

It is a good thing for Your Grace to always keep active, and investigate and inquire closely into the actions of your neighbors, from whom I do not believe there is anything for you to fear, other than that they will be seen to be abandoned and come by themselves to make effective the scattered rumors that those habitants are planning to send a messenger to Detroit, demanding English vassals, and begging the protection of His Britannic Majesty. Your Grace will keep the sharpest look-out and take the greatest precautions, and continue to exercise the said attention, in order not to be surprised under any circumstances.

I shall give the fitting orders, for a post to be despatched overland from Los Arcos³⁷ with news of the ascent of the convoy, in order that Your Grace may send a pirogue to meet it in order to inform it of the innovations which might have occurred in those settlements, and opportunely avoid the fatal results that might follow from not proceeding with safety and with a full knowledge of all things.

Your Grace reports concerning the interpreter, Antonio

³⁷ Los Arcos was the post on the Arkansas—one of the oldest in the lower Mississippi valley. In 1686 some of Tonty's men obtained permission to form a settlement at this point, and it was thither the survivors of the murder of La Salle made their way. The settlement was, however, not continuous; for when the Seminary missionaries made their way to this region from Quebec (1699), to found a mission for the Arkansas, there were no traces of previous white occupation. The mission, afterwards transferred to the Jesuits, seems, with occasional intermissions, to have been maintained until 1763. Meanwhile a small post was established here under the supervision of the Louisiana government—probably in 1718, when John Law sent thither a body of German colonists and a number of negro slaves to work his concession upon the Arkansas River. From this time forward a garrison was maintained on the river until the American occupation, the outpost being officially known as St. Etienne, but in common parlance as "Aux Arcs" (at the Arkansas). In 1748 it suffered an attack by the Chickasaw, and four years later the fort was rebuilt. A considerable force was kept here throughout the Spanish regime, but the fort was surrendered to the Americans in 1804.—Ed.