the Alabama became openly hostile by the fall of 1770 because of a murder. Commandant Louis Judice informed the governor that he had given refuge to the Houma Indian accused of murdering an Alabama brave with a tomahawk. The Alabama now wanted to kill the Houma in revenge. Judice was forced to mediate between the tribes to keep the peace. As stated before, immigrants to the

37 Judice to Unzaga, June 1, 1771, AGI, Cuba 188-B, Folio 218; Descoudreaux to Unzaga, June 1, 1771, AGI, Cuba 188-B, Folio 231; Unzaga to Judice, September 12, 1772, AGI, Cuba, 189-A, Folio 438; Judice to Unzaga, June 15, 1773, Cuba 189-A, Folio 478.

38 Judice to Unzaga, September 13, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 1 d/27.
lower Mississippi were not always peaceful and neither did they immediately sign peace
treaties with the Spanish until they found it appropriate. The Apalachee, for example
moved into Louisiana at the end of the French period, locating their settlement on the Red
River at Rapide near a group of refugee Alabama families. Spanish Florida had become a
dangerous place for the tribe because they assisted the Spanish in capturing a Tallapoosa
brave. The Apalachee feared Tallapoosa reprisals because the Spanish could not or
would not protect them. When Etienne Marafret Layssard the Spanish Commandant of
the newly designated Rapide Post arrived he found the Apalachee contemptuous of
Spanish government because of their experiences in Florida. At the time the Native
American population overshadowed the French and Spanish at Rapides and the
Apalachee therefore held the upper hand in political negotiations concerning land or
trade. They had also refused to make peace with Governor Ulloa whom they said
“considered them dogs.” During Unzaga’s tenure, however, the Apalachee changed
their minds. Threatened by constant English raids and influence by other “petite
naciónes,” they made peace with the Spanish.

The trouble with the British and their allies continued unabated through the next
two years. In 1773 other “petite naciónes” moved across the Mississippi to escape raids
by the British allied tribes. Rapides Post welcomed settlements of Mobilians, Choctaw
and Pascagoula Indians. In April, however, the Chief of the Mobile Indians began
spreading rumors of an English threat to all the tribes on the Spanish side of the

39 Donald G. Hunter, “Their Final Years: The Apalachee and Other Immigrant
Tribes on the Red River, 1763-1834,” The Florida Anthropologist, 47 (March, 1994), 3-
45 gives a complete story of the Apalachee, Biloxi, Mobile and Taensa at Rapides.
Mississippi. He and a Chickasaw brave visited the camps of the Choctaw and Biloxi
telling them that after 26 days the "large nations" in English territory would kill all the
Indians left in Spanish territory. Lassayrd explained to Unzaga that:

The Chief of the Mobilliens is a bad subject, he comes from Manchac
where he received a present from the English and has held here many talks. . . . He
brought two Tchactas who cause much worry among the Apalaches, Chactos,
Alibamons, Pascagoulas, and Biloxis who are in this part. . . . And their chief
Gaspar (Choctaw) came to tell me that the English threaten to destroy all the small
nations that I name if they do not come over to their land.40

The "petite nations" around Rapides were suitably impressed with the British
threat and in 1773 the Pascagoula, Biloxi, and Choctaw re-settled on the English side of
the Mississippi just below the mouth of the Red River. The Apalachee remained.
Unzaga and Layssard slowly wooed the Pascagoula and the Biloxi back into the Red
River area. The Chief of the Pascagoula played both the Commandant at Rapides and
Governor Unzaga off the British, arguing for larger medals and secretly trading with the
English when it suited him. Unzaga blundered by giving both the Apalachee and the
Alabama one annual present which might have cost him the loyalty of both. The Chiefs
of each tribe needed recognition and they complained to Layssard but remained loyal to
the Spanish.41 The Biloxi Chief never became totally loyal to the Spanish, continuing to
wear British medals and failing to remain allied to the Spanish under the threat of attack
by other Indians. Perhaps he had a point.

40Layssard to Unzaga, April 22, 1773, AGI, Cuba 189-A, Folios 1084-1085,
translation in Hunter, "Their Final Years," 9.

41Layssard to Unzaga, AGI Cuba 189-A, Folios 1084-1085, translation ibid, 14.
Another problem the "petite naciónes presented Unzaga was that even established and loyal tribes did not always condescend to abide by Spanish policies, particularly concerning land. They did not really understand land ownership or boundaries and if asked to move from one area merely relocated a small distance away, sometimes on a settler's property. Often such movements partitioned tribes into separate groups which then tried to gain recognition, changing the balance of power and threatening the integrity of the tribe.

The prime example of these problems was the prominent and loyal Houma tribe, with two villages near New Orleans. During Unzaga's tenure, the Houma began to sell land to local colonists. In 1774 they sold land to a man named Patrick Conway. The Indians, led by a young chief named Calabee and twenty braves, eagerly accepted Conway's payment but merely moved a small distance away (about two leagues). Three different groups of Houma Indians suddenly emerged and began to address the commandant separately. They wanted to speak with the governor. Judice tried to explain to the new "chiefs" that Unzaga was "indisposed." The creation of new tribes was part of a competition to be recognized by the governor to gain more material wealth as each tribe could expect to receive separate gifts from the Spanish government. Judice reasoned, however, that this kind of separation was not useful and cautioned Unzaga against recognition of the new "chiefs". He believed that keeping the Indians in one area was tantamount to continuance of the tribe. Once they separated and gained individual chiefs the competition would separate them even further. Smaller tribal units actually
meant less chance of survival for each group and less defense for Judice. He tried to stop them from leaving the area but a division had already begun.42

The problem of Indian slavery also concerned the “petite naciónes.” Such slavery had been abolished with the advent of Spanish government, although many Indian slaves remained in the colony. The new law required current owners to report their slaves to the local authorities for census purposes.43 The laws did not, however, remove current Native Americans from their owners. Stephen Webre concludes that part of the reason was the ambiguousness of Spanish policy and a wish not to generate disputes over debts “incurred in slave purchases prior to the cession.”44

Several things made freeing currently owned Indian slaves difficult. The first problem surrounded the idea that the French colonists in Louisiana saw slaves, Indian or African, as immovable property rather than people. Stephen Webre points out that during the Spanish period the courts continued to protect slave owners against damage to such property. It was also easy to sell current Indian slaves by listing them on the bill of sale as “mulattoes.” Webre also notes that with enforced avenues to freedom, the Indian slave population in New Orleans almost entirely disappeared during the Spanish period. One of the reasons may have been that they became “Africans.”45

42 Judice to Unzaga, October 1, 1775, AGI, Cuba 189-B, Folios 284 and 285. In time the Houma broke apart, intermarried and disappeared as an individual tribe. They are presently trying to regain recognition as Native Americans.

43 See Kinnaird, SMV, 1: 189-92.


Unzaga’s work with the “petite naciónes” produced mixed results. The Biloxi and Choctaw never became true Spanish allies. Truly independent, despite their “small” status, the Biloxi took neither the British or Spanish side during the late 1770s, moving north toward Pointe Coupée to avoid “other men’s” wars. The Choctaw continually plagued both sides of the Mississippi for trade and recognition in a changing world.46 Other tribes, like the Apalachee, became permanent residents whose loyalty eventually allowed the Spaniards to lead them into battle against the British. Despite their disappearing acts and uncertain allegiances, the “petite naciónes” remained a necessary part of Louisiana’s trade and its defense. Indian slavery plagued the governor throughout his tenure. He walked a particularly thin line between enforcement of Spanish law and the realities of Louisiana’s labor systems. In the long run he reduced slavery but never eradicated it.

Sales and ownership of Indian slaves allows us to focus on Unzaga’s second geographical location, Upper Louisiana. In 1770, the governor ordered Commandant Pedro Piernas to enforce the new slave codes and to have the citizens at St. Louis and Ste. Geneviève formally declare any Indian slaves in their possession. Piernas sent back a census of sixty-nine Indian slaves in St. Louis and twenty-eight in Ste. Genevieve. He also noted that there were problems in enforcing the slave code because several of his citizens had already advanced money toward the purchase of such servants. Unzaga pragmatically skirted the law. He allowed all sales in progress to be consummated and

46For more information on the Choctaw see Jesse O. McKee and Jon A. Schlenker, The Choctaws: Cultural Evolution of a Native American Tribe (Jackson: University of Mississippi, 1980).
instructed Piemas not to allow any future enslavement of the local tribes. Once again, those who had slaves were not deprived of their property.47

The loneliness of life at outlying posts in Upper Louisiana added to the problems of enforcement. Toward the middle of the eighteenth-century Indian women became the prime subject of slave sales at places like Arkansas post. Such slaves often became concubines of their owners and in some cases their wives. Native Americans also undermined Spanish policy on Indian slavery. In some cases they deliberately sold women to Europeans because of the possibility of marriage. Such intermarriages could be used as leverage by the tribes to obtain trade connections and maintain or increase diplomatic power. Such slavery therefore continued.48

Indian slavery was not the greatest issue which concerned Unzaga's commandants in Upper Louisiana. For these men, diplomacy with the Osage tribe was the constant they shared. The Osage occupied an area in the Great Plains from the Missouri and Arkansas River Valleys to the Rocky Mountains. They settled mostly along the Osage River south of the Missouri, but they were an extremely volatile and mobile group that murdered and pillaged from the borders of British Canada to Spanish Texas. If they found the Spanish unwilling to sell them firearms and munitions in St. Louis it was easy enough to remove themselves from the area and raid the Arkansas and the Red River valleys.

47Piernas to Unzaga, May 26, 1771, AGI, Cuba 81; Unzaga to Piernas, n.d., ibid.

48See Arnold, Colonial Arkansas, Chapter 3, 53-72 for a discussion of intermarriage with the Quapaw.
As Unzaga took command of Louisiana, the Osage began a double-pronged attack, this time in the west, where they attacked hunters near the Arkansas Post and Natchitoches. At Natchitoches, Lieutenant-Governor, Athanase de Mézières wrote Unzaga blaming the lascivious behavior by the hunters in the area for the problems with the Indians, claiming most of the hunters were deserters, robbers and rapists and recommending that the Osage be removed from the Osage and Arkansas Rivers and confined to Upper Louisiana to isolate them from the influence of such men. He also recommended that the Caddo and their allies be confined to the area below the Arkansas to keep them away from the depredations and bad influence of the Osage.49

Unzaga responded quickly to de Mézières’ report. He instructed Demasellières at Arkansas to order all hunters back to the post in hopes that their removal from the river would induce the Osage to move north again. Before the men could regain the post, however, seven war parties of Osage attacked the hunters along the river, looting guns and ammunition. In the next two months, hunters and their bedraggled families began to return to the fort. Demasellières reported that most of the men had Indian “squaws” and children in such a sorry state that the people at the fort took up a collection to buy them clothing. He requested a priest be sent immediately to perform marriages and refused to resupply the hunters lest they leave the post again.50

49De Mézières to Unzaga, Natchitoches, May 20, 1770, AGI, Cuba 100, Folio 227 in Bolton, Athanase de Mézières, 1: 166-68.

50Demassilères to General (O’Reilly), no date, AGI, Cuba 107; id. to id. May 14, 1770, June 2, 4, 6, 15 and 16, 1770, ibid and Arnold, Colonial Arkansas, 158-159.
In July of 1770, Unzaga changed tactics. Removing the hunters had not stopped Osage attacks, they merely chose different targets—mainly other Indians. Furthermore, they had not left the Arkansas River Valley. Unzaga’s first step was to replace Commandant Demasellières with Joseph de Orieta. The governor ordered him to try and use the Quapaw to drive the Osage out of the valley. The Quapaw had been staunch allies at Arkansas post during the French regime in Louisiana but they had little faith in the Spanish. The Spanish, after all, had already been ousted from New Orleans once by the French. It might happen again. Worse, the Spanish commandants didn’t speak the proper language of trade and tried to withhold their favorite trade item—whiskey. Still, the Quapaw saw in Unzaga’s plan an excuse to take vengeance on their enemies, the Osage. The great leader of the Quapaw, Cozenompoint, arrived at Arkansas post on September 12, 1770, to obtain permission to send out war parties against the Osage. Permission granted, his warriors set about hunting the Osage but they were not successful and their fervor soon died. The next year the Osage were back again, ravaging and plundering the hunters along the Arkansas. Orieta suggested depriving them of weapons since the armed Indians attacked both Indians and traders.31

A frustrated Unzaga changed tactics and commandants again. He appointed Captain Fernando de Leyba to the post in March of 1771. Along with the appointment, the governor issued a special set of instructions Leyba was to follow in his dealings with the Osage. The instructions included orders to deprive the Osage of any weapons and further to “reprimand them kindly” on their behavior and bad faith with the Spanish and

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31Orieta to Unzaga, January 26, and February 2 and 6, 1771, AGI, Cuba 107.
the Quapaw. These “kind reprimands” would be a hallmark of Unzaga’s relationships with both the Indians and his commandants.

For their part, the Osage had already begun to make a small peace with the Quapaw and the post before de Leyba arrived. Baffled by the sudden turn of events, Orieta reported to the governor he had given them a Spanish flag to remind them who commanded in Louisiana. In the summer of 1771, the Osage returned to the Arkansas post to treat with the new commandant. Going directly against the governor’s wishes, de Leyba gave the Osage gifts which included guns. He quickly regretted his mistake when the Osage used the guns to rob hunters for more weapons and ammunition. Still, he suggested that it might be possible to send the Quapaw after the Osage again if the Spanish promised to reward them with munitions.

Unzaga refused to arm the Quapaw. All the Arkansas valley needed was a full blown Indian war enhanced by European weapons. He maintained his tactic of “kind reprimands” and ordered de Leyba to secure several Osage hostages to maintain the peace. Neither de Leyba, nor the governor understood the power of the Osage. The governor least of all. Commandant de Leyba had no leverage with which to order the Osage to appear at the post for a reprimand and he definitely had no means to demand hostages. Unzaga clung fiercely to O’Reilly’s belief that peace could be accomplished

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52 Unzaga to Orieta, March 8, 1771, AGI, Cuba 107; and “Special Instructions which the Captain of Infantry, Fernando de Leyba, Commandant of the Post of Arkansas, is to observe,” signed Luis de Unzaga, March 11, 1771, AGI, Cuba 131-A. See also Din and Nasatir, Imperial Osages, 74-75.

53 Leyba to Unzaga, July 5 and September 11, 1771, AGI, Cuba 107; For a larger discussion of Leyba’s plan see Din and Nasatir, Imperial Osages, 75-76.
through proper negotiations. He restrained both the Quapaw at the Arkansas and the Caddo near Natchitoches from retaliation against the Osage lest they interrupt what he considered the peace process he had begun.54

From Natchitoches, De Mézières warned Unzaga that peace would not work with the Osage. As if to underscore his warning, the Osage began trouble again. They robbed and killed the local tribes and stole horses from both Indians and colonists. Moving up into the Arkansas valley they began to attack and kill the hunters who moved their camps to the river during the fall. Not only were they not ready to make peace with de Leyba, a large war party was headed for the small, dilapidated stockade that de Leyba called his fort. Unzaga’s reaction was diplomatic. He understood de Leyba’s fears and frustrations but wished to continue Spain’s policy of neutrality which placed them in a defensive position with the Indians. He repeated his earlier orders to de Leyba to try and treat with their chiefs and if possible to take hostages. If the Indians continued their hostilities they would fall back to Unzaga’s previous plan of arming the Quapaw against the Osage. Unzaga desired peace with the Osage but their behavior made him believe it might be impossible.55 Unzaga’s gamble with the Osage paid off briefly only because the Osage split into two parties heading back to Illinois and up the Osage River. No truce had been struck between the Indians and the Spaniards at Arkansas Post.

54 Draft by Unzaga to de Leyba, September 22, 1771, in Din and Nasatir, Imperial Osages, 76.

55 De Leyba to Unzaga, December 26, 1771, AGI, Cuba 107 and Id. to Id., January 4, 1772, Ibid. See also Unzaga to de Leyba, January 26, 1772, AGI, Cuba 107 in Din and Nasatir, Imperial Osage, 78 as well as the warning from Natchitoches.
Unzaga issued similar orders to St. Louis regarding the Osage. The Lieutenant-Governor was to continue annual gift-giving ceremonies but he was required to stop giving them weapons. Piernas did not trust the Indians of Upper Louisiana. He found them thankless and treacherous, writing to the governor that “The Indians shift their loyalties to the person or persons that have most recently given them gifts, without paying any attention to what they had received before, even though it might have been a thousand times more.” He also reported that the British had continued to “court” the Little Osage and the Missouri, supposed Spanish allies. Further, he noted the Indians were adept horse thieves who continued to expand the already troublesome contraband trade in the area. Despite his fears, Piernas followed the governor’s orders, issuing presents and requesting that the governor send him Spanish flags to give to the Osage and Missouri. 56

Osage attacks in the Arkansas River area caused Unzaga to warn Piernas in early 1772 not to retaliate. He again issued orders that Piernas was to treat with the Indians and quietly reprimand them for their unfriendly and untrustworthy behavior. He also required that the Osage appear before the Lieutenant-Governor in St. Louis and account for the murders they had perpetrated. If, however, they did not comply, Unzaga would then consider them a hostile enemy who needed to be eradicated. He repeated the same orders to de Mézières at Natchitoches.57

56Piernas to Unzaga, June 12 and 23, 1771, AGI, Cuba 81; Piernas to Unzaga, November 6, 1771, AGI, Cuba 81; Nasatir, Indian Trade, 37.

57Unzaga to Piernas, March 14, 1772, AGI, Cuba 81, and Unzaga to de Mézières, April 3, 1772, AGI, Cuba 111. Piernas to Unzaga, November 19, 1772, AGI, Cuba 81.
In 1772 the Spaniards began to distinguish individual groups among the Osage, especially the difference between the Little and Big Osage. The worst offenders seemed to be the Little Osage, egged on, of course, by the Missouri. That summer the two groups attacked the fort in Missouri stealing weapons and food. During the perpetration of the crime they carried and flouted the British flag, insolently planting it on the river bank afterward. The Missouri also attempted to steal horses from Ste. Geneviève and Kaskaskia but were caught in the process by both the Spanish and the British. Piemas suspended trade with the groups although it meant the possibility they might turn to the British. 58

The Indian tribes surrounding Missouri and the Arkansas Post decided to take matters into their own hands. Patience was not working. In July the Saulteaux and Potawatomi killed two Little Osage chiefs and cut the arm off another. The Little Osage were forced to turn to their intended victims for protection. Further west, the Big Caddo and the Quapaw caught and killed a number of Osage who had been stealing their horses. 59

On the Arkansas, the Big Osage began to sue for peace. Chief Clermont wrote to Piemas that he wished to come to St. Louis but was afraid of the other Indians. Piemas wrote to Unzaga saying he believed the only troublesome band was the Little Osage, whom he considered thieves and who “by treacherous acquaintance . . . find themselves

58 Piemas to Unzaga, November 19, 1772, AGI, Cuba 81, and Nasatir, Indian Trade, 41-42; Din and Nasatir, Imperial Osage, 81.

59 Piemas to Unzaga, November 19, 1772, AGI, Cuba 81; José de la Peña to Unzaga, July 14, 1772, AGI, Cuba 111.
in war with all the nations of this continent, who desire their destruction.” Piernas was somewhat mislead, because at the same time other bands of Big Osage were attacking, killing and capturing hunters who ventured near their camps. Yet Chief Clermont pursued peace with Piernas in St. Louis. In August, he arrived with his representatives in St. Louis for the annual gift-giving ceremony. Piernas ventured to reprimand them for earlier atrocities and was surprised when Clermont offered to find those who had killed the hunters and bring them to the post. The ploy worked to stay the hand of the Spanish for a while but Clermont did not speak for all the Osage. In October the Little Osage struck in Missouri again, killing three men. The infuriated governor gave his permission for Piernas to retaliate. Horse stealing by the Big Osage in the Natchitoches district elicited an order from Unzaga in early January of 1773, to make war upon the bands involved “even to the point of destroying them . . . without cost to the royal treasury.”

In order to view the picture of the Osage properly, it is necessary to bring into the picture Louisiana’s third geographic territory—the west which was governed by Athanase De Mézières. Indeed, while Unzaga dealt with Osage depredations in Upper Louisiana between 1770 and 1773, De Mézières was busy handling similar problems in the post at Natchitoches. De Mézières was only too familiar with the Osage who used guns acquired at the Arkansas post to attack and rob the Indians and settlers of his district, stealing

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60 Piernas to Unzaga, July 8, 1772 and November 19, 1772, AGI, Cuba 81.

61 Piernas to Unzaga, September 1, 1772, ibid; Nasatir, Indian Trade, 44. Unzaga to De Mézières, January 10, 1773, ibid and March 19, 1773 in Din and Nasatir, Imperial Osages, 83.
horses and taking captives for slaves. At the time De Mézières was involved in negotiations with the Caddo on the Red River and the Osage had killed an important Caddo leader. Despite inter-tribal war, De Mézières managed to bring the Caddos into an alliance with the Spanish in April of 1770 as Unzaga was dealing with the Osage in Arkansas and St. Louis.

This treaty was quite a coup for Unzaga, since the Norteños (the Caddo Confederated tribes, the Wichita and the Comanche) had not been friendly with the Spanish in Texas previously. In fact an attack on Los Adaes in 1767, had been turned aside at the last moment by St. Denis, then Commandant at Natchitoches. It had been O'Reilly, working with Baron de Ripperdá to secure a peaceful frontier between their colonies that sent De Mézières to the Caddo in the first place. After the treaty, De Mézières arranged an annual gifting ceremony at Natchitoches, inviting the Natchitoches, Yatasis, Petit Caddos, and Kadahadoches. After licensing traders to visit the tribes, he singled out two chiefs to receive and officially wear Spanish medals. Unzaga distrusted his French commandants at first, including the Lieutenant-Governor at Natchitoches. Used to running things with a free hand, De Mézières angered the governor by holding

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62 De Mézières to Unzaga, May 20, 1770, AGI, Cuba 110, Folio 227, in Bolton, Athanase de Mézières, 1: 166-68.


64 F. Todd Smith, "Indian Policy in Spanish Louisiana," 288. The two chiefs were the famous Tinhíoïen of the Kadohadachos and Cocay of the Yatasis. For a full discussion of the Caddo and Spanish authorities see F. Todd Smith, "A Native Response to the Transfer of Louisiana: The Red River Caddos and Spain, 1762-1803," LH 37 (Spring, 1996):163-185.
court and passing sentence without his approval. Still, O'Reilly had believed that the Frenchman was the most knowledgeable man in his district concerning the Indians.  

After his work among the Caddos, Unzaga grudgingly sent De Mézières to make peace with the remaining tribes among the Nortenos—the Wichita and Comanche. He also sent along a Spaniard to keep and eye on him in the process. De Mézières talked his new allies, the Caddos, into influencing the Wichita and Comanche. It wasn't hard. The Kadahodoche and the Yatasis were now dependent upon the Spanish for trade and realized their relationship with the local posts would be enhanced by tranquility and their position as peacemakers. They promised not to trade with the other tribes in order to show them that only Spanish allies would receive much sought after European goods. In August of 1770 the Wichita sent word to the Caddo that they desired to negotiate with De Mézières.  

Tinhioiien, chief of the Kadahadoches, arranged a meeting with the Lieutenant-Governor, asserting his position as middleman between the Spanish and the other Nortenos. To assuage the doubtful governor, De Mézières took several Spaniards with him to treat with the Wichita including a priest, Franciscan Father Miguel de Santa María y Silva, who noted that the Indians were extremely friendly with the French but remained aloof with the Spanish, a holdover from their problems with Spanish Texas. De Mézières carefully flew the Spanish flag during his negotiations to leave no doubt in the minds of

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65 The relationship between Unzaga and the Lieutenant Governor can be found in Bolton’s biography of De Mézières, and is discussed further in the following chapter.

the Indians with whom they were negotiating. He explained that Louisiana was now Spanish and that if the Indians wished to trade they must stop their attacks on the missions in Spanish Texas and become allies. The two medal chiefs added their own arguments in favor of the new government and its representatives.

The Wichita explained to the Spanish that they were still angered by the Missions in Texas which had been established for their enemies the Apache. The Wichita also feared retaliation by the Comanche and therefore refused to sign a treaty with De Mézières or the Missions in Texas. They agreed, however, to return the next spring to re-negotiate. Unzaga was discouraged and angered by what he considered a failed meeting. Believing his trust had been misplaced, he refused to allow De Mézières to return in the Spring but the Frenchman quietly persisted and was rewarded in September with formal alliances with the Hainai, Kichai, Iscani and Tawakoni. Encouraged, Unzaga allowed him to treat with the Wichita and Comanche in 1772. Once again, De Mézières was successful.

The peace in the west helped ease part of Unzaga’s Indian problems but it did not stop the problems with the Osage. In 1772, De Mézières suggested that he use the Caddo and their allies to eradicate the Osage. Unzaga, as previously noted, had refused his offer, instructing De Mézières to try peaceful methods first. Although he was busy with peace negotiations, the Lieutenant-Governor was constantly aware of the Osage. In July, he

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67From the Report by De Mézières of the expedition to Cadodachos, October 26, 1770 in Bolton, Athanase De Mézières, 1: 204-206, and Smith, “Indian Policy in Spanish Louisiana,” 298.

68Ibid.
contacted Unzaga again, suggesting that he prevent all Spanish allied tribes from trading with the Osage, create a buffer zone between the colonists and the Osages, and again induce the Caddo to wage war on them. Finally, in December of 1772, Unzaga agreed with De Mézières that he could not longer proceed with a peaceful solution to the problem. Heartened by the governor's decision the Frenchman reminded him that the Caddo and Quapaw were united against the Osage and could, therefore, could be sent to fight them. He planned a surprise attack at the end of the summer when the Osage would return to their villages.

Mysteriously, Unzaga reneged on his proposed eradication of the Osage. At the beginning of 1773, he ordered both Lieutenant-Governors in Natchitoches and St. Louis to return to a defensive diplomacy. Din and Nasatir note that Unzaga probably did not wish to upset the other Indians with inter-tribal warfare. This is probably part of the answer. Finances were also a possible factor. De Mézières letter to the governor indicated that he could promote this war if he had the money for munitions and gifts. Unzaga's discretionary income was small enough that funding an Indian war could not be part of the agenda. He, therefore, for several reasons reverted to a conciliatory relationship with the Osage. Threats of eradication soon turned to terms of imprisonment.

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69 Din and Nasatir, Imperial Osages, 80.

70 De Mézières to Unzaga, February 10, 1772, AGI, Cuba 2357, in Bolton, Athanase de Mézières, 2: 24-27. De Mézières to Unzaga, February 28, 1772, AGI, Cuba 81, Folio 5; De Mézières to Ripperdá, July 4, 1772, in Din and Nasatir, Imperial Osages, 78; De Mézières to Unzaga, Natchitoches, December 15, 1772, AGI, Cuba 131-A; and Unzaga to De Mézières, January 10, 1773, AGI, Cuba 81.

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and fines where the Indians were concerned. The only method which seemed to keep the Indians in line was to ban trade with them, a gamble which could backfire at anytime.\footnote{Unzaga to de Mézières, March 19 and April 17, 1773, AGI, Cuba 18 and Draft to Piernas, February 19, 1773, ibid., in Din and Nasatir, Imperial Osages, 84.}

The gamble paid off in April when the Big Osage lived up to their promise, bringing the parties responsible for the murders along the Arkansas to St. Louis. Piernas chose to follow his governor's example and was lenient with the criminals. Instead of death he imprisoned them, and sent to Unzaga for a decision. In his letter he reported his hope that all would end favorably, "without bloodshed or expense."\footnote{Piernas to Unzaga, April 24, 1773, AGI, Cuba 81.}

In 1773, the seeming peace created by Unzaga's conciliatory policy seemed to be working. It was only a lull in the conflict. In Lower Louisiana, as mentioned previously, rumors spread by the Mobile had caused several of the "petite naciones" to flee toward the English, upsetting the remainder. Simultaneously in Upper Louisiana, the Quapaw began retaliation raids on the bands of Big Osage who were once again attacking hunters along the Arkansas River and the Caddo turned on the Osage in Natchitoches district. It became disturbingly clear to Unzaga that his Indian policy had not been successful.\footnote{To make matters worse the Acadians in St. James Parish began to agitate to leave the colony or relocate in Opelousas. (See Chapter 7) Unzaga was faced with unrest at all points of the compass.}

The Quapaw also would not listen to or obey de Leyba at Arkansas Post any longer. By following Unzaga's orders the commandant appeared two-faced to the Quapaw he was supposed to protect. They chastised him for his weakness against the
Osage and went after their enemies with the very knives Unzaga had given them during the gift presentations in New Orleans. In April they took five Osage scalps and captives, a fact which, in reality, did not displease the governor. Unzaga wrote to de Leyba that he should thank the Quapaw for doing what he could not because “the Osage Nation has been so insolent that it is necessary to applaud all those who try to destroy it.” Having said that, the governor banned Chief Clermont from returning to Arkansas Post.  

At Natchitoches, José de la Peña reported that the Osage attacks and looting had caused the tribes of the Caddo confederation to move toward each other for safety. Some of them had returned to their former locations to remove themselves entirely from the Osage. The Caddo, like the Quapaw, would no longer go on without retaliation. They pursued the Osage, killing several and capturing another who informed them that hunters along the Arkansas River were still providing them with munitions!

The Little Osage in the Missouri district completed Unzaga’s disillusionment when they failed to appear at St. Louis to atone for several murders near Ste. Geneviève. Tribes made hostile by their continued abuse now began to reciprocate and the Little Osage fled the Missouri toward the Arkansas. Unzaga sent much the same message to Piernas as he had to de Leyba, saying that he should force Indian chiefs to execute the criminals in full view of the post and other Indians to make an example of them. Fearing retaliation if he killed the captive, Unzaga had de Leyba return him with threats that this

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74 De Leyba to Unzaga, April 30, 1773, AGI, Cuba 107 and quote in Unzaga to Leyba, June 18, 1773, AGI, Cuba 81, and Din and Nasatir, Imperial Osages, 88.

75 José de la Peña replaced De Mézières at Natchitoches while the later was in Europe during 1773. José de la Peña to Unzaga, May 5, 1773, AGI, Cuba 111.
was the last indulgence they merited. There followed a "tragedy" of errors. Attacks by their intended victims had shocked and briefly demoralized the Osage. In August the Little Osage and the Missouri visited Piernas at his fort in Upper Louisiana and entered into peace negotiations. By the end of the year the Big Osage also returned to re-establish themselves with the Spanish.

As peace terms were concluding in St. Louis, the Quapaw again attacked the Osage. Now they would not listen to de Leyba or Unzaga. Firm in the belief that the only good Osage was a dead Osage, three war parties of Quapaw left the post in early October. A few weeks later reports came to de Leyba that the Osage were about their seasonal robbery along the Arkansas River. He promised the governor to try and rein in the Quapaw but speaking frankly he felt the same way they did about the violent tribe. Peace in Missouri obviously had little to do with peace at the Arkansas Post. It had even less to do with Natchitoches which by September was ablaze with Osage depredations. These set off retaliatory raids by the Kichais, in turn causing fresh attacks by the Osage who finally dispersed the Kichais. The Osage then turned their attacks on the Big and Little Caddo. Unzaga's plans for peace were clearly a failure yet he strove one more time to extend the "kindly reprimand" before he ordered an offensive.

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66 Piernas to Unzaga, July 6, 1773, AGI, Cuba 81. Unzaga to Piernas, August 14, 1773, Cuba 81, and Din and Nasatir, Imperial Osages, 90.

77 Piernas to Unzaga, September 14, 1773, AGI, Cuba 81, and December 12, 1773, ibid. De Leyba to Unzaga, October 6, 1773, and Unzaga to De Leyba, October 26, 1773, AGI, Cuba 107.
The Osage began what by now was a seasonal retreat. In the spring of 1774, they disappeared. Rumor claimed the Big Osage were building further up the Arkansas. Trade increased in the absence of the terrorists and new Indian groups along the Missouri sent representatives to become allies of the Spanish at St. Louis. Unzaga sent word to the Arkansas that it was okay to trade with the Big and Little Osage again, but there could still be no bullets or powder. Not all was well, however. Once again, as the fall returned and the hunters reappeared along the Arkansas, the Osage returned. Again the Quapaw reacted to their pillaging with violence, hunting them down and killing three braves. Unzaga also replaced de Leyba with Joseph Orieta in 1774. Orieta experienced much the same disrespect that de Leyba had from the Quapaw. This was made worse by the British across the river and a trader who boldly set up a store among the Indians, stocked with merchandise from Concordia. Dressed like one of the Indians he paraded himself at the post, helping to convince the Indians that the dilapidated state of the fort and its guns meant that the Spanish really didn’t control the west bank of the River. The Quapaw were not united in their like of the British but they were used to playing the British off the Spanish. Somewhat confused, they went to see Orieta who decided to give them a show of strength. In answer to their questions about ownership the commandant fired his canon, which shook the surrounding buildings. The Quapaw were satisfied: they returned to their village and ejected the trader.

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78Din and Nasatir, *Imperial Osages*, 95; Nasatir, *Indian Trade*, 55.

79Orieta to Unzaga, July 14, October 17 and October 30, 1774 in Morris Arnold, *Colonial Arkansas*, 109-111.
Other than the problems with the Quapaw, the Osage gave little trouble to the colony in 1774. Both Piernas and the returning De Mézières reported increased trade and quiet throughout the year. Piernas remained confident of peace as both the Big and Little Osage provided some forty-percent of the fur trade with Missouri the following Spring. In the southwest, at Natchitoches, De Mézières warned the Osage would return once they had built another village. And the Caddos grew restive waiting for the next attack.

The following spring, Unzaga’s attention was directed to increased activity along the Mississippi and the impending hostilities between the British and their colonists on the eastern seaboard. He beefed up his defenses along the Mississippi, refurbishing and manning the small fort at Spanish Manchac in particular. With the governor’s attention thus diverted, the merchants and traders in Missouri returned to their old habits of trading guns and ammunition with their “peaceful” Osage neighbors. These weapons were put to no good use by the Osage. In May the Osage returned to the Natchitoches, attacking French hunters camped near the Caddo, taking four lives. They also resumed their attacks on the Wichitas and the Caddo. They also terrorized the hunters near Arkansas post in early fall. De Mézières wrote disgustedly that peace treaties meant nothing to the Osage and that his Indian allies only awaited the governor’s permission to mount an assault on their hated enemy. The supposed peace also meant little in Missouri where the Osage continued to steal horses and make war upon other Indians.80

80Smith, “Indian Policy in Spanish Louisiana,” 290; De Mézières to Unzaga, June 6, 1775, AGI, Cuba 111; Din and Harkins, Imperial Osages, 97.
The following year (1776) brought little change in Osage behavior although their trade with the post at St. Louis increased. Francisco Cruzat, who had replaced Piernas in 1775, reported he expected a huge increase in furs from the Big Osage. At Arkansas, Balthazar de Villiers, who replaced Orieta as commandant, reported several Osage bands continued to raid and kill hunters in the area but the hunters had begun to strike back. A quiet war continued to rage in the Arkansas river valley though the Quapaw "appeared to be moving toward a peace with the Osages." Like Unzaga, however, de Villiers was more concerned with the British, who now openly crossed into the Arkansas district, and with refurbishing his small fort on the Arkansas River. At Natchitoches, De Mézières wrote that nothing had changed between the Osage and his Norteños.81

Luis de Unzaga's attempts to create a network of defensive Indian allies at best remained incomplete. His conciliatory nature had created more confusion than loyalty among the tribes. Many saw his efforts at peace as a weakness on the part of the Spanish. The Caddo and Quapaw had viewed it as a betrayal. Economically the colony benefitted from increased trade with the Indians although contraband also increased. This financial benefit, however, came at the cost of continued attacks by the Osage, despite their peace treaties. With the exception of the pacification of the Norteños and Caddo under De Mézières and the alliance between Layssard and the Apalachee at Rapides, little changed between the Spanish and their Native American neighbors.

As the American Revolution began in the east, Native Americans once again chose sides as they had done in the Seven Years War between France and Great Britain.

81Ibid, 98.
This time the choices were somewhat more difficult. In 1776 many Native Americans, including those in Spanish Louisiana, had become more dependent on trade with Europeans. Some tribes saw little difference between the two contestants in the approaching conflict and hoped to continue their ploy of playing to the highest bidder. Along the Mississippi, the conflict elicited several responses from the "petite naciónes." Some of the tribes, such as the Apalachee, moved permanently into the Spanish sphere becoming staunch allies against the British in the ensuing fight. Others, like the Biloxi, sought to escape northward into more unsettled portions of Spanish Louisiana. Still others, like the Choctaw and the Pascagoula, grew more restive, their loyalties constantly changing.  

While the commandants at St. Louis and Arkansas Post prepared for war, the Quapaw began a peace council of their own with the Osage. The Spanish, now under governor Gálvez, hoped the united tribes would help in the defense of Upper Louisiana. Not all the Osage complied, however, and other bands continued their depredations in Natchitoches, to the frustration of De Mézières and his Indian allies. It seemed impossible that the Osage would ever come in peace to the Red River, though Unzaga's policies had come close.  

As Unzaga struggled with Louisiana's Indians he also worked toward another of O'Reilly's commands—that he develop a colony of loyal subjects. This was a formidable

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82 Layssard to Unzaga, AGI, Cuba 189-A, Folio 1105, and 1109-1110, in Hunter, "Their Final Years," 10-11.

83 De Mézières to Unzaga, May 2, 1777, AGI, Cuba 112, in Bolton, Athanase de Mézières, 2: 130-131.
order considering the recalcitrant independence of Louisiana’s citizens. The governor believed that loyalty was an abstract quality, one which he could not demand or necessarily produce. He could bring order to the populace, implant the rule of law, and thereby continue to reconcile his colonists to Spanish rule. He would see about loyalty afterward.
Chapter Seven

Order and Loyalty

"I heartily approve some of the instructions . . . which are such as to secure the rights and interests of the king, the object of which is to retain his subjects under his rule by conforming as much as possible with their genius, their character, and manners."

Luis de Unzaga to the Bishop of Havana, September 26, 1772

Luis de Unzaga’s managerial skills remained his most important talent for king and colony. His attempts at establishing a viable economy had been successful given his circumstances. The governor also had to attend to O’Reilly’s command to create a colony of loyal subjects. He believed, however, that loyalty could not be achieved without order. Through just and consistent, if not always impartial rule, Unzaga created a stable, growing population reconciled to Spanish rule. He applied enlightened, Bourbon ideas to centralization of government and separation of church and state, and lastly implanted the rule of law. At the end of his tenure, he had carefully and deliberately shepherded his colonists toward loyalty.

Unzaga’s attempts at order included re-organizing and stabilizing the population, acting as the colony’s chief judicial officer, attending Cabildo meetings, and filling the spiritual and education needs of his community. These duties meant that Unzaga spent the majority his governorship in the seat of government--New Orleans. As he gradually settled into the routine of life in the Crescent city his own personality and leadership emerged. The governor was not a member of the elite in Spanish society. Hard work, bravery and good leadership capabilities had brought him to his current position. Unzaga

1Gayarré, History of Louisiana, 3: 84.
did not carry the imperial authority vested in O’Reilly, nor his pomposity. Neither did he have the social advantages of his well-heeled successor, Bernardo de Gálvez. Still, by 1772, his titles included Brigadier, Inspector, Intendant and Governor General of the Colony. Such weighty titles meant that the governor must now have his interests represented at the Spanish court. Accordingly, on September 25, 1772, he gave his power of attorney to Don Andrés Lidón and Don Thomas Peres de Arroyo, “of the city and court of Madrid,” to “represent him before the King, Royal Councils, Tribunals, and Audiencias for all business.”2 This allowed him to focus on the colonial government without constant worry about his family, property and reputation in Spain.

One of the ways that Unzaga won the following of his colonists was to marry among them, an act not particularly sanctioned by the crown concerning its officials in the Indies. The marriage in some ways allowed the governor to act within the colony’s society instead of always acting upon it. As a member of society, rather than its foreign governor, he became party to useful information about his colonists, their habits and needs, at dinners and social gatherings. As their governor, and the representative of the King, he could use such information to establish a stable and effective colonial government.

Unzaga became friendly with many elite members of Louisiana’s society. Not all of the French planters had been adverse to Spain and many had willingly supported their new governors. Among these was Gilbert Antoine de St. Maxent, head of one of the

2Andrés Almonaster y Roxas, Notarial Archives, January to December 1772, Act No. 26, September 25, 1772.
wealthiest and most prominent families in Louisiana. The governor was an intimate friend of the St. Maxents. Unzaga was a particularly handsome man, with long dark hair, a high brow and flashing eyes and within the first years of his tenure he married the St. Maxent's eldest daughter, Marie Elizabeth, then about nineteen years old.³

Little else exists in the records of the couple's life in New Orleans. No diaries of either have been found and Unzaga's correspondence is confined to business matters or requests to the crown. The notary's records do not indicate the purchase or sale of any homes or land in their name either when they were married nor upon their departure from the colony in 1776. It is probable that the pragmatic officer and his young wife moved into government housing in the city which was available, cost-free and "close to the office." It is also probable that Unzaga did not know how long he would be in Louisiana and did not wish to have the responsibility of large amounts of property.⁴

Indeed, the only commercial transactions the notarial records record are Unzaga's buying and selling of several slaves in the city. In 1773 he sold a twenty-year-old female slave named Marian whom he had brought with him from Havana, to Miguel Almonasy, the Adjuntant Mayor of the New Orleans Battalion. It is quite possible that 1773 is the year he married Marie Elizabeth de Maxent and was removing a possible "problem" to

³Marie's birthdate is February 3, 1752 in Monsignor Earl C. Woods and Charles E. Nolan, _Archdiocese of New Orleans Sacramental Records_, Vol. 2, 1751-1771, (New Orleans: Archdiocese of New Orleans, 1989), 201. The church records for the marriage have burned and an exact date is not known, though its is believed to have been between 1771 and 1772. See also James Julian Coleman's 1968 biography of St. Maxent.

⁴The notary records indicate that Elizabeth had one piece of property which may have been her dowry, yet it was small and she sold it two years before they left for Caracas.
their marriage. Again, in 1775, he sold two other slaves to Miguel Almonasi and Geronimo La Chappelle.5

We do know that the couple had one daughter, Marfa Rafaella Elois de Unzaga y Amezaga de St. Maxent, who was baptized in 1775, though the sacramental records give no day or month and no birth date. Her sponsors were Martin Unzaga, the governor’s brother and Victoria de St. Maxent, Gilbert de St. Maxent’s daughter, who was twelve at the time. Martin was Canon of the Cathedral Church of Malaga and therefore in absentia at the baptismal ceremony. His proxy was Unzaga’s friend, Captain Major Jacinto Panís.

Sadly, Marfa’s life seems to have been extremely brief. She lived long enough to become the baptismal sponsor of her cousin Marie Elois Mercedite Maxent, the last child of Gilbert and Elizabeth Maxent, born in September of 1775. Unfortunately, both Marfa Rafaella and her namesake appear to have perished the following year. The markings in the sacramental records indicate that both girls received the church rites at home on June 23, 1775, which was usually done for children who were extremely ill or near death. No further instance of their names is noted.6

The governor’s personal life reflected, if somewhat mutely, the tragic stamp of early colonial life in Louisiana. Like any frontier colony, life in Louisiana was often tenuous, especially for women and children. Unzaga’s personal life, however, allowed

5Andres Almonaster y Roxas, Notarial Records, January to December 1773, Act No. 135. Sale to Almonasi and La Chappelle respectively in ibid., January to December, 1775, Acts 248 and 399.

6Sacramental Records, 3: 97, for Marfa Rafaella Elois and 206 for Marfa Elois Mercedite.
him a special vantage point and Unzaga used his position to promote order in the colony with the least amount of resistance.

Colonial order also required stability in Louisiana’s declining population and acceptance of the law. Stabilizing Louisiana’s population was a difficult and lengthy process which included immigration and land grant policies, orchestrating and controlling the internal migration of his colonists, and stabilizing and pacifying Indian groups. At the beginning of the Spanish period the census indicates the population of the colony at 11,500 souls with 32% living in New Orleans.\(^7\) In 1771, the official census shows a population total of only 11,344.\(^8\) Thus the population declined from Ulloa’s tenure to the beginning of Unzaga’s, despite immigration and importation of troops. In the decade that followed the population of the lower colony rose to 17,926 persons with a shift in the population density showing only 20% living in New Orleans.

Historians have generally attributed the rise in population during the 1770s to immigration and the introduction of African slaves. Other factors must be considered. The initial immigration of the Acadians may partially account for the increase, but many of those early colonists succumbed to local diseases. Too, numerous colonists exited the colony following the hurricane of 1773. Neither can the rise be accounted for by a huge increase in slaves as less than two-thousand were imported (legally) in the decade.

\(^7\)Census of 1766 in AGI, Cuba 2357.

\(^8\)Census figures from Antonio Acosta Rodriguez, La Población de Luisiana Española 1763-1803 (Madrid: Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores. Dirección General de Relaciones Culturales, 1979), 17-130.
between 1766 and 1777. The density of population settlements by the end of Unzaga’s tenure gives the impression that population growth, outside of New Orleans, had more to do with a stabilized economy and the implementation of Spanish land policies than with immigration. It is to those subjects that we must now turn.

Throughout the French period surveys of land claims were extremely sporadic and often left incomplete. Their form changed with each new government and there was no official French Surveyor General. It was not until John Law took the colony that land concessions were truly defined and then they were just a little better because they fixed only the amount of land and its location, not actual on-the-ground boundaries.

Improvements in defining land grants began after the 1730s when the arpent was introduced as a measure of land in the colony. It continued to be used throughout the Spanish period. The arpent is a French word derived from the Latin arepìnnes (Gallic) which was an ancient agrarian measure. The arpent measure was characteristic of land

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10 Carolyn Oliver French, “Cadastral Patterns in Louisiana: A Colonial Legacy” (Ph.D. diss., Louisiana State University, 1978, 3, 42.)

11 According to the *Sebastian Vincente Pintado Papers, 1771-1818, Vol. I, Part I, Baton Rouge: State Land Office,*, “the arpent of Paris, of which use was made in Louisiana and West Florida during the Spanish domination, is a square whose side is of 10 perches and, or course contains, 100 sq. perches. The lineal perch of Paris is 18 feet of the same city.” According to John Whitling Hall, “Louisiana Survey Systems: Their Antecedents, Distribution and characteristics” (Ph.D. diss., Louisiana State University, 1970), 24, the Square arpent was 180 x 180 French feet which equals 192 x 192 American feet. French indicates in “Cadastral Patterns” that the arpent was .845 of the modern acre and was a linear and superficial measure.
grants along the navigable streams in Southern Louisiana but extended into Northern Louisiana along the Mississippi, Ouachita and Red Rivers.

During the Spanish regime other survey systems were introduced in areas where the land was under different use. In the western portions of Louisiana where stock raising was common (including the Opelousas and Attakapas Posts) the Spanish *sitio* was employed, a square grant, one league on each side. Spanish Missouri, Arkansas and the lands west were also often given in the form of general concessions much like the old French system. A general concession described a certain amount of land granted to a settler who could "locate" it upon reaching an appropriate place. The description of the location was then filed with two granting officials. In Upper Louisiana this not only allowed people to select tracts of land convenient to their style of life but also near the valuable mines.

During O'Reilly's brief stay in Louisiana he further defined the land grant system in a decree dated February 18, 1770, which detailed the rules for receiving and keeping a grant. O'Reilly's system attempted to encourage residents along the Mississippi, and especially in Lower Louisiana, to settle contiguously. To accomplish this only tracts of land next to land that was already occupied could be granted so that no vacant land was created. Furthermore, land could only be transferred through inheritance and more particularly, only to heirs who maintained their residence in Louisiana.

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12 Hall, "Louisiana Survey Systems," 25, 34. A square league is 84 x 84 arpents.


14 Instructions from O'Reilly's land ordinance in AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folios 2-8.
Spain's laws required that all land recipients be Catholic, married, and farmers or farming someone else's property. Immigrants were required to swear their allegiance to the King of Spain. Married settlers got two-hundred arpents with an additional fifty for each child and twenty for each slave. The total land any one family could own was limited to eight-hundred arpents. New settlers were allowed to bring in duty free any implements, and slaves and enough provisions to last for two years. O'Reilly directed that recipients of such grants farm the land for four years although this was reduced to two years for men who married the daughter of "an honest father with her father's consent" and it was totally waived if the settlers had slaves.15

Grantees were expected in the first year to construct levees against flood and canals parallel to the property line. Additionally, they had to maintain a public roadway at least thirty feet wide and build bridges a minimum of fifteen feet wide over the canals and ditches. All settlers were required to have cleared and cultivated their land (the standard grant being approximately eight to ten arpents on the front and 40 arpents deep) to at least two arpents depth within the first three years or it returned to the crown. These stipulations were made specifically to prevent the sort of land speculation which occurred under the French and which produced large areas of land owned by those who never set foot in the colony. During the Spanish period some lands were actually confiscated for lack of "tenure." Harassment was not common, however, because the Spanish were more

interested in settlement and population density rather than enforcement of laws which did not fit the colony’s needs.\textsuperscript{16} A denser population meant, after all, a better defense.

Claimants could apply to the local commandant for permission to receive a grant. If the commandant found no conflicting claims to the land he forwarded the application or \textit{requête} to the governor with the quantity, preferred location, amount of land for grazing and the size of the family (including slaves). The governor then issued the authorization for a survey and plat to be made at the settler’s expense. Once the survey was made the governor’s office issued a grant of land. The decree also required that claimants of existing land grants show proof of ownership on paper, buy the land or substantiate somehow that they had occupied and farmed the land for ten years.\textsuperscript{17}

All these procedures were good in theory but Unzaga found that many requirements were impractical in Lower Louisiana. Among his new settlers, the Acadians were a freedom-loving group of individuals who didn’t like the compulsory closeness of their neighbors. More than once during his administration Acadian families abandoned their original grants for larger and more solitary tracts of land. There were a number of reasons for these desertions including the repositioning of previously agreed upon boundaries, frustration arising from improper surveys, and grants of land which were either not good agricultural plots or that slowly sank into the rivers.


\footnotesize\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., 45-46.
Unzaga began surveying and re-granting land during his first year in Louisiana. He was forced to rush the project because of the wreck of the *Britain* at Matagorda Bay which introduced a new group of Acadians into the colony. These survivors wished to settle the rich agricultural lands along the Mississippi. By April of 1770 seven Acadian families from the *Britain* incident migrated from Natchitoches to the Iberville district where they were each given six arpents fronting on the Mississippi just above the mouth of Bayou Plaquemine. Land granting became strategically important in 1770 to keep the Acadians in a close knit and therefore defensible community.

Unfortunately, a lack of understanding regarding the shifting nature of the Mississippi led to grants along the insides of curves on the river where the flooding and the natural flow of the water eroded the banks, causing colonist’s homes to slide into the river. Other settlers were given property that was unfit to farm or uninhabitable. Examples are Paul and Pierre Hebert who complained they had rebuilt their homes twice in two years and Ignace Babin, whose land grant had no depth because the property was laced with bayous. Before the surveys were even finished the post commandants on the Acadian Coast and Iberville were writing to the governor to request he re-grant land on

18 De Mézières to Unzaga, March 22, 1770, AGI, Cuba 110, Folio 113; Unzaga to De Mézières, April, 1770, AGI, Cuba 110, Folios 398-399.

19 As early as March of 1770 the Acadians settled in the lower parishes and began building a church in their new community. In April they asked Commandant Judice to request land grants. Judice to Unzaga, April 1, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 1/d3. The seven families from Matagorda Bay were settled on the west bank of the Mississippi River where Unzaga designated. Unzaga to Dutisné, April 10, 1770, AGI, Cuba 193-B, Folios 283-284; ibid., April 26, 1770, AGI, Cuba 193-B, Folios 290-291.
the opposite bank of the river for their settlers. Unzaga complied with the wishes of his colonists.20

Surveying proved difficult. Discussing lines on a map was far different from dealing with settlers on their own lands. Many resented and/or mistrusted the presence of the surveyors. Others complained that the surveyors were destroying their crops and requested that the survey stop until they had a chance to harvest. In Cabannoce, St. James Parish, Commandant Verret petitioned Unzaga to stop surveying until harvest because the locals were afraid wild animals would ruin the corn if it was left standing in the field while the survey was completed.21

Not all the surveyors were accurate nor did they care about the property being surveyed. A large scandal arose over the improper measuring techniques of a surveyor named De Bellevue in March of 1771. He ignored the local settlers and took careless and sometimes arbitrary measurements. Complaints continued to flow into the governor’s office during the year and Unzaga finally removed De Bellevue in December. The De Bellevue fiasco continued to haunt the governor through January of 1772 when the settlers called public meetings at the local church to petition for new surveys which they were willing to pay for if the survey was done professionally.22

20François Scimars de Bellile (German Coast) to Unzaga, May 20, 1770, AGI Cuba 188; Louis Dutisné (Iberville) to Unzaga, July 1770, AGI Cuba 188-A; Ignace Babin to Unzaga, October 18, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-B, Folio 175.

21Verret(Cabancocey) to Unzaga, September 25, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 1 d/46.

22Chevalier de Bellevue to Unzaga, March 3, 1771, AGI, Cuba 192, Folio 329; Bellevue to Unzaga, May 27, 1771, AGI, Cuba 188-C, Folio 64; Judice to Unzaga, May
Despite setbacks such as these, surveyors completed their inspection of much of lower Louisiana between 1771 and 1772 and turned their findings over to the governor. This was only the beginning of the process for Unzaga. Now he had to integrate the new system of boundary lines into the present settlements and acclimate his colonists to the change. Again he faced a demanding and diplomatic task. Grants of unoccupied land, especially away from the rivers, generally caused few problems, but the repositioning of boundaries along the river created real headaches for colonial officials. Spanish tradition required that the surveyors draw their boundaries in lines perpendicular to the river. Along large curves and oxbows these boundaries created pie-shaped wedges of property where the best land, the part near the river, was smaller on the outside curves of the rivers. Previous owners became infuriated when they actually lost land along the riverbank.23

The new boundaries also robbed many landowners who had labored years to clear their land but could not produce any proof of ownership. Others were given property deserted by previous owners, which caused trouble between neighbors. Settlers, particularly the Acadians continually petitioned Unzaga for permission to migrate. Many of the colonists in St. James and Iberville parishes moved, legally or illegally, to the Attakapas district to enlarge their land, remove themselves from flood zones, or to be

28, 1771, AGI, Cuba 188-B, Folio 90; Judice to Unzaga, December 4, 1771, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 278; Judice to Unzaga, January 1772, AGI, Cuba 189-A, Folio 418.-A

23 Judice to Unzaga, April 1, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A: Folios 1-3 and Judice to Unzaga, June 3, 1771, AGI, Cuba 188-B, Folios 94-98.
nearer to family.\textsuperscript{24} Both Unzaga and his commandants frowned upon this migration generally because it depopulated areas the governor deliberately settled for defensive purposes. Still, if family was involved Unzaga usually allowed it.\textsuperscript{25}

The Acadians were only part of the new population filling lower Louisiana. Indians seeking refuge from English tribes requested the governor give them asylum on the Spanish side of the Mississippi. Like the tribes in the west who feared the Osage, the small tribes feared the Choctaw and Chickasaw. Indians appealing for asylum promised more trade for Louisiana and less for the English. The British-backed tribes, however, were a real menace. Several times Unzaga had to check the migration of his colonists, Indian and Acadian alike, who sought to remove themselves from the real or implied threats by Indians.\textsuperscript{26}

Unzaga continued to support immigration as a stabilizing factor in Louisiana and the Acadians were only one group of many who found their homes along the Mississippi. Others included Irishmen who favored a Catholic colony over the new English landlords on the eastern banks of the Mississippi, and other Europeans who gradually drifted westward, e.g. the French who gradually moved into Spanish territory in St. Louis from the Illinois side of the river. The governor often used the Irishmen as spies and translators. For the most part Unzaga welcomed any settler who promised to abide by

\textsuperscript{24}Verret to Unzaga, February 15, 1771, AGI, Cuba 188-B, Folio 76.

\textsuperscript{25}Verret to Unzaga, November 5, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188a, Folio 1 d/49; Dutisné to Unzaga, January 20, 1771, AGL Cuba 188b, Folio 195.

\textsuperscript{26}Descoudreaux to Unzaga, June 1771, ibid., Folio 231, and Dutisné to Unzaga, June 1, 1771, ibid., Folio 218.
Spanish land policy, accept Roman Catholicism and remain peaceful. The more colonists, the better the defense. Peaceful Indians were also welcomed as more Indians meant more trade. By 1775, Unzaga had the land grant system firmly in place and a growing population in the lower Mississippi parishes as well as the western parishes like Attakapas.

Order required more than denser populations Another problem was the ecclesiastical and social disorder caused by the introduction of the Spanish clergy. Clerical problems had existed in Louisiana during the French period when the Capuchins and Jesuits fought each other for control of the province. With the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1766 the colony fell under the jurisdiction of the French Capuchins headed by Father Hilaire de Génoveuax. Génoveaux was removed by the Superior Council because he refused to join the rebellion in 1769 and was replaced by Father Dagobert.27

Dagobert was a kindly priest, if somewhat corrupt in the eyes of the Spanish Capuchins who swore vows of poverty and meant them. He was not, however, unusual for a priest in a remote, frontier colony. The man was tolerant of colonial life and considered peace his main goal as opposed to conversion and preaching. Mass was said on all holy days if not every Sunday as there was a dearth of priests in the territory. He was loved by his parishioners and favored by many of the Spanish governors. He even stood as godfather for the children of many of New Orleans’ elite families.28 It had been

27 An overview of the French Capuchins before the advent of Spanish rule can be found in Claude Lawrence Vogel, The Capuchins in French Louisiana, 1722-1766 (New York: J. F. Wagner, 1928.

28 He was godfather to St. Maxent’s child. Sacramental Records, vol. 2, 201.
to Dagobert that O'Reilly turned to make his list of necessary clergy for the colony in 1770.29

Unzaga's ecclesiastical problems, however, surrounded the integration of Spanish priests into the current colonial reality. A pragmatic man, the governor recognized that there were not enough churches or clergy in the province and that many of his colonists only saw a priest every six months or on special occasions. He also assessed correctly that the growing population needed priests amenable to Louisiana's circumstances, not those who required strict adherence to orders created in the metropole which were not based on colonial realities.30 Louisiana, like many other portions of Spain's empire, received the gospel primarily from missionary orders rather than secular clergy, a fact not lost on the governor who had suggested more secular clergy be sent as soon as he took command.

The governor became enmeshed in the difficulties of the clergy and the settlers as a point of colonial order. Of the French priests who remained in the colony and the Spanish clergy serving Louisiana in 1770, many served the people well but others had already caused trouble among his "parishioners" despite the colonists' willingness to build and maintain churches. During the first year of the governor's tenure, Father

29See AGI, Cuba 2357, Folio 408, "Nombre des Religieux que nous envoyons nécessaires dans la colonie pour desservir les paroisses et pour les devoirs Spirituels des Habitants", February 14, 1770.

30Relación del Gobierno actual de la provincial de la Luisiana en lo espiritual y noticias de su constitución y establecimiento por don Luis de Unzaga. (Sobre el modelo que ha dado el Gobernador de Luisiana Unzaga a aquel Diocesano para el gobierno espirituel, 1772-1774)", New Orleans, November 14, 1772, AGI, SD 2594, Folios 748-97.
Valentin, a French Capuchin moved from Opelousas to Cabanocey, where, with great forbearance, the priest lived in an outbuilding (kitchen) of Nicolas Verret’s property and served his parish while the presbytery and church were constructed.\(^{31}\) In St. James Parish, Louis Judice assessed church taxes and had the local families hew the lumber and construct their church and a presbytery as well as kitchen for the priest’s residence. In Natchitoches, Athanase de Mézières had his parishioners reconstruct the local church, but the local missionary, a Father Stanilas, pull out anyway, leaving Natchitoches without a prelate or missionaries by 1774.\(^{32}\) Despite requests for more churches and clergy, especially in areas where the population was increasing, many priests complained about the indignities of serving under such circumstances and often refused to deal with the backward areas and their anomalies.\(^{33}\)

The Spanish priests, led by Father Cirilo de Barcelona (recently from Havana), were particularly annoyed at the French settlers who seemed uncivilized and ignorant of the rules of conduct concerning the church. They grumbled that the parishioners didn’t tithe to the Church properly. They complained about the farmers who stood outside the church on Sundays swearing and drinking and especially about the forwardness of the women who rode astride their horses. They complained in general that the people of the outlying parishes did not act in a sedate, civilized manner concerning the church, but

\(^{31}\)Verret to Unzaga, May 21, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 1 d/40.

\(^{32}\)Athanase de Mézières to Unzaga, February 1, 1770, AGI, Cuba 110, Folio 96.

\(^{33}\)Judice to Unzaga, August 18, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 1 d/18; id. to id. August 27, 1770, ibid., Folio 1 d/20.; the refusal to serve can be found in Judice to Unzaga, April 22, 1771, AGI, Cuba 188-B, Folio 80.
these clergy offered little in the way of accommodation. The settlers, on the other hand, did not differentiate between Spaniard or Frenchman as long as the priest was willing to serve them. These generalizations can be illustrated with the following examples.

The lives of farmers of St. James and Ascension parish or any frontier parish had little to do with those of the people Father Cirilo served in Havana or those he served in New Orleans. Many settlers in the frontier had to travel miles, even to another parish, to see a priest. These colonists sometimes saw a priest once or twice a year. Following certain customs of the church was impossible in such areas. One of the largest complaints by the Spanish surrounded the collection of indulgences (a problem which lost the Catholics half their flock in Europe during the 1500s). In the colonies priests were supposed to collect the Santa Cruzada, an indulgence given to persons who waged war against infidels (an extension of support for the Reconquista) or contributed alms. According to Gayarré, the indulgences sold for 21 quartos a piece (about 14-15 cents each). A papal Bull ordered that all Catholics within Spain's empire must purchase these indulgences or they were considered suspicious and became a target for the Inquisition. The indulgence itself provided the parishioner with the right to eat meat, or use eggs and milk on fast days. The colonists disregarded the indulgence. It was not a part of the

34Judice to Unzaga, October 6, 1772, AGI, Cuba 189-A, Folio 448.

35Verret to Unzaga, April 25, 1772, ibid, Folio 130.

36There was no real office of the Inquisition in Louisiana until the 1780s, although those suspected of heresy were sent either to Mexico or Havana during Unzaga's tenure. See Richard E. Greenleaf, "The Inquisition in Spanish Louisiana, 1762-1800," New Mexico Historical Review 50 (1975): 45-72.
French church and they found no real benefit from such a tithe. This attitude made it almost impossible for Dagobert and other priests to collect the "alms."37

The complaint about the laxity of parishioners in outlying parishes can be traced to an old anticlerical attitude among the French which included low church attendance (especially by men), marriage as a formality rather than a necessity, use of the church as a meeting hall (which including drinking), and a healthy disrespect for the clergy themselves. This laxity extended to their slaves, who often did not receive baptism or last rites nor did they practice marriage. Slaves, after all, were often sold away from each other and the French didn't "make" families they would soon separate.

When possible, the settlers “attended” church regularly, but the men and women of the frontier areas could did not have the same social patterns of the colonists in New Orleans. The men, who worked six to seven day weeks, from sun-up to sun-down, enjoyed relaxing on the steps of the church with friends, catching up on the local gossip, which they couldn’t do any other time. Joking and misbehavior were relaxing and drinking was more common at parish meetings then on Sunday mornings. Still drinking was as common to these colonists as it was to others in the English colonies who found it necessary to relieve the tensions and frustrations of the brutal frontier with corn whiskey. Women and children attended church far more often then the men but they lacked

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37Unzaga to the Bishop of Havana in Gayarré, History of Louisiana 3: 87-88. One reason the Bull was not important was that the French priests allowed their flock to eat Teal (small ducks) which they decided were aquatic and therefore could be substituted as fish on holy days or Lent.
refinements and carriages of their town cousins. This led them to ride to church astride their horses, an act seen as lewd behavior by the Spanish priests.38

The Spanish priests were far less tolerant than the French concerning any laxity on the part of their parishioners. The colonists, especially those outside of New Orleans, were apparently a shock to the Iberians. The Spanish Capuchins whose whole raison d'etre for being in the New World was conversion really shouldn't have been so appalled. Stanley G. Payne's work on the church in Spain notes a decided anticlericalism on the part of Iberians extending from time of the Reconquista. The Iberian-Americans in Spain's earlier colonies often exhibited the same distrust of the clergy.39 Still, the problems over control their flock brought the Spaniard's into open conflict with the French, a clash which included Louisiana's governor.

It had been at Unzaga's request that the Bishop of Havana had sent Cirilo and his assistants to help "Hispanify" the Capuchin order in Louisiana. Arriving in July of 1772, the new priests were met in New Orleans by Father Dagobert and the Governor. Louisiana's historians have long repeated Gayarré's notable chapter devoted to the argument between the French Father Dagobert and Spanish Father Cirilo de Barcelona. According to Gayarré, upon arrival Cirilo immediately wrote a long letter to the Bishop condemning the French Capuchins. The letter spoke at length about the problems

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38Judice to Unzaga, October 6, 1772, AGI, Cuba 189-A, Folio 448.


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mentioned above but included a vitriolic attack on Dagobert and his abilities as a priest.\textsuperscript{40} Dagobert, of course, wrote the Bishop in his own defense on the 14\textsuperscript{th} of September, thanking the prelate for extending his privileges as Vicar-General and express his desire to work with the Spaniards.\textsuperscript{41}

Father Cirilo was a remarkable and hard working man who, like his assistants, was used to an austere life. As the Superior of Louisiana's missionaries he immediately learned French and set out to serve his new flock. He frowned at the French priests' seemingly leisurely existence and was disgusted with Father Dagobert who housed slaves, including a female "mulatress" who served and lived in his household. It has been argued that according to a French rule, established in 1743, clergy were not to have slaves or obtain money from their sale. Dagobert's violation of this was behind Cirilo's anger. This is a curious point since the clergy (especially the regular orders) in other Spanish colonies owned African slaves.\textsuperscript{42} The Spaniards' orders, however, were to help preserve order, which in their eyes required strict compliance to Spanish religious practices within the colony. Any priest guilty of laxity or moral turpitude was to expect punishment.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{40}See Gayarré, History of Louisiana, Vol. 3, Chapter 2, for Unzaga's administration in which he translates a long letter by father Cirilo to the crown concerning the anomalies and abominations in Louisiana.


\textsuperscript{42}Lemmon, "Spanish Louisiana", 520.

\textsuperscript{43}Roger Baudier, Catholic Church, 181.
One can then understand the reactions of Spanish priests performing under such orders. Spain's legacy of fiery missionary efforts and the Spanish church's long relationship with the crown as a pacifying force must also be brought into the argument.

Unzaga viewed the complexity of the problem in his usual objective manner. He was intent on enforcing O'Reilly's commands that Louisiana's priests follow the regulations of the Catholic Church. He also knew that the local clergy included men who did not attend to their duties properly and that many of his parishioners demanded special treatment if they were to be wooed into compliance with Spanish religious customs. Still, as protector of the faith he still had to establish ecclesiastical order and support the church if he was to use the church as a stabilizing factor to promote colonial order.

His response was twofold. He immediately rebuilt the Capuchin rectory to house the new missionaries and directed Cirilo to increase the power of the church. On the other hand he refused to allow the prelate to annihilate the work of Father Dagobert or other local clergy and sought to acclimate the new clergy to the seeming "deviance" of his colonists. On September 26, 1772, Unzaga wrote his own letter to the Bishop of Havana in order to settle the argument and maintain control of the situation. In that letter the governor explained while he approved of the Bishop's instructions to the new missionaries,

"the object of which is to retain his [the King's] subjects under his rule by conforming as much as possible with their genius, their character, and manner. This is what I call acting in accordance with the spirit of the apostolic mission. . . . . working for the service of God by assuming the garb of the Jew among the Jews, of the pagan among the pagans. . . your Grace will no doubt infer that many of the synodical regulations cannot be applied to this province without injury to the interests of the king, the
number of whose vassals might be diminished considerably, if those regulations were attempted to be carried into execution, and your Grace will easily understand that it is not always that the laws made for one region can be safely adapted to another."

The problem between Cirilo and Dagobert continued into 1773 and Unzaga remained firm in his defense of both Dagobert and the colonists, to the point of angering the prelate in Havana. In another letter the governor admonished the Bishop, insisting that he should consider the difficulties involved in Hispanifying a stubbornly French population. Truly it was not the same thing as converting the heathen, although the Spanish Capuchins often felt that’s exactly what they were doing. Unzaga remained conciliatory toward both the Bishop and Cirilo. He assured them that things would work out given time and patience on the part of both parties. Secretly, he told Arriaga in Spain that the Spanish priests were far too severe and misrepresented the reality of the situation. He informed the minister that the colonists could be submissive and loyal if their customs were not undone by zealously—a daring statement for a colonial governor.

Unzaga’s solution to the controversy exemplified the governor’s willingness to act on behalf of his colonists and to assert his legal authority despite pressure from the church hierarchy. His defense of the French Capuchin’s maintained peace in the colony through 1773 and even generated support from some members of the local elite. City officials in New Orleans, such as Andrés Almonester y Roxas, responded by supporting the

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44Gayarré, History of Louisiana 3: 84.

governor's advocacy of proper housing and new churches for Louisiana's clergy. In outlying Parishes the commandants refurbished clerical domiciles and churches.46

With Unzaga's assistance and moderation the arrival of Father Cirilo and his Spanish missionaries actually began a new expansion for the Catholic Church in Louisiana. Three new parishes were created in the 1770s.47 Cirilo and his missionaries continued to do their work with limited means and men. As the fight between the priests faded into the background Unzaga realized that the real problem was a continual deficiency of secular clergy in the colony. Not all missionaries were priests who could administer sacraments and as a result no confirmations were made during the governor's tenure. In Louisiana, as in many other parts of colonial Latin America, the regular clergy were given special powers to serve as secular clergy, but this did not happen during Unzaga's tenure. In fact it was not until the later part of the 1780s that Cirilo was granted power as an auxiliary bishop under which he finally organized the "proper" religious education of the colonists and their slaves.48

As governor of Louisiana, Unzaga sought the ecclesiastical well being of his community. As a Bourbon official, the governor applied enlightenment ideas of separation of church and state to the colony's administration. Not all of the governor's

46Lemmon, "Spanish Louisiana," 521; Baudier, Catholic Church, 188-189.

47The three parishes established were at Ascension, St. John the Baptist and Opelousas. See Cross, Crozier and Crucible: A Volume Celebrating the Bicentennial of a Catholic Diocese in Louisiana, General Editor, Glenn Conrad (Lafayette, LA: Center for Louisiana Studies, 1993), xxiv.

decisions were popular and sometimes they were improvident. This was the case in his handling of the Ursuline nuns and Charity Hospital. The Ursuline sisters arrived in 1727 and established a convent-school in a small set of buildings in New Orleans, across town from Charity Hospital. While waiting to build a larger convent next to the hospital in order to serve the sick, the nuns expanded the small school into both a boarding-house and an orphanage.49

The Ursulines provided very important services. Their school was the first of its kind. The sisters taught young girls, including blacks and Native Americas.50 Working at long dining tables the students learned their lessons in two languages during the French period. The school offered writing, spelling, household management, mending and sewing, embroidery and tatting, etiquette, and of course, religious instruction.51

After the new convent was built near the hospital the nuns began their service to the sick and remained the only nurses until 1770 when Unzaga relieved them of that position. The governor was concerned about "professional" health care attendants. O'Reilly had ordered that only licensed physicians be allowed to serve in the hospital.


50 A boys school had been established earlier under Father Raphaël in 1725 but was poorly attended. The elite sent their sons to France and the poor taught their sons a skill or put them to work in agriculture.

The nuns, however, had given a great deal of assistance to both the doctors and patients and the hospital became impoverished without them. After their dismissal, the sisters focused their energies on educating young women in the colony. Unzaga's attempts to separate church and state in this particular instance were not necessarily beneficial to his colonists.

As an enlightened administrator Unzaga tried other means to create order. Some of which were well meaning but either didn't work or as in the case of the Ursulines created more problems. One of those endeavors was an attempt to expand public education in New Orleans. The Spanish administration of the New World held a long history of educating its charges. Under the "enlightened" Bourbons, the administrators sought public education as opposed to ecclesiastical education. In 1772, Unzaga brought a Spanish school master to the capital to begin education for colonial boys outside of convent or monastery schooling. With this school he hoped to create a group of educated, enterprising young men in the colony who favored order and Spanish rule. A year later, however, his plans fell apart when the maestro quit because of low enrollment and a lack of interest. Unzaga's attempt at creating an enlightened populace seemed to have failed.52

Another example where the governor's attempts failed to serve his colonists involved the administration of Charity Hospital in New Orleans. Built in New Orleans in 1718, its administration was originally placed under ecclesiastical control. With the advent of Spanish rule, however, O'Reilly decided that the hospital should be

administered through the governor's office. He appropriated a fund of four hundred pesos per year from taxation on New Orleans' taverns and businesses to run the hospital and requested that the public make contributions for further expenses.\(^5\) The hospital declined after the removal of the Ursulines.

When Unzaga took office Charity suffered further damage from Spanish administration. Unzaga often acted judiciously to cut government expenses. Part of his cuts, unfortunately, included reducing the governmental allowance for Charity from four hundred to two hundred pesos. He expected the citizens of New Orleans to fund the rest. It was a good decision for government but not for the hospital. Tax collections was problematical and the hospital endured hardships when taxes didn't meet the needs of the patients and staff. In fact, tax collection continued to be uncertain until 1775 when the governor granted a monopoly on the collection and administration of the funds to Pedro Morris and Raymond Escote.\(^4\)

Between the loss of its nursing staff and drastically reduced funding the hospital limped along on beneficence. It became such a disreputable institution that the Attorney General suggested it be dismantled. Only public outcry saved it. Finally protests from New Orleans' citizens brought the hospital more government funding and better administration, but not until the late 1780s.\(^5\)


\(^4\)Ibid., 18.

\(^5\)Ibid.
Unzaga's decisions, however faulty, usually reflected the necessity of the moment. The removal of the Ursulines and funding cuts, should be viewed in the light of Spanish Louisiana's constant privation. Equally as important was the need to keep as much money available as possible for defense while simultaneously building the treasury. These necessities often overruled civil expenditures. His failure at public education can be placed firmly on the shoulders of the populace who disdained such a gift. Lack of public acceptance could make any endeavor, no matter how important, unsupportable.

Expediency and a desire for order also led the governor to chastise the citizens of New Orleans and to remind them of their responsibilities. As previously described the city was filled with buildings of wooden construction and fire was a considerable concern. The Spanish government had no extra money for a real fire department. Unzaga was, therefore, extremely concerned that the populace seemed lackadaisical about keeping the necessary equipment to fight such conflagrations. Incensed at their indifference, the governor promulgated an ordinance which claimed their actions were tantamount to being indifferent to humanity. He felt he had no other recourse than to order all citizens to keep the proper equipment (ladders, gaffs, pick axes, and buckets) in their homes for emergencies and fine those without them. He further ordered that at the first sound of the bells announcing a fire, all carpenters and joiners, be they white, black or slave, must come with their equipment to the fire and join in the fight. This simple ordinance exhibits Unzaga's commitment to the general welfare of his colony and his attempts to create a sense of community spirit among a disparate population. It also

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further enhanced the power of his office. While Unzaga sought to engage his citizens in their own best interest he also realized the necessity to maintain his authority, especially if he was to centralize command of the colony.

Historically there had always been a propensity in Louisiana to amplify the powers of the governor. Under Spanish rule, the authority of the governor expanded, a fact which reflected the centralizing tendency of the Bourbon reforms, but more importantly the necessity to establish control over a huge and unwieldy territory. Unzaga was protective of his position and all that it represented in empire. He was also apparently unhappy if he felt his power was being usurped or undermined. As top military official he instituted the governor's authority over his commandants early in his tenure. While he expected subordinates to handle normal matters at their posts, he also expected them to report to him before making decisions on matters considered his purview. Immediately after O'Reilly's departure, the colony's commandants often found their new governor extremely critical of their decisions. It was not until after 1770 that Unzaga felt he could trust these men to carry out "his" wishes rather than the traditional status quo. Still, it is apparent that after having confirmed his authority he began to help establish theirs, and by extension Spain's. He generated this authority in his local commandants by funneling appropriate legal cases and decisions back to them.

For their part, the commandants strove to established a fresh working relationship with their new commander-in-chief, during Unzaga's first year in office. More often then

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not the governor began with reprimands to remind the men of the chain of command and then congratulated them on their proper handling of a local affair. For example, it took Lieutenant-Governor, Athanase de Mézières, a full year to create a relationship built on trust with Unzaga. De Mézières had been appointed Spain’s Indian agent in Louisiana’s western territories before Unzaga took office. Natchitoches was a long distance from the capital and the Frenchman was accustomed to making independent decisions concerning his colonists at the post and then informing the government in New Orleans. This behavior was not tolerated by Unzaga.

In May of 1770 de Mézières informed the governor that he had allowed a man accused of murder to go free because the suspect had served a seven year “sentence” among the Indians. At the local chief’s request, the commandant cancelled the man’s trial and placed him in the custody of the tribe with whom he had lived. Believing that Spain’s needs would be served by keeping peace with the Indians, de Mézières requested the governor’s sanction in his resolution of the problem. The answer was unexpected. Unzaga informed his lieutenant-governor that he would not sanction his decision. He further reminded de Mézières that O’Reilly’s instructions concerning such crimes were that the commandants at St. Louis and Natchitoches were to hold trials locally and send the perpetrators to New Orleans where the governor would pronounce sentence.57

Unzaga couched his words carefully. At stake was the establishment of Spanish authority and the creation of loyalty between commander and lieutenant-commander. The

57De Mézières to Unzaga, May 15, 1770, in Bolton, Athanase de Mézières, I:160-162; Unzaga to de Mézières, June 1, 1770, ibid.

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governor was dealing with Frenchmen in a former French colony who not only had ruled their locales before his arrival but were often tied to the area by marriage and property. He appended his instructions with a note that the letter “caused him much pain” but that “proper” procedures must be followed. De Mézières reaction is not recorded.

It was a full year before Unzaga began to trust the commandant at Natchitoches in his handling of both Indian affairs and criminal offenses. He grudgingly accepted de Mézières appointment as Indian Agent but sent along a Spaniard, José de la Peña, to oversee his operations throughout 1770. Unzaga was, quite frankly, skeptical of the Frenchman’s intentions and his abilities. It was not until the lieutenant-governor finally negotiated treaties of peace and alliance among the Nations of the North the following year that the governor finally began to trust him completely. Even so, Unzaga was careful to take credit for his subordinate’s actions, writing to de la Torre in Havana that “under my orders peace was officialized by the lieutenant governor of Natchitoches with the various nations bordering this place, and with the Presidios de Adaes and Señor Antonio de Bucareli (the Viceroy of New Spain).”

De Mézières was not the only commandant to receive such a rebuke. In August of 1770, Unzaga angrily reprimanded commandant Louis Judice for “usurping the governor’s authority” by granting colonist, Marc Molet the right to sell tafia in St. James Parish. All licenses were to be issued by the governor’s office. Unzaga, however, was less concerned with Judice’s handling of criminal affairs because the commandant made a

\[58\] Ibid.

\[59\] Unzaga to de la Torre, December 17, 1771, Dispatches.

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habit of inquiring about the crime and making suggestions regarding the outcome rather than passing judgement out of hand. Several letters between governor and commandant include Unzaga's approval of his subordinate's leadership.\textsuperscript{60}

The governor's determination to institute his authority also surrounded the need to keep lines of communication open with commandants unused to such a formal system. This becomes apparent upon examining his different treatment of various commandants. In lower Louisiana, Unzaga dealt with long-standing French authority in the forms of local French land owners who became commandants. He was firm with these men in instituting the requisite chain of command within the Spanish system. His letters to Arkansas and St. Louis, however, do not contain reprimands. This may be accounted for by the fact that these commandants were Spaniards used to the Spanish military and governmental system. Furthermore, Pedro Piernas, at St. Louis, had received his post as a promotion under O'Reilly and was, therefore, in Unzaga's eyes, a trusted servant of the crown.

Letters from the post commandants in lower Louisiana and in Natchitoches indicate that Unzaga's early attempts to establish centralized rule in the office of the governor did, in fact, open the lines of communication between Spanish authorities and their colonists. The letters also give insight into the practice of colonial jurisprudence and the judicial travails of the governor. It was through the courts that Unzaga finalized his attempts at instituting order in the form of the rule of law.

\textsuperscript{60}The reprimand is contained in Unzaga to Judice, August 11, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio1 d/17; example of approval found in Unzaga to Judice, July 20, 1770, ibid., Folio 1d/15.

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Earlier studies of the colony's jurisprudence have asserted that the governors were often unaware of the majority of crimes committed outside New Orleans. This opinion was largely based on information gleaned from the few records available at the time. In studying only court records, past historians missed the countless letters forwarded to the governors asking their approval of the decisions of local commandants or the governors' decision's in judicial matters. While only part of these crimes were actually tried in New Orleans (and therefore appeared in the records), they were still "dealt with" one way or another by the governor. Either he sent it back to his commandant to be handled, and officially supported the commandant's position, or he accepted the case in the Governor's Court of the Cabildo, or sent it to the court of last appeal in Havana. Unzaga's correspondence with his commandants provides ample evidence of the multitude of decisions made by Spain's military governors in frontier posts. Indeed, contrary to the belief that the governors knew little of their colonists' day to day lives, the records indicate Unzaga was appraised on a daily basis of the ongoing lives of his colonists, their desires, their arguments, their crimes and their achievements. Those lines of communication allowed him, in return, to gain their confidence and finally their loyalty to Spanish authority.61

Louisiana's governor maintained civil and judicial authority through several courts. While the Spanish system was more complex than the French combination of

61AGI, Cuba Legajos 188-A, 188-B, and 188-C contain hundreds of letters (primarily in French) which given tremendous insight into the lives of local Louisianians throughout Unzaga's tenure. See especially the letters of commandants Verret, Dutisné and Judice..
superior council and military justice, it was also more efficient. The governor presided over a civil, criminal and a military court. His authority was ostensibly absolute, and subject only to the King, yet he was limited by realities and practicalities. Beneath him were the courts of the *alcaldes ordinarios*, and the *alcaldes mayor provincial* and the commandants, and the court of the intendant and ecclesiastical courts. The efficiency of the court system and the Cabildo meant that Unzaga actually knew as much of the daily lives of the planter class and those residing in New Orleans as he did of his colonists in surrounding territories. It was also through the courts that Unzaga struggled to establish the rule of law in the colony and to educate its leaders in Spanish government.

The Cabildo, according to the Code O'Reilly, assembled every Friday to oversee such various functions in New Orleans as policing, taxation, supervision of the local markets, regulating licenses for building, health regulations, land distribution and local festivals. On a larger level it was supposed to act as a court of justice for the whole colony, though it more frequently served New Orleans and its immediate environs. Unzaga served at the Cabildo and in his personal court on a regular basis. This consistency, combined with the regular meetings of the Cabildo, created a constant judicial presence in the colony. This served in turn to support Unzaga's attempts to create the rule of law and implant Spanish administrative systems.

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62 Along with these were, of course, the lesser or inferior courts of the commandants and syndics in outlying districts. Most maritime cases and those dealing with the treasury were sent to the court of the Intendancy. The ecclesiastical court tried cases dealing with church fuero and the inquisition. See Kerr, "Petty Felony," Chapter One on the court system.

63 Din, *Cabildo*, 56.
The governor's court convened in a plain room with a raised platform at one end. Atop the platform the court's officials presided from various tables and desks, overseen only by a crucifix to remind them of God's justness. Governor's courts in the Borderlands generally handled cases appealed from the lower courts, criminal cases which threatened the welfare of the colony such as murder or slave offenses, treason and any cases concerning foreigners. Kerr noted that the kinds of cases the governor actually saw also depended on his "desire to make an example of an offender or his availability to handle the court." Unzaga made himself available for court on a regular basis where he stood as a constant example for the other courts and his colonists. In his court in New Orleans, the governor tried various cases which included debt collections, family successions, slave offences, slave emancipations and damages to slave and/or property, contraband, smuggling, the appointment of officials to the Cabildo and fines on their offices, and heard appeals from the commandants. Transcripts of the trials and hearings indicate that Unzaga remained constantly in touch with the social realities of his colony.

Problems surrounding debts and debt collection were the most common cases heard by the courts. A review of the court transcriptions indicates, for instance, that of fifty-four cases tried by the governor himself in 1774, twenty-nine (54%) were for debt

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66Abbreviated transcripts of the trials for the Spanish Period can be found as a series, translated and published in the Louisiana Historical Quarterly, those for Unzaga's period are found in volumes 71 through 11.

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collection and several others were suits on broken contracts or damages to goods. The following year eight out of thirteen cases (62%) were for debt collection. Spanish law favored the creditor and many cases sought help in collecting from debtors in a timely manner. The court frequently required the debtor to pay within a three-day period. Debtors found guilty of non-payment were also required to pay the court costs. If they did not pay within the required time Unzaga and the other judges lost no time in sending the sheriff to collect the money or something appropriate to serve in lieu of the cash. Sometimes the sheriff was sent to bring defendants who dodged their debts into court to stand trial. For example, on October 7, 1773 militia soldier Juan Bautista Chateau appeared before the governor asking that he help collect a bill from one Christoval de Liza who claimed to have nothing with which to pay Chateau. Unzaga decided that de Liza had had more than enough time to pay the debt. The governor sent the sheriff to de Liza's domicile to collect the money. He instructed the sheriff to ask for cash but take possessions if necessary and if de Liza didn't point anything out to choose something himself. De Liza, apparently still penniless, stood aside, refusing to point anything out, so the sheriff collected his straw chair as payment. In another case from December of 1773, unpaid creditor Nicolas Longueval was given permission to enter debtor M. Lamorandier's home with the commandant in Opelousas to collect either

67See Court Docket 5, December 18, 1773, Collection of debt, court ordered payment within three days in “Index to Spanish Judicial Records of Louisiana-Sep-Dec, 1773,” LHO 10 (1927): 154. Cited further as SJR with volume and page numbers.

money or possessions worth the same amount.69 A final example came on March 3, 1775, where Unzaga agreed to order the collection of a debt. By the following week when the debt had not been paid, Unzaga sent the Sheriff to bring the man to court to stand trial, pay the debt and pay court costs.70

Spanish law also allowed debts assessed on third parties if the debtor was deceased. In January of 1775 a creditor sought payment for a slave from a third party. The original owner was deceased and the current owner hid the slave to escape the former’s debts. The record does not indicate if the slave was inherited or given away, or even confiscated by the third party but in February, the governor’s court required the third party to produce the slave or pay the debt. Unzaga sought also to enforce the seriousness of skirting the law and the courts. Because the defendant sought to conceal the slave the governor assessed him for the court costs.71

Unzaga honored debts owed before the Spanish take-over. His work with his father in-law and the merchants is commonly cited as proof of his integrity. It is also worth noting that the governor worked with the French crown to insure that the Company of the Indies could collect from its former colonists and their estates, although he protected his colonists against wrongful collection. In February of 1774, Salmon Prevost, newly appointed to oversee the affairs of the Company of the Indies in Louisiana, sued the widow Francisca Ruella in the governor’s court to attach the estate of

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69Nicolas Longueval vs. M. Lamorandier, December 19, 1773, ibid.


71See Docket Nos. 3744 and 3745, January 16 and February 25, ibid., 155-156.
Membrede Ruelland, for "an ancient debt of 22,400 livres." Membrede had been dead thirty seven years but Francisca remained the guardian of the estate under the right of usufruct. In March the governor's court determined that the widow did not owe the sum asked for, nor any debt, and collection was denied. The same was not true for Charles Mareet de la Tour, however. His estate was charged not only the amount owed to the Company of the Indies, but also taxed for the court costs. In July of 1774, Unzaga ruled again in favor of Saloman Prevost and the Company of the Indies against the heirs of the estate of Gerardo Pellerin. Clearly the rule of law was to be upheld, even if it had been the law previously established by the French crown.72

It was apparently common to tax such estates for court costs whether in debt suits or in successions. In many cases surrounding inherited estates or those attached for payment of debt the court taxed the estate for its own costs.73 Even when estates produced so little that taxes could not be assessed, the court taxed it for costs. For example, in a succession heard August 31, 1775, for an estate to be relieved of debts and taxes because it was such a small inheritance, Unzaga agreed to the former but took his court costs out none-the-less.74


73 Docket No. 3831 "SJR ", Ibid, 466

74 "SJR," ibid, 165.
Unzaga was not fond of debt suits and he encouraged his citizens to settle out of court if they could. The threat of having to pay court costs apparently was one of the weapons Unzaga used to get individuals to settle their disputes privately, as the following cases will show. In some cases they settled out of court but in others they were forced to stop the suit because the legal costs were prohibitive. In January of 1774, a wife sued her husband, living separately, to pay her room and board since they were still married. The governor's court stalled on any decision, the parties cancelled the suit and the husband paid the wife's board the following day.\(^5\) In another case Alexander Baure and Vincente Fangui petitioned the governor saying that "for the service of God and to escape further costs they desire[d] to drop the suit." Unzaga agreed. Family arguments which ended in court also were frequently settled out of court as in the case of Antonio Cavelier who sued his brother-in-law Santiago Carriere for a debt in March of 1774. The brothers-in-law eventually decided not to prosecute through the courts and Santiago paid Antonio as well as another creditor, Henry Voix, within the month.\(^6\) Another amusing case was a debt instantly dismissed because the governor was given proof, in the form of a receipt, that the debtor had already paid his bill! There is no indication as to whether the creditor was just forgetful or if he intended to deliberately cheat the man.\(^7\)


\(^7\)Henrique Desprez vs. Francisco de la Barre, April 11, 1774, Docket No. 3767, "SJR," 10: 438.
Not all claims of debts were easily settled and many cases went undecided until a later date when more proof could be brought to the courts. Instead of becoming frustrated by a lack of evidence the governor used some of these hearings to re-establish the authority of the post commandants by referring such cases back to them for final judgement. For example in September of 1773, Henry Voix sued Pablo de la Houssay for a debt. De la Houssey said that his agent, Garic, was liable for the debt but Garic swore in court he was not the man’s representative. Having no further information on who actually represented de la Houssay the governor allowed the case to be sent to the Commandant at Opelousas, Fuselier de la Claire, who knew the case and the people involved. In this way, more information could be brought into play to establish liability and the governors actions fostered Fusilier de la Claire’s authority in such cases.\(^7\)\(^8\) This did not mean his commandant had a completely free hand in Opelousas, as seen in a case where Joseph Moreau petitioned the governor’s court to get back land granted to him during d’Abbadie’s administration. Fuselier de la Claire had taken it upon himself to evict Moreau from the land and give him another plot. Unzaga, acting as a court of last resort for his colonists, upheld the French land grant because Moreau showed the conveyance to him from the original owner Pellerin which described the property he possessed. With this evidence the governor ordered Commandant de la Claire to restore Moreau’s property.\(^7\)\(^9\)

\(^7\) Enrique Voix vs. Pablo de la Houssay, September 11, 1773, Docket No. 26, “SJR,” 10: 130.

\(^8\) Petition of Joseph Moreau, January 21, 1774, Docket No. 3704, “SJR” 11: 287. The governor frequently referred cases which pertained to the posts back to the
While the governor sought to establish a centrality of command he also allowed the court system to grow as it accepted Spanish law. He upheld the decisions of lower courts and referred appeals back to the appropriate court of first instance. Thomas Ingersoll erroneously claims that, under Unzaga, Louisiana was returned to the rule of traditional Spanish borderlands military governorship. Under such leadership, Ingersoll claims, the governor answered to no authority other than Havana and the King and the "planter class lost their right to representation in a local organ of colonial government" because the Cabildo offered no provisions for the people "to challenge the Spanish system from within." The Cabildo was filled with planters who bought offices and fought to serve in the judicial system, assuring themselves a voice in government. Additionally, while Unzaga overrode decisions by the earlier Superior Council based on French law, he also stood back while the new Spanish Cabildo expanded its powers to overturn his own decisions, as in the case of Joseph Loppinot vs. Juan Villeneuve, where Unzaga had ruled against the plaintiff. Loppinot appealed to the Cabildo and the Cabildo overturned the governor's decision. The governor declined to interfere, allowing the case to go to Havana as a last court of appeal. Havana upheld the governor's original decision. In the end, Unzaga's patience accomplished the growth of the court system in Louisiana commandant because he could verify and deny information given to the court in New Orleans. In April of 1773 accusations of stolen dairy cattle were settled by sending the case back to Opelousas for trial where the suit was eventually dismissed. Case of Judith Chenal, April 23, 1773, Docket No. 35, "SJR," 9:442.

Ingersoll, Old New Orleans, III, 456.

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and helped tie it to the Havana judiciary, thus cementing Louisiana more firmly into the
greater Spanish system.81

Citizens of New Orleans strove to become active in the Cabildo. As in any
colonial territory public service meant more business contacts and a higher social rank in
the colony. Serving in the Cabildo was taken as seriously as serving in the militia. Those
citizens who did not do their duty lost their office. In one case, the governor auctioned
off the seat of an absentee official named Denis Braud. Braud was New Orleans’ first
printer and as such had come under suspicion because he printed materials for the French
Superior Council and the rebels of 1768. O’Reilly arrested him and attached his estate.
Exculpated of any crime Braud applied for the office of Regidor but later left the colony
for France, never to return. In November of 1773 Unzaga prosecuted Braud for absenting
himself after applying for the office and fined him. On January of 13, 1774, the governor
declared the office vacant and five days later the office sold at auction to Daniel Fagot for
the fines in the amount one-thousand two-hundred and two pesos, a tremendous deal for
Fagot since the actual price of the office was over nine-thousand pesos. Public service
offered a great many opportunities in Louisiana but it also brought with it responsibilities
which Unzaga and the courts seemed willing to enforce.82

81Joseph Loppinot vs. Juan Villeneuve, April 15, 1774, Docket No. 3780, “SJR,”
9: 438. See also Henry P. Dart, “Civil Procedure in Louisiana Under the Spanish Regime
as Illustrated in Loppinot’s Case, 1774,” LHQ 12 (1929): 33-120.

82See Henry P. Dart, (ed.) “The Adventures of Denis Braud, the First Printer of
Louisiana, 1765-1773.” LHQ 14 (1931): 349-60; also Prosecution of Dionisio Braud,
November 23, 1773, Docket No. 12, “SJR,” 10: 422. For auction of office see the case
tried January 18, 1774, Docket No. 20, ibid. 11: 282.
The records also indicate that both the governor and the courts took measures to protect colonists' inheritances and private property. Unzaga oversaw numerous cases concerned with the rights of wives, widows and especially children in the event of their parents' deaths. Under Spanish laws all wives kept control of their dowry (whatever property they brought to the marriage). By law that property remained theirs and was inherited by their children, although their father might have the usufructs of it in his lifetime. A wife also had use of her husband's estate in her lifetime though it belonged to his children. Many men in Spanish Louisiana sought escape from debt, from prison, or just from responsibility by fleeing into the colonial wilderness. Sometimes men who were hunters or worked with cattle left their homes never to return. In such cases the wife could approach the court for the rights to her husband's property. For example, in January of 1774, a wife asked the court to authorize her to sell her husband's "real property" because he had not returned in over a year and in his absence the family had become destitute. After affirming her story with witnesses to her husband's disappearance Unzaga granted the wife the right to sell their house to support herself.83

The governor also upheld the right of women to their doweries even while married. One of his female colonists sued for her property while still married because she refused to live with her husband on the grounds of "bad treatment." Until the hearing the husband had refused to support his wife or to give back her property. The governor's

court required that the man answer his wife and upon assuring itself of his improper
treatment granted the wife’s request for her property.84

While women’s rights to property were based primarily on the idea that the law
was inevitably protecting her children’s inheritance, they sometimes protected the mother
from the children. One widow was granted the right to inventory and divide her estate
without interference by the children’s curator. In another case a mother-in-law claimed
and was granted her property from the estate of one of the leaders of the 1769 revolt.85
The case of Henrique Desperez vs. Bagriel Dubertrand, shows where the new husband of
a widow even successfully sued to collect her inheritance from the estate of her first
marriage.86

Spanish law strictly enforced the right of female colonists to their property but the
governor was especially interested in the rights of children to their inheritances. An
example can be found in Docket No. 3774, May 20, 1774, where the children of a
deceased father were allowed to sue their step father to get their father’s inheritance.
Unzaga ordered the children’s rightful inheritance produced and taxed the stepfather’s
estate for the court costs.87 It was common for children, especially minor children to be

84See Philippe Flotte vs. Marie Theresa Leiveille, May 25, 1773, Docket No.10,
“SJR.,” 10: 534.

85See Docket no. 3802, June 15, 1773, ibid; and Docket No. 3806, July 24, 1773,

86Henrique Desperez vs. Gabriel Dubertrand, December 10, 1773, Docket No. 24,

87Petition for inheritance, Ana and Elena, daughters of Isaac Guinault vs.
represented by adults in the family who served to guide them and protect their interests. Sometimes it was necessary to seek that help outside the family, especially since Spanish law did not recognize the right of “family meetings” to decide important controversies concerning inheritance. In several cases the governor allowed minor children to appoint curators to protect their inheritances and under special circumstances allowed the children’s early emancipation.88

The protection of inherited rights extended also to slave children. In an unusual case on January 17, 1774, Unzaga ruled on the succession of a free black woman named Martha Marton who died leaving a small estate of personal property to her son Pedro. Martha had emancipated herself but apparently had not been able to do the same for Pedro who belonged to Father Bernabe, pastor on the German Coast. Despite his social status, the court upheld Pedro’s rights to inherit his mother’s property. The property was sold at auction to pay off the mother’s creditors and the governor assigned the remainder of the estate to Father Bernabe for safekeeping.89

Emancipation was an extremely important element of the Spanish judicial system which saw all persons as human beings and creatures of God whether free or enslaved.

88 In several instances the governor required that curators of children’s inheritance explain their actions and account for the inheritance. See May 25, 1774, Docket No. 3793, “SJR,” 10:452. January 2, 1774, Docket No. 3758, ibid.

89 The remainder of Martha’s estate was small indeed. Her original property was sold for the amount of one-hundred sixty-four pesos and two reales. Afterwards the estate was charged one-hundred fifteen pesos and three reales for her debts and seventeen pesos six reales for costs. Other small bills were presented, subtracted and the remainder given to the good Father. See Succession of Martha Marton, January 17, 1774, Docket #3787, ibid, 292.
Several slaves bought their freedom in Unzaga’s courts though the court placed obstacles against other emancipations. In 1775, the eighty-year-old slave of the deceased William Dupre gained freedom for the amount of twelve pesos which he had saved. To do so, however, the man had to submit to public auction as part of Dupre’s personal property to make sure that he was not counted as part of a debt against the estate.\textsuperscript{90} It is evident that despite the view of Spanish law that all persons had souls and rights, once enslaved a person also became moveable property and both Spanish and French law strongly protected personal property. More often, than not, the courts found a way to keep slaves from gaining their freedom. For example, Anonio, a mulatto slave of the Deshotel estate, petitioned the courts for his freedom in 1774. He produced a paper which granted such freedom on the death of his masters. Upon examining the papers, the courts denied his emancipation on the grounds that the paper was not notarized and the writing was not formal. Anyone, they said could have forged such a note and there was no way to prove it was the deceased’s writing. A sad Anonio was sold at auction with the rest of his master’s property.\textsuperscript{91}

The notarial records indicate other ways that slaves could be denied their freedom. Spanish law provided masters with a legal recourse to maintain the labor of their slaves even after emancipation. The term \textit{obligación} referred to the legal requirement that slaves remain on the property of their former owners and serve for an allotted time before they were granted complete freedom. \textit{Obligación} was common in the Spanish colonies.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item No Docket No. “SJR,” 11: 155.
\item Petition of Anonio, March 7, 1774, Docket No. 3757, “SJR,” 10:288.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
It had originally been set up to smooth the transition from slavery to freedom for both slave and master. It was, however, an abstract theory and as such could be twisted to deny freedom, despite the right of emancipation. An good example is the account of Luisa. After serving her master well for twenty years, the owner rewarded her with emancipation (*libertad*). They recorded the act with the notary’s office, but on the following day Luisa was required to swear to continue serving her master another four years under the rule of *obligación*, “obeying as she should everything he ordered, recognizing him as lord.” In the end, her master was not satisfied with her behavior during *obligación* and her emancipation was rescinded.⁹²

Luisa was not alone. Many owners twisted the terms of contracts and legal arrangements to keep what they felt was their property. Indeed the legal theories of the protection of private property and the right of contract became the most common arguments to hold onto slaves under the Spanish system.⁹³ Free blacks and slaves understood this point of law and therefore the most common form of emancipation during Unzaga’s tenure came at the hands of other Africans who literally bought slaves and freed

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⁹²Andres Almonaster y Roxas, *Notarial Archives* III January-December, 1772, Act No. 96, dated March 3, 1772, gave Luisa her freedom. The following day, Act No. 98, she swore to the act of *obligación*. In September, Act. 348, her emancipation was rescinded.

⁹³The idea of property was strong enough to protect new buyers against the sale of damaged “merchandise” as in the case of Juan Baptista Richard who sued Joseph Roth in 1774 for the selling him a slave named Marie and her infant daughter. Richard claimed he had been deceived in the sale because Marie was not of good character and the infant daughter was crippled. The court supported Richard’s claim and ordered Roth to take back the slave and her child and refund Richard’s money. January 7, 1774, Docket No. 4, “SJR,” 10: 281.
them afterward, carefully notarizing the emancipation. Unfortunately there were ways
around such sales as in the case of Antonio Albert and his nineteen year-old son Juan sold
by Geronimo La Chappelle in January of 1772, who rethought the sale in the court room
and had the sale rescinded on the same day because it “inconvenienced” him. Freedom
came to African slaves more under the Spanish system than the French, but it was still
difficult to obtain.\textsuperscript{94}

In volume two of his work on class and race in New Orleans, Thomas Ingersoll
claimed that the French planters of Louisiana rejected Spanish culture and its attitude
toward slavery and that the growth of a free black community threatened their ideas of
slavery. Other historians, however, note that there was already a free black population
under the early French regime which gave rise to stricter slave codes by the end of the
French period. Further, Spanish law supported the right of slaves as property while
applying humanistic ideas of the slave’s rights to legal representation and emancipation.
Many Spaniards in Louisiana, including governor Unzaga, were slave owners and
approached the application of the new slave regulations cautiously.\textsuperscript{95}

\textsuperscript{94}Andrés Almonaster y Rojas, \textit{Notarial Archives} III, Jan-Dec, 1772, in Act No.
192, a free black man named Joseph bought a twenty-seven year old slave also named
Joseph (no relation mentioned) and the slave was henceforth freed in the act of sale. In
Act No. 16, January 28, 1772, Antonio and Juan were sold, and Act No. 17, dated the
same day, rescinding of previous act because it inconvenienced the original owner.

\textsuperscript{95}Ingersoll, \textit{Old New Orleans} II: 454; See Mathe Allain, “Slave Policies in
of Slave Regulations in French Louisiana, 1724-1766,” Ibid, 139-58; the Notarial
Archives in New Orleans note the sale or purchase of several different slaves by Unzaga
during his tenure: one previously noted before his marriage, the purchase of a thirty-nine
year-old slave Theodoro in 1774, \textit{Notarial Archives} Act. No. 136; and sale of slave on
April 27, 1775, to Miguel Almonasi, ibid., II: January 2 to May 1, 1775, Acts 1-270; Act.
Emancipation cases were not the only court cases regarding slavery Unzaga heard. During his administration he oversaw cases regarding property and murder, additionally ruling on commandants’ decisions regarding slaves in their jurisdiction. His attitude toward enslaved Africans was mixed. As a slave owner, he upheld the right of property and supported strict discipline where slaves were concerned. As the representative of Spain’s judicial system, he oversaw numerous cases where slaves were allowed to defend themselves in court against their accusers. Unzaga exhibited enlightened leadership in many of these cases, interfering only to steer the Cabildo and courts toward Spanish law.96

Tackling the problems of African slavery in Louisiana required patience. While Unzaga could be brusque he began the installation of Spanish slave law by issuing a proclamation on November 3, 1770 requiring that all sales of property, including slaves, be notarized in order to be considered valid by the courts. That action supported the French idea of slaves as moveable property but reduced illegal practices within the system. The governor also fought to lessen the amount of fugitive slaves in the colony and actually strove to curtail many allowable freedoms which he felt threatened the order

96 The following cases concern slaves of African decent, although numerous Indian slaves applied for and were granted their freedom. In fact the attitude of the Spanish toward Indian slaves led many slaves to claim Indian decent in order to gain their freedom. See Weber, “Problem of Indian Slavery,” 118-119.

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of the colony. He supported the actions of Lieutenant-Governor Athanase de Mézières against fugitive slave bands which disrupted the community in Natchitoches.97

In De Mézières letter to the governor on the first of February of 1771, the Lieutenant-Governor indicated that there were two kinds of slaves causing problems: “Africans” and “Creoles.” This differentiation was commonly made when selling slaves. Newly arrived slaves were considered Africans and were seen as “uncivilized.” As previously noted, most of the slaves sold in Louisiana after the Spanish take over were African slaves who hadn’t been tainted with other ideas. Creole usually referred to second generation Africans, but could also indicate a mixture of Indian or European blood. The crown considered Africans or “brutos” (sometimes called bozales) less troublesome but court documents indicate that the crown’s ideas did not fit colonial reality. Many “Africans” still harbored ideas of freedom and retaliation. The wilderness gave slaves ample opportunities to disappear, sometimes for years, and the exceptional relationship between some masters and slaves in Louisiana’s settlements outside New Orleans created still more problems. Plantation slaves and more especially those in the hinterlands were often in possession of firearms, despite the regulations against such possession. Trusted slaves were expected to hunt and protect property but the possession of weapons often got them into trouble or increased the means by which they might

“retaliate” against bad treatment. Unzaga’s main concerns were order and the enforcement of law. He echoed de Mézières belief that fugitives should be punished quickly and severely to prevent other such actions and therefore supported the Lieutenant-Governor’s application of one-hundred lashes each to the six fugitives at Natchitoches.

If law was to create order, Unzaga realized that the promulgation of law must be particularized. In dealing with the colony’s various needs, he learned that law in New Orleans did not necessity fit the reality of frontier posts. Accordingly, he left the everyday administration to the commandants. These men could create laws to suit the particular needs of their posts. One example was De Mézières’ ordinance dated January 21, 1770, which forbade the sale of alcohol to slaves and their possession of weapons, whether it be sticks, knives or firearms. He added his own rules which applied to a territory on the edge of civilization. In the document de Mézières forbade slaves from engaging in public meetings whether for dances, games or other reasons. This was an ordinance that would never have been allowed in New Orleans. Slaves continued to meet at Congo Square and slaves were some of the best customers for New Orleans’ merchants. The Lieutenant-Governor also forbade slaves the ownership of horses which of-course would have eased illegal flight. Punishment was to be sure and swift. Slaves

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98 See Gilbert C. Din, Spaniards, Planters and Slaves, 48; Ingersoll, Old New Orleans 2: 552, indicates that one women caught in the Attakapas area in 1771 had been a fugitive for two years. See Usner, Indians, Settlers and Slaves, on the arming of favored slaves.

99 Din, Spaniards, Planters and Slaves, 50.
breaking the regulations were to be lashed and masters who violated such regulations were to be fined. It was assumed that masters were responsible for their property.\textsuperscript{100}  

Control over slaves in New Orleans was a thornier problem. In the city many free blacks engaged in sales, purchased goods and had businesses. Slaves also ran businesses for their masters and dealt with merchants on a regular basis. The businessmen and planters in New Orleans were, therefore, divided over the treatment of slaves. Many wanted to retain a certain freedom for their slaves to a free day on Sunday and the right of slaves to earn money for themselves while others sought to maintain stricter control over the movement of slaves.  

Fugitive slaves grew in number in the city and in 1773 the Cabildo and the planters moved to try and control both maroonage and insubordination of slaves whose lax treatment allowed such behavior. Din notes that Unzaga allowed the Cabildo to act on its own regarding these new regulations.\textsuperscript{101}  

\begin{itemize}
  \item The councillors of the Cabildo agreed to establish a special tax whose funds could be used to compensate owners whose slaves were removed from their ownership through the courts. At Unzaga’s prompting they opened the discussion of the tax, which affected all colonists, to a wider vote. On August 26, the citizenry of New Orleans and the surrounding parishes met to discuss the tax and changes to laws affecting slaves and fugitives. They eased the burden of reporting maroonage and suggested that the funds also be used to reward those who captured fugitives.
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{100} The ordinance can be found in AGI, Cuba 188-A, its date is January 21, 1770.

\textsuperscript{101} Actas del Cabildo, 2: 109-12; Din, Spaniards, Planters and Slaves, 58.
runaways. The Cabildo and the governor immediately implemented the councils’
suggestions while forwarding the new laws to the crown for approval.102

The compensation fund was an excellent example of the growth of law and a
sense of community in the colony but it was not completely successful. Claims for
compensation arrived from slave owners all over the colony. Collecting the tax was
difficult and when compensation didn’t immediately follow a claim the claimants in
surrounding parishes reneged on their tax assessments to support it. Still, the governor
gained valuable information from the fund. To assess the tax, census materials were
generated and reports flowed into New Orleans regarding mis-behavior on the part of
both slaves and owners. With that information the governor could more easily oversee
the plantation areas surrounding New Orleans and even the outlying parishes. Stricter
slave codes could be enforced. This reporting also strengthened ties between the
governor and his post commandants, whom he allowed to enforce the regulations.

Fugitive laws did not, however, stop the loaning of slaves and their labor, or the
right of slaves to sell their own labor on Sundays. In the Loppinot case a valuable slave
lost his life on the way back from working for a neighbor on Sunday. He was drunk,
having been given alcohol by the neighbor as part of his reward. The owner sued,
denying the right of his neighbor to endanger his slave. He was actually after more
control of the slave’s life than was possible under the law. Unzaga’s unpopular decision
in the Loppinot case upheld the portions of Spanish law which gave slaves Sundays to be

102 Actas del Cabildo, 1: 109-12, and pages 113-14, for the August cabildo abierto. Din gives a larger discussion of the rules for the slave fund and the actually employment of persons used to hunt down runaways in Spaniards, Planters and Slaves, 58-61.
used as they saw fit (within the law). This case exacerbated the problems over congress between slaves and between slaves and freedmen which some planters felt threatened their authority. In this instance the governor bent the colonists to the law not the other way around.\textsuperscript{103}

As an eighteenth-century leader the governor tried to use enlightened methods to expand the rule of law in Louisiana and truly instill justice in the system. At the same time he had to use stern measures to back the letter of the law. He imposed severe punishment on offenders including the use of torture on the rack to extract confessions, flogging, and drawing and quartering in cases of murder. In such cases, the governor also enforced scientific investigation of crimes, using appropriate authorities to discuss evidence, and every defendant was allowed to speak in court in his own defense.

Several cases heard by the governor show the complexity of the problems Unzaga faced in bringing justice. Francisco Bellisle’s slaves and a “bruto” slave from Guinea named Carlos were tried for engaging in African “gris-gris” to try and poison their overseer and master. During the hearing all of the slaves were allowed to give their testimony (some of which was coerced through torture) and translators were provided for those who did not speak Spanish, including Carlos. The poison was examined by three doctors who gave their deposition as to the nature of the concoction. The investigation began in the governor’s court in June of 1773 and ended in a trial during January of the following year. In the end, the governor ruled that most of the slaves had been guilty only

of conspiracy and failure to report such a conspiracy to their owners. Since Carlos, the culprit who concocted the poison, had died in prison Unzaga dropped the case with the understanding that all of the other slaves were to be separated and sold. The "creole" slave accused of being the ringleader was given his time already served in prison as punishment and ordered sold away from the others. In the case of Carlos it becomes apparent that having "bruto" slaves did not guarantee one’s safety or that "creole" slaves were less guilty of committing crimes against their masters. 104

In another poisoning case in July of 1774, the accused poisoner, Pedro was also a Guinea born African. Accused of killing his black overseer, Pedro swore he never gave the man anything to drink. Without corroborating witnesses Unzaga chose to address the case scientifically, ordering an autopsy which indicated the man might have been poisoned. The governor ordered a trial. When Pedro continued to deny the poisoning his defense attorney suggested the man might have died from other cases. With no new evidence to indicate the cause of death Unzaga finally ordered that Pedro remain imprisoned for ten years. In 1777, Pedro’s owners abandoned him to prison which meant he would be allowed emancipation once he completed his sentence. The courts had tried a criminal and jailed a possible offender who, if guilty, at least would not be able to perpetrate another crime for ten years. 105


In the case of Temba and Francisco Mirliton in 1771, two slaves fired their master’s hayloft and shot him as he emerged from his house to put out the fire. Unzaga extorted the testimony of both slaves with the use of torture on the rack and condemned both to the hangman’s noose. The dead bodies of the criminals were left hanging and Temba’s hands were nailed to a post on the road. Two other slaves implicated as accomplices were tarred and feathered as an example of what happened to those who helped criminals. Unzaga withheld punishment, however, on other slaves he suspected of being accessories because he did not have evidence to convict them. Despite his vehemence toward slave crime and his determination to halt its growth, Unzaga did not move outside of the law to enforce his will on the populace.

Din interestingly notes in a footnote to the Temba case that torture was not common in Louisiana’s courts and that the Spanish did not use “the heinous instrument of torture and death called ‘the wheel,’ as the French had done, or any other similar device.”\textsuperscript{106} In his attempts to defend the Spanish system Din perhaps overlooks the fact that the “rack,” an extremely painful device, was the favorite instrument of torture used by the Spanish to extract confessions from slaves. Accused criminals like Carlos sometimes died in prison from mistreatment while awaiting trial during Unzaga’s tenure.

A more meaningful point might be made by stressing that the governor’s court and those of the \textit{alcaldes mayor} often served to disseminate justice before a trial was necessary and that fines often took the place of imprisonment. As a Spanish official, Unzaga sought to mete out justice and order in the colony, not revenge or tyranny. This

\footnote{Din, \textit{Spaniards, Planters and Slaves}, 262, note number 12, to Chapter 2.}

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last position can be seen particularly in the trial of several soldiers accused of allowing deserters to escape prison. In November of 1773 the case of Pablo Augraud and Asa Daniels, escaped prisoners, appeared in the governor's court. Unzaga heard the testimony of several soldiers accused of allowing the escape. The soldiers apparently were hoodwinked by an English Captain who plied the grenadier on guard, Antonio Gossen, with alcohol and then stole the keys, allowing the soldiers to escape. During the trial in April of the following year several soldiers were implicated and imprisoned along with Gossen. The accomplices pled innocence and petitioned the governor for their release. On April 22 Unzaga released and absolved the accomplices. He did not absolve Gossen but added that the man had acted with carelessness, not malice, adding that time already served was enough although Gossen must pay court costs. Justice was served. An example was set and court costs paid.107

During the 1770s Unzaga steadily worked to create a colony of loyal subjects. He correctly judged that order must be established before loyalty could be expected. To affect order, settled and resettled colonists through surveys and land grants in the lower Mississippi Valley, thereby creating a denser and larger population capable of defense and domestic industry. More importantly for the creation of loyal subjects, he bent Spanish law to fit colonial realities where necessary to protect the colony and enforced the law where it benefitted the people and the king. Enlightened vision led him to enhance his colonists' opportunities for education and worship and religious disputes

allowed him to enhance his position as defender of the faith and his colonial charges. By maintaining a strong and constant presence in the courts he used Spanish justice to systematically implant Spanish law in the colony. At the same time he indelibly etched the figure of the governor as the central authority. Indian slavery lessened considerably, though it did not disappear entirely. Planters continued to fight what they considered lenient Spanish law concerning their slaves but they also increasingly sought to use the courts to settle their claims. Emancipation remained tenuous for Louisiana's black slaves, their fate decided more by the owner's manipulation of legal codes than protection by the courts. The real emancipator, as always, remained cold, hard cash. Spanish codes defending slave's rights to employ themselves on Sundays opened fresh avenues to freedom. Unzaga left a sound system of justice, an enlightened Cabildo and court system, and a network of commandants able to serve justice in outlying areas. Justice gradually brought with it loyalty to the Spanish crown and a grudging obedience to the Spanish system. The greatest challenge for Unzaga remained the protection of the colony with a small, indefensible line of deteriorating forts, an untrained, undisciplined militia and an underpaid military.
Chapter Eight

In Defense of Crown and Colony

“These thoughts revolve in my head everyday so that I may be able to elect the best defense should the occasion present itself and as is dictated by my limited prudence and experience.”

Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga, June 8, 1770

The Bourbon Crown’s reform of its defenses in the Indies rested heavily on restructuring the army in the Indies and rebuilding certain defensive outposts. Spanish minister Esquilache and his successors gradually replenished treasury funds to support such defenses through increased taxation and better revenue collection. Posts in the Caribbean received funding to buttress their defenses, although the crown recognized that military responsibility for safeguarding the Indies must be transferred to a disciplined, colonial militia system. Alejandro O’Reilly applied his remarkable skills to the reorganization of defenses in Cuba and Louisiana. In both colonies he cut expenses, re-arranged troops, re-built fortifications and created an armed, better disciplined militia of Creoles and free blacks. In both instances, Spain’s officials were successful in integrating the colonial elite into a stable and loyal relationship with the Crown. Indeed, Louisiana’s military reorganization began in and extended directly from O’Reilly and Havana.

The results of the reform varied in the empire. This variance depended on the size and energy of the Crown’s expenditures, as well as the importance and economic stability of the colony. The importance of Havana in Spain’s imperial plans led Carlos III to

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1 Unzaga to Grimaldi, June 8, 1770, AGI, SD 2543, Folio 999.
2 Kuethe, Cuba, ix.
invest large sums toward its defense during the late eighteenth century. Allan J. Kuethe’s work on Cuba also indicates that under Alejandro O’Reilly, the king allowed the island to create a large, independent militia of Creoles and free blacks which shifted the burden of defense to the colony. Works which cover similar attempts in Mexico and Peru suggest Cuba’s stability and growth was actually an anomaly. Lyle N. McAlister’s work on Bourbon New Spain also shows that the extension of the *fuero militar* or military privilege to the colonial militia often created more conflict than appreciation and loyalty. Indeed, Carlos III, openly faced the possibility of having created a well armed and supplied army of insurrection in the colonies, yet he continued to construct such forces. This is most understandable when seen in the light of the continuing tensions among Spain and England and their colonies in North America.

Working under imperial and sometimes secretive orders, Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga, refurbished and re-manned Louisiana’s deteriorating defenses. He concentrated on building and maintaining the army and militia O’Reilly had created, despite illness, desertion and limited payrolls. Using his unique methods of adapting imperial necessities to colonial realities he also created a network of merchant spies and informants to funnel information on the British to Spain.

3Both Archer, in *The Army in Bourbon Mexico* and Campbell, in *The Military in Colonial Peru*, indicate a constant influx of funds and troops and a continual re-institution of such militia groups elsewhere in empire.

This examination of Louisiana's defenses compares it to both Havana and the remaining Spanish borderlands in which it existed. In Cuba, O'Reilly rebuilt the regular army, establishing several fixed regiments including dragoons and artillery companies. He lowered the military budget, although he was forced to make concessions later. The Captain-General also worked, with tremendous success, to create a reserve army in the form of a disciplined militia which remained a stable portion of Cuba's military for another century. Pragmatic management produced a well integrated military establishment using all the available resources. In Havana, and its environs he created white, pardo (mulatto), and moreno (free black) militias. The officers of such militias had to live within the district of the company they commanded. To enhance militia training he offered higher pay to regular army officers willing to command militia units. The militia companies also drilled regularly and received standardized equipment. Finally, under the Conde de Ricla, they received the fuero de guerra militar, permitting the men to appear before military tribunals instead of civilian courts and creating a certain esprit de corps and a feeling of upward mobility.\textsuperscript{5}

O'Reilly, like other military officials, contended with problems surrounding pay for the soldiers and militia, desertion (a constant problem in the Indies), proper supplies and equipment, uniforms and food. Later, the governorship of the Marqués de la Torre oversaw the creation of local funding for uniform replacements and armaments, as well as promulgating new regulations regarding deserters (both soldiers and sailors) and

\textsuperscript{5}See the chapter on Reform in Kuethe, Cuba, 3-23; McAlister, \textit{The "Fuero Militar."} 5-6 covers the social consequences of extending the \textit{fuero} to the militia.
penalties for those who aided them.\textsuperscript{6} Pay for the soldiers continued to be a problem into the 1780s and 1790s although Havana received far more subsidization than other locations in Spain's empire.

Cuba's militia units numbered 5,558 men by 1779 and volunteers were common. Accompanying the militia were a veteran infantry regiment of some 1,358 men both fusiliers and grenadiers and extra staff and command. The militia included white and \textit{pardo} battalions, a cavalry regiment and a dragoon regiment.\textsuperscript{7} Outnumbering the Spanish troops, the militia created under the Bourbon reforms guarded one of Spain's most important outposts.

While O'Reilly refurbished Cuba's armed forces and fortifications, Spain's ministers attempted to create a net around the Caribbean which would catch possible spies. As early as 1764, Minister of the Indies, Julián de Arriaga ordered all Spanish governors to maintain a cautious but continual discipline against any possible attack by the British.\textsuperscript{8} Despite the supposed peace between the two nations, Carlos III was determined not to be embarrassed by the English again. In 1766, agents in Europe informed him of a possible spy, a Frenchman named Pottier, who had been sent by England to spy in the Spanish colonies. Arriaga ordered Ricla to arrest and detain Pottier

\textsuperscript{6}Kuethe, \textit{Cuba}, 79; Royal order, El Pardo, March 10, 1785, AGI, SD 2160; and Marqués de la Torre, Cartas y Bando, July 6, 1776, AGI, Cuba 1221.

\textsuperscript{7}Kuethe, \textit{Cuba}, 179-182.

\textsuperscript{8}Arriaga to the Conde de Ricla, September 22, 1764, AGI, SD 1194.
if he were spotted. To curtail such spies the crown issued orders in 1768 to cordon off the empire by restricting the traffic in Spanish ports. The injunction was aimed specifically at the British, who were allowed entry only in emergencies and allowed shelter just long enough for repairs. Questionable ships were to be detained, the ship seized, and the crew sent to the closest British port with the expenses to be borne by the British or other foreign crown. The King admonished all governors not to allow contraband especially if it meant that “hard specie” might leave the empire.

This order was followed in Cuba as long as it didn’t interfere with the normal ship traffic and apparently with the expected trade in contraband items. Captain-General Bucareli followed the crown’s wishes as closely as possible, forbidding entry to British ships and admonishing other governors to do the same. Captain-General de la Torre “elasticized” such restrictions to benefit Cuba (see Chapter Four). Thomas E. Chávez finds in his work, The Ultimate Gift: Spain and The Independence of the United States, that Spain’s officials also managed somehow to distinguish the difference between British spies and the regular colonial practices of trade in the Caribbean. They differentiated, therefore, between English colonists who merely “subverted” the Atlantic mercantile system and British attempts at subterfuge.

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9 Arriaga to Ricla, January 24 and March 24, 1766, AGI, SD 1194.

10 Grimaldi to Bucareli, April 30, 1768, AGI, SD 1195.

Between 1770 and 1771 the Malvinas crisis heightened tensions and Spanish suspicions in Cuba and the Caribbean. In Cuba, de la Torre stepped up intelligence gathering along the Mosquito Coast and contacted the governor in Louisiana. The English could become a threat at any time, and their proximity on the Mosquito Coast continued to make that a possibility. While Spain found the English presence inconvenient it did not wish to openly confront them, either in Europe or the Americas. Arriaga informed the Marqués de la Torre, that he could do nothing but keep up the surveillance. With Ricla and O’Reilly’s reforms in place, and a continued vigil by his colonial governors, the monarchy’s desire for a self-supporting defense had been answered in Cuba. The borderlands, however, posed a different problem.

Carlos III’s long range plans for the Borderlands included the reorganization of defenses in New Spain, the creation of a defensive barrier in Louisiana and eventually the retaking of Florida. Actual reconstruction of the Borderlands can be divided between the provinces of New Spain and Louisiana in both theory and application, as Florida was not retaken until the American Revolution. As previously discussed, the Marqués de Rubí’s crown-sponsored investigation of the northern boundaries in New Spain initiated a series of reforms under the Regulations of 1772. These included re-organizing the mission-presidio defenses between California and Texas. By the third year of Unzaga’s tenure in Louisiana, Hugh O’Connor had reconstructed the frontier provincias internas of New

12 Arraiga to Marqués de la Torre, June 9, 1772, AGI, SD 1211.

Spain. The colony’s northern missions and presidios were relocated and garrisons rebuilt. The reforms also included the standardization of uniforms, pay, supplies and military conduct, and a number of regulations to prevent further corruption among the officers.\textsuperscript{14}

As the colonial border withdrew and realigned itself, the Indians moved into the vacuum, attacking settlers and raiding other tribes. That is, the reorganization did little to defend the Hispanic communities on the frontier. In the short run, the King favored further immigration into the Texas borderlands to build a defense through denser population. The depredations of the Apaches and Comanches combined with the indifference and inability of the viceroy, made it difficult to implement such immigration, however. The north was left poorly defended.\textsuperscript{15} It would not be until after 1776, under the able Viceroy Teodoro de Croix, that the presidio system recommended by Rubf was modified to meet the real needs of the frontier.\textsuperscript{16}

As Rubf investigated New Spain in 1769, Alejandro O’Reilly realigned Louisiana’s military defenses according to the realities of its own frontier. He focused mainly on the English threat in the east and the contraband at New Orleans and

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., on corruption and military standards; See Weber, Borderlands, 204-218 on reconstruction and standardization of dress and supplies. The reforms did little to better the lives of soldiers on the frontier. They were paid small sums out of which they were expected to buy specific, and inappropriate clothing, horses, and food. In fact, most soldiers pay was in the form of clothing and supplies whose prices were commonly inflated

\textsuperscript{15}See Bolton, Athenase de Mézières, on the Apache attacks and Bobb’s biography of Bucareli, for the inability of the viceroy to do more with the frontier.

\textsuperscript{16}Moorehead, Presidio, 87-91; Weber, Borderlands, 225-227.
Natchitoches. As he had done in Cuba, the Captain-General restructured the forts as described earlier, strengthened the regular troops and created a militia for colonial defense.

The regular troops consisted of a newly developed fixed Louisiana infantry battalion formed from the Regiments of Guadalajara, Aragón, Milan, and Lisbon, approximately 412 men. The new battalion included a grenadier company and seven fusilier companies each with a captain, a lieutenant and a sublieutenant.

O'Reilly set monthly pay for the soldiers at 70 pesos fuertes for captains, 44 for the lieutenants, and 32 for sublieutenants. Headquarters staff such as Francisco Bouligny received more compensation. Lieutenant colonels received 146 pesos and lieutenants at headquarter 51 pesos instead of the requisite 44. There were also two flag sub-lieutenants whose salaries stood at 30 pesos. Pay scales for enlisted personnel were much lower and varied with time served.

Officers in the battalion were expected to perform a number of functions in the community. In addition to their normal duties they were required to serve at military trials, on councils of war, and as commandants in isolated communities. Additionally, these men frequently served in naval positions because of an absence of officers. The enlisted personnel were expected to act as a local police force in New Orleans and hunt

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17 Holmes, Honor and Fidelity, 18.

18 "Reglamento que explica todas las obligaciones de esta Provincia que se deberán satisfacer por cuenta de la Real Hacienda," O'Reilly, New Orleans, February 23, 1770, AGI, Cuba 1055 and Coutts, "Martín Navarro," 554-555.

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down runaway slaves as well. Militia captains and soldiers acted similarly in their posts and commandants were also in charge of economic development.19

The formation of a fixed battalion followed O'Reilly's original intent to create a self-supporting defensive system in the Indies and prevented the constant and costly rotation of troops previously necessary in such garrisons. He realized the necessity of more able bodied soldiers because both weather and disease took horrendous tolls on colonial regiments everywhere, most especially in the Circum-Caribbean. Yellow fever, malaria and a large assortment of internal parasites sapped the strength of armies and caused the continual rotation of soldiers which undermined the stability of the army. Larger regiments allowed for less rotation and made up for the normal desertion problem. The Captain-General, therefore, requested 100 more soldiers, plus guns and ammunition from Spain for the colony.20

The new battalion was eagerly joined by many of the colony's ex-French officers and the sons of the local planters and merchants.21 Colorful service uniforms, crown pay and the extension of the fuero militar to Louisiana, provided certain social and monetary benefits otherwise unavailable in Louisiana. The French had previously established the

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19 Holmes, Honor and Fidelity, 77; see Araham P. Nasatir, ed., Spanish War Vessels on the Mississippi, 1792-1796 (New Haven: Yale University Press 1968), 1-145 regarding army officers in the navy; and Arnold, Colonial Arkansas, for economic problems of commandants.

20 Holmes, Honor and Fidelity, 20.

21 Many soldiers accepted commissions not only in the army but also as militia captains which gave them greater status and more land. See testimony to the idea of French soldiers retiring to be settlers and militia in Louis Judice "Procés-verbal of the examination of a drowning victim, July 9, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188a:1 d/14.
idea of using the military as a form of social mobility and it was quite natural, therefore, that Louisiana's colonial elite continue that behavior. To assure a "professional" army and fit officers, O'Reilly issued instructions which required cadets to train in "mathematics and military subjects." He also established pensions for the families (wives and children) of deceased soldiers and pensions for disabled veterans. He encouraged regulars and non-commissioned officers to stay in the service by establishing bonus payments in addition to their regular salaries, and further rewarded men who served honorably for a minimum of twenty years by allowing them to retire with pensions. Officers also were enticed to perform their duties by the promise of being allowed to join one of Spain's Royal Military Orders, increasing their prestige at home and abroad.

Paralleling his efforts in Cuba, O'Reilly supported the fixed Louisiana battalion with a colonial militia. The militia originally embraced 1,040 men in thirteen companies. He instructed their leaders that the men were to be drilled by regular officers every Sunday and supplied by the crown. He hoped the discipline of marching and target practice would create some sort of esprit de corps among the men.

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22 Ibid., 76, who indicates that O'Reilly's instructions are listed in his "Memoire sur l'Instruction des cadets" Barcelona, May 25, 1767, and can be found in the Bibliothèque National (Paris), MSS. Espagnols, Vol. 363 (Esp. 423), folios 242-45; Ulloa to Grimaldi, July 20, 1768, AGI, SD 2542, No. 5 notes that the French were already engaged in this behavior and "appreciated" military positions.

23 These advantages were actually created for all royal troops, in the crown's order of September 29, 1761, see Holmes, Honor and Fidelity, 76.

In Louisiana, O'Reilly needed to distribute one-third the number of troops available in Cuba across a territory at least five times as large. He began by concentrating the majority of the soldiers at the capital in New Orleans, with smaller detachments in the immediate area. At Balize, he posted troops to intercept any advance up the Mississippi. He also positioned sixty-five soldiers in twin forts further upstream at English Turn to catch anyone who might get past Balize. The remainder of the New Orleans forces were stationed at the old French barracks. These were actually the third set of barracks built during the French period and O'Reilly chose them because they were large, two-storied buildings of brick with an ample arcade and brick flooring, and were capable of housing 1200 to 1500 soldiers. It was at these buildings, incidently, that O'Reilly chose to execute the traitors of the rebellion in 1768. The barracks was positioned parallel to the river near the military hospital. Outside the building a brick wall surrounded a fairly large parade ground for drilling the men and showing off to the general public. The barracks also contained a powder magazine and an armory. The dragoons were placed at another building located at the present-day corner of Chartres and Toulouse a site now occupied

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25Bienville built a second barracks to replace the dilapidated barracks erected sometime before 1723. See Villers Du Terrage, Les Derniers annees, 45 for a plan of the second barracks in the Place d'Armes or present day Jackson Square; these however were made of wood, with no flooring, or chimneys, and lifted off the ground on piles, all of which rotted. The last French barracks were finally constructed of durable materials and it is those that O'Reilly confiscated for his troops. See John Smith Kendall, History of New Orleans, 3 vols. (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1922) 1:88 for the plan of the third and final French barracks.
by one of the Pontalba buildings. Four companies of militia resided in New Orleans but as locals did not need quartering.\textsuperscript{25}

The military hospital originally erected in 1733 was a one-story brick affair which acted as the infirmary for wounded and diseased soldiers. These hospitals were extremely important. As previously mentioned, disease took a terrible toll on new Europeans entering Louisiana. In addition to tropical fevers and "bugs," soldiers and others contracted a variety of serious health problems including, but not limited to "pink eye," gout, hernias, epilepsy, "apoplexy," hepatitis, abscesses, "pleurisy, cholera, dysentery, "milk-sickness, goitre, typhus, dyspepsia, measles, small-pox and scarlet fever" and severe diarrhea."\textsuperscript{27} Too, the soldiers in New Orleans were near bars and houses of prostitution, both of which they visited. Consequently the hospital treated a good number of military men who had been wounded during a brawl or had succumbed to venereal disease (the curse of serving in the Americas).\textsuperscript{28} Venereal disease became quite a severe problem among the soldiers, although it attacked colonists and Indians alike. By the 1790s English Colonel John Pope noted that most citizens in Spanish ports enjoyed good


\textsuperscript{27}Jack D. L. Holmes, "Medical Practice," 334.

\textsuperscript{28}For a complete copy of O'Reilly's instructions see Douglas C. McMurtrie, "A Louisiana Decree of 1770 Relative to the Practice of Medicine and Surgery," \textit{New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal} 84 (1933): 7-11.
health except for the garrison whose “mode of living” and imprudent diet of rich foods
and alcohol drunk with “lewd” women would corrupt anyone’s health.29

A. P. Nasatir, notes in his discussion of royal hospitals that these institutions housed:

stocks of curious old remedies and equipment,. . . often depleted and replaced only after long delays and petitioning. Nevertheless the royal hospitals were important havens for the sick and injured of the whole province. Their establishment and maintenance was one of the fine, humanitarian acts of the Spanish paternalism which was otherwise too prone to stifle the economic and intellectual life of the colonials.30

After establishing the regiment in New Orleans and its environs, O’Reilly distributed the remaining militia at Louisiana’s forts at the posts. One militia company was established at St. Louis, serving under the Lieutenant Governor, Pedro Piernas, and another for Ste. Genevieve, serving under Don Francisco Vallé. The remaining companies were ordered for Cabahonocoy or St. James Parish under Nicolas Verret, at Natchitoches under Lieutenant-Governor, Athanase de Mézières, at Point Coupée with Francisco Allain, (who would be replaced by Balthazar de Villers whom O’Reilly transferred from Natchitoches), at the German Coasts under Roberto Robin de Laugni, and Captain of the Infantry, Francisco Simard de Bellisle, at Attakapas, or Opelousas to serve with Gabriel Fuselier de la Claire, and at La Fource de Chetimachas, under Don

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29Holmes, “Medical Practice,” 333.

Luis Judice. Arkansas Post and St. Louis received detachments of soldiers which they kept throughout the Spanish period (see Table 3).\(^3\)

The last step in New Orleans was to fortify the city. The palisades around New Orleans were a shambles in 1770 and O'Reilly was of the opinion that it was not worth the expense on materials and labor to replace palisades which quickly rotted, or dig moats which silted up.\(^3\) He further abandoned the French forts of St. Charles and St. Louis along the bend in the river South of the city as St. Louis was rotted and St. Charles was little more than a stockade.

The other decision O'Reilly faced was what forts to keep outside of New Orleans. The French created a number of forts and "posts" along the Mississippi, then westward along the Arkansas and Red Rivers toward Spanish Texas. With the exception of forts near Lakes Pontchartrain and the mouth of the Mississippi, the alignment of these posts had more to do with the fur trade and Indian diplomacy than they did with the threat of any European invasion. Moreover, after his tour of the colony, Ulloa had arranged to have a large number of forts built, including one near the Red and Black Rivers (1767) which never materialized.

As previously indicated in Chapter Three, O'Reilly kept the forts of St. Jean Baptiste in Natchitoches, San Carlos III de Arkansas, and Forts St. Marie and St. Leon at English turn. He also changed the position of Ft. Real Catolica San Carlos which was sinking quickly into the mud at the mouth of the Mississippi and rebuilt it at the old

\(^{31}\)There is a listing also for Don Estevan Mardefret Layssard.

\(^{32}\)Kinnaird, SMV, 2: 147.
French location for Balize. He used the materials from Ft. Real Catolica but did not “fortify” Balize. He abandoned Fort St. Gabriel de Manchac across the bayou from the abandoned English Fort Bute and a small French fort called Tigouyou on a bayou of the same name which connected Lakes Pontchartrain and Maurepas, which was curious considering the British penchant to enter the Mississippi via the lakes and the Iberville River. He kept Ft. St. Jean to the south of Lake Pontchartrain, though he never sent a full company to that location. He also continued the small fort at St. Louis and the stockade at Ste. Genevieve. All other forts, French or Spanish, were to be abandoned.

O’Reilly did not really have a chance to thoroughly understand Louisiana’s problems though he did a remarkable job considering he was there only one year. Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga, given more time and changing circumstances, modified O’Reilly’s plan and skirted his regulations. In particular, during the first two years of his tenure, Unzaga faced a widening dispute in the Atlantic between Spain and England. At the same time he dealt with increasing Indian problems in the west and heightened British activity along the Mississippi.

With the increased activity of the British in the Atlantic came reports that the British were planning to rebuild Fort Bute at Manchac which they had abandoned in 1768, taking with them the guns and powder, destroying much of the fort but leaving the barracks. These last buildings were the ones that John Fitzpatrick and the other English merchants salvaged to build the new settlement at Manchac. British Manchac grew

33 For more information on Pensacola and Fort Bute see Major General Frederick Haldimand Papers, British Museum, Film Ps8 16770(2), Louisiana State Archives, Baton Rouge.
during 1769 and early 1770. Unzaga became increasingly uneasy, sending reports of British movements to his superiors. He wrote to Grimaldi that he could not defend the long expanse of the Mississippi with such meager troops and equipment. He was particularly concerned by the arrival of one thousand British troops to reinforce Pensacola. Accompanying the troops were boats with munitions and two frigates which had just returned from New York. Unzaga could not help but reflect that these troops might be thrust at Louisiana through Manchac and Natchez. He told Grimaldi that:

"These thoughts revolve in my head everyday so that I may be able to elect the best defense should the occasion present itself and as is dictated by my limited prudence and experience."

Unzaga’s fears were well grounded. The British were planning to attack New Spain through Louisiana if the Malvinas crisis became a war. Indeed, early the next year (1771), General Gage ordered the troops to prepare for an attack on New Orleans and mobilized British troops in New York.

As the Malvinas crisis developed in 1770, an interesting exchange of letters ensued between Unzaga, Bucareli and Spain’s Minister Grimaldi. Bucareli reported to Grimaldi that he (the Captain-General) did not believe there were really three full regiments reinforcing Pensacola but that he instructed Unzaga to “always keep himself

34Unzaga to Grimaldi, June 8, 1770, AGI, SD 2543, Folio 999.

aware of the troops that guard Pensacola although we’re at peace with the English.”36 He added, that if the British did attack that troops from Havana could never reach New Orleans in time to defend it. He was also of the opinion “that the posts in Louisiana only serve[d] to sign the frontiers of the dominions of the King in both parts,” an opinion shared by Unzaga.37 Grimaldi’s answer to Bucareli and Unzaga was long and involved. He agreed with Bucareli that there might not be two battalions at Pensacola, adding however, that knowledge gained through London and the current condition in the Malvinas made British plans somewhat complex. Further, he made it clear that the King saw Louisiana as “useful and convenient” in its position as a buffer between the English and New Spain because Louisiana “made it more difficult for illicit commerce to take place on the frontier of Mexico and retard[ed] the influence of the Indians that are situated on Louisiana’s frontiers who [were] provided with munitions [ostensibly by the British].” Grimaldi clearly stated twice in the letter that Louisiana’s final fate would be decided in peace and not war. He did not feel it would serve the King to mount any offensive from the colony.38

The upshot of the Unzaga-Bucarelli-Grimaldi correspondence was that Spain’s minister sent another letter to Unzaga which carefully delineated what he should do in case the British did actually become belligerent. Having consulted O’Reilly, Grimaldi

36Bucareli to Grimaldi, August 17, 1770, AGI, SD 2543, Folio 1003.

37Ibid.

38Grimaldi to Bucareli, San Lorenzo, October 24, 1770, AGI, SD 2543, Folio 1005.
again advised Unzaga not to worry about any offensive movements against the British, cautioning the governor that the King wanted to conserve Louisiana but not at the expense of having to “Employ forces there that are more needed in other parts, because no matter what, the fate of Louisiana will be decided in peace.” Having received the request for troops and munitions from O’Reilly and being informed of the difficulties of defense, Grimaldi said he was sending Louisiana another hundred men, 800 guns and bayonets, and 1500 cartridge belts. Grimaldi informed the governor that he must try and defend the colony with the militia, retreating to Opelousas if the situation grew untenable, and admonishing him to begin the production of cattle at that post in case such a move was necessary. Given that Unzaga feared the British might outflank him on the way to Opelousas from Manchac or Natchez Grimaldi suggested that the governor station a small force somewhere along the Manchac-Amite connection. If that didn’t work Unzaga was to “conserve his troops” and retire to New Spain. Grimaldi added that he felt the Arkansas contingents, with aid from the local Indians, could defend their post or retreat toward Natchitoches. If the British threatened Illinois, he contended the men could “flee into the arms of the Missouri Indians whose friendship has been earned by his [Pedro Piernas’] good treatment.” In the meantime, Unzaga was to continue a strict surveillance of British movements along the Mississippi.40

39 Grimaldi to Unzaga, October 24, 1770, AGI, SD 2543, Folio 1007.

40 O’Reilly to Grimaldi, June 8, 1770, AGI, SD 2543; O’Reilly to Grimaldi, September 30, 1770, ibid.; Grimaldi to Unzaga, October 24, 1770, ibid., Folio 1007.

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Unzaga reacted to his orders in several ways. In response to the English settlement at Manchac, the governor reconstructed old Fort Saint Gabriel de Manchac and manned it with Commandant Descoudreaux and a small detachment of soldiers.\(^{41}\) Descoudreaux’s letters indicate that his orders were to monitor British movements along the river and also to keep an eye on Louisiana’s colonists who might be “trading” with the British at Manchac (see Chapter Five on Contraband).

Considering the one-thousand men in Pensacola and the possibility of attack by Generals Gage and Haldimand, Unzaga ordered his veteran troops to begin training the militia.\(^{42}\) Because Grimaldi, Arriaga and Unzaga had reiterated O’Reilly’s order that Louisiana have thirteen companies of militia, with three at New Orleans and the other nine to be spread throughout the province, Unzaga tried to bring them to full strength by recruiting more Frenchmen into the militia companies. Britain was an old enemy to France and he felt these appointments would further engender loyalty and gratitude toward Spain.\(^{43}\)

From March to May of 1770, while he trained the militia at New Orleans, the governor also armed the militia along the Mississippi. He sent guns with bayonets, cartridges (cartouches which were actually the little paper bags that held the powder), flints and belts for ammunition. There were few arms to go around. As Judice mustered

\(^{41}\) Casey, Encyclopedia of Forts, 193.

\(^{42}\) Grimaldi to Unzaga, October 24, 1770, AGI, Cuba 174, Folio 46.

\(^{43}\) Unzaga to Grimaldi, June 30, 1770; Grimaldi to Arraiga, October 19, 1770, Secretaría de Guerra, Florida and Louisiana (1779-1802), AGS in Chávez, Ultimate Gift, 61.
his militia, Unzaga sent more arms to the Iberville district through Pierre Brasseau, this time 30 muskets with Bayonets, “cartridges,” and belts with tin buckles. Commandant, and Captain of the Militia, Louis Judice, notified Unzaga that he had received the weapons and munitions and was preparing the men at the Acadian Coast (La Fourche de Chitemachas) to fight. He had named three sergeants, four first class corporals and four second class corporals to the militia and stood poised for orders. The same was true for most of the posts. There were no bright uniforms and bright shiny buttons to go around. Every freeholder was expected to do his share.44

In order to receive a land grant from the Spanish government a colonist in Louisiana had to agree to serve in the militia. Those who chose to become captains of the militia stood to gain even more land in exchange for their position and responsibility. The difference in land between a regular militia man and his officer was considerable. On the land grant maps the acreage commonly given to colonists on average was approximately 414 acres. Officers and commandants, however, commanded acreage anywhere from 1423.27 acres (a former French commandant) to 2,269 acres (Joseph Alexander Declout).45

44 Judice to Unzaga, March 28, 1770, AGI Cuba, 188-A, Folio 1 d/2 and Unzaga to Dutisné, May 27, 1770, AGI, Cuba 193b, Folio 287.

45 Acreage differences began in the French period but were amplified by the land grant system used under the Spanish administration, such was the case for Declouet who gained his large acreage in a land grant by Luis de Unzaga in May of 1772. See Gertrude Taylor Land Grants Along the Teche: Port Barre to St. Martinville (Lafayette, LA: Attakapas Historical Association, 1979).
Positions in the militia were requisite but also desired. The commandants took their positions seriously and militia men who were unruly or recalcitrant were often disciplined. Those not showing up for militia drills were considered AWOL and would be “called upon” by their neighbors. If a colonist refused to serve he stood a good possibility of losing his land.4 5

While the commandants organized their militia units, Unzaga, amplified the troops at English Turn, bringing the total soldiers to 100 men (a full company). To enhance the defense of New Orleans, he placed eighteen, six-pounder canons on carriages by the city gates and gathered others into an artillery park.4 7  He also refurbished the defenses at Ft. St. Jean on Lake Pontchartrain, with cannon and a sergeant’s guard. It was essentially a facade, but the men might act as a warning in case of a large British foray through the lakes.4 8

There is no discussion in Unzaga’s correspondence of manning the small fortifications at Tigouyou, though it would not have been too difficult to send a sergeant and a few soldiers to scout the area from Spanish Manchac. A glance at a map of the area does afford a plausible explanation for this oversight. The Isle of Orleans, given to Spain

46Even as late as 1775 the commandants held their men responsible and drilled them every week. When Simon Broussard refused to appear before Alexandre DeClouet for drill, the governor and the Commandant gave orders to evict him from his land. DeClouet to Unzaga, May 1, 1775, AGI, Cuba 189-B, Folio 234.

47Casey, Encyclopedia of Forts. 133.

48For a description of the fort in 1770, see Pittman, European Settlements. Also see Edna B. Freiberg, Bayou St. John in Colonial Louisiana, 1699-1803. (New Orleans: Freiberg, 1980) for a further history of the area.
during the Treaty of Paris in 1763, was the only Spanish territory which lay east of the Mississippi. Located just south of the lakes it actually had formed a barrier of its own. Only the western portion of the Isle was habitable and arable, constituting the German and Acadian coasts. The eastern (or perhaps a better description is northern) portions were swamps which impeded travel and therefore attack. Also, while the “Iberville” was accessible it was not always navigable which meant a British advance up the rivers would have to be planned and executed “in season.” It is quite possible that Unzaga determined that the land along the Manchac–Amite Rivers, would be a form of natural protection augmented by the re-establishment of the Fort at Spanish Manchac and therefore did not expend soldiers or money on Tigouyou.

Little could be done with the mouth of the Mississippi. The new fort built by O’Reilly was not a real fortification although it had men and cannon to defend the mouth of the river. The Balize stood primarily as a sentinel checking the ingress and egress of shipping up and down the river and providing pilot services. The buildings at Balize suffered severe weather damage as did the cannon.

To complete his preparation at New Orleans, Unzaga decided that part of a good defense was to use the British visiting at New Orleans to obtain information rather than try to restrict their entry. In addition, as early as 1770 he began surveillance of the British colonists who left Ft. Pitt to settle the Natchez area. To further facilitate his vigil, the
governor gave unwitting and un-licensed British merchants permission to sail up the river and often invited them to dine with him in New Orleans before progressing up river.49

Turning his attention back up-river to the areas near Manchac Unzaga encountered more difficulties. The post of Pointe Coupée (just across from Bayou Sara) had a militia but little fortification other than a rough quadrangle surrounded by a stockade.50 This was not unusual. Many of Louisiana's posts were little more than the commandant's house, his crib which was used as the local jail, and his barn, which served to billet soldiers in time of crisis, although the local militia lived in their own homes. Point Coupée was just another loose pearl on a broken string along Louisiana's British frontier. The posts at Opelousas (Attakapas) and the German Coasts, held little in the way of defense other than the local militia. There is no evidence that any of these smaller areas even had more than a small palisade built during Unzaga's tenure. All rotted quickly into nothing by Galvez's term in office.

Northward, at Arkansas, a detachment of the Louisiana Fixed Regiment manned the post on the Red River. As previously described, however, Arkansas post was not well fortified nor populated. Grimaldi's instruction to engage the Indians in its defense was built on faulty knowledge. The English had already established a settlement at the mouth of the White River near Arkansas post. The Quapaws with whom Arkansas had had a monopoly, were also trading with the British. Furthermore, in the summer of 1770,

49Commandant Juan Delavillebeauvre (Balize) to Unzaga, December 28, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188; Unzaga to Delavillebeauvre, December 31, 1770, ibid.; Cummins, Spanish Observers, 14-15.

50Casey, Encyclopedia of Forts, 162.

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Englishmen openly began to settle among the Quapaws. Demasellières could do little about it with so few troops.\textsuperscript{51} It was not realistic, therefore, to depend upon the ministrations or loyalty of the Quapaw. It was far better to plan a retreat toward Natchitoches and eventually Spanish Texas.

At St. Louis and Ste. Geneviève the situation also was different from what Grimaldi had thought. Piernas received Grimaldi’s orders from Unzaga in February of 1771. In April, the Lieutenant-Governor informed his superior that he would follow Grimaldi’s orders, adding that he had little confidence, however, in the Missouri Indians. He wrote that the Indians’ loyalties shifted to the person or persons who most recently had given them gifts “without paying any attention to what they had received before, even though it might have been a thousand times more.”\textsuperscript{52} In another letter he explained that he also hesitated to retreat into a group of “miserable and irrational Indian nations” (the Missouri and Little Osage) who to Piernas were traitors because they were favorably “inclined toward the English for the last four to five years.” If the colonists did settle among these tribes, he stated, they would still be at the mercy of other tribes who were friendly with the British and were already attacking the Missouri.\textsuperscript{53}

The last post Unzaga concerned himself with was Natchitoches. Fort St. Jean Baptiste was erected by the French in 1716 on a site settled by Louis Juchereau St. Denis

\textsuperscript{51}Arnold, \textit{Colonial Arkansas}, 109.

\textsuperscript{52}Unzaga to Pedro Piernas, February 15, 1771, AGI, SD 2543; Piernas to Unzaga, April 26, 1771, AGI, Cuba 81.

\textsuperscript{53}Piernas to Unzaga, June 12, 1771, AGI, Cuba 81.
two years earlier. Located first on a small island in the Red River it was relocated on the river’s west bank, somewhere between the 1720s and 1740s. Like the Balize fort, San Carlos El Real, the original fort experienced the same problem of its stockade literally sinking into the mud.\footnote{Casey, \textit{Encyclopedia of Forts}, 194-195.}

In the Spring of 1770 the garrison at Natchitoches held a captain, two lieutenants and fifty soldiers under the command of Lieutenant-Governor Athanase de Mézières. Mounted on a small hill, the fort was basically a square palisade and a shallow moat which enclosed a number of cannons, the commandant's house at one end, a powder magazine, guard house and soldier's barracks.\footnote{Pittman, \textit{European Settlements}, 32; Casey, \textit{Encyclopedia of Forts}, 196.} Natchitoches, as Ft. St. Jean Baptiste was commonly known, served mostly to deflect Indian attacks because of its western location. Still it was to Natchitoches that Unzaga and his men might have to go in case of an attack from the east.

In the summer of 1771, Unzaga had prepared the colony for the coming onslaught and modified Grimaldi’s instructions in light of local conditions. He informed Arriaga that the roads from New Orleans to the Attakapas Post and Opelousas areas were clear and readied for troop movements or a forced retreat.\footnote{Arriaga to Unzaga, June 20, 1771, AGI, Cuba 174, Folio 60.}

In September of 1771 fifteen families from the Carolinas came down the Mississippi from the Missouri Area to settle at Natchez and Baton Rouge. Upon questioning the captain of the boat, the Spanish were informed that another fifty families
were to follow. Unzaga knew that more English settlers boded ill for Louisiana. More settlement meant more English shipping on the river and more contraband. Minister of the Indies Arriaga warned that Spain, and therefore Louisiana's Governor, could do little but watch and wait. Unzaga personally disagreed. The new settlements posed a direct threat to Louisiana and exacerbated the Indian difficulties along the Mississippi. Contraband would heighten and British tribes would plague the river.

The governor continued his surveillance as ordered. He gleaned information from incoming settlers and merchants alike. Sometimes the information was important and sometimes the information was faulty. Such was the case in 1772 when the British attempted to enforce the Quartering Act in New England. A French spy named Suriret had observed General Gage's consolidation of the British forces, and their reassignment to New York. By the time Unzaga received the news it had been inflated to a British attack on New York. Despite the falsity of the information Spain continued to read all reports sent from its governors about the English with the inference being that it was the Spanish government, not its colonial administrators, who would make the final decision on what was important or unimportant. Suriret did however, provide detailed plans of the British fort on Santa Rosa Island and calmed Spanish fears that the reinforcements at

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57 Bucareli to Arriaga, September 30, 1771, AGI, SD 1211, Folio 49 and Arriaga to Unzaga, March 21, 1772, Ibid, sin numero.

58 "Noticias adquiridos de los vecinos colonias ingleses por Mr. Suriret vecino de Punta Cordtado...," October 2, 1772, AGI, Cuba 1146.

59 Unzaga to Arriaga, Three Letters in October 2, 14, and 24, 1772, AGI, SD 1211.

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Pensacola were directed at Spain. Gage was trying to shore up his defenses of British sea
lanes around Jamaica.60

In 1772, Lieutenant-governor Pedro Piernas wrote from St. Louis that the English
were busily reinforcing Ft. Chartres. His suspicions were correct and Louisiana had to
fend off a small attack by Jean Marie Ducharmé (on behalf of the English) in 1772. The
St. Louis militia, under Pierre Laclede, defended its post and ran Ducharmé off, capturing
his supplies and equipment and a number of his men. Unzaga’s and O’Reilly’s faith in a
militia of men defending their homes appeared to be well founded.61 By 1773
surveillance by Captain-General de la Torre in the Caribbean and Unzaga in North
America indicated that a direct English threat no longer existed. Spain’s ministers
concurred.62 The decision Grimaldi and Unzaga feared never had to be made. The
Malvinas crisis passed and England and Spain once again entered an uneasy truce.
Despite peace, Unzaga continued his efforts to spy on the British and to man the colony’s
forts against any possible attack

During the three years of the Malvinas crisis, as well as in the years of peace that
followed, Unzaga was also required to deal with the day-to-day military matters,
including arguments between and with the post commandants regarding their men and
their territory, and the continued arming and drilling of the militia. This was exacerbated

60Cummins, British Observers, 23.

61For a complete account of the Ducharmé invasion see Abraham Pedro Nasatir,

62Torre to Unzaga, January 25, 1773, AGI, Cuba 1146.
by increasing desertions and debilitating illness in the ranks. Last but not least were monthly promotions and re-assignments. Examples of each follow.

In May of 1770, Louis Judice on the Acadian Coast and Nicolas Verret at St. James began to argue over the boundary between their militia districts. Before O'Reilly refigured the parishes, St. James and the Acadian Coast (La Fourche) had been one large piece. Without firm boundary marks it was easy for the men to usurp each other's territory. The controversy continued into June when Unzaga finally told both commandants that he would not rule on the dispute until both of them reported to him at New Orleans. He was busy with far more pressing affairs. It was not until October that Unzaga finally settled a definitive boundary between the militia districts for St. James and the Acadian Coast.63

Constant illness among the soldiers continued from O'Reilly's time into Unzaga's tenure. Ships commonly left Louisiana with sick men to be returned to Havana, and from there to Spain. Some of Louisiana's troops fell sick on the way to the fixed battalion, convalescing in Havana before proceeding to their final destination. This was the rotation problem inherent in much of Latin America.64

63 Judice to Unzaga, May 3, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 1 d/7; Nicolas Verret to Luis de Unzaga, May 21, 1770, ibid, Folio 1 d/40; Unzaga to Verret, June 2, 1770, ibid; and declaration of Unzaga, October 10, 1770, ibid, Folio 1 d/29.

64 See the notices from Antonio José de Aguiar regarding the sick prisoners in Havana waiting to be shipped to Louisiana. Aguiar to José Fajordo y Cobarruvias, April 6, 1772, AGI, Cuba 585, Folio 292. Louisiana paid for her sick soldiers, whether they were in Havana or New Orleans! See ibid., Folios 293, 294 and 295.
The worst problem affecting troops’ stability—both regular and militia men—was desertion. Desertion was already common when Unzaga took office. It became a more serious offence with a possible British attack in the offing. In September of 1770, Commandant and Militia Captain Louis Judice reported to the governor that a man without a passport had turned up at the post. Charles Bernard Lancelot, turned out to be a deserter. Judice arrested Lancelot and then sent him with three men (corporal Charles Babin, and two fusiliers (men who had muskets named Joseph Landrie and Joseph Babin) to take the malapert back to New Orleans. Lancelot died on the way to New Orleans and Judice ordered the militia Sergeant to pay the three soldiers for their time and trouble. Judice then apparently billed the governor for the cost of the escort. In a curt letter, accusing his commandant of naivete and possible incompetence, Unzaga informed Judice that he must set an example and not allow this kind of laxity to create vagabonds and deserters and refused to refund Judice for his own negligence.

The government frowned heavily on desertion but it was such a prominent feature that it became a fact of life for Louisiana’s governors. Hardship posts like Manchac and Arkansas frequently reported deserters. Soldiers already disgruntled with being stationed in Louisiana found appointments to the outlying posts particularly distasteful. Manchac was a particularly easy place from which to “disappear.” It took very little for a soldier to “jump pirogue” as they called it and cross the river to the English where they could

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65 Judice to Unzaga, September 2, 1770, AGI, Cuba 188-A, Folio 1 d/23.
readily go to work for local planters, moving up and down river to escape Spanish patrols.  

Soldiers fleeing from New Spain sometimes made their way across into Natchitoches and then up to the Arkansas post. Unzaga warned the commandant there to return such men at once. Other men deserted and disappeared into the abundant wilderness west and north. These men frequently became the half-wild hunters that haunted the Arkansas post.

Deserters who roamed the countryside around the Mississippi could be spotted more easily because moving from place to place within the colony required a passport from the governor. This was not new. The Superior Council had decreed in 1723 that passports were required for intra-colonial travel, even from post to post. Under Spanish governance travelers also were required to have passports and if they journeyed by boat were required to be licensed for such vehicles. It was quite easy, therefore, to distinguish legal travelers on business from ne’er-do-wells roaming the countryside—if you were

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66 Thomas de Acoste, the new commandant at Manchac advised Unzaga in March of 1775 that a new recruit, Bernardo NiPie (last name distorted) had arrived at the fort only to “jump pirogue” to the English side. Weeks later they were still chasing the culprit and the records do not indicate that they ever caught him and he remained working for the English somewhere near Pointe Coupée. In the end Acoste was forced to return the pay of 12 pesos allotted for NiPie to the governor and asked for a replacement for the deserter. Thomas de Acoste to Unzaga, March 4, 1775, AGI, Cuba 81, Folio 94; and Acoste to Unzaga, March 18, 1775, ibid., Folio 95 and 96.

67 See Arnold, Colonial Arkansas, for descriptions of the kinds of men who became hunters.
diligent in your duty. Passports and licenses also enabled the governor to keep track of Louisiana's citizens and their movements in an impossibly huge colony.68

Requiring and monitoring passports was good, in theory, and Unzaga enforced it vigorously. The reality of the immensity of the colony, however, meant that people could blend into the background and as long as they hired out as menial labor they could "escape" for years at a time. It took several months to track down most deserters. Most were found in the next post or in a small settlement nearby. Still others who trekked into the wilderness found death instead of solace. Lastly there were those who actual escaped and were never brought to trial. In August of 1770, during the Malvinas crisis, four artillery men and one infantry man deserted in a pirogue and were never captured. Again in January of 1771, Francisco Moreno, Sergeant of the Louisiana Regiment, deserted and was never captured.69

Of the sixty-two military hearings covered by Derek N. Kerr, in "Petty Felony, Slave Defiance and a Frontier Villany: Crime and Criminal Justice in Spanish Louisiana, 1770-1803," the offence of desertion was second only to "unknown" during Unzaga's tenure, amounting to only fifteen actual court cases. Desertion carried a number of sentences. Kerr indicates that deserters could expect anything from remittance (return to

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68 See the Decree of the Louisiana Superior Council, November 13, 1723, AC, A 23:43-43vo; and Perier and La Chaise to the Company of the Indies, March 25, 1729, AC, C 13a, 11:322; See a list of passports and licenses issued to colonists in 1771, AGI, Cuba 110, Folio 757.

duty) to deportation and imprisonment at Morro Castle in Havana. Examples are Juan Gallardo and Francisco Ochaita of the Louisiana Regiment who deserted from Natchitoches in 1769 and were not caught until 1772. When they were tried in New Orleans and remitted to their original post. Another interesting incident surrounds Jean Roubier who deserted in April of 1773 and then again in June of 1775. Upon leaving the second time he hid aboard an English ship leaving the colony but was found at Bayou Saint John. Surprisingly, Roubier was remanded to Puerto Rico to become part of the fixed regiment there.

In the first year of his tenure Unzaga frequently returned deserters to Havana as many had come from that post. Many of those desertions were sailors like Miguel Lopez whom Unzaga remanded to the Captain-General of Havana for arraignment and sentencing. Records indicate that in Cuba, deserters were treated to several different sentences such as imprisonment or the Royal Works (hard labor) rebuilding Havana’s fortifications and public works. Of interest is the difference in sentencing between deserters from New Orleans and those from outlying posts. All of the deserters from

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70 Derek N. Kerr’s coverage of military trials during Unzaga’s period, in “Petty Felony,” was based on the Dispatches of the Spanish Governors of Louisiana Volumes 2-6.

71 “Dispatches,” 4: 44.

72 Ibid, 5: 2 and 51.; the Dispatches lists his final desertion as 1776 but there is a letter from the Marqués de Torre to Arriaga which indicates that Juan Rubier was already in custody in 1775 and that Torre had been chastised for allowing the second desertion. Torre to Arriaga, November 3, 1775, AGI, Cuba 1221, Folio 982.

73 Kerr, “Petty Felony,” 382 and Unzaga to Bucareli, May 27, 1770, AGI, Cuba 1055, Folio 108.
places like Natchitoches were remitted, perhaps a fitting sentence in itself. Others from
the regiment or navy at New Orleans were more severely punished. The worst
punishment seems to have been eight years in the Fixed Regiment of Puerto Rico for
desertion of post and taking refugee in a church. Unzaga rewarded those persons who
sheltered a deserter with six years of service in the royal dockyard at Havana.

Monetary punishments awaited the regiments and officers who allowed the
desertion to happen. Pay for deserters had to be returned and regiments could be back-
billed for such costs. An example is a document from Miguel Almonares in 1773, which
deducted the pay of nine soldiers who deserted backward to the date of their desertion in
1770. While this may seem harsh considering the lack of money actually sent to support
the regiment many commandants apparently reported deserters as sick in order to
continue collecting their pay.

A glance at the communications between the governors of Havana and Louisiana
indicate that there was a continual turnover of deserters shipped from Havana to
Louisiana, as punishment. Then many of those men were shipped to Puerto Rico, again
as punishment. An assignment to the Caribbean was not the best place to be. However,
an appointment to Louisiana was close to the worst, apparently followed by Puerto Rico.

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74 This case was against Teodoro Medina, Juan A. Pombo, and Juan González of
the Louisiana Regiment, in Kerr, “Petty Felony,” 387, found in Dispatches, 6: 52.
75 Ibid, 6: 46.
76 “Lista y Carta sobre battalion de Luisiana,” Miguel Almonares, May 8, 1773 and
18 May, 1773, AGI, Cuba 1221, Folios 448, 449.
77 Ibid.

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A letter from Captain-General de la Torre to Arriaga in 1774 gives some insight into the real cause of desertions from Havana and Louisiana. Torre informed the Minister of the Indies that he had received three hundred and forty-three military deserters shipped from La Coruña, Spain, “to serve in the fixed regiment of this Island (Cuba), and the Province of Louisiana.” Two of them had already deserted a second time in Puerto Rico and another fifty-eight were in the hospital at the same place. These Spanish deserters were being punished by assignment to the Dragoons, Artillery and the Fixed Battalion of Louisiana! Torre further argued that he needed more men, deserters or not, to support the fixed regiment of Havana.78

In 1775 the receipt of deserters continued. Treasurer Martín Navarro wrote in May to Cuba that the Louisiana Battalion had received its recruits from La Coruña. After settling the troops in he wrote that they were missing a deserter from the regiment of Toledo, one Andres Negro, who, after resting in Puerto Rico, finally arrived in August. Another, unexpected deserter named Diego Fernandes turned up without papers in June of 1775 demanding pay and a position in the Fixed Regiment. Navarro was informed that he was one of 24 deserters destined for the New Orleans Regiment but had to recuperate briefly in Havana before joining his companions in their new location.79

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78Torre to Arriaga, July 6, 1774, AGI, Cuba 1219, Folio 681.

79Martín Navarro to José Fajardo y Coborruvias, May 15, 1775, AGI, Cuba 585, Folio 333; Fajardo to Navarro, June 8, 1775, ibid, Folio 334 and Navarro to Fajardo, August 5, 1775, ibid, Folio 335. A rich source of information on the receipt of deserters and their consequences can be found in AGI, Cuba 1054.
Desertion and the constant exchange of men became such a time consuming and confusing task that the Governor General of Havana finally promulgated a document in 1776 which covered all such men and gave explicit instructions for handling and punishing deserters. It also listed penalties for those who induced them to desert or harbored them. For knowing the whereabouts of a deserter and not denouncing him a commoner served four years in the deserter's own regiment or the same amount of time in the work projects of the King. Noblemen were to be sent to a presidio in the Americas. Persons aiding a deserter were sentenced to six years of service in the arsenals or public works and if noble, six years in the Americas. If a woman, she was to be fined 30 pesos and if too poor would be sent to jail. The same penalties applied to those who induced soldiers or sailors to desert.

Monetary rewards awaited colonists and military personnel who helped the crown retrieve the scoundrels. Those who captured and turned deserters to their proper regiments were to be awarded twelve pesos, and six pesos went to those who established their whereabouts. A per diem expense of twelve pesos was also available for the maintenance and transportation of such prisoners (something Unzaga had steadfastly refused to do in Louisiana). Militia men capturing deserters were awarded two more years on their pension after twenty years of service plus sixteen pesos in hand. The latter was probably more of an incentive. Interestingly, the regiment of the deserter was to be billed for all expenses incurred to apprehend him. The list goes on to punish judges with...

80Orders of the Marquis de la Torre, Captain General of the Island of Cuba, “Sobre Desertores del Exercito y de la Armada,” July 6, 1776, AGI, Cuba 1221, Cartas y Bando 1134.

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the loss of their jobs and threatens captains of ships with six years in jail and trial in a military court for aiding and abetting. 81

A different and even more important kind of desertion haunted Unzaga between 1772 and 1773. Louisiana’s defenses rested heavily on its militia and therefore the governor needed to keep colonists in their respective areas of settlement in order to distribute the responsibility. In 1772 the Acadians in St. James Parish began seeking permission to leave the colony or to change their place of residence to move near family. They were unhappy with their land grants, with the requirements of military service in order to have land, and most of all with new taxes and requests to build a church in the area. The Acadians petitioned the governor through their commandant for permission to move some families near relatives in the LaFourche district and for others to leave the colony for Saint Domingue. 82

While the bureaucracy digested the information, the families negotiated with a captain for passage out of Louisiana. Unzaga did not wish for them to leave because they presented a sizeable force against the English across the river. He threatened them with having to return the money invested in them by the Spanish Crown. In response, the Acadians claimed that they feared the local Indian tribes and that they had been given worthless lands. He still refused them passage. 83 Undeterred, the Acadians had a few tricks in store for the governor. They immediately abandoned their lands in St. James

81 Ibid.
82 Judice to Unzaga, September 1, 1772, AGI, Cuba 189-A, Folio 435.
83 Judice to Unzaga, September 20 1772, AGI, Cuba 189A, Folio 436.
rather than contribute to the church, moving illegally into Dustiné's district at LaFourche.
From La Fourche, the Acadians requested Dustiné's permission to join their families in
the Opelousas district. Unzaga restrained the urge to summarily arrest them. Instead he
denied them permission to migrate. Dustiné wrote that he had finally convinced them to
stay in the Iberville district. The dispute continued to spread. The Acadians at
Opelousas now argued about paying the cost of building a church. When that didn't work
they argued that the destruction of the hurricane of 1773 had devastated their land, life
was too hard and they wanted permission to relocate to Cap Français, Saint Domingue—or
the Attakapas district, which ever the governor would allow. Permission for either was
denied. The Acadians finally gave up their hopes to migrate to Saint Domingue and
seemed to settle down, disgustedly, on their appointed land grants.

These stubborn settlers were not done with the governor yet. Some of them sold
their property without authorization and moved to Attakapas without a passport. Judice
urged the governor to punish one such colonist, a Pierre Guidry. Unzaga complied but
realized he was fighting a losing battle. Rather than keep the countryside in an uproar
and continue a useless struggle, he began slowly to grant a limited amount of immigration

84 Judice to Unzaga, March 2, 1773, AGI, Cuba 189-A, Folio 472; Dutiné to
Unzaga, March 2, 1773, AGI, Cuba 189-A, Folio 358, Unzaga to Dutiné, March 4, 1773,
AGI, Cuba 189-A, Folio 359; and AGI, Cuba 193-B, Folios 250 and 252.

85 Unzaga to Dutiné, March 1, 1773, AGI, Cuba 193-B, Folio 252; Unzaga to
Dutiné, April 1, 1773, AGI, Cuba 193-B, Folio 248.

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from one district to the next. This prevented mass desertion and actually balanced out in the long run.86

Louisiana's soldiers continually presented Unzaga with daily problems. Charges against soldiers and sailors, other than desertion, consisted of vicious behavior, theft, perjury, robbery, smuggling, leaving their posts, sheltering deserters, and, amusingly, being a "bad influence" on the Louisiana Regiment because of their past criminal records. Salvador Alvarez, Tomás Camparolas, Juan Martínez, and Manuel Gatica, the soldiers charged with this last misdeed, could not have been too bad an influence as they were returned to service.87

The regular army also required day-to-day supervision of a different sort. Many regimental men maintained a respectable life in the military and in time deserved pay raises and promotions. Several of the original officers brought with Ulloa, Lieutenant Pedro Piernas and Sub-lieutenants José Orieta, remained in the colony and received promotions under O'Reilly to captain and lieutenant. Others who came with the Captain General in 1769 received promotions such as the newly appointed Captains Fernando de Leyba and Francisco Cruzat, and Brevet Captain Francisco Bouligny, who became a major figure in Louisiana's history. Many sergeants were married and did not womanize or drink terribly and many enlisted men followed their lead.88

86 Judice to Unzaga, February 7, 1774, AGI, Cuba 189-A, Folio 531; Unzaga to Dutisné, February 18, 1774, AGI, Cuba 189-A, Folio 390.

87 Kerr, 385-388.

88 Din, "Protecting the 'Barrera',” 191-92. In 1776 Orieta died while acting commandant of Arkansas Post, Unzaga to Sergeant Lucas García, New Orleans, July 4,
These men were willing joined by French army officers such as François Demasillières, François Coulon de Villiers, and Jean de la Villebeauvre (seen as Delavillebeauvre in Spanish documents) who helped form the newly created Louisiana battalion. In some ways Frenchmen were less likely to cause trouble because they frequently had families and others were at least "connected" by family to the colony. This family connection offered a support system outside the barracks and the corps. These Frenchmen helped the Spanish maintain control through their knowledge of the colony and their understanding of its inhabitants.89

Soldiers in Spanish Louisiana expected pay raises and promotions for consecutive and distinguished service. Rising in the ranks depended on a number of things including seniority, ability, education, social standing and service. Seniority was extremely important among the officers. Many petitioned the Crown for promotions with the help of the local lieutenant governor, governor or captain-general when they (the soldiers)

1776, AGI, Cuba, 189-B; also see John Franics McDermott, "The Myth of the 'Imbecile Governor': Captian Fernando de Leyba and the Defense of St. Louis in 1780," in The Spanish in the Mississippi Valley, 1762-1804, ed. John Francis McDermott (Urbana, 1974), 314-91; and Din and Nasatir, Imperial Osages, 96-116, and 131-82 for Cruzats services as lieutenant governor in the 1770s and 1780s; see Gilbert C. Din, Francisco Bouligny: A Bourbon Soldier in Spanish Louisiana (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993).

thought it was time for advancement. Later in the Spanish period some men were even able to purchase their offices to ensure promotion.

Because of the small size of Louisiana’s army (during Unzaga’s time it was only one battalion) promotion depended on more than seniority. Command was measured by more than the ability to endure and stay out of trouble. For officers to be promoted they must educate themselves and, according to some historians, they had to speak Spanish. While this last requirement may have been true during Gálvez’s time and after, it was not heavily enforced during Unzaga’s tenure. The period from 1770 to 1776 contains a large number of instances where the governor communicated with his men in French and several of them were promoted despite the language barrier. Men who became commandants (and therefore officers in the militia) during Unzaga’s era found in some instances that being able to speak only Spanish was a handicap, especially when dealing with the Indians. Also, during Unzaga’s governorship, many French army officers who

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91 See O’Reilly to José de Gálvez, May 7, 1779, AGI, SD 2662 regarding prices for such offices.

92 Din made this point about language twice, once in his paper with Janet Fireman on the Corps of Engineers and again in his work on the Cabildo.

93 The great majority of Unzaga’s letters to Commandants Judice, Dutisné, Verret, Fusilier de la Claire, and Logny are in French.

94 The Indians at Arkansas Post announced to the governor that they thought very little of the Commandant who could not speak French “the language of trade.” See Chapter Six.
opted for service under O'Reilly, realistically, took awhile to gain significant command of the language. That would have more easily been done by young cadets who entered the service at 16 years of age, or sometimes earlier.

A post at the plana mayor or headquarters, however, was different. In order to saber despachar, (process paperwork) in a Spanish army knowledge the language was, of course, a must. Headquarters personnel in 1776 included a Teniente Coronel (Lieutenant Colonel), under whom served in descending order, an ayudante mayor (adjutant major), two subtenientes Banderas (Flag Sub-lieutenants), a Capuchin Father Francisco de Caldas, a Cirujano (Surgeon), a Tamborilero (drummer), two Pifanos (fifers) and an Armero (gunsmith). The officers included, notably, only one Frenchman, Flag Sublieutenant Raimundo Dubrévil.95

Promotion also depended upon social status. Status in turn depended on your family, your comportment and your marriage. If a soldier wished to become an officer he must not only be educated, but also maintain an unblemished record of service to the crown, and associate with the right people. Unblemished was a relative term in frontier post assignments where small acts of misconduct were often overlooked or deliberately kept off the record if the men were otherwise good soldiers. The fact that so many military court cases carry the term “unknown” under the charge bespeaks the need to guard the future of such men.

95“Carta y listas de Batalion de Unzaga,” April 27, 1776, AGI, SD 2661, Folios 118-124.
Marriages, on the other hand, were extremely important and the *proper* wife was crucial. Unzaga (having married a local girl himself) encouraged marriage among his troops and personally oversaw the marriages of his officers. He investigated the background of any young woman marrying an officer, including her birth, her family connections, and her "*limpieza de sangre*" or purity of blood. A good example is the case of Jacinto Panis, Captain of the Infantry and First *Ayudante Mayor* in New Orleans. He applied to Unzaga to marry Margarita Wiltz in February of 1776. The girl's father was deceased but Unzaga had both the girl and the mother investigated. He assured himself, through character witnesses and baptismal records, that the conduct of both women was good, that they had "*limpieza de sangre*," and that they were of the "proper station" (property owners with slaves) to advance his officer's career. After several months of questioning witnesses he finally forwarded Panis' request for permission to marry to O'Reilly. Jacinto Panis' case was common and other requests for marriage by Louisiana's officers were handled similarly. The governor wanted his officers to advance and realized that they might be transferred elsewhere where their marriage would be closely scrutinized.

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*Jacinto Panis to Unzaga, February 15, 1776, AGI, SD 2547, Folio 4; attendant documents dated February 16, 1776 include, a statement by Unzaga on the conduct and bloodline of the two women, a certificate of ownership of property and slaves and another certifying the bride-to-be's birth records by the local priest. The final attachment, dated April 12, 1776 contains the answers of witnesses to Margarita's character.*

*The same legajo holds several applications for marriage by Unzaga's officers, including that of the Lieutenant of the 6*th* company, Manuel Perez who wished to wed a young French woman named Juana Catalina Dubois, Perez to Unzaga, March 5, 1776, AGI, SD 2547, Folio 153. Juana went through the same examination suffered by Margarita. The testimony of her character fills twenty folios (Nos. 30-50) in the legajo.*

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Unzaga stayed busy during his tenure promoting many such men. One of his happiest requests for promotion was that of Captain Pedro Piernas to Lieutenant Colonel. In March of 1776, he forwarded Piernas’ documents and service record to O’Reilly, with his recommendation.\(^9\)Apparently the governor considered O’Reilly and Arriaga his superiors where military matters were concerned and totally bypassed the Captain-General in Havana on such matters. All of the military promotions and pay raises in Louisiana under Unzaga were signed by these two men.

This infraction of the chain of command clearly infuriated the Captain-General in Havana. In June of 1774 he wrote a terse letter to Arriaga blasting Unzaga’s improper behavior and reminding the Minister of the Indies that as Captain-General in Cuba, he (de la Torre), held the right not only to approve criminal processes in Louisiana but also “promotions, graduations, merits and other graces for soldiers.” Torre maintained that such promotions were the right of the position of Captain-General yet the only dispatch for such promotions which had “passed through his hands” was that which raised Unzaga to Brigadier. He also whined to Arriaga that he didn’t see where it was an inconvenience for such orders or promotions to be sent from Spain through him to Louisiana.\(^9\) Unzaga answered this complaint by sending a copy of all his requests for promotion to the Captain-General while he continued to send the requests directly to O’Reilly the man he obviously considered his superior, even after he assumed the governor’s seat.

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\(^9\)Unzaga to O’Reilly, March 5, 1776, AGI, SD 2547, Folio 152 with attachments.

\(^9\)Torre to Arriaga, June 10, 1774, AGI, Cuba 1219, Folio 676.
Like his officers, Unzaga also wished promotion and recognition. One of the greatest recognitions an officer could get was admission into one of the “orders” or brotherhoods in Spain. In August of 1776 he wrote Minister of the Indies, José de Gálvez, requesting to be received into the Order of Carlos III. He complained that as head of government in such a large territory it was difficult for him to deal with various officials, especially those who had received the French Cross of St. Luis, and still remain distinguished and powerful among such gentlemen. Apparently the request was still pending when he left Louisiana.100

The other constant in Unzaga’s military duties was the promotion of regular soldiers according to the Royal decree of 1766. Each year brought a list of soldiers whose good behavior and time in service demanded reward. Rewards were small, but under Unzaga, consistent. Regular soldiers could expect a pay raise of 6 reales after fifteen years of service, and 9 reales after 20 years of service. Handicapped or ill soldiers could count on their pay and the governor took care to see that widows received their proper pensions.101

Careful attention to detail, constant reward, and fair treatment also helped Unzaga create strong, vigorous militia units in Louisiana. By the end of his time in office local commandants could chose to be picky about the men they commanded, often writing the

100Unzaga to José de Galvez, August 13, 1776, AGI, SD 2547, Folio 170.

101See Unzaga’s requests, O’Reilly’s confirmations and Arraiga’s certificates coinciding with Unzaga’s tenure in AGI, SD 2661. The special requests for the handicapped soldier and widows can be found in the same legajo, Folios 428-448.
governor to send them less insubordinate or more competent men. The body of men entering the militia grew to the point that on the first of June, 1775, Unzaga was able to create a new unit, the Battalion of New Orleans Militia, with its own red, white and blue uniforms.

Despite his achievements, the governor was not satisfied with his work in Louisiana’s defense. In a report of April 4, 1776, he forwarded the service rosters of the Louisiana Battalion. An attachment noted that there were “only two professional grade officers in the entire province.” He also added that while “the militia company soldiers can fire their muskets, they have no military instructions; the only exception being those five companies stationed in the capital and the two companies of Germans.” Again he complained that there were not enough sabers for the Grenadiers and corporals, the fortifications were rotting, there were not enough cannon balls, and much of the shot they had didn’t fit the cannons.

There were real reasons for Unzaga’s constant concern with Louisiana. While a general truce had been in place during 1773 activities on the Atlantic picked up in 1774. Great Britain’s problems with the colonies increased and the Spanish crown re-intensified its efforts to monitor British activity in North America and the Caribbean. Spain’s

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102 See communications of Commandant, Thomas de Acosta to Unzaga, March 23, 1775, AGI, Cuba 81, Folio 98.

103 Holmes, Honor and Fidelity, 20-21 and Statement of the military, undated, in AGI, Cuba, 184-A.

104 The lists and notes of April 4th are contained in “Carta y listas de Batalion de Unzaga,” April 27, 1776, AGI, SD 2661, Folios 118-124.
ministers reported that members of the English court supported and encouraged open war with the Bourbons to help "cool" the revolution brewing in their Atlantic colonies. During 1774 and 1775 the bellicosity of English ships in Atlantic shipping lanes quickened and Spanish tempers flared. Spain "investigated" every British ship caught off the Iberian peninsula and even imagined insults led to fist fights.

England's bellicose behavior at sea, rumors of attack, and requests for assistance from the Americans in North America caused a rift at the Spanish court. Grimaldi favored covert aid to the Americans and public neutrality. He reminded the King that if the revolution went badly, British forces in America could easily be turned against Spain. On the other hand, the Conde de Aranda in Paris, and the French Foreign minister, Charles Gravier, the Comte de Vergennes, openly supported a combined French and Spanish attack on Great Britain while it was distracted by colonial discord.

Spain's court hesitated. The King wisely assessed that France had far less to lose in open confrontation since she had already lost the majority of her American colonies in 1763. Accordingly, Spain acted to reinforce her defenses in the Caribbean, sending additional troops to both Cuba and Puerto Rico in the latter part of 1775.

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105 Cummins, Spanish Observers, 27.

106 See numerous instances of British-Spanish confrontation in Spain's waters in AGS, Estado 6988.

107 The most comprehensive account of the diplomatic exchange between the French and Spanish can be found in Juan Fernando Yela Utrilla, España ante la independencia de los Estados Unidos (2d ed; 2 vols.; Lerida, 1925).

108 Ibid, 50.
and Spain secretly accelerated their intelligence gathering in the colonies. The new
Minister of the Indies, José de Gálvez, authorized the Captain-General in Cuba to use
Havana as a base of operations to funnel aid to the Americans, and send word to Unzaga
of his actions.¹⁰⁹

In the Americas, Spain’s colonial governors acted surreptitiously to aid the
rebellious colonists. Unzaga believed that aiding the colonists would help undermine the
British threat to Louisiana. He became aware of the needs of the Americans through their
merchant and ally Oliver Pollock.¹¹⁰ Requests for aid became more open with the events
at Lexington and Concord. Commander Charles Lee of the Continental Army openly
corresponded with Unzaga through Captain George Gibson, requesting aid from the
Spanish and offering to “include” the Spanish in the “re-capture” of English settlements
from Manchac to the Ohio and the Floridas (long a dream of the Spanish Crown).¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Minister of the Indies, Julian Arriaga, died after a long and debilitating illness
in 1775 and was replaced with José de Gálvez in the late Spring but because of some
confusion at the Spanish court he began active duty in December of 1775. Unzaga
congratulated Gálvez on his appointment in June of 1775, Unzaga to Gálvez, 19 June,
1775, AGI, SD 2547, Folio 163.

¹¹⁰ Pollack’s life and aid to the American’s has been the subject of numerous
articles and books including James Alton James, Oliver Pollock: The Life and Times of
an Unknown Patriot (New York: Appleton Century, 1937); same author, “Oliver Pollock,
Financier of the Revolution in the West,” MVHR, 15 (1929); and Light Townshend
Cummins, “Oliver Pollack’s Plantations: An Early Anglo Landowner on the Lower

¹¹¹ Lee to Unzaga, May 22, 1776 (two letters) AGI, SD 2596.
Unzaga favored such support. He wrote to José de Gálvez that the recapture of Pensacola would also re-secure Spain’s sea lanes in the Caribbean. Torre agreed.\textsuperscript{112} While Unzaga wrote for “permission” he actively began to secure supplies for the rebels. Assisting the governor was the wily Oliver Pollock who successfully slipped Captain George Gibson of the Continental Army and fifteen men down the Ohio and the Mississippi to New Orleans to purchase gunpowder from the Spanish.\textsuperscript{113} Unzaga, in a now famous exchange, covertly sold the rebels nine-thousand pounds of gunpowder from the royal storehouses. Publically, Unzaga “arrested” Gibson and returned him and the gunpowder to Philadelphia. The governor’s use of obedezco pero no cumpló eventually allowed the Americans to successfully defend both Wheeling and Fort Pitt against the British.\textsuperscript{114}

Louisiana’s governor also used Philadelphia as a base of operations to spy on the British. In 1776 he sent several merchant-spies including his old friend Bartolomé Beauregard, under the pretense of purchasing flour.\textsuperscript{115} Once again he acted in Spain’s best interests and excused himself later. After sending the spies he wrote the Minister of the Indies that he apologized for breaking royal orders against buying from foreigners, but

\textsuperscript{112} Unzaga to José de Gálvez, September 30, 1776, ibid; Torre to José de Gálvez, October 9, 1776, AGI, SD 1224.

\textsuperscript{113} Chávez, The Ultimate Gift, 64-65; James Alton James, “Oliver Pollock, Financier,” 70-71.

\textsuperscript{114} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{115} Unzaga to José de Gálvez, 7 September, 1776, AGI, SD 2547, Folio 180.
that he had done so under "extreme need," and would not do so again, being content to supply himself in the future from Veracruz and Havana.\textsuperscript{116}

Spain finally formed an allied front with France and moved forward to aid the Americans against their mutual enemy as 1776 drew to a close. Aid now came from Havana and Louisiana, despite protests from de la Torre that such action would strip Havana of the gunpowder and muskets necessary to defend his capital.\textsuperscript{117} A new network of spies issued from Havana to English ports in the Caribbean. Under Gálvez's recommendations de la Torre utilized a network of merchant-spies similar to that of the governor in Louisiana. Like Unzaga, Havana's commander also extended his spies to Philadelphia to watch the emerging war. De la Torre additionally utilized more and more information from Louisiana where Unzaga's commandants furnished him with troop and naval movements and the migration of English settlers in the Mississippi Valley.\textsuperscript{118}

As the revolution between Britain and its North American colonies enlarged, command in both Louisiana and Havana changed. Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga had already requested his retirement in June of 1776. In a long letter to Minister Gálvez, the governor reminded the crown of his previous service record, his loyalty against the English in Havana, and gratefully thanked them for his governorship. He was, however, tired after

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{116}Unzaga to José de Gálvez, 7 September, 1776, AGI, SD 2547, Folio 175.
\item \textsuperscript{117}José de Gálvez to Unzaga, 28 February, 1776, Royal Order, No. 199, AGI, Cuba 174-B and José de Gálvez to Torre, 28 February, 1776, Royal Order, No. 483, Ibid.;
\item \textsuperscript{118}See Cummins, Spanish Observers, for a complete description of these spies and their locations, especially pages 35-45. It is ironic that just as Spain began to actively move against the British, Havana became host to numerous British subjects (military and civilian) seeking refuge from the conflict.
\end{itemize}
thirty-three years of service in the Americas, and wished to return to Spain with the salary of a colonel and an assignment in his home province of Malaga.119

The Crown complied with Unzaga’s request to leave Louisiana, but not in the expected manner. The following September the governor received word that his time in the Americas was not finished. The Crown gave him the requested promotion, but to a higher command. Unzaga departed Louisiana as the new Captain-General of Caracas. In the midst of the American Revolution, he organized his papers, his family and belongings.120

In a lengthy letter to the Minister of the Indies, governor Unzaga made a final report on Louisiana and a plea for it independence from Havana. He openly argued that Louisiana and its defenses would suffer if the colony remained under the auspices of the Governor-general in Havana. He repeatedly and rather bitterly accused de la Torre of ignoring Louisiana’s defensive and financial needs. Having received a letter from Havana not to forward foreign prisoners but to sentence them in Louisiana, Unzaga advised that all prisoners should receive the same treatment which would quicken sentences and punishments and help discipline the troops. He further argued that Florida had requested and received independence from Havana and that Louisiana was a larger territory with more inhabitants and products and should be granted the same freedom of rule.121 As he

119 Unzaga to José de Gálvez, June 22, 1776, AGI, SD 2547, Folio 167.
120 Unzaga’s promotion to Caracas is in Torre to José de Gálvez, December 1, 1776, AGI, Cuba 1222, Folio 1202.
121 Unzaga to José de Gálvez, 28 December, 1776, AGI, SD 2547.
left Unzaga could boast of a comparatively dense population of loyal citizens, a
coordinated defense and a financially secure if not wealthy colony.

Bernardo de Gálvez, the adventurous nephew of the Minister of the Indies, José de
Gálvez, arrived in Louisiana to replace Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga as governor in
November of 1776. After a brief time with Unzaga to exchange information and
command he assumed command on January 1, 1777, whereupon he immediately adopted
the former governor’s policy of aiding the American rebels. In time Unzaga’s suggestions
and Lee’s promises bore fruit. Bernardo de Gálvez successfully led Louisiana’s loyal
troops against the British to recapture Florida. The British attack on Havana which
produced the slogan, beware the Mameyes, finally backfired in the American Revolution.
The fruit of the Mameyes, Louisiana and its governors, returned Florida to its former
owner and for a brief time re-secured the Gulf of Mexico for Spain.122

122 Bernardo de Gálvez’s journey to Louisiana in and in Torre to José de Gálvez,
24, November, 1776, ibid; Gálvez’s report of his command in Bernardo de Gálvez to
Torre, 19 January, 1777, ibid, Folio 1341.

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Chapter 9

Summary

As a result of the peace treaty following the Seven Years War, the Bourbon throne of Spain inherited the former French territory of Louisiana. Spain's slowness in establishing its rule in the colony produced a series of events culminating in a rebellion which ousted the first Spanish governor, Antonio de Ulloa. The crown's response to this insult was swift and certain. Captain-General O'Reilly took formal control of the colony for Spain in 1769 and quickly punished the ringleaders of the revolt.

O'Reilly had already been involved in a successful reorganization of the defenses and economy in Havana. He applied his considerable skill and experience to the defenses and government of Louisiana. Within a year he created a defensive barrier of forts and colonial settlements against the possible encroachment of the British along the Mississippi. He reorganized the government, and established Spanish mercantilistic rules in the economy. O'Reilly instituted Bourbon rule and reform in Louisiana. He hispanicized its government and reorganized its economy, but he did not engender loyalty or re-orient its colonists toward the Spanish Crown. The successful implementation of O'Reilly's reforms and colonial re-orientation came under its next governor, Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga.

O'Reilly left Unzaga with instructions to create a viable defense, a colony of loyal citizens, and make it economically successful for the crown. Unzaga spent the next seven years working to integrate the Louisiana borderlands into the Spanish system and make the colony successful for both Spain and for its colonists. Spain's mercantilistic rules devastated Louisiana's trade as the colony produced very little that Spain wanted. From
the colonists' view the reforms were a disaster. Unzaga, however, saw an opportunity to put Louisiana back on its feet economically and create new industry. During his tenure he backed Louisiana's tobacco growers, began a new industry in cypress lumbering, and even stimulated a domestic market. While many historians have written about his turning a blind eye to contraband trade, Unzaga actually used an old Spanish custom known as *obedezco pero no cumplo* to glean public funds from illicit trade and feed his hungry colonists. The governor's efforts even began to integrate Louisiana's frontier economy into the colony's legitimate commerce and filled the colonial treasury, which showed a surplus at the end of his time in office.

Unzaga's mandates to create loyalty and order were somewhat more difficult. Within those two commands layers of smaller exigencies existed. Order required he create peace among both the Indians and his colonists. That meant maintaining a group of Native American allies as well as dealing with intertribal conflict and the aggressive Indian policies of the English across the Mississippi. Order also required a stable, growing, and law-abiding population.

Unzaga's success with the Indians was limited by Crown funding. Alliances were made with the Norteños and the Caddo in the west by Lieutenant-General Athanase De Mézières and between the Apalachee at Rapides but the remaining tribes along the Mississippi shifted their alliances between the British and Spanish to suit their own needs. The Osage threat remained a constant during Unzaga's tenure and because of limited funding he could not arm his allies. As O'Reilly's orders had been to keep peace at all costs, Unzaga refused to fuel intertribal warfare, an effort seen as weakness by the
Quapaw, Missouri and Little Osage in Upper Louisiana and the Caddo in the West. Clearly, the Indians retained control of trade and alliances, and elicited the desired European response by playing the Spanish off the English and continuing conflict and contraband trade.

Creating a colony of loyal subjects was also a difficult task. To Unzaga's mind it required that he bring order and stability to the populace, implant the rule of law and reconcile his colonists to Spanish rule. He began by marrying into one of the colony's elite families, a tactic often frowned on by the Crown, but successful in Louisiana. From this vantage point he used his considerable managerial skills to create trust. He stabilized the population through a series of land surveys and official land grants, creating a denser and larger population capable of both defense and domestic industry. He also worked to enhance his colonists' education and attended to their clerical needs, including the peaceful solution to a conflict between Spanish and French clergy. This confirmed his position as defender of the faith as well as his colonial charges.

Centralizing his authority had to be accomplished carefully in order to make Louisiana's recalcitrant citizens abide by the rule of law and his orders. In his dealings with colonists, post commandants, and military underlings Unzaga was firm, but fair. He did not play favorites, even where family was concerned. Unzaga's fairness in dealing with debts in the colony and his determination to place his colonists' needs first engendered trust and then loyalty. He also refused to give up his authority over colonial affairs to his superior in Havana and often wrote directly to the Minister of Indies or O'Reilly in Spain, whom he considered his immediate superior.
Unzaga used flexible Spanish justice to implant Spanish law and maintained a constant presence in the courts. In doing so he centralized authority in the person of the governor and tied provincial government to the courts in New Orleans, while at the same time supporting the authority of his commandants as Spanish officials. Justice too brought loyalty and a grudging obedience to Spanish rule.

Slavery changed under Unzaga. Indian slavery lessened and more lenient Spanish slave codes allowed a larger group of free blacks to emerge. Emancipation was limited, as always, by legal codes and the ability to buy one’s freedom.

Unzaga’s most pressing need was to continue a defense against any possible British attack. This included maintaining a strong network of Indian allies, manning and refurbishing Louisiana’s deteriorating forts and maintaining a fit army and a colonial militia. Unzaga drilled, armed and paid his militia regularly. He enforced the idea that ownership of land was dependent upon service in the militia, an idea backed by the local commandants. He even started a new militia company in New Orleans with its own uniforms. Although he was plagued by constant desertion, the governor treated his own soldiers fairly, advancing their pay and grade regularly and overseeing their marriages to respectable colonials. This encouraged Louisiana’s colonists to view the Spanish military as a chance at advancement. Lastly, the governor employed a group of merchant-spies to continue surveillance of British activities and help the Americans during the Revolution of 1776.

Although Unzaga considered his efforts at defense futile, he nonetheless created a loyal group of colonists who successfully helped Louisiana’s next governor fight against
the British and recapture Florida for Spain. At the end of his tenure, Unzaga applied for retirement, but the Crown awarded his excellent management of Louisiana with promotion to the Captaincy-General in Caracas. Unzaga left Louisiana with its colonists, economy and defenses reconciled to Spain's Bourbon empire and its reforms.
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Appendix A

Treasurer’s Reports for Louisiana
Martin Navarro 1769-1775
Bernard de Ortero 1776-1777
Resume of the accounts of Don Martin Navarro:

September 1, 1769 until December 1, 1770

Tres millones, setecientos, seiscientos ochenta y nueva reales cuatro y dos tercios maravedís 3,700,689.4 2/3

dos millones, setecientos, setenta y dos mil ochocientos cinquenta reales dos y once, quince maravedís 2,772,850.2 11/15

A favor de su excelentísimo-novecientos veinte y siete mil ochocientos treinta y nueve reales y dos maravedís 927,839.2 Balance

January 1, 1771 until December 31, 1771

un millón ochocientos noventa y dos mil, novecientos cincuenta y un reales, veinticuatro maravedís 1,892,951.24

ochocientos sesenta y seis mil, doscientos veintiocho reales y veintiséis maravedís 866,228.26

Total: un millón, veintiséis mil setecientos veintidos reales y treinta y dos maravedís 1,026,722.32 Balance

January 1, 1772 until December 31, 1772

a cargo de.... 2,022,406.14

data de.... 257,724.18

Total: un millón, sesenta y cinco mil doscientos ochenta y un reales treinta maravedís 1,065,281.30 Balance [1,064,682]

January 1, 1773 until December 31, 1773

a cargo de.... 2,036,335.4

data.... 858,826.2

Total: un millón ciento setenta y siete mil, quinientos nueve reales y dos maravedís 1,177,509.2 Balance

January 1, 1774 until December 31, 1774

cargo de 2,239,453.9

data... 889,385.4

1AGI, SD, Legajo 2628. Errors in math are those of the treasurer though I have added corrected figures in brackets.
January 1, 1774 until December 31, 1774

cargo de 2,239,453.9
data... 889,385.4

Total de existencia: de un millon trescientos cincuenta mil sesenta y ocho reales y cinco maravedís 1,350,068.5 Balance

Resume of the account of Martín Navarro from January 1, 1775 until May 4, 1775 when he officially became Intendant and the treasurer’s office was taken by Don Bernardo de Otero:

Cargo de la relación 1,400,599.15
Data 1,400,599.15

*Apparently the treasury had not changed by May when he handed over his office.

Resume of the accounts from Don Bernardo de Otero:

May 5, 1775 until December 31, 1775

Acredita de cargo en la relación jurada: dos millones, ocho mil treinta y cuatro reales veinte y quarenta partes de otro 2,008,034.27 80/100
La Data: quinientos treinta y cuatro mil trescientos cincoenta y seis reales, un maravedís 538,356.1

Que resulta en favor de Su Majestad: un millon cuatrocientos sesenta y nueve mil seiscientos setenta y ocho reales, veinte maravedís y 40 partes de otro de existencia 1,469,678.20 40/100 Balance

January 1, 1776 until December 31, 1776

El cargo según la cuenta dos millones, quatrocientos sesenta y cuatro mil, ciento quarenta y cinco reales, veinte maravedís y ochenta y ocho cien otros 2,464,145.20 88/100
La Data: nuevecientos veinte y cuatro mil ochocientos ochenta y nueve reales, diez y seis maravedís, y tres cien otros 921,889.16 3/100

La existencia de: un millon, quinientos treinta y nueve mil, doscientos cincuenta y seis reales, quatro maravedís, y ochenta y cinco, cien otros a cargo en el cuenta reservado para su majestad 1,539,256.4 85/100 Balance

[1,542,256.4 85/100]
January 1, 1777 until December 31, 1777

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cargo: dos millones, ochocientos setenta y cinco mil quinientos</td>
<td>2,875,578.31 65/100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>setenta y ocho reales treinta y un maravedis y</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>sesenta y tres partes de otro</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Su data con arreglos del libro de caja: nuevecientos noventa y</td>
<td>998,722.1 83/100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ocho mil, setecientos veinte y dos reales, un maravedis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y ochenta y tres partes de otro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existencia de un millon ochocientos setenta y seis mil ochocientos</td>
<td>1,876,856.29 81/100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cinquenta y seis reales y veinte y nueve maravedis,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y ochenta y un parte de otro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Entradas and Salidas at Havana, Cuba to and from New Orleans, 1772-1776
### Entradas and Salidas at Havana, Cuba to and from New Orleans 1772-1776

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Entradas (from New Orleans)</th>
<th>Salidas (to New Orleans)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>No.</td>
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<td>April</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Figures from AGI, Cuba Legajo 1215, Nos. 57, 85, 111 and AGI, Cuba Legajo 1216, Nos. 139.

2It is interesting that no record of El Sol's entrance into Havana was made, or reference to where it might have come from.

3This large number of ships leaving is due to a shipment of money, frutos and troops to Cadiz accounting for 13 of the vessels.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1772</th>
<th>Entradas (from New Orleans)¹</th>
<th>Salidas (to New Orleans)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>San Francisco</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nuestra Señora de el</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Ships In</td>
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<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>San Miguel</td>
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<td>Nuestra Señora del Carmen</td>
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<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Ships In</td>
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<tr>
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<td>354</td>
<td>Ships In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ships In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>El Príncipe de Asturias *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>San Francisco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>La Deseada</td>
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<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Ships In</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>San Antonio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Figures from AGI, Cuba Legajo 1216, Nos. 162, 199, 228, 252.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Entradas (from New Orleans)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>No.</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>September</td>
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<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>20</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

December's entradas and salidas are missing from the legajo.

**Total** 156 **Ships In** (22 from New Orleans)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salidas (to New Orleans)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*There is no mention of the El Principe as ever having left Havana in August or September.*

---

1 Figures from AGI, Cuba Legajo 1216, No. 277 and Legajo 1217, No. 305
Year 1773  | Entradas (from New Orleans)¹  | Salidas (to New Orleans)
---|---|---
Date | No. | Name | Cargo | No. | Name | Cargo
January | 1 | San Antonio | Cortes de caña² | 2 | La Virgen de Monte Negro | frutos
 | 12 | Ships In | | | La Union | frutos
 | | | The numbers for February-May are missing from the Legajos.
June | 4 | Nuestra Señora del Carmen | frutos de aquelle Provincia | 2 | El Cid Campeador | frutos
 | | Nuestra Señora del Rosario | same | Nuestra Señora del Carmen | frutos
 | | Ntra Señora de la Consolación | same | | | frutos
 | | San Antonio | cortes de cajas por sucre | San Miguel | | caudales³
 | 20 | Ships In | | 23 | Ships Out | |
July | 3 | Nuestra Señora del Rosario | frutos de aquelle Provincia | 2 | San Antonio | frutos
 | | San Miguel | same | El Renombrado | | caudales³
 | | Nuestra Señora del Asunción | same | | | |
 | 11 | Ships In | | 17 | Ships Out | |

¹Figures from AGI Cuba, Legajo 1217, Nos. 347, 437
²Cuts of wood for sugar boxes
³Caudales are monies. This ship was captained by Antonio O'Carrol who was bringing the situado to New Orleans.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Entradas (from New Orleans)</th>
<th>Salidas (to New Orleans)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Cargo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Nuestra Señora del Carmen</td>
<td>madura y alquitran^1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alejandro (Beauregard)</td>
<td>cortes de Caña para embarazar azucar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28 Ships In^2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>SM San Juan de Romuseno</td>
<td>not mentioned^3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 Ships In</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>registro^4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>San Antonio</td>
<td>cortes de Cajas para</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 Ships In</td>
<td>embarazar azucar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23 Ships Out^5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^1Wood and tar.

^2Several of these ships were carrying the kings mail and silver from Veracruz, another with tobacco from another part of Cuba.

^3This was captained by Commander O'Carrol who generally delivered the situado. He may merely be returning to Cuba.

^4Register of items - used in place of frutos.

^5This shipment contained a large flota to Cadiz including two ships with troops.
Year 1773  | Entradas (from New Orleans)     | Salidas (to New Orleans)
| Date      | No. | Name                        | Cargo          | No. | Name                        | Cargo   |
| November  | 1   | Nuestra Señora de Consolación | frutos         | 1   | Nuestra Senora del Regla     | reg.    |
|           | 12  | Ships In                    |                |     | Ships Out                   |         |
| December  | 4   | San Luis (Beauregard)       | cortes de cajas| 1   | Nuestra Señora de Consolación|         |
|           |     | San Martin                  | cortes de cajas|     |                            |         |
|           |     | San Francisco               | cortes de cajas|     |                            |         |
|           |     | San Antonio                 | cortes de cajas|     |                            |         |
|           | 26  | Ships In                    |                |     | Ships Out                   |         |
| Total*    | 131 | Ships In (18 from New Orleans)|              | 104 | Ships Out (11 from New Orleans)|         |

*While these totals do not show all entradas and salidas (February-May being missing) they are sufficient to give a ratio of shipping from New Orleans to rest of Indies flowing through Havana.

---

1This larger number of entradas includes ships from Vera Cruz and elsewhere gathering for a flota.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Entradas (from New Orleans)</th>
<th>Salidas (to New Orleans)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>No. Name</td>
<td>Cargo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>19 San Juan Nepomucena Nuestra Señora de Regla</td>
<td>cortes de caja y otras efectos frutos</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>12 El Renombrado Nuestra Señora de Consolación</td>
<td>frutos frutos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>1 San Antonio</td>
<td>cortes de cajas</td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>17 San Luis (Beauregard) San Francisco</td>
<td>cortes de cajas cortes de cajas</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>21 Nuestra Señora del Carmen</td>
<td>cortes de cajas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1 Figures from AGI, Cuba Nos. 594, 603, 623, 636, 659..
### Year 1774

#### Entradas (from New Orleans)†

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ntra Sefi de Consolacidn</td>
<td>carnes, tablas y brea</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>SM San Antonio</td>
<td>troops, pertrechos para escudron</td>
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#### Salidas (to New Orleans)

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<td>en las.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>en las.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>San Antonio</td>
<td>en las.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>El P rincipe</td>
<td>en las.</td>
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†Figures from AGI, Cuba Legajo 1219, Nos. 674, 698, 719, 733.

²The situado for Louisiana brought by Com. Andres Balderrama.

†Carried the Commandante Andres Balderrama back from delivering the situado.
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<thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salidas (to New Orleans)</th>
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1 Figures from AGI Cuba 1219, Nos. 733, 760, 779, 807.

2 Does not include missing salidas from March.
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<th>Salidas (to New Orleans)</th>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>Name</td>
</tr>
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<td>January</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>La Virgen de Misericordia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>El Renombrado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>San Antonio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>San Geronimo</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ships In</td>
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</table>

1Figures from AGI, Cuba 1220, Nos. 829, 844, 865.

2There appear to have been two Nuestra Señora del Carmen's, one out of Louisiana and one from Spain.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1775</th>
<th>Entradas (from New Orleans)¹</th>
<th>Salidas (to New Orleans)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Date</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

¹Figures from AGI, Cuba 1220, Nos. 876, 892, 912.

²The first Santo Christo piloted by Pat Buenaventura Gualva and the second by Tomas Tayonera who left on the 11th of January for New Orleans.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Entradas (from New Orleans)¹</th>
<th>Salidas (to New Orleans)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>August</td>
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<td>San Luis (Beauregard)</td>
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<td>Nuestra Señora de Regla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Ships In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Santo Cristo</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Ships In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>San Vicente Ferrer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>La Luisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ships In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Figures are from AGI, Cuba Legajo 1220, No. 959 and Legajo 1221, Nos. 977, and 995.

²While not on the entrada/salida register this ship had been in the English Caribbean in search of slaves and wheat. There is no record of her entrance into Havana.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Entradas (from New Orleans)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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</table>

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1 Figures from AGI, Cuba, Legajo 1221, No. 1014.
### Year 1776

#### Entradas (from New Orleans)

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<th>Cargo</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>La Dulcissima</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nuestra Señora de Regla</td>
<td>frutos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Ships In</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>San Josef</td>
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<td>cortes de cajas</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>April</td>
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<td>Mariana</td>
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<td>17</td>
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#### Salidas (to New Orleans)

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<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>La Maria</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Ships Out⁶</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

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¹Figures from AGI Cuba, Legajo 1221, Nos. 1014, 1046, 1059.

²While it did not return to New Orleans the Nuestra Señora de Regla sailed to Veracruz with the Papel de Cuenta. It appears that boats did not ferry back and forth between New Orleans and Havana the way they had in 1774. Instead they stopped in Havana to deliver a cargo and pick up another for elsewhere in empire.

³The San Josef's voyage had originated in Santander, Spain.

⁴The San Josef left Havana bound for Campeche and the San Antonio went to Santander with "frutos."

⁵lar.

⁶Among these were two boats with the situado funds for Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo and Cumana but not Louisiana!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Entradas (from New Orleans)</th>
<th>Salidas (to New Orleans)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>July</td>
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¹Figures from AGI Cuba, Legajo 1221, Nos. 1096, 1118, 1155.

²Planks of wood.
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<th>Cargo</th>
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<td><strong>Salidas (to New Orleans)</strong></td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>October</td>
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<td>La Luisa</td>
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<td><strong>Total Ships Out (16 to New Orleans)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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1 Figures from AGI Cuba, Legajo 1221, Nos. 1198, 1216, 1259.
Appendix C

Entradas and Salidas at Havana, Cuba
1772-1776
### Entradas and Salidas at Havana, Cuba 1772-1776

#### 1772

<table>
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<th>Entradas</th>
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<th>Salidas</th>
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1 Figures from AGI Cuba 1215, Folios 57, 85, and 111; Legajo 1216, Folios 139, 162,199, 228, 252, and 277; and Legajo 1217, Folio 305.
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2 The note following this entry says "same one that entered that port last 30th." No entry was made of the Sara in February, which does not have a 30th, or in January of 1772 or in December of 1771.
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<th>Vergantín/La Virgen de los Dolores</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Manuel de Jesús Fernandez</td>
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<th>Apr/8</th>
<th>Cádiz</th>
<th>Zaetia/El Espíritu Santo</th>
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<td>P. Joseph Boter</td>
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<th>Zaetia/La Virgen de Misericordia</th>
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<th>Cádiz</th>
<th>Fragata/Jesus, María &amp; José</th>
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<td>Martín de Echegaray</td>
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<th>Apr/8</th>
<th>Cádiz</th>
<th>Zaetia/La Purísima Concepción</th>
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<th>Barcelona</th>
<th>Zaetia/San Isidro</th>
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For April 1772
Total of 8 Ships In
Total of 29 Ships Out

Further Salidas:

Apr/29 al mar
Fragata SM/el Caymen
Comd. Juan Moscosa
unknown

Apr/29 Santo Domingo
Goleta/N.Sa. de los Dolores
Miguel Fernanris
vacío

Apr/30 La Coruña
Fragata correo SM/La Princesa
Josef Theodoro Perés
correo

Apr/30 Barcelona
Zaeta/San Agustin
P. Mariano Mare
frutos

Apr/8 "accompanied the expedition until the canal"
Balandra de SM/a Belona
Comd. Miguel de Alderete
unknown

Apr/9 Guayra
Fragata/San Carlos
plata y
Manuel de Francia
efectos

Apr/18 La Coruña
Fragata/La Concepción
Joseph Calvo
frutos

Apr/18 Santander
Bergantín/N.Sa. de la Augustín
Joseph Ignacio Aspelaga
frutos

Apr/18 New Orleans
Balandra/San Antonio
Lorenzo Delisaus
frutos

Apr/26 a la mar (to sea)
Bergantín SM/El Principe de Asturias
Comd. Antonio O’Carrol
unknown

Apr/26 en su compañía (in his company)
Balandra SM/La Belona
Comd. Miguel de Alderete
unknown

Apr/26 Veracruz
Bergantín correo/El Despacho
Joseph Antonio Urda Hipillesa
correo

Apr/26 Gijón
Bergantín/N.Sa. del Carmen
Diego del Collado
frutos
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Entradas</strong></th>
<th><strong>Last Port</strong></th>
<th><strong>Salidas</strong></th>
<th><strong>Destination</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ship</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cargo</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ship</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May/3</td>
<td>La Coruña</td>
<td>harina</td>
<td>Campeche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paquebo/El Espíritu Santo</td>
<td></td>
<td>Goleta/San Josef</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vicente Urágo</td>
<td></td>
<td>Josef del Agüila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May/3</td>
<td>Cartagena de Indias y Trinidad</td>
<td>vacío</td>
<td>Cádiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Balandra/La Industria (slave transport)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bergantín/San Juan Bautista</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Julio Flowe</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gabriel Sistare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May/3</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
<td>Guanico</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Balandra SM/La Belona</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bergantín Frances/El Activo</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comd/ Luis de Alberet</td>
<td>(with British Balandra)</td>
<td>Juan Decasaval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May/4</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fragata SM/El Caymen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Balandra de Real Hacienda/La Industria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comd. Juan Francisco Moscosa</td>
<td>(with British Balandra)</td>
<td>Comd. Juan Tauso</td>
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<tr>
<td>May/4</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cádiz</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bergantín SM/el Príncipe de Asturias</td>
<td></td>
<td>Paquebo/N.Sa. del Rosario</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Comd. Antonio O'Carol</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bernardo Sepulveda</td>
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<tr>
<td>May/4</td>
<td>Tampico</td>
<td>carne, cuero y sebo</td>
<td>Boston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goleta/N.Sa. de Concepción</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 British Balandras The Two Brothers and Pluto under Benjamin Woppe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ignacio Gil</td>
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<tr>
<td>May/4</td>
<td>Tampico</td>
<td>carne, cuero y sebo</td>
<td>Cádiz</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Barca/N.Sa. del Carmen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bergantín/San Francisco Pavia Antonio Saens</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Marcelino Mier</td>
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<tr>
<td>May/14</td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>noticias y pliegos de aquella provincia</td>
<td>Portobelo y Cartagena</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Balandra/San Francisco</td>
<td></td>
<td>Goleta/San Francisco de Asís Nicolas Balderas</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Luis Boyen</td>
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<td>Su Majestad</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Ship Name</td>
<td>Command</td>
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<tr>
<td>May/14</td>
<td>Veracruz</td>
<td>Fragata S. M./El Aluna</td>
<td>Josef Invi</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Veracruz</td>
<td>Fragata S.M./La Perla</td>
<td>Comd. Josef Bodegos</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tampico</td>
<td>Zaetia/N.Sa. del Rosario</td>
<td>Pablo Asmé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May/16</td>
<td>(came taking on water)</td>
<td>Berganti/San Juan Bautista</td>
<td>(exited for Cadiz 14th of this month)</td>
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<td>May/21</td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>Bergantín/N.Sa. del Amparo</td>
<td>Pedro Dios Balandon</td>
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<tr>
<td>May/24</td>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>Bergantín Real Haciendo/La Minerva</td>
<td>Ramón de la Husia</td>
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<td>May/24</td>
<td>Veracruz</td>
<td>Paquebot correo/El Alvaredo</td>
<td>Francisco Ambrosio Madera</td>
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<tr>
<td>May/30</td>
<td>Pensacola</td>
<td>British Bergantín/El Ranger,</td>
<td>Ricardo Hodgson, (anchored at the mouth of the port, taking water, needs repairs)</td>
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For May 1772:

- Total of 19 Ships In
- Total of 11 Ships Out
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<th><strong>Ship</strong></th>
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<th><strong>Cargo</strong></th>
<th><strong>Salidas</strong></th>
<th><strong>Destination</strong></th>
<th><strong>Ship</strong></th>
<th><strong>Captain</strong></th>
<th><strong>Cargo</strong></th>
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<td>Jun/11</td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>Bergantín/El S. de las Tres Caídas</td>
<td>Cristóbal García</td>
<td>frutos</td>
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<td>Jamaica (anchored in the mouth of the port)</td>
<td>Balandra/The Isabel</td>
<td>Diego de Alba</td>
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<td>Jun/3</td>
<td>Cádiz</td>
<td>Paquebot/San Luis</td>
<td>Salvador García</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun/11</td>
<td>La Coruña</td>
<td>Zaeta/Santo Cristo del Calvario</td>
<td>P. Pedro Gay</td>
<td>harina, caldos y otras efectos</td>
<td>Jun/4</td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>Bergantín/El Renombrado</td>
<td>Andres Berman</td>
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<td>Balandra SM/La Belona</td>
<td>Comd. Luis de Alberete</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>Jun/4</td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>Bergantín/El S. de los Milagros</td>
<td>Josef Antonio de Uriarte</td>
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<td>Paquebot/El Príncipe</td>
<td>Juan de Cohegollen</td>
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<td>La Coruña</td>
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<td>Cristobal Murillo</td>
<td>harina y otras efectos</td>
<td>Jun/15</td>
<td>Veracruz</td>
<td>?correo/El Postillon de Mexico</td>
<td>Josef la Parra</td>
<td>cartas</td>
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<td>Santo Domingo y Puerto Rico Fragata SM/La Dorada Comd/ Felisio el Coronel situado</td>
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<td>Goleta Dinamarque (that entered this port the 29th of last month)</td>
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**For July 1772**

- Total of 7 Ships In
- Total of 19 Ships Out
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**Additional Entradas:**

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<th>Port of Departure</th>
<th>Port of Arrival</th>
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<td>Cádiz</td>
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<td>Aug/21</td>
<td>el Puerto de Ferrando</td>
<td>Goleta SM/El Santo Cristo del Buen Viaje</td>
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**For August 1772**

- Total of 20 Ships In
- Total of 12 Ships Out
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<th>Destination</th>
<th>Ship</th>
<th>Captain</th>
<th>Cargo</th>
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<td>Paquebot/N.Sa. del Carmen y Santa Rita</td>
<td>Francisco Montes Sapata</td>
<td>frutos de Nueva España</td>
<td>Sep/5</td>
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<td>Sep/3</td>
<td>Santa Cruz de Tenerife</td>
<td>Fragata/N.Sa de la Rosa</td>
<td>Josef García</td>
<td>Caldos</td>
<td>Sep/6</td>
<td>La Coruña</td>
<td>Fragata Correo SM/El Rey</td>
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<td>Sep/3</td>
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<td>Bergantin/N.Sa de la Luz</td>
<td>Lorenzo Basa</td>
<td>productos de la provincia de Yucatan</td>
<td>Sep/6</td>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>British Balandra/The Three Brothers</td>
<td>Benjamin Wipp</td>
<td>grease</td>
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<td>El Ferrol and Puerto Rico</td>
<td>Urcia SM/San Antonio</td>
<td>Cnd. Ignacio Montero</td>
<td>equipo para la escuadrón</td>
<td>Sep/6</td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>Goleta/La Descuadra</td>
<td>Francisco Ismar</td>
<td>en lastre</td>
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<td>Zaetia/San Pedro y San Pablo</td>
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<td>en lastre</td>
<td>Sep/6</td>
<td>Cádiz</td>
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<td>Josef Vitori</td>
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<td>Balandra/N.Sa. del Carmen</td>
<td>Domingo La cinto de Anduva</td>
<td>carnes</td>
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<td>Balandra/San Antonio</td>
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<td>Sep/17</td>
<td>Barcelona, Puerto Rico y Cuba</td>
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<td>P. Isidro Fabregas</td>
<td>efectos</td>
<td>Sep/27</td>
<td>Veracruz</td>
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<td>plata y tinta para Cádiz</td>
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<td>Fragata Correo SM/El Quiros</td>
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For September 1772
Total of 11 Ships In
Total of 8 Ships Out
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<td><strong>Ship</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cargo</strong></td>
<td><strong>Date</strong></td>
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<td>Anchored in the Port, taking water</td>
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<td>Veracruz</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Comd. Guillermo Bernabi</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct/10</td>
<td>Santander</td>
<td>Oct/13</td>
<td>Cádiz</td>
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<td>Igancio de Antillaga</td>
<td>harina y otras efectos</td>
<td>Cádiz y Barcelona</td>
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<td>Oct/13</td>
<td>Cádiz</td>
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<td>Oct/13</td>
<td>Cádiz</td>
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<td>Bergantín/ N.Sa. de la Luz</td>
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<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>Oct/13</td>
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<td>Bergantín/El Sol</td>
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<td>Luis Gallot</td>
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<td>Oct/17</td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>Oct/14</td>
<td>left for his destination &quot;repaired&quot;</td>
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<td>Paquebot SM/El Sandoval</td>
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<td>Antonio Gonzales</td>
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For October 1772
Total of 12 Ships In
Total of 14 Ships Out
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<td>Captain</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Captain</td>
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<td>Barcelona, Malaga y Puerto Rico</td>
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<td>Veracruz</td>
<td>Paquebot correo SM/El Postillon de Mexico</td>
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<td>La Coruña</td>
<td>Fragata/La Concepción</td>
<td>Nov/12</td>
<td>Cádiz</td>
<td>Zaetia/Santa Ana</td>
<td>P. Isidro Fabregas</td>
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<td>Cádiz</td>
<td>Urca SM/Santa Ana</td>
<td>Petrechos para la plaza y escuadron</td>
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<td>Maracaibo</td>
<td>Paquebot/N.Sa de Guadalupe</td>
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<td>Veracruz (taking on water)</td>
<td>Navio/El Buen Consejo</td>
<td>granos para Cadiz</td>
<td>Nov/28</td>
<td>Carolina &quot;repaired and full of food&quot;</td>
<td>Goleta de SMBritish/&quot;which entered the port on the 21st of this month</td>
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<td>Campeche</td>
<td>Goleta</td>
<td>San Josef (Alias La Fortuna)</td>
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<td>Josef del Aguila</td>
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<td>cacao</td>
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<td>Nov/21</td>
<td>Pensacola, anchored in the mouth of the port</td>
<td>Goleta correo SMB</td>
<td>British/The Comet</td>
<td>&quot;needs repair and food&quot;</td>
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<td>Nov/23</td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>Balandra</td>
<td>La Pastorina</td>
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<td>San Juan Bautista</td>
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<td>Cartagena de Indias</td>
<td>Fragata</td>
<td>de Guerra/El Caymen</td>
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<td>Nov/26</td>
<td>Cadiz</td>
<td>Fragata</td>
<td>N.Sa. del Carmen (alias El Soberbio)</td>
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<td>Cadiz</td>
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<td>San Bruno</td>
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**Additional Entradas:**

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<td>Zaetia</td>
<td>San Josef</td>
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<td>P. Juan Bautista Codina</td>
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<td>Veracruz</td>
<td>Bergantin Correo SM</td>
<td>El Despacho</td>
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<td>N.Sa. del Carmen</td>
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<td>La Coruña</td>
<td>Fragata</td>
<td>La Santisima Trinidad (alias El Caballo)</td>
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**For November 1772**
- Total of 20 Ships In
- Total of 7 Ships Out

**For December 1772**
- Missing from the legajo.

**Totals for 1772**
- 156 Ships In
- 149 Ships Out
Vita

Julia C. Frederick was born on November 21, 1948 in Newport News, Virginia. She moved to Lafayette, Louisiana in the fall of 1976. She graduated from the University of Southwestern Louisiana in the Spring of 1991 with a B.A. degree in History, minoring in Spanish. She received her M.A. from Southwestern in the Fall of 1993 in Latin American History, with a minor in European history. She received her doctorate in Latin American History, with minors in Asian History and Geography, from Louisiana State University in 2000.

As an undergraduate, Mrs. Frederick was co-recipient of the 1991 Jefferson Caffrey Award for excellence in research and the Amos E. Simpson award for scholarship in history. In 1998 she received a grant to do research in Spain from the Spanish Ministry of Education and Culture, through the Program for Cultural Cooperation. To date, her publications include, “‘Colinda’: Mysterious Origins of a Cajun Folksong,” co-authored with Shane Bernard, in the Journal of Folklore Research, 1992; bibliographical articles on Juan de Oñate and Fabry de La Bruyère in American National Biography, 1998 and an article on Caudillismo in the Encyclopedia of Mexico, 1999. She is presently teaching Latin American History in the Department of History and Geography at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (formerly Southwestern).
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Julia Carpenter Frederick

Major Field: History

Title of Dissertation: Luis de Unzaga and Bourbon Reform in Spanish Louisiana, 1770-1776.

Approved:

[Signature]
Major Professor and Chairman

[Signature]
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signature]
Frendsly E. Hilton

[Signature]
William A. Clark

[Signature]
W. V. Davidson

[Signature]
John B. Robinson

Date of Examination:

July 25, 2000