

October 10, 1975

Mr. Henri A. de Bonneval  
43-5th Avenue  
New York, New York 10003

Dear Mr. Bonneval:

Your letter of September 14 finally reached me. I regret to tell you that Rodney Young was killed in an automobile accident a year ago.

Under separate cover we are sending you a monograph ~~in~~ which some of our work at Sybaris is described, and also a reprint from Geoexploration, in which our cesium magnetometer is described. There is also a book by Orville Bullitt, entitled the Search for Sybaris published by J.B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia and New York (1969).

I should very much like to receive the report of your magnetometer survey.

Sincerely yours,

Elizabeth K. Ralph

Henri A. de Bonneval

43-5th Avenue

New York City 10003

Sept 14 '75

Dear Ms. Elizabeth Ralph,

I read an article about archaeological work you were conducting in a great city of Sybaris. The article appeared in the Newsweek issue of August 25 1975 first column page 45. I was particularly interested about your use of the magnetometer.

About 13 years ago I wrote a report in which I mentioned the use of a magnetometer to locate a metal plate buried by the Sieur de La Salle which he planted at the foot of a cross located in Louisiana commemorating the "prince's Possession" for the King of France.

If you would be good enough to send me your address I would be pleased to send you a copy of this report.

Cordially

H. A. Bonneval

Henri A. de Bonneval

43-5th Avenue

New York City 10003

Sept 30 '75.

Mr. Rodney S. Young,  
Chairman Curator, Mediterranean Section  
University Museum.

Dear Mr. Young,

I am very interested in getting  
in touch with Mrs. Elizabeth Ralph.  
I wrote her to the university and  
the letter was returned. I am  
enclosing it, opened so you can  
know why I am trying to get in  
touch with her.

If you do not wish to forward it  
directly to her please give me  
her address so I can get in  
touch with her.

Yours cordially,  
H. A. de Bonneval

212-AL5-7265

Henri A. de Bonneval  
43-5th Avenue  
New York City 10003

P. 11

Oct. 17 '75.

Elizabeth K. Ralph  
Associate Director,  
The University Museum

Dear Ms. Ralph:

I cannot tell you how delighted I was to receive your letter of Oct 10 and the reprint of *Geographical*. Please find attached copy of my proposal for a monument to commemorate the "Prise de Possession" by de la Salle which I would be pleased to let you keep.

I made no magnetometer survey & only refer to it in the report page 11.

With my understanding that to-day with modern devices that traces in the ground that cannot be detected by the eye can be now be traced.

I would like to have the opportunity to talk to you at some opportune time.

Sincerely yours,  
H. A. Bonneval

Return to EXR

HENRI A. DE BONNEVAL

43 FIFTH AVENUE

NEW YORK CITY

10003

Jan 20 '76

Dear Mr. Ralph:-

I wish to thank for the  
gracious time you gave me.

Please find enclosed copy of  
letter, trying to start this  
project.

I will keep you posted  
as it goes on.

Sincerely,

Henri De Bonneval

Sounds quite sensible  
Beth

*Henri A. de Bonneval*

*43 - 5th Avenue*

*New York City 10003*

January 20, 1976

Executive Director Roger D. Harris  
Mississippi River Commission  
Corp of Engineers, U. S. Army  
P. O. Box 80  
Vicksburg, Mississippi.

Dear Mr. Harris:

Please find attached a report of a proposal for a monument commemorating the "Prise de Possession of Louisiana by the Sieur R. Cavelier de la Salle". I prepared this report in February, 1964 and revised it in 1972. Since then, it has been slumbering on my bookshelf, and only now have I become interested in reviving it. This current interest was brought about by an article that I read concerning the archeological search sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania of the site of Sybaris, a city (in Italy) that disappeared about 4,000 years ago. The article piqued my curiosity because the city had been discovered by the use of a magnetometer, an instrument that I referred to ten years ago on page 11 of the report.

Subsequently I called on the University of Pennsylvania and talked to two of the archeologists who had participated in the search for Sybaris, Ms. Elizabeth K. Ralph, PhD, Associate Director, and Mr. Bruce Bevin, research fellow, expert on aerial photography with infrared plates. Unfortunately, just as I feared, the size of the lead plate and the fact that it is non-magnetic would render extremely improbable the detection of the object by those means.

My disappointment notwithstanding, my belief in the historical importance of the project has been strengthened and even quickened by the bicentennial spirit, so promiscuously and -- all too often -- tastelessly abroad in the land. Thus I am enclosing a copy of Hydrological Map No. 1136 (Plate No. 1) and topographical map West Delta (Plate No. 2). Both of these maps are marked to indicate about where the cross could have been planted based on the description in the "Proces-Verbal" prepared by La Metarie, notary. A most unusual document in the annals of discovery, this document forms part of the Report.

*Henri A. de Bonneval*  
*43-5th Avenue*  
*New York City 10003*

Roger D. Harris

-2-

1/20/76

The principal objective in bringing all this information to your attention is, I hope, that from a careful ground-level examination, your engineer could detect some slight evidence that might lead to the location of the cross. If anything could be found, it would undoubtedly give a great impetus to the project. However, the exact location need not be found since the proposed structure is only symbolic and need not be precisely pinpointed.

The year 1982 will mark the tri-centennial of the "Prise de Possession" and should be a very appropriate time to commemorate this event. This was a tremendous step in the spread of western civilization and provided the "raison d'etre" for the eventual Louisiana Purchase which was of supreme importance in the territorial expansion of the democratic political concept of the world.

A suitable memorial of this size as outlined in the report would produce a very striking image to all who visited it. Just as the statue of Liberty is an impressive visual reminder of the political foundation of this country, this monumental memorial would be an impressive reminder of the physical evolution of the country.

HAdB/q

Encl.

PROPOSAL  
FOR A MONUMENT COMMEMORATING  
THE  
"PRISE DE POSSESSION"  
OF LOUISIANA  
BY THE  
SIEUR R. CAVELIER DE LA SALLE

**HENRI A. de BONNEVAL**  
43 5th AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY 10003  
AL. - 5-7265



Copyright 1903 by The Singer Mfg. Co.

LA SALLE AT THE MOUTH OF THE MISSISSIPPI A. D. 1682.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page No.</u>
FRONTISPIECE -- Artist's concept of La Salle at the mouth of the Mississippi A.D. 1682	
Preamble	1
Brief Historical Background	2
General Description	8
Location	9
Financing	12
Letters Patent "Granted by the King of France to the Sieur de la Salle"	13
Proces Verbal of the Taking Possession of Louisiana	15
Park and Monument	Dwg 1
Section of Park and Monument	Dwg 2
Detail of Monument	Dwg 3
Partie de l'Amerique Septentrionale a Quebec en la Nouvelle France, par Jean Louis Fraquelin, 1681	Map 1
Amerique Septentrionale 1685 and 1686	Map 2
Les costes au environs de la riviere du Misisipi, decouverte par M. de la Salle en 1683 et reconnues par M. Le Chevalier d'Iberville en 1698 et 1699, par N. de Fer	Map 3
Acknowledgements	23
Reference Sources	24

REPORT  
ON THE PROPOSAL FOR A MONUMENT  
COMMEMORATING THE "PRISE DE POSSESSION"  
OF LOUISIANA

February 1964

Revised 1972

Henri A. de Bonneval

"Songez que nous ne sommes pas en un regne de petites choses"\*

-- Jean Baptiste Colbert

PREAMBLE

April 9, 1682, an enormous territory on the banks of the Mississippi is baptised "Louisiane."

By this act a territory four times larger than the Kingdom of France is placed at the feet of Louis the Fourteenth.

"Louisiane" or "Louisiana" -- a gentle name that trips lightly on the tongues of the men -- Frenchmen, Spaniards or Americans -- who have governed her.

\*"Know that we are not in a reign of small things." C. 1663 Colbert

BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A world map was published in 1507 by Martin Hylacomylus Watzermuller (Waldseemuller) of Saint Die, Lorraine. In the upper left hand section of this map may be discerned the Gulf of Mexico, a section of land bordering the gulf and jutting out from the continent that could be Florida and a large island called Hispaniola which resembles a combination of Cuba and Santo Domingo. On the opposite side of the Gulf is distinctly shown a three-outlet delta of a large river. It bears such a resemblance to the south of the Mississippi River that one cannot help but feel that it must be it. This map is terribly distorted in comparison with a modern map. Nevertheless, there are too many points of resemblance with our present knowledge to dismiss it as a flight of imagination of the then mapmaker's art.

It is believed that Americus Vespuccius and possibly Alonso Sanchez, as well as Martin Alonzo Penzion, contemporaries of Christopher Columbus and possible companions of Americus Vespuccius, had been in touch with Watzermuller. This could undoubtedly have been the only source of information for the mapmaker.

In 1519 Alvarez de Penida discovers a mighty river which he names Esperito Santos, presumably the Mississippi River. He describes it with such extravagant praise that he destroys the credibility of his discovery.

The next on the scene in this epoch of semi-legendary discoveries, probably lured on by the golden fables of Penido, is Pamphilo de Narvae, whose shipwreck and death in a delta, probably the mouth of the Mississippi, are recorded in a hazy chronicle of 1528.

History now sheds its cloak of legendary haze when Hernandez de Soto in January 1542 finally and unquestionably discovers the father of waters. The exact place where he and his companions first laid eyes on the river and where he crossed it has not yet been positively determined. But the record of his discovery is too well authenticated to be doubted. He finally meets his death along its banks; his body is surreptitiously buried in the bosom of the river at night to maintain the illusion fostered on the Indians that Europeans never die.

Now a strange thing happens. After raising the cloak of haze on the existence of this mighty river, history now drops a pall of silence which is to last 130 years. No record exists that any European again sets eye on this mighty and elusive river.

In 1670 Father Marquette is encouraged by the Comte de Frontenac, then governor of New France, to explore the Mississippi River and to determine finally if it empties into the Pacific Ocean and may thus be a suitable way to China. It is well to remember that the early explorers were obsessed with the desire to find a direct passage to the wealth of Asia. But the early missionaries had another incentive, a burning zeal to convert the Indians to Christianity. Thus, with the double interest of Church and State, Father Marquette wends his way on the Mississippi as far as the Arkansas River. When he feels assured that the river empties in the Gulf of Mexico and not the Pacific Ocean, he decides because of the lateness of the season and the fear of being frozen in the northern part of the river, to retrace his steps to Villemarie de Montreal.

On the scene now appears the young intrepid Robert Ignace Cavellier. After numerous explorations he requests from the Comte de Frontenac who has befriended him, the right to explore that mighty river which he has heard of and to proclaim this territory for the King of France.

In a letter patent (Q.V.) of May 12, 1678, he is granted the right to explore the western part of New France and is given the title of nobility, Sieur de La Salle.

In the annals of discovery a most unusual event takes place. A complete resume of the discovery of de La Salle is recorded and duly notarized by La Metairie-Notary (Q.V.), who accompanied the expedition, and is signed by de La Salle and his twelve companions. This "Proces Verbal", this official document of the "Prise de Possession" of Louisiana, gives a full account of de La Salle's voyage down the Mississippi River, his exploration of the mouth and finally the decision to erect a marker definitely locating a claim to this territory, which they would soon call Louisiana.

With the historical records available and a knowledge of the epoch, it is possible to reconstruct with fair accuracy this event.

The French, dressed in their best attire for this solemn occasion, stand at attention in a semicircle along the bank of the river before a column on which is marked the arms of France and the inscription:

"Louis le Grand Roy de France et de Navarre, regne le 9<sup>o</sup> Avril 1682."

The whole party at attention, under arms, chants the Te Deum and Domine Salvum fac Regem, followed by a salvo of musketry and the cry of "Vive le Roi."

Under the vault of an azure sky, with the acrid odor of a soil always damp and covered with tropical vegetation, the cranes in their white plumage and their cries of alarm, disturbed by these new creatures, dash in the virgin blue, their white plumage against the blue, reminiscent of the colors of the royal house, the Sieur de La Salle, who now seems to have shed all fatigue, stoops to grasp a lump of soil in his hand as if to take physical possession of the land that he would soon claim. Then gazing over this vast horizon and mighty river, in a powerful and solemn voice with its sonorous sentences of the French of his time, he proclaims:

\* "De part très-haut, tres-puisant, tres-invincible et victorieux Prince Louis le Grand, par la grace de Dieu Roi de France et de Navarre, quatorzieme de ce nom, cejourd'hui, 9<sup>o</sup> Avril 1682, je, en vertu de la commission de Sa Majeste, que je tiens en main, prêt a la faire voir a qui il pourroit appartenir, ay pris et prends possession au nom de Sa Majeste et des successeurs de sa couronne de ce pays de la Louisiane, mers, havres, ports, bayes, destroits adjacents et toutes les nations, peuples, provinces, villes, bourgs, villages, mines, minieres, pesches, fleuves, rivieres, compris dans l'estendue de ladite Louisiane, depuis l'emboucheure du grand fleuve Saint-Louis de coste de l'est, appele autrement Ohio, Olighinsipou ou Chukagoua, et ce du consentement des Chaouesnons, Chicachas et autres peuples y demeurant avec qui nous avons fait alliance, comme aussi le long du fleuve Colbert, ou Missisipi, et rivieres qui s'y deschargent, depuis sa naissance au dela du

---

\*Translation in the English version of *Prise de Possession* (Q.V.)

pays des Sioux ou des Nadouesiou, et ce de leur consentement et des Ototantas, Islinois, Matsigamea, Akansas, Natchez, Koroas, qui sont les plus considerables nations qui y demeurent, avec qui nous avons fait alliance par nous ou gens de nostre part, jusqu'a son embouchure dans la mer ou golfe de Mexique, environ les 27 degrez d'elevation du pole septentrional jusques a l'emboucheure des Palmes, sur l'assurance que nous avons eue de toutes ces nations que nous sommes les premiere Europeens qui ayent descendu ou remonte ledit fleuve Colbert. Proteste contre tous ceux qui voudroient a l'avenir entreprendre de s'emparer de tous ou chacun desdits pays, peuples, terres, ci-devant specifiez, au prejudice du droit que Sa Majeste y acquiert, du consentement des susdites nations; de quoy et de tout ce que besoin pourra estre, prends a tesmoins, ceux qui m'escoutent et en demande acte au notaire present pour servir ce que de raison."

The official act of "Prise de Possession" is hailed with "Vive le Roi" and another salvo of musketry.

Then at a short distance from the column a roughly hewn cross is fastened to an adjacent tree, at the foot of which is buried a lead plate on which is engraved:

"Ludovicus Magnus regnat nono Aprilis 1682."

On the obverse of the plate are inscribed the names of the principal witnesses of the act.

The assembly then kneels before the cross and chants the Vexilla and Domine Salvum fac Regem. Father Zenobe Membre, in his canonicals, invokes the benediction. Whereupon the ceremony is concluded with cries of "Vive le Roi."

Thus, after overcoming tremendous hardships incomprehensible to modern man wrapped in a cocoon of creature comforts, this small band of courageous men, engulfed in this vast land, were able with the meager means at their disposal to solemnize with pomp and dignity an act which was to have such far-reaching effect on the advance of western civilization in North America.

\* \* \*

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The object of this report is to propose a monumental cross commemorating the "Prise de Possession" by the Sieur de La Salle of an area eventually to become part of the United States, an important event in the advance of Western civilization.

The monument is to symbolize in a very impressive way the terrific sacrifice by a dedicated few in their effort to extend man's knowledge. It will be a reminder and a source of inspiration to all who see it and a fitting start to the Great River Road now in the planning stage.

- I. It will consist of a level park area of 1,000 feet by 1,000 feet along the Mississippi River. Bordered on one side by the Great River Road Parkway to be built along the river. This area is to be surrounded by an embankment to the same height as the levee. Then the area enclosed by the embankment is to be hydraulically filled to the top of the levee to form a level park area. Dwg. No. 1
- II. The park to be bordered by two rows of live oaks, similar to the Versailles oaks below New Orleans, a parking area and a service building to be provided. Dwg. 1 and 2.
- III. The monument to consist of two main sections:

A pedestal consisting of four setbacks having a total height of 32 feet. The pedestal to be faced with granite and the name of each of the witnesses to be carved on each side of the setbacks.

The cross itself to be 150 feet high, which would be visible up and down the river for a distance of approximately 16 miles. The cross to be constructed of structural steel with a facing of stainless steel. Fig. 3.

LOCATION

No attempt is made in this report to locate definitely the place where the column was planted by the Sieur de La Salle.

The "Proces-Verbal" states that it was on the west bank of the Mississippi River at 27 degrees north. This is obviously approximate. In fact, it is a considerable error, even measured with an astrolabe. The latitude is nearer 29 degrees north. It is well to remember that these men had so many other more pressing problems; to obtain food to keep body and soul together, as well as to combat the elements and the psychological fear of the unknown, that for them an error of one or two degrees which would seem like a large error to modern men with the accurate instruments at their disposal, would not seem half as important.

Zenobe Membre in his journal published by "Pere Chrestien Leclercq" states that the Sieur de La Salle always carried an astrolabe, that "he took the latitude of the mouth, although he kept to himself the exact point, we have learned that the river falls in the Gulf of Mexico between 27 and 28 degrees north."

The "Proces-Verbal" also states "we reascended the river a little above the confluence with the sea, to find a dry place, beyond the reach of inundations." Obviously none of this information gives a definite location.

To help us visualize the state of the geographic information available at the time, we have three maps of the mouth of the Mississippi and immediate territory.

Map No. 1 shows the river emptying into the Bay du St. Esprit, very

likely what is now known as Mobile Bay. The information for this map was probably obtained from Father Marquette's trip and may have been used by de La Salle. It is dated 1681.

A young engineer by the name of Jean Baptiste Fraquelin, attached to the service of the King at Villemarie de Montreal prepared a map dated 1685 and 1686 with information most likely supplied to him by either the Sieur de La Salle or some member of his party. Map No. 2.

Map No. 3 does not give additional information but is of interest because it acknowledges that it was prepared from the discoveries made by de La Salle.

A comparison of a U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey map of 1963 of the delta with the earliest reliable survey available indicates that the first land not subject to flooding is approximately near the present community of Venice and not too far from the historical markers placed by the chapter of the Louisiana Colonial organization.

Certainly a monument erected to commemorate such an event is symbolic and does not necessarily have to pinpoint the exact position.

But it is interesting to note that in 1910 a stone marker was accidentally found marking the location of Fort Biloxi, after the location of the fort had been completely forgotten for nearly two hundred years.

The "Proces-Verbal" tells us that at the foot of the cross a lead plate was buried. It is surmised that de La Salle carried a number of lead plates, that he located them at different villages where he made treaties with the Indian chiefs. We do know that the French

in order to secure their claim against English encroachment buried a number of lead plates along the Ohio River. These plates were  $11\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide by  $7\frac{3}{4}$  inches high and weighed about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  pounds. However, when we consider the instability of the banks of the Mississippi, to think that such a fortuitous find should happen for the lead marker -- as it did for the marker at Fort Biloxi -- is to think that the proverbial needle in the haystack is an object conveniently handy.

To indulge in a little scientific speculation, we know that today there is a magnetometer which, flown from a helicopter, records in a few hours underground conditions that would have taken a field crew months to determine. And to go still further, on the border of science fiction, we can imagine a magnetometer of such sensitivity that a lead plate could be detected. Who knows? So often the science fiction of today becomes the commonplace of tomorrow.

FINANCING

The ever-present and gruesome subject of raising the necessary capital always has to be faced.

But it need not be so difficult as it would appear at first glance. We can here outline a broad procedural plan.

First -- Such an important monument would obviously be an asset to Plaquemine Parish and there should be no great difficulty in obtaining voluntary contributions for the purchase of the land, once the location is decided upon.

Second-- The Federal Government could assign the U. S. Engineers to build the embankment and the hydraulic fill. They have the equipment, and a project of this size would be considered just routine for them.

Third -- The Louisiana State Forestry and Park Development could supply the trees and supervise their planting.

Fourth-- The Mississippi River Park Commission, when faced with the "fait accompli" of the de La Salle Monument, would certainly proceed with the construction of the "Great River Road" for a few miles at least, if not all the way to New Orleans.

Fifth -- This is the question of the monument and the service building. The service building should not be difficult to finance, as it could be a source of revenue from rentals as a concession.

The monument itself would be the most expensive part of the project. But by that time the worth of the project would become so obvious that there should be no difficulty in raising the funds to complete it.

LETTERS PATENT

Granted by the King of France to the Sieur de la Salle,  
on the 12th May, 1678.

(Translation)

Louis, by the grace of God, King of France and of Navarre. To our  
dear and well-beloved Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle, greeting.

We have received with favor the very humble petition, which has been  
presented to us in your name, to permit you to endeavor to discover  
the western part of New France; and we have consented to this proposal  
the more willingly, because there is nothing we have more at heart than  
the discovery of this country, through which it is probable a road may  
be found to penetrate to Mexico; and because your diligence in clear-  
ing lands which we granted to you by the decree of our council of the  
13th of May, 1675, and, by Letters Patent of the same date, to form  
habitations upon the said lands, and to put Fort Frontenac in a good  
state of defence, the seigniory and government whereof we likewise  
granted to you, affords us every reason to hope that you will succeed  
to our satisfaction, and to the advantage of our subjects of the said  
country.

For these reasons, and others thereunto moving us, we have permitted,  
and do hereby permit you, by these presents, signed by our hand, to  
endeavor to discover the western part of New France, and, for the  
execution of this enterprise, to construct forts wherever you shall  
deem it necessary, which it is our will that you shall hold on the  
same terms and conditions as Fort Frontenac, agreeably and conform-  
ably to our said Letters Patent of the 13th of March, 1675, which we  
have confirmed, as far as is needful, and hereby confirm by these  
presents. And it is our pleasure that they be executed according to  
their form and tenoir.

To accomplish this, and everything above-mentioned, we give you full powers; on condition, however, that you shall finish this enterprise within five years, in default of which these presents shall be void and of none effect; that you carry on no trade whatever with the savages called Outaouacs, and others who bring their beaver skins and other peltries to Montreal; and that the whole shall be done at your expense, and that of your company, to which we have granted the privilege of the trade in buffalo skins. And we command the Sieur de Frontenac, our Governor and Lieutenant-General, and the Sieur Duchesne Intendant, and the other officers who compose the supreme council of the said country, to affix their signatures to these presents; for such is our pleasure. Given at St. Germain en Lage, this 12th day of May, 1678, and of our reign the thirty-fifth.

(Signed) LOUIS

By the King,

COLBERT,

(And sealed with the great seal with yellow wax.)

PROCES VERBAL OF THE TAKING POSSESSION OF LOUISIANA, AT THE MOUTH OF  
THE MISSISSIPPI, BY THE SIEUR DE LA SALLE, ON THE 9TH OF APRIL, 1682.

(Translation)

Jaques de la Metairie, Notary of Fort Frontenac in New France,  
commissioned to exercise the said function of Notary during the  
voyage to Louisiana, in North America, by M. de la Salle, Governor  
of Fort Frontenac for the King, and commandant of the said Discovery  
by the commission of his Majesty given at St. Germain, on the 12th  
of May, 1678.

To all those to whom these presents shall come, greeting: --  
Know, that having been requested by the said Sieur de la Salle to  
deliver to him an act, signed by us and by the witnesses therein named,  
of possession by him taken of the country of Louisiana, near the three  
mouths of the River Colbert (Mississippi), in the Gulf of Mexico, on  
the 9th of April, 1682.

In the name of the most high, mighty, invincible, and victorious  
Prince, Louis the Great, by the Grace of God, King of France and of  
Navarre, Fourteenth of that name, and of his heirs, and the successor  
of his crown, we, the aforesaid Notary, have delivered the said act  
to the said Sieur de la Salle, the tenor whereof follows.

On the 27th of December, 1681, M. de la Salle departed on foot  
to join M. De Tonty, who had preceded him with his followers and all  
his equipage 40 leagues into the Miamis country, where the ice on  
the River Chekagou, in the country of the Mascoutens, had arrested  
his progress, and where, when the ice became stronger, they used sledges  
to drag the baggage, the canoes, and a wounded Frenchman, through the  
whole length of this river, and on the Illinois, a distance of 70  
leagues.

At length, all the French being together, on the 25th of January, 1682, we came to Pimiteoui. From that place, the river being frozen only in some parts, we continued our route to the River Colbert, 60 leagues, or thereabouts, from Pimiteoui, and 90 leagues, or thereabouts, from the village of the Illinois. We reached the banks of the River Colbert on the 6th of January, and remained there until the 13th, waiting for the savages, whose progress had been impeded by the ice. On the 13th, all having assembled, we renewed our voyage, being 22 French, carrying arms, accompanied by the Reverend Father Zenobe Membre, one of the Franciscan Missionaries, and followed by 18 New England savages, and several women, Ilgonquines, Otchipoises, and Huronnes.

On the 14th, we arrived at the vottage of Maroa, consisting of a hundred cabins, without inhabitants. Proceeding about a hundred leagues down the River Colbert, we went ashore to hunt on the 26th of February. A Frenchman was lost in the woods, and it was reported to M. de la Salle, that a large number of savages had been seen in the vicinity. Thinking that they might have seized the Frenchman, and in order to observe these savages, he marched through the woods during two days, but without finding them, because they had all been frightened by the guns which they had heard, and had fled.

Returning to camp, he sent in every direction French and savages on the search, with orders, if they fell in with savages, to take them alive without injury, that he might gain from them intelligence of this Frenchman. Gabriel Barbie, with two savages, having met five of the Chikacha nation, captured two of them. They were received

with all possible kindness, and, after he had explained to them that he was anxious about a Frenchman who had been lost, and that he only detained them that he might rescue him from their hands, if he was really among them, and afterwards make with them an advantageous peace (the French doing good to everybody), they assured him that they had not seen the man whom we sought, but that peace would be received with the greatest satisfaction. Presents were then given to them, and, as they had signified that one of their villages was not more than half a day's journey distant, M. de la Salle set out the next day to go thither; but, after traveling till night, and having remarked that they often contradicted themselves in their discourse, he declined going farther without more provisions. Having pressed them to tell the truth, they confessed that it was yet four days' journey to their villages; and perceiving that M. de la Salle was angry at having been deceived, they proposed that one of them should remain with him, while the other carried the news to the village, whence the elders would come and join them four days' journey below that place. The said Sieur de la Salle returned to the camp with one of these Chikachas; and the Frenchman, whom we sought, having been found, he continued his voyage, and passed the river of the Chepontias, and the village of the Metsigameas. The fog, which was very thick, prevented his finding the passage which led to the rendezvous proposed by the Chikachas.

On the 12th of March, we arrived at the Kapaha village of Akansa. Having established a peace there, and taken possession, we passed, on the 15th, another of their villages, situate on the border of their river, and also two others, farther off in the depth of the forest, and arrived at that of Imaha, the largest village in this nation, where peace was confirmed, and where the chief acknowledged that the village

belonged to his Majesty. Two Akansas embarked with M. de la Salle to conduct him to the Talusas, their allies, about fifty leagues distant, who inhabit eight villages upon the borders of a little lake. On the 19th, we passed the villages of Tourika, Jason, and Kouera; but as they did not border on the river, and were hostile to the Akansas and Taensas, we did not stop there.

On the 20th, we arrived at the Taensas, by whom we were exceedingly well received and supplied with a large quantity of provisions. M. de Tonty passed a night at one of their villages, where there were about 700 men carrying arms, assembled in the place. Here again a peace was concluded. A peace was also made with the Koroas, two leagues distant from that of the Natches. The two chiefs accompanied M. de la Salle to the banks of the river. Here the Koroa chief embarked with him, to conduct him to his village, where peace was again concluded with this nation, which, besides the five other villages of which it is composed, is allied to nearly forty others. On the 31st, we passed the village of the Oumas without knowing it, on account of the fog, and its distance from the river.

On the 3d of April, at about 10 o'clock in the morning, we saw among the canes thirteen or fourteen canoes. M. de la Salle landed, with several of his people. Footprints were seen, and also savages, a little lower down, who were fishing and who fled precipitately as soon as they discovered us. Others of our party then went ashore on the borders of a marsh formed by the inundation of the river. M. de la Salle sent two Frenchmen, and then two savages, to reconnoitre, who reported that there was a village not far off, but that the whole of this marsh, covered with canes, must be crossed to reach it; that they had been assailed with a shower of arrows by the inhabitants of the town, who had not dared to engage with them in the marsh, but who had

then withdrawn, although neither the French nor the savages with them had fired, on account of the orders they had received not to act unless in pressing danger. Presently we heard a drum beat in the village, and the cries and howlings with which these barbarians are accustomed to make attacks. We waited three or four hours, and, as we could not encamp in this marsh, and seeing no one, and no longer hearing anything, we embarked.

An hour afterwards, we came to the village of Maheouala, lately destroyed, and containing dead bodies and marks of blood. Two leagues below this place we encamped. We continued our voyage till the 6th, when we discovered three channels by which the River Colbert (Mississippi) discharges itself into the sea. We landed on the bank of the most western channel, about three leagues from its mouth. On the 7th, M. de la Salle went to reconnoitre the shores of the neighboring sea, and M. de Tonty likewise examined the great middle channel. They found these two outlets beautiful, large, and deep. On the 8th, we reascended the river, a little above the confluence with the sea, to find a dry place, beyond the reach of inundations. The elevation of the North Pole was here about  $27^{\circ}$ . Here we prepared a column and a cross, and to the said column were affixed the arms of France, with this inscription:

"Louis Le Grand, Roi De France Et De Navarre,  
le Neuvieme Avril, 1682."

The whole party, under arms, chanted the Te Deum, the Exaudiat, the Domine salvum fac Regem; and then, after a salute of fire-arms and cries of Vive le Roi, the column was erected by M. de la Salle, who, standing near it, said, with a loud voice, in French: (Q.V.)

"In the name of the most high, mighty, invincible, and victorious Prince, Louis the Great, by the Grace of God King

of France and of Navarre, Fourteenth of that name, this ninth day of April, one thousand six hundred and eighty-two, I, in virtue of the commission of his Majesty which I hold in my hand, and which may be seen by all whom it may concern, have taken, and do now take, in the name of his Majesty and of his successors to the crown, possession of this country of Louisiana, the seas, harbors, ports, bays, adjacent straits; and all the nations, people, provinces, cities, towns, villages, mines, minerals, fisheries, streams, and rivers, comprised in the extent of said Louisiana, from the mouth of the great river St. Louis, on the eastern side, otherwise called Ohio, Alighin, Sipore, or Chukagona, and this with the consent of the Chaouanons, Chikachas, and other people dwelling therein, with whom we have made alliance; as also along the River Colbert, or Mississippi, and rivers which discharge themselves therein, from its source beyond the country of the Kious or Nadouessious, and this with their consent, and with the consent of the Motantees, Illinois, Mesigameas, Natches, Koroas, which are the most considerable nations dwelling therein, with whom also we have made alliance, either by ourselves or by others in our behalf; as far as its mouth at the sea, or Gulf of Mexico, about the 27th degree of the elevation of the North Pole, and also to the mouth of the River of Palms; upon the assurance which we have received from all these nations, that we are the first Europeans who had descended or ascended the said River Colbert; hereby protesting against all those who may in future undertake to invade any or all of these countries, people, or lands, above described, to the prejudice of the right of his Majesty, acquired by the consent of the nations herein named. Of which,

and of all that can be needed, I hereby take to witness those who hear me, and demand an act of the Notary, as required by law."

To which the whole assembly responded with shouts of Vive le Roi, and with salutes of fire-arms. Moreover, the said Sieur de la Salle caused to be buried at the foot of the tree, to which the cross was attached, a leaden plate, on the one side of which were engraved the arms of France, and the following Latin inscription:

LVDVICVS MAGNVS REGNAT

NONO APRILIS C<sup>D</sup> DC LXXXIII

ROBERTVS CAVELIER, CVM DOMINO DE TONTY, LEGATO,  
R. P. ZENOBIO MEMBRE, RECOLLECTO, ET VIGINTI GALLIS,  
PRIMVS HOC FLVMEN, INDE AB ILINEORVM PAGO, ENAVIGAVIT,  
EIVSQUE OSTIVM FECIT PERVIVM, NONO APRILIS ANNI  
C<sup>D</sup> DC LXXXII

After which the Sieur de la Salle said that his Majesty, as eldest son of the Church, would annex no country to his crown, without making it his chief care to establish the Christian religion therein, and that its symbol must now be planted; which was accordingly done at once by erecting a cross, before which the Vexilla and the Domine salvum fac Regem were sung. Whereupon the ceremony was concluded with cries of Vive le Roi.

Of all and every of the above, the said Sieur de la Salle having required of us an instrument, we have delivered to him the same, signed by us, and by the undersigned witnesses, this ninth day of April, one thousand six hundred and eighty-two.

La Metairie  
Notary

De La Salle

P. Zenobe, Recollet Missionary

Henry de Tonty

Francois de Boisrondet

Jean Bourdon

Sieur d'Autray

Jaques Cauchois

Pierre You

Gilles Meucret

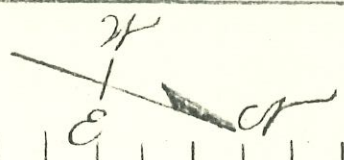
Jean Michel, Surgeon

Jean Mas

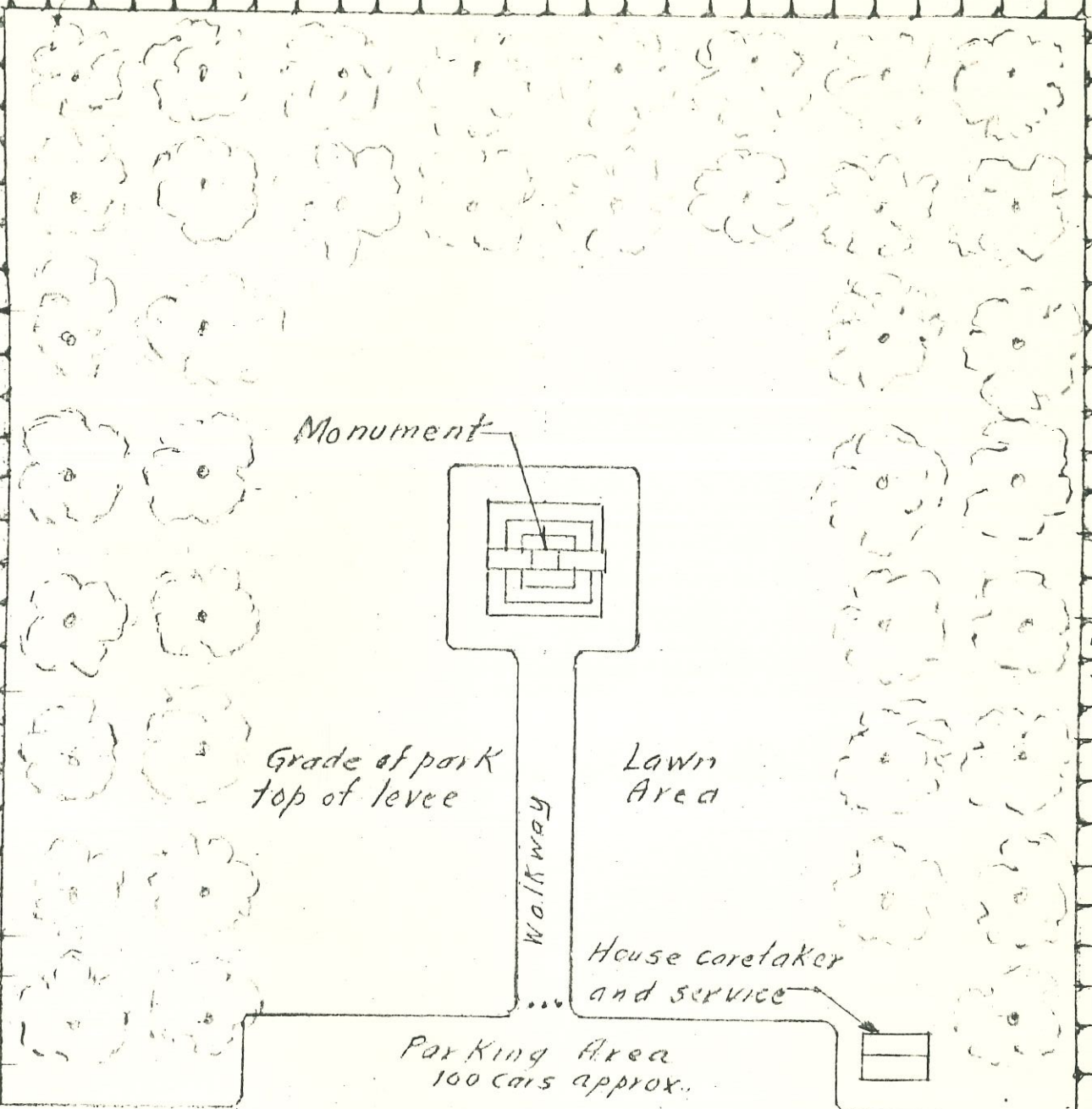
Jean Dulignon

Nicolas de la Salle

2 Rows of Live Oaks



Embankment  
A  
surrounding park



Monument

Grade of park  
top of levee

Lawn  
Area

House caretaker  
and service

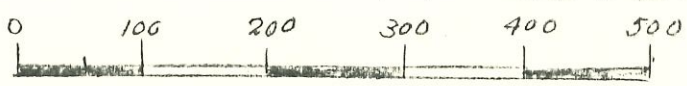
Parking Area  
100 cars approx.

Walkway

Great River Road Parkway

Top of Levee

Mississippi River

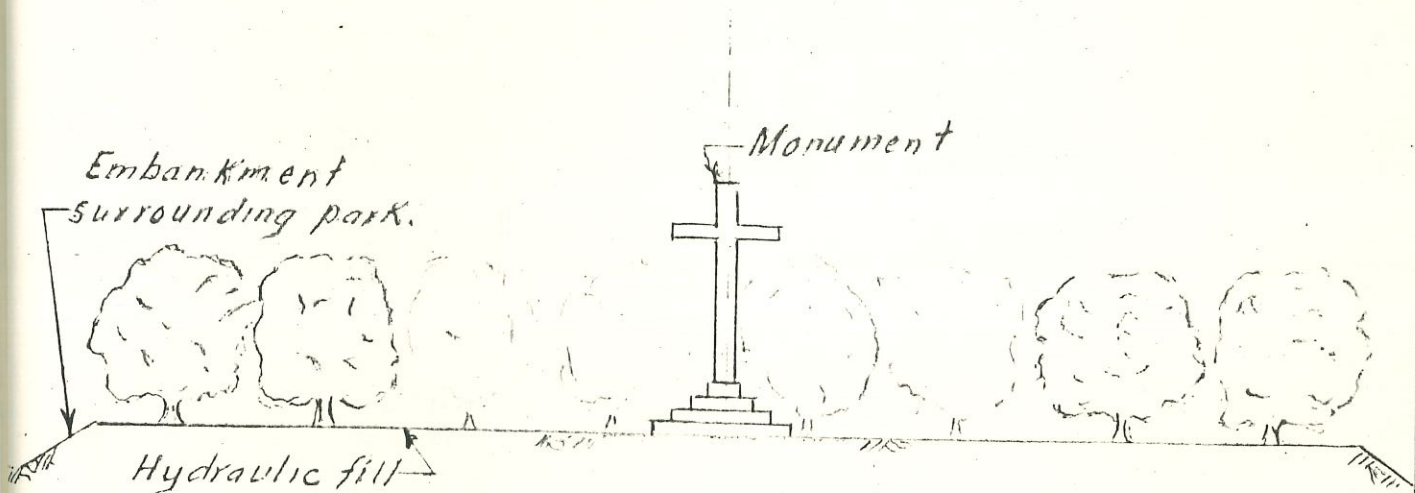


Scale Feet

PLAN

DE LA SALLE  
PARK & MONUMENT

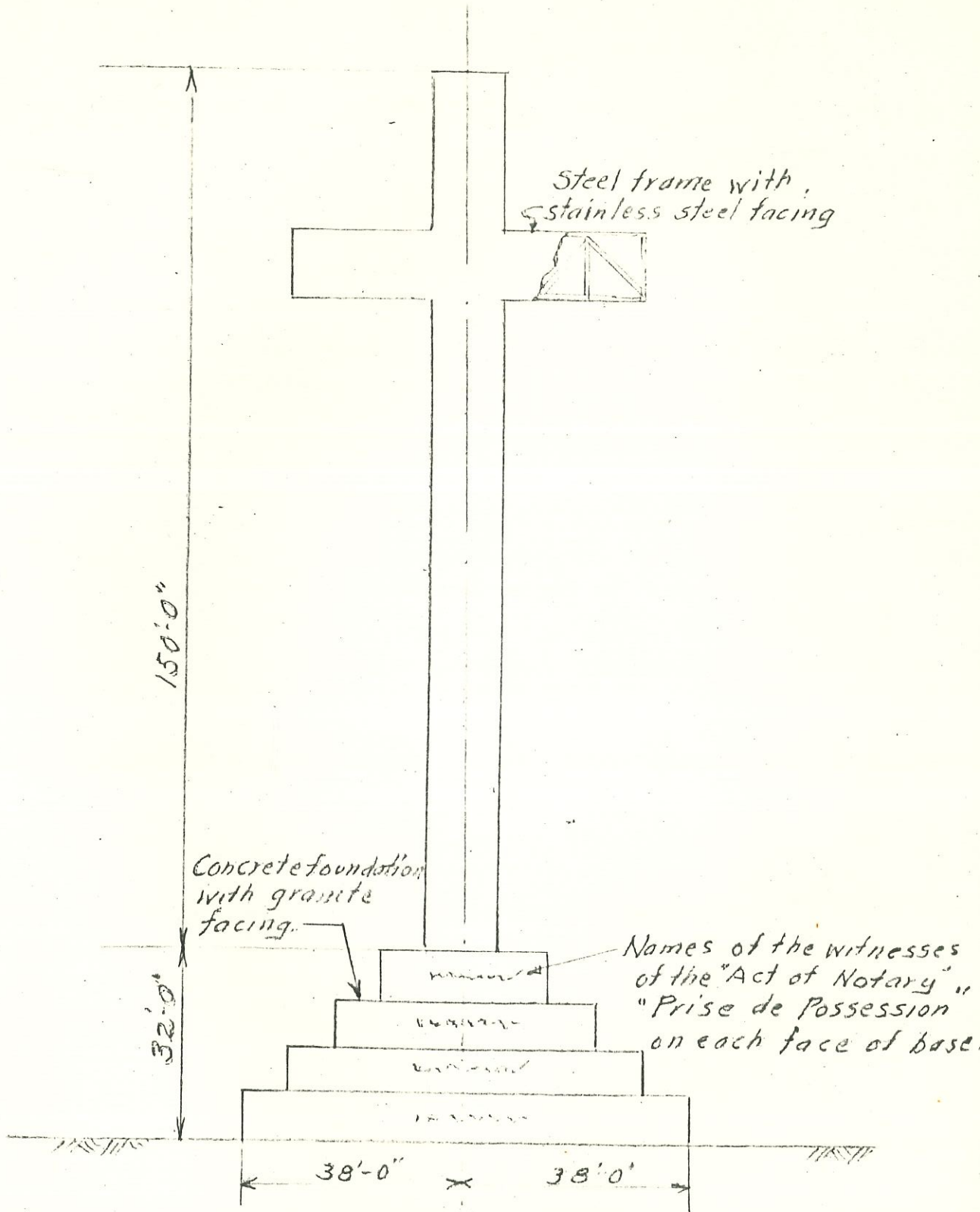
DWG. No 1  
Henri A. de Bonnaval 1964



SECTION A-A  
Looking Westward

DE LA SALLE  
PARK & MONUMENT

DWG. N°2  
Henri A. de Bonneval 1964



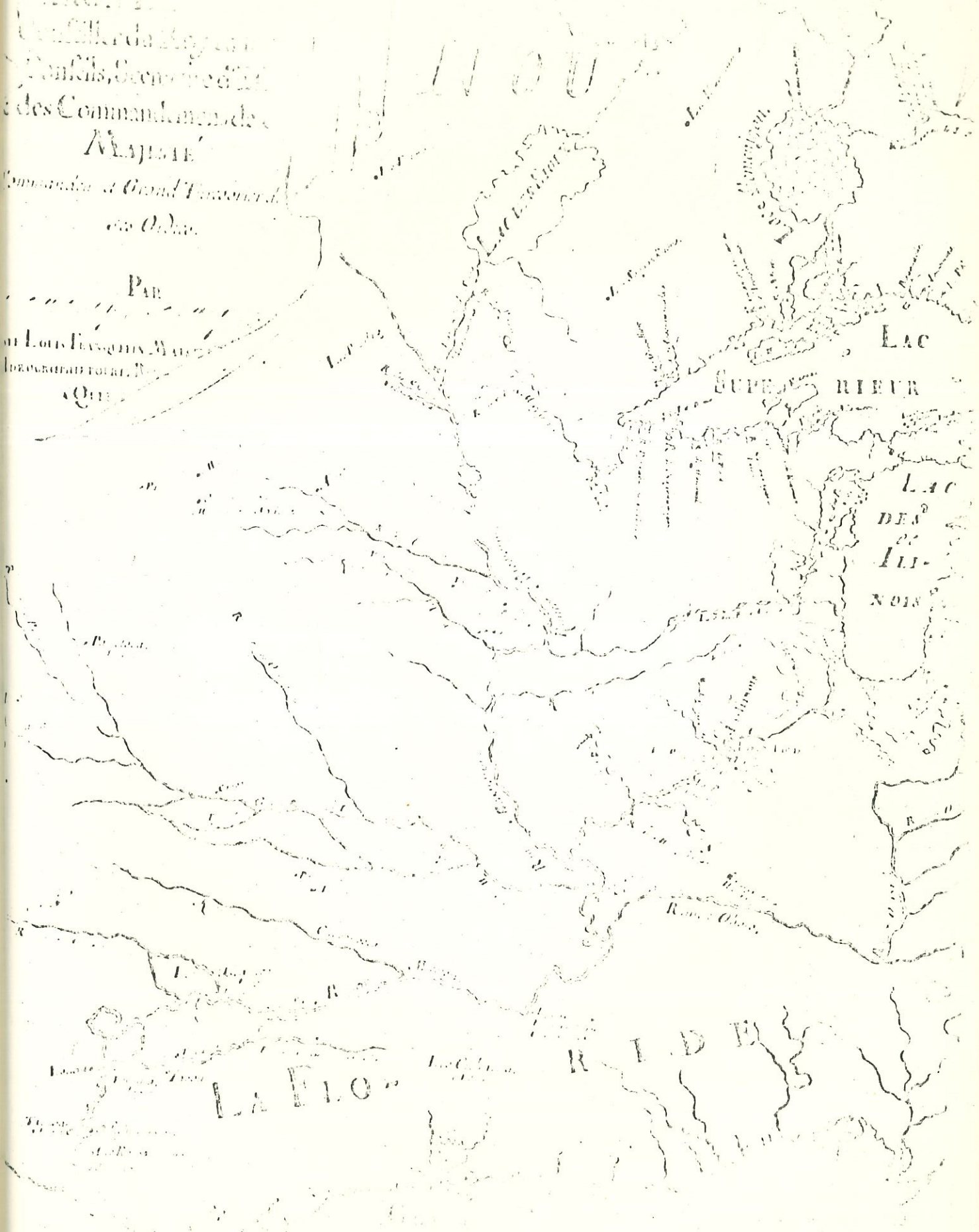
Overall dimension  
of  
Monument

DE LA SALLE  
PARK & MONUMENT

DWG. N° 3  
Henri A. de Bonnavat 1964

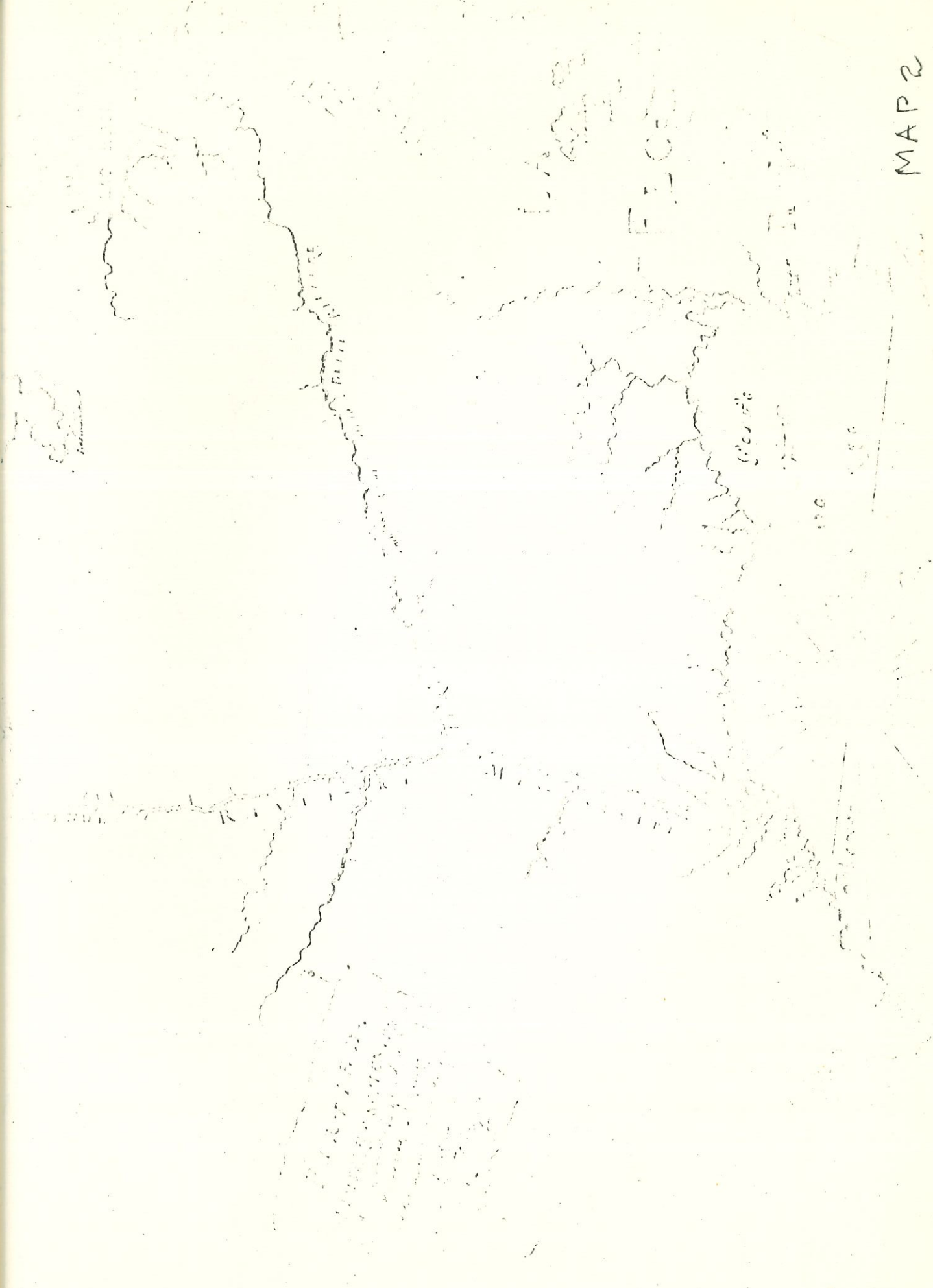
ROYAUME  
Conseil de la Marine  
Conseils, Secours &c.  
des Commandemens de  
MARINE  
Commande de Grand Porteur de  
de Océan.

PAR  
de Louis François de  
L'ÉTOILE TOULON  
1701



MAP I

MAP 2





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It would be difficult to name all those who helped to gather the information to prepare this proposal. However, there are a few I would like to mention. They are those who have worked so hard to commemorate the historical events forming part of the colonial period of Louisiana; the members of the Louisiana Colonial Founders Chapter, Mrs. Falvey Jerome Fox, Mrs. Stephen Ray Campbell and Mrs. Herbert C. Parker, who took the trouble to call on me during my visit to New Orleans and went through no end of trouble to make arrangements for my trip to Venice, Louisiana, to see the de La Salle marker, which through their efforts had just been dedicated.

I wish to express my gratitude to Mr. A. F. Guidroz, as Supervisor of Schools for the Plaquemines, who took time to drive me down to the location of this marker and so enthusiastically narrated the accomplishments of his Plaquemines Parish.

I also wish to thank the Singer Company for donating the photograph of a painting of an artist's conception of the "Prise de Possession," which they had commissioned from the artist, J. H. Marchand, to commemorate the Louisiana Purchase at the St. Louis Exposition in 1903.

Henri A. de Bonneval

REFERENCE SOURCES

The Library of Congress, Washington 25, D. C.  
Manuscript Division, David C. Mearns  
Rare Books Division, Frederick R. Goff

Ministere d'Etat, Affaires Culturelles,  
27 Rue Oudinot, Paris 7<sup>e</sup>, France  
Archives Nationales, Section outre-mer

Marine Historical Association, Inc., Mystic, Conn.  
Adrian K. Lane, Assistant to the Curator

Lenox Library, 5th Ave. and 42nd St., New York City  
Map Department  
Rare Books Department

Louisiana State Museum, 616 Pirates Alley,  
New Orleans 16.