

chored in seven fathoms, south of Pensacola, about two cannon-shot from the bar, as Mr. de Champmêlin wished to examine in person whether there was sufficient water on the bar for the King's ships, the two largest of which, namely, the Hercules, his flagship, and the Mars, drew nineteen feet. The Canadians declared that they would pass with ease; but several Spanish and French pilots maintained that he would not find more than eighteen feet of water. On the morning of the seventeenth the general ordered all the sloops and boats of the squadron to go and sound the bay; Mr. de Vienne, the Chevalier de Goyon and Mr. de Serigny embarked, and nowhere found less than twenty-two feet, but the tide was high and Mr. de Champmêlin still hesitated to risk the King's ships. Mr. de Serigny pledged his head that he would take them in, and the whole council of war favored the projected passage.¹

In fact, though the tide was quite low when the squadron got under weigh, it found twenty-one feet of water everywhere except in one spot, where the Hercules, by not exactly following the channel, touched slightly, but without sustaining any injury. The ships Comte de Toulouse, Maréchal de Villars, St. Louis, and a small frigate of eighteen guns, were anchored with a spring upon the cable,² just within the entrance of the harbor, under the guns of the fort at the point of Santa Rosa Island or Siguença, which had fourteen mounted, and nearer the shore lay seven bilanders, armed with from eight to fourteen guns. The squadron entered wind astern, with the topsails on the cap, in order to have time to cannonade the ships and fort at the point. These latter fired first on the King's ships, which showed only the bow, being obliged to wear, so that they were for a time unable to reply, but when they came within good musket-shot

1719.

The
squadron
enters the
bay.

Capture of
the fort at
the Point,
and of the
Spanish
ships.

¹ Dumont says, p. 22, that the Hercules was piloted in by an old Canadian named Grimeau, who the

² With a rope made fast to the next year received Letters ennobling him. Bénard de la Harpe, cable.

161-3. Pénicaut, Relation, ch. 21, § 5, MS.