Rachel B. Herrmann
Keys and heartlands: the perils of fictional borders
Chapter 11 in working book MS titled *Water, Hunger, and Borders in the Gulf South*
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Although imperial officials recorded Native Americans' claims to their homelands and the cattle and deer herds they managed there, historians have had to recover and cross-reference these claims alongside the insistent voices of the French, British, Spanish, and American imperial officials who, in boundary disputes with other empires, elided or delegitimized the presence of Indigenous people. By the 1790s (but not for the first time) the act of demarcating an Anglo-European border on a river was an act that made it easier to ignore on paper the people whose homelands that river bisected, who lived on and alongside it, and who used it as a seasonal crossing place. Facing west from the places that became Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina, the reality was that it was impossible to reach other Native American towns overland without first passing through Creek towns. Facing north from Mar del Golpho de Mexico (what the Spanish called the Sea of the Gulf of Mexico) it was not possible to use water to head into the interior without stealing or buying a Native American canoe or piragua and obtaining permission and pilots from the Creeks whose towns were located on Gulf river systems.[1]

To imagine what life in terraqueous homelands was like for the people who lived in the environs of what people called the Alabama, Coosa, Cherokee, Mississippi, Ohio, Tallapoosa, Tombigbee, and Yazoo rivers, this chapter cross-references mentions of these rivers in letters and reports with manuscript maps depicting the same places. These were maps co-produced by

[1] Using Creek rivers was difficult because most towns were located above the fall line, which was not navigable for European watercraft. Robbie Ethridge, *Creek Country: The Creek Indians and Their World* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2003), 121–23. For canoes vs. piraguas/pirogues see John Amos Johnson, "Pre-Steamboat Navigation on the Lower Mississippi River," (PhD Dissertation, Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College, 1963), *LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses*, 892, https://repository.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses/892/, xi, 52–53; H. E. Hoagland, "Early Transportation on the Mississippi," *Journal of Political Economy* 19, no. 2 (February 1911): 111–23, esp. 111–12.

different imperial officials and at times, their unidentified Indigenous co-authors.[2] This chapter first sketches the history and historiography of late-eighteenth-century Anglo-European border disputes before turning to Spanish inability to manage water on the Mississippi at the point where it met other rivers. It then considers a series of waterways documented in Spanish and British manuscript evidence to discuss evidence of foodstuffs including flour, turtles, wheat bread, rivercane, and corn. It explores how changes to borders on paper—which lacked knowledge and detail about what a place was called and who inhabited it—affected Native Americans' relationships across their waterways.

Louisiana's European-drawn borders remained ill-defined for about a century, between 1682, when René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, descended the Mississippi to its mouth in a canoe, and 1762, when France ceded its claims to New Orleans and lands east of the Mississippi River to Spain. After La Salle's voyage the Spanish and French then built many forts and a map war erupted from 1703 to 1720. Mapmakers Herman Moll and Guillaume Delisle, working for the British and French empires respectively, had used the features of the continent—coastlines, lakes, mountains, rivers, and river mouths—to make aspirational, unenforceable claims for their

[2] For this book's conceptualization of terraqueous homelands I draw on Simone M. Müller and David Stradling, "Water as the Ultimate Sink: Linking Fresh and Saltwater History," *International Review of Environmental History* 5, no. 1 (2019): 23–41, esp. 27–29, 30; Jace Weaver, *The Red Atlantic: American Indigenes and the Making of the Modern World, 1000–1927* (University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Andrew Lipman, *The Saltwater Frontier: Indians and the Contest for the American Coast*, (Yale University Press, 2015); Joshua L. Reid, *The Sea is My Country: The Maritime World of the Makahs, an Indigenous Borderlands People* (Yale University Press, 2015); *Governing the Sea in the Early Modern Era: Essays in Honor of Robert C. Ritchie*, ed. Peter C. Mancall and Carole Shammas (Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, 2015), 41–75; Ernesto Bassi, *An Aqueous Territory: Sailor Geographies and New Granada's Transimperial Greater Caribbean World* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2016); Alison Bashford, "Terraqueous Histories," *The Historical Journal* 60, no. 2 (2017): 253–72, esp. 255; Douglas Hamilton and John McAleer, eds., *Islands and the British Empire in the Age of Sail* (Oxford University Press, 2021); James Hill, "'Bring Them What they Lack': Spanish-Creek Exchange and Alliance-Making in a Maritime Borderland, 1763–1784," *Early American Studies* 12, no. 1 (2014): 36–67; Rachel B. Herrmann and Jessica Choppin Roney, "Introduction: Borders, Places, and Movement," in *Claiming Land, Claiming Water: Borders and the People Who Crossed Them in the Early Modern Atlantic* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2026); Samuel Truett, "Amphibious Tales: Villagers and Strangers in a Border-Crossing World," in *Claiming Land, Claiming Water*, ed. Herrmann and Roney, 390–428; Rachel B. Herrmann, "Looking for cattle knowledge in Creek and Seminole Homelands" (accepted at *The Historical Journal*); 5; Tiffany Lethabo King, *The Black Shoals: Offshore Formations of Black and Native Studies* (Duke University Press, 2019), esp. xv

employers, which they did by marking their maps with script text drawing on accounts by previous colonizers, and by marking forts, mines, and outposts.[3] In 1745, Governor General Vaudreuil had rebounded Louisiana from the Wabash valley to the mouth of the Vermilion River, to le Rocher on the Illinois River, to Rock River, but never secured a clear western boundary. In the 1760s, after the British had acquired Spain's claims to Florida and split the colony into two, they were less interested in demarcating a border between West Florida and Louisiana because they knew very little about the distinction between littoral and interior zones.[4] After the 1763 Treaty of Paris in which Spain reacquired France's claims to Louisiana, officials noted the French failure to clarify Louisiana's western boundary, which, facing east, had become a problem because of new English claimants to the Floridas.[5]

During the American Revolutionary War Spain joined France and the Americans against the British. The Spanish gained reliable and frequent reports from Juan de Miralles in Philadelphia. Miralles had good knowledge of food staples and finer ingredients, both of which enhanced his negotiating abilities. He had been able to hide his work gathering information while trading flour.[6] During the war Miralles sought on behalf of Spain a concession that the United States would recognize Spain's right to reclaim the Floridas while promising to the Americans free navigation of the Mississippi, including access to the Gulf. He had built networks with North American merchants in his work out of Havana as a slaver, was fluent in English, and had enough diplomatic know-how to send George Washington a hundred-pound sea tortoise

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[3] Alex Zukas, "Crafting and Contesting Borders in Guillaume Delisle's and Herman Moll's Early Eighteenth-Century Maps of North America," in *Claiming Land, Claiming Water*, ed. Herrmann and Roney, 60, 62, 63.
[4] David Narrett, *Adventurism and Empire: The Struggle for Mastery in the Louisiana-Florida Borderlands, 1762–1803* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 16, 24; Stephen Warren, *The World the Shawnees Made*, 213–14.
[5] Narrett, *Adventurism and Empire*, 24.
[6] Cummings, *Spanish Observers and the American Revolution*, 107, 114.

(turtle?).[7] It was an impressive animal to gift, as the naturalist John Bartram aimed to do when he tried and failed to send a tortoise to his English patron. Sea turtles, though a more common source of meat in the elder Bartram's time, had become scarce in Cayman waters by about 1790, when fishers moved to fish in the waters of southern Cuba. Their meat was enhanced by spices. Amelia Simmons's *American Cookery*, generally recognized as the first cookbook published in the United States, treated turtle meat as the basis for a fine dish for a large crowd. For every twelve pounds of turtle meat, she recommended that there be "three spoonfuls" of seasoning: salt, cayenne pepper, black pepper, nutmeg and mace. The spices—scaled up, given the size of the Washington animal—represented a long history of colonization in Africa and South Asia.[8] Miralles came to Philadelphia during the busy social time of Christmas. Rather than clash with an event hosted by the General Society of Dames, Miralles combined his planned New Year's Eve banquet with theirs to general acclaim.[9]

While Miralles was politicking with Washington, John Jay and James Madison were writing about rivers and ports. In a 1781 report to Jay, Madison had invoked Vattel to underscore the importance of securing inland waterways to gain control of external trade. He asserted that even given what he viewed as Spain's control over the mouth of the Mississippi where it met the Gulf, the two nations were at peace. He thought that Americans and Spaniards both deserved the right of peaceful passage on the whole river in exchange for a modest toll payable to Spain at the

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[7] Ferrer, *Cuba*, 60, 61.
[8] Christopher M. Parsons and Kathleen S. Murphy, "Ecosystems under Sail: Specimen Transport in the Eighteenth-Century French and British Atlantics," *Early American Studies* 10, no. 3 (Fall 2012): 503–29, esp. 510, 527 (Bartram); Amelia Simmons, *American Cookery* (Hartford, 1798), 21–22 (quote 22). On turtling see Karen A. Bjorndal and Jeremy B. C. Jackson, "Roles of Sea Turtles in Marine Ecosystems: Reconstructing the Past," in *Biology of Sea Turtles*, vol. II, ed. P. L. Lutz, J. A. Musick, and J. Wyneken (Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2002): 259–73, esp. 264; Mary Draper, "Timbering and Turtling: The Maritime Hinterlands of Early Modern British Caribbean Cities," *Early American Studies* 15, no. 4 (2017): 769–800. On spices see Amanda E. Herbert, Jack Bouchard, and Julia Fine, "Colonizing Condiments: Culinary Experimentation and the Politics of Disgust in Early Modern Britain," *Global Food History* 11, no. 1 (2025): 42–71.
[9] Cummings, *Spanish Observers and the American Revolution*, 123–24.

river's mouth. He extended this argument to include the right to claim free ports in West Florida, and to suggest that inland Georgian inhabitants would need privileges if not formal rights to access the rivers in West Florida that Spain claimed. Lacking such rights and secure overland roads, Madison knew that American traders would have to go via the Ohio River and then north and against the current on the Mississippi to trade in Canada.[10]

Impressive Spanish food diplomacy and arguments about rivers and tolls did not easily resolve border disputes. After 1783, when Spain had reacquired Britain's claims to East and West Florida and retained its claims to New Orleans, what remained of the Florida-Louisiana boundary dispute were memories. One 1803 account used information from a fur trader's employee, a 70-year-old man who could recall his youth. He remembered fixing a metal plate to a tree by the mouth of a small stream in his work as a soldier on a boundary survey demarcating "limites" between Spain and France.[11] Information such as this fed shaky Spanish convictions that the Río Perdido (the Perdido River) had been the boundary between Spanish and French claims.[12]

After the Revolutionary War Spain's neighboring claimants east of the Mississippi were neither English nor French; facing north from the Floridas and east from the Mississippi River were now Americans states, several of them home to notoriously land-hungry settler colonists. By 1783 the British had agreed separate treaties with Spain and the United States, which

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[10] J. C. A. Stagg, *Borderlines in Borderlands: James Madison and the Spanish-American Frontier, 1776-1821* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 21–22.

[11] "De la Aurora, Limites y extencion de la Luisiana," f. 16r, Louisiana documents from the Real Academia de la Historia, MF16, Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans ("Un Caballero empleado en el comercio de Pieles").

[12] "De la Aurora, Limites y extencion de la Luisiana," f. 16r, Louisiana documents from the Real Academia de la Historia, MF16, Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans ("el rio perdido que está a dose millas al provincia de la Basta de Pansacola fue considerado como limites entre las dos Naciones"). Lafon dated the choosing of the Perdido as the boundary between Spain and France to 1712. "Tratado de Limites Escrito por Bartolome Lafon, Ingeniero Geografo en la Nueva Orleans, 1809," ff. 90v–91r, Louisiana documents from the Real Academia de la Historia, reel 2, MF16, Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans.

introduced ambiguities over the northern boundary between US and Spanish claims and recognized the Mississippi River as a border without Spanish knowledge.[13] The northern border was a problem for the Americans because the rivers that originated in their states and that offered access to the Gulf had first to pass through places claimed by the Spanish in Louisiana and East and West Florida.[14] American-Spanish disputes flared over a number of different rivers, as they continued to do over the Mississippi. In the summer of 1784 José de Gálvez, acting as minister of the Indies, issued orders that blocked US citizens from navigating the Mississippi. Three days after Gálvez's orders, José Moñino y Redondo, 1st Count of Floridablanca proclaimed on Spain's behalf new riverine boundaries. The new Spanish line began at the Apalachicola River, which flowed into the Golpho. The boundary then ran northward to the Flint River. From the source of the Flint the line connected in a line to the north, to the headwaters of the Hiawasee to its juncture with the Tennessee, and then along the Tennessee until it met the Ohio River.[15]

These boundaries crossed places of Native American homelands and towns in the continent's interior. That US officials wanted access to the Gulf via the continent's rivers was a reflection of powerful, small Native nations. These homelands were populated by Creeks and Seminoles (not only on the Apalachicola and Flint rivers, but also on the Coosa, Escambia, Oconee, St. Marys, Tallapoosa, and Tombigbee rivers); Cherokees on the French Broad, Keowee, Hiawasee, and Tennessee rivers; and Shawnees, Delawares, Miamis, and other members of the Northwest Confederacy on the Ohio. Choctaws lived east of the Mississippi River on the Pearl, Pascagoula, and Chickasawhay rivers, and Chickasaws north of Choctaws,

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[13] Thomas D. Watson, "Strivings for Sovereignty: Alexander McGillivray, Creek Warfare, and Diplomacy, 1783–1790," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 58, no. 4 (April 1980): 400–14, esp. 400–401.
[14] These rivers included the Mississippi and Perdido as well as the Pearl, Mobile, Escambia, Choctawhatchee, Apalachicola, Ochlocknee, and Suwanee Rivers. Deborah A. Rosen, *Border Law: The First Seminole War and American Nationhood* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2015), 12.
[15] Coker and Watson, *Indian Traders of the Southeastern Spanish Borderlands*, 2.

east of the Mississippi between the Yazoo and Tombigbee rivers.[16] As a contemporary report sent to the U.S. Secretary of War observed, between the northern navigable waterways "of the Apalachicola, particularly the Flint river and Cataheekee [Chattahoochee]," and "the southern navigable waters of the Tennessee, there are no established portages." It optimistically concluded, "good roads might easily be made."[17] Not only were there no portages over rivers, but necessary (non-Indigenous) paths were envisioned but not a reality. Riverine boundaries were only boundaries for imperial planners; Indigenous people regularly crossed them, as they crossed the sea to voyage to Cuba.

Two 1784 treaties between Spanish and Creek leaders and the Spanish and Choctaw and Chickasaw leaders allowed the Spanish to effectively block Americans' overland access "through the interior" of these homelands, "their territories."[18] Following the Treaty of Pensacola between Spaniards and Creeks represented by Alexander McGillivray, Creek townspeople enjoyed from the Spanish the best and freest trade conditions because through McGillivray's advocacy they won the right (after 1788/9) to opt out of Spanish tariff policies and, despite Spanish and US complaints they continued to trade with multiple nations.[19]

By comparison Spaniards permitted some Americans and some US goods entry to Isla Nueva Orleans via two rivers—the Ohio, and then down the Mississippi—and charged duties as part of the policy of *comercio libre* (15 percent before a royal order in December 1788, 6 percent

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[16] Coker and Watson, *Indian Traders of the Southeastern Spanish Borderlands*, 5.
[17] "The Commissioners to the Secretary of War," New York, November 20, 1789, *ASPIA*, 1:79.
[18] José Antonio Armillas Vicente, "La Gran Confederación India: Interacción Hispano-Angloamericana con las naciones indias del Sudeste norteamericano a fines del S. XVIII," in *Estudios Sobre Politica Indigenista Española en América*, vol. II, ed. Seminario de Historia de America (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1976), 249–66, esp. 252; [Sebastián Nicolás de Bari Calvo de la Puerta y O'Farrill] to Mariano Luis de Urquijo, New Orleans, October 8, 1800, f. 530r, PC, 2355, AGI ("o por el interior de sus territorios").
[19] Rachel B. Herrmann, "*Comercio Libre*: Revisiting a Concept on Trade and Borders in Creek Homelands," in *Claiming Land, Claiming Water*, 242–61. The tariff exemptions took effect in 1789 but William Panton received retroactive exemptions from duties for the year 1788, because this was the year in which he submitted his request.

thereafter). While he was secretary of state, Thomas Jefferson cited the Law of Nations to try to persuade the Spanish that the Mississippi River should be "considered as a streight of the sea." The land, he wrote, only rose above water level "here and there, in spots and slips," implying that this was ocean space that should be shared. The Spanish position was that the Mississippi was not the sea; access via the coast remained forbidden to US pilots.[20] In his 1790 description of the two emerging political parties in the United States, Spanish Governor of East Florida Vicente Manuel de Zéspedes wrote, "Luck has it that these two parties rarely agree on anything, except their desire to seize the western territory and to acquire the right to navigate the Mississippi."[21] The reality was that until 1795, the Spanish denied to the Americans this right.

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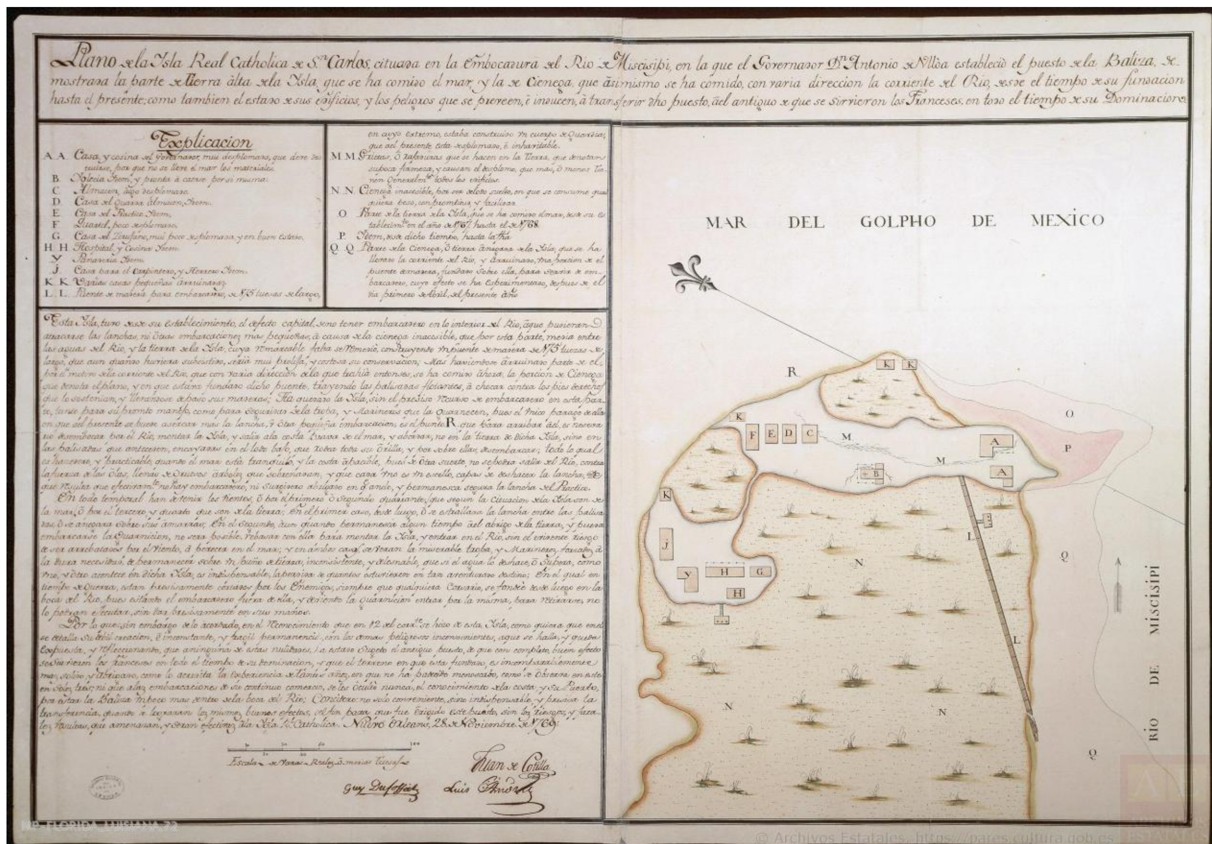
[20] They could settle in Louisiana by swearing allegiance to the king of Spain. Kentucky residents gained the privilege to ship down the Mississippi, and paid a 15% duty on what they were exporting into Louisiana. Officials had the discretion to reduce duties for influential traders. The royal order flowed backwards towards the Ohio and included Kentuckians whose settlements were located on rivers that emptied into the Ohio. David Narrett, "William Panton, British Merchant and Politico: Negotiating Allegiance in the Spanish and Southern Indian Borderlands, 1783–1801," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 96, no. 2 (Fall 2017): 135–73, esp. 152, 152n36; Holmes, "Some Economic Problems of Spanish Governors of Louisiana," 533; Thomas Jefferson, "Report on Negotiations with Spain, 18 March 1792," *Founders Online*, https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-23-02-0259 [accessed October 26, 2022]; Gilje, *Free Trade and Sailors' Rights*, 131.

[21] "Report by Don Vicente Zéspedes, St. Augustine, Florida, June 20, 1790—Duplicate," in James A. Lewis, "Cracker, Spanish Florida Style," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 63, no. 2 (October 1984): 184–204, esp. 199.

Another reality was that Spanish claims were forts appearing on maps as swamps and isolated islands on the edges of the Mississippi. This river was a corridor of seasonal floods where the siting and technologies of early forts in the 1760s failed. The Mississippi's challenges prompted Spanish officials in the 1790s to try with limited success to improve their abilities to manage water. Mapmakers working for the French had depicted the mouth of the Mississippi as a strategic staging point for attacks into northern Mexico to the northwest. Mouths of waterways were portals to other places that were difficult to secure; the English and Spanish both depicted the mouths of the Mississippi.[22] For much of the century as Madison likely knew, it was only possibly to navigate down most of the river, and then only in seasons of high water, during spring floods. The lower Mississippi (from the Ohio River down) was more navigable, but it still



Guy Dufossat, Juan de Cotilla, and Luis Andrés, "Plano de la isla real catholica de San Carlos . . ." November 28, 1769, MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 72, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19213 [accessed August 13, 2024], image 137, ED_089_R_001, Archivo General de Indias.

[22] Navakas, *Liquid Landscape*, 80; Zukas, "Crafting and Contesting Borders," 65.

took skill to sail downstream and yet more skill to avoid the central current if navigating upstream against the current.[23] A 1769 plan by Guy Dufossat, Juan de Cotilla, and Luis Andrés of the island of San Carlos in the mouth of the Mississippi told a story of a place where water was literally and figuratively ravenous. The swamps surrounding the Spanish post, marked "N" and taking up the majority of non-textual geographic space, was "inaccessible"; it "consumed any weight," "promptly and easily." Though a beacon guided ships into the river from the Golpho, the upper part of the island had "been eaten by the sea," a swamp "had also been eaten" by the river current, and the buildings had become unsuitable.[24] This was an unhospitable, difficult to inhabit place.

Spanish colonizers attempted to make Native American places of seasonal flooding, crossing, and hunting into places of permanent habitation by using forts and outposts to monitor the Ohio River and relying on Americans with transimperial aims and interests. At Fuerte San Luis further upriver in the Illinois country, Lieutenant Governor Francisco Cruzat received word that shortly before May 1785 the Mississippi had flooded, leaving the "poor inhabitants" in an "unhappy situation." His correspondent had had to abandon his house for the same reason, and the soldiers under his command had had to leave their flooded barracks.[25] New Madrid, which

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[23] H. E. Hoagland, "Early Transportation on the Mississippi," *Journal of Political Economy* 19, no. 2 (February 1911): 111–23, esp. 117; John Amos Johnson, "Pre-Steamboat Navigation on the Lower Mississippi River" (PhD Dissertation, Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College, 1963), *LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses*, 892, https://repository.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses/892/, xii, xv.

[24] Guy Dufossat, Juan de Cotilla, and Luis Andrés, "Plano de la isla real catholica de San Carlos, cituada en la embocadura del rio de Missisipi, en la que el governador don Antonio de Ulloa estableción el puesto de la Baliza, demostrada la parte de tierra alta de la isla que se ha comido el mar, y la de ciénaga que asimismo se ha comido con varia dirección la corriente del rio desde el tiempo de su fundación hasta el presente, como también el estado de sus edificios y los peligros que se preveen e inducen a transferir dicho puesto a el antiguo de que se sirvieron los franceses en todo el tiempo de su dominación," November 28, 1769, MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 72, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19213 [accessed August 13, 2024], image 137, ED_089_R_001, AGI ("Cienega inacesible, por ser de todo suelto, en que se consume qualquiera peso, con prontitud, y facilidad," "buen estado," "Casa, y cosina del Governador, mui desplomada").

[25] [Francisco Cruzat to Antonio de Oro], San Luis de Illinois, May 4, 1785, 195rv, Papeles de Cuba, 117B, ED_144_031.

was south of San Luis, presented one of the northernmost, hypothetically more navigable options to Spaniards. What the Spanish once called the Río Oyo met the Mississippi River; travelers needed to navigate the one to reach the other and New Madrid was advantageously located twelve leagues below this junction. There were already reports of American incursions.[26] William Panton soothingly called the mouth of the Ohio one of "the best natural barriers that I know of in all America." Spain, if it could control the mouth of the Ohio, "would of Course become the Carrier of the whole produce that will be made on the River Mississippi." He bolstered this optimism with another recommendation that the Spanish reclaim an old French fort further east on the Ohio. US forts in the Ohio Valley were thinly-manned, consisting of some 350 troops in 1788.[27]

Spanish letters about New Madrid provide information about the timing of river travel, the production of edible crops including corn and potatoes, the practice of food diplomacy, and Indigenous kinship ties. In October 1788 Diego de Gardoqui had written to Esteban Miró—then Governor of Louisiana and Florida—about George Morgan, to whom he'd given permission and funding to form the place that became New Madrid, which in turn became an information-gathering site about Chickasaws and Creeks. "Jorge Morgan" wanted permission to reconnoiter the territory on the west bank of the Mississippi because he thought the waters were advantageous for carrying out that work, and Gardoqui believed him because of Morgan's knowledge of trading for many years "with various Indian nations."[28] In April 1789 inhabitants

[26] "Report by Don Vicente Zéspedes, St. Augustine, Florida, June 20, 1790—Duplicate," in Lewis, "Cracker, Spanish Florida Style," 191.
[27] "Panton to Miró, July 12, 1790," in Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 269. On the importance of the Ohio as a conduit to New Orleans and US military staffing in the Ohio Valley see François Furstenberg, "The Significance of the Trans-Appalachian Frontier in Atlantic History," *The American Historical Review*, 113, no. 3 (June 2008): 647–677, esp. 660–63 [citing Cayton on the figure of 350].
[28] Diego de Gardoqui to Esteban Miró, Nueva York, October 4, 1788, PC, 2352, AGI ("su concocimiento, y trato de muchos años con varias Naciones de Indios").

of New Madrid had made the two-month voyage down the Ohio, built cabins and a storehouse, and were making gardens planted with "corn, hemp, flax, cotton, tobacco, and potatoes."[29] Five years later, Spanish inhabitants at the post were practicing food diplomacy by supplying four hundred "Minotes" of corn to Chickasaws, who according to Thomas Portell were suffering from food scarcity. He also noted a second purpose for the grain: to support the Chickasaws' "war with the Talapuches, or Creeks." In this instance, Spanish distributions of maize at the terraqueous site of New Madrid served both to address complaints of hunger and to provide provisions for war.[30] The Chickasaw leader Ugulayacabé (Wolf's Friend) let Manuel Gayoso de Lemos—the Governor of Natchez—know that despite good words and professions to love "red men," he had been very angry and killed many people living very close to the Spanish. These people had in turn killed many of his people. Ugulayacabé's main concern was related to matrilineal lines of kinship: he needed to find his nephew, Wailabey, to tell him his son was one of the dead.[31]

Francisco Luis Héctor de Carondelet (who succeeded Miró as governor-general of Louisiana and West Florida in December 1791 and served until 1797) knew about the escalating violence. Carondelet knew that the Americans were already trying to trade—in his estimation, clandestinely—with the region's Indigenous inhabitants. He also knew he could do nothing about it without stationing an armed "Galera, ó Goleta" (like a brigantine, with sails, two or more) at New Madrid.[32] Ultimately, it was not feasible to station at vessel at New Madrid because the post itself was not reliably secure: like the post at San Carlos, it was not built to cope

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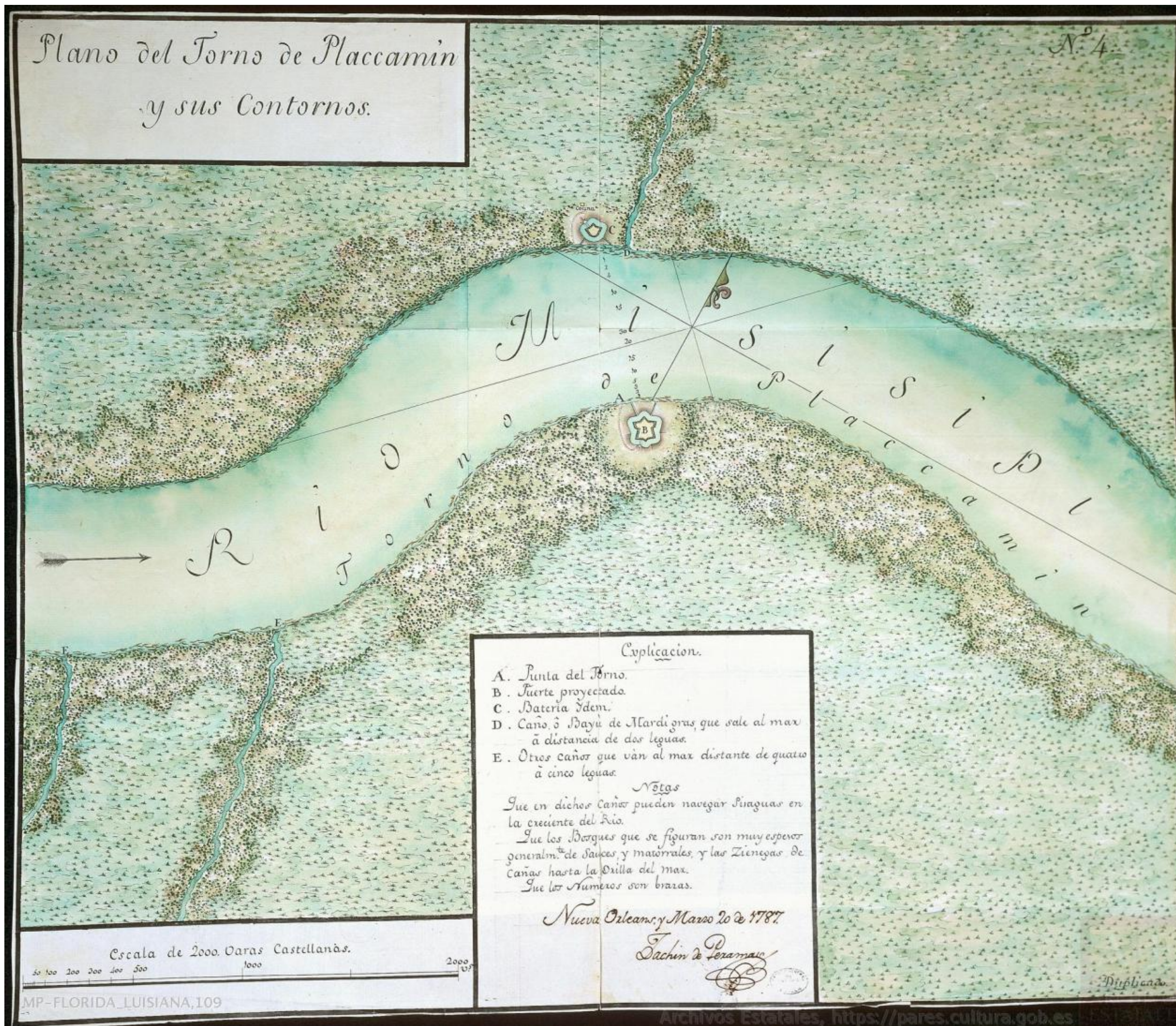
[29] George McCully, Juan Dodge, Pedro Light, David Rankin, Juan Wand, ? Shreve, Juan Steward, Jayme Rhea to ?, New Madrid, April 14, 1789, PC, 2352, AGI ("Mahiz, cáñamo, lino, Algodon, tabaco y Patatas").

[30] [Thomas Portell to Luis Héctor de Carondelet, New Madrid, May 8, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI. On food diplomacy and hunger see Herrmann, *No Useless Mouth*; On Creek-Chickasaw conflict see Peach, *Rivers of Power*, 7, 9, 83–84, 95.

[31] Ugulayacabé to Manuel Gayoso de Lemos, February 23, 1794, PC, 1447, AGI.

[32] [Luis Héctor de Carondelet to Luis de las Casas], New Orleans, May 22, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI.

with the volume of water surrounding it. In a budget he wrote in the 1790s, Carondelet estimated 69,000 pesos were needed to improve posts on the Lower Mississippi and 397,000 pesos for posts further north. Carondelet recommended so little funding for New Madrid—just 500 pesos—in comparison to the other posts he discussed that it is clear that he did not deem it worth long-term investment. It faced "imminent ruin."[33]



Archivos Estatales, https://pares.cultura.gob.es

Joaquín de Peramás, "Plano del torno de Placcamin y sus contornos," March 20, 1787, MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 109, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19255, image 196, ED_089_R_001, AGI.

[33] Luis Héctor de Carondelet, "Relacion del estado de las Plazas Fuertes y Puestos de las Provincias de la Luisiana y Florida occidental; repasos que necesitan, Artillería que deseguarnecelos [desguarnécelos], aumento de esta que necesitas; con expresion de la importancia, y objectos de cada uno," April 18, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI ("ruina

Fuerte San Felipe de Placaminas, by contrast, Carondelet deemed much more valuable and also more costly to maintain at 10,000 pesos. He called it "the key to the Mississippi." Placaminas was one of several terraqueous spaces the Spanish described this way.[34] Facing south from New Madrid, Placaminas was another eighty miles below New Orleans and another forty miles to the mouth of the Mississippi. In plans for two not-yet-existent batteries that Joaquín de Peramás drafted for "Placcamin" in March 1787, he depicted Spanish abilities to control movement across, up, and down the river by facilitating crossfire between batteries on opposite banks. The battery at Fuerte San Felipe de Placaminas, on the west bank of the river, would complement the battery on the east bank, where the river led into the Mardi Gras Channel. Both batteries contained projected plans for communication channels with the Mississippi River "to avoid corruption from the moat waters." Peramás had been thinking more about managing stagnant water than the planners who built New Madrid had done. The Mardi Gras battery required less manpower; where Peramás planned a kitchen for one official there (and produced a plan showing its location), he planned kitchens and a bread oven for the commandant, troops, and officials at Fuerte de Placaminas. Knowing as historians do the importance of bread to Spanish colonizers, it is probably that Peramás imagined a future battery inhabitant making a daily boat trip to fetch and carry bread across the river.[35] Peramás's profiles and other plans took

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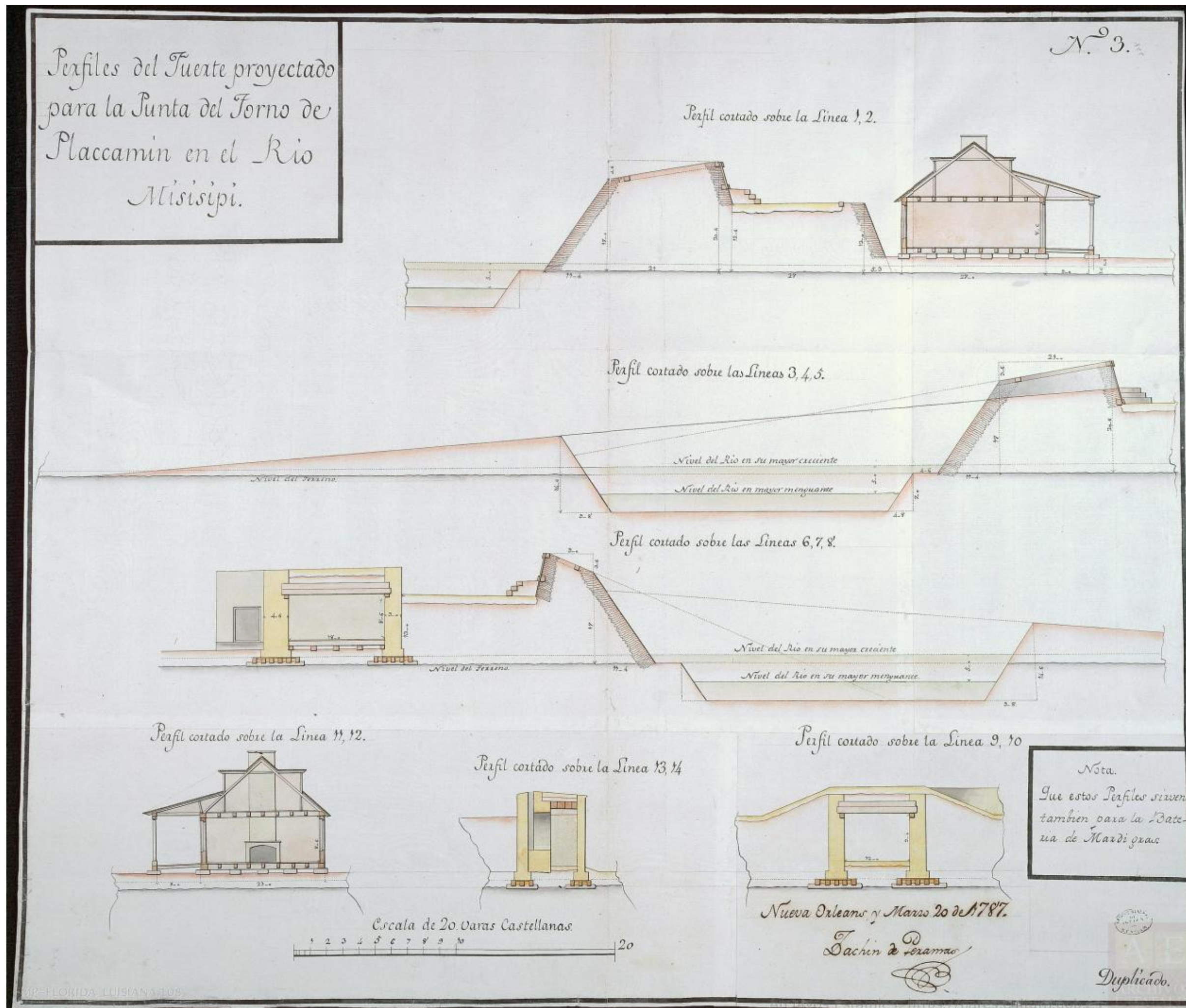
próxima"). Here and elsewhere the analysis takes inspiration from the Plan of Forts and Garrisons that Max Edelson discusses in *New Map of Empire*.

[34] Luis Héctor de Carondelet, "Relacion del estado de las Plazas Fuertes y Puestos de las Provincias de la Luisiana y Florida occidental; repasos que necesitan, Artillería que deseguarnecelos [desguarnécelos], aumento de esta que necesitas; con expresion de la importancia, y objectos de cada uno," April 18, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI ("es la llave del Misisip").

[35] Joaquín de Peramás, "Plano del fuerte proyectado, para la punta del torno de Placcamin en el rio Missisipi, para cruzar sus fuegos con los de la batería que se proyecta al otro lado del mismo rio, en el caño de Mardigras," March 20, 1787, MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 106, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19252 [accessed August 14, 2024], image 193, ED_089_R_001, AGI ("Canales de comunicacion con el Rio p[a]. evitar la corrupcion de las aguas del fosso"); Joaquín de Peramás, "Plano de la batería proyectada, para la entrada del caño de Mardigras en el rio Misisipi, para cruzar sus fuegos con los del fuerte que se proyecta al otro lado del mismo rio en la punta del torno de Placcamin," March 20, 1787, MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 107, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19253 [accessed August 14, 2024], ED_089_R_001, AGI;

other aspects of water management into account. His profile of Placaminas depicted the river at



Joaquín de Peramás, "Perfiles del fuerte proyectado para la punta del torno de Placcamin en el rio Misisipi," March 20, 1787, MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 108, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19254, image 195, ED_089_R_001, AGI

its highest and lowest. His seafoam green plan of the two places, with the Mississippi running across the middle, plotted several channels with connections to the sea, including the "channel, or bayou of Mardi gras," which met the sea two leagues away. He noted that in the channels or

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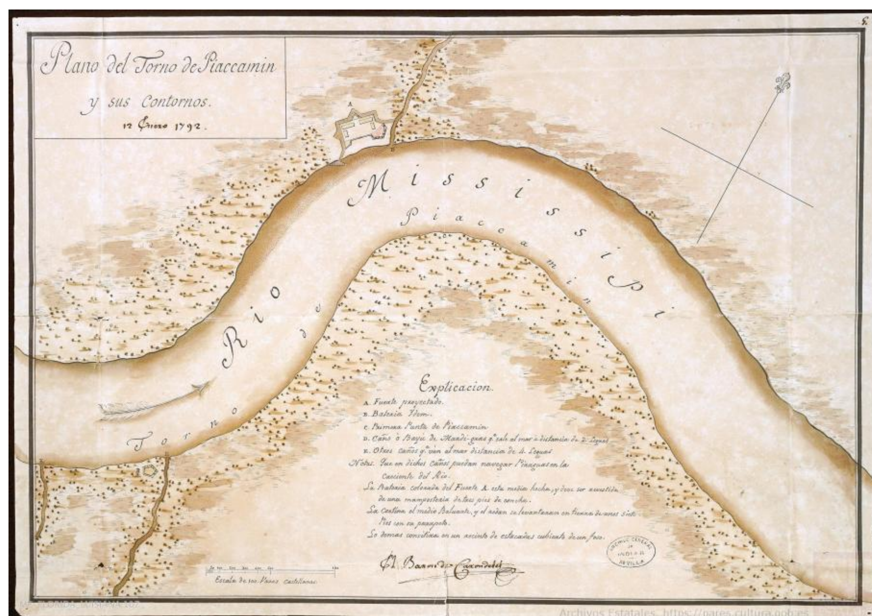
Joaquín de Peramás, "Plano del torno de Placcamin y sus contornos," March 20, 1787, MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 109, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19255 [accessed August 14, 2024], image 196, ED_089_R_001, AGI. On Spaniards and bread see Rebecca Earle, *The Body of the Conquistador: Food, Race and the Colonial Experience in Spanish America, 1492–1700* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 56, 153; Juneisy Quintana Hawkins, "Victual Connections: Anglo-Spanish Food Trade in the Colonial American Southeast, 1704–1763" (PhD Thesis, New York University, 2022), esp. 198–217.

bayous, piraguas could pass during the rising of the river, and that there were "swamps of canes up to the shore of the sea." There were also forests of willows and "matorrales."[36]

Placaminas was still in the process of being constructed and its power to monitor space still untested. By 1792, when construction had begun but before Carondelet sought additional funding, Carondelet sent a confusing plan of the post to Cuba. He called Placaminas "Piaccamin," and switched the locations of the battery and the fort. On his plan, the structure on



[Map, sent by Héctor de Carondelet to Luis de las Casas y Aragorri], "Plano del torno de Piaccamin y sus contornos," January 12, 1792 [sent January 13, 1792], MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 144, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19300 [accessed August 16, 2024], image 255, ED_089_R_001, AGI;

the Mardi Gras channel on the east bank of the Mississippi was the projected fort, and the structure on the west bank of the Mississippi was the smaller battery. Carondelet's 1793 budget called for ten cannons between the post and New Orleans, upriver.[37] This plan of the post reveals

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[36] Joaquín de Peramás, "Perfiles del fuerte proyectado para la punta del torno de Placcamin en el rio Misisipi," March 20, 1787, MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 108, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19254 [accessed August 14, 2024], image 195, ED_089_R_001, AGI; Joaquín de Peramás, "Plano del torno de Placcamin y sus contornos," March 20, 1787, MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 109, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19255 [accessed August 14, 2024], image 196, ED_089_R_001, AGI ("caño, o bayu," "Zienegas de Cañas hasta la orilla del mar").
[37] [Map, sent by Héctor de Carondelet to Luis de las Casas y Aragorri], "Plano del torno de Piaccamin y sus contornos," January 12, 1792 [sent January 13, 1792], MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 144,

his limited knowledge, and his budget sheds light on which of these envisioned terraqueous places Spanish planners most valued.

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While planners and colonists with transimperial interests were getting to know the Mississippi River between New Madrid and the mouth of the Mississippi, Spanish officials continued to seek information about and conduct diplomacy with Creeks, Chickasaws, Cherokees, and Choctaws. These activities allowed them to imagine in plans and maps the waterways that constituted Indigenous homelands—some of which connected to the Mississippi, and some of which did not—including the Cherokee River.

In 1793 Carondelet helped to depict this river and its tributaries, alongside others. He was using knowledge from Cherokee and Choctaw informants and layering it unevenly onto someone else's map. When Cherokees spoke with Carondelet about the Americanos who still wanted to dispossess them of "the only useful hunting lands they have left," they situated those lands, according to Carondelet, "between the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers."[38] His sepia manuscript map with English place names and Spanish annotations in more than one hand—one of which was Carondelet's or his clerk's—placed Cherokee homelands to the west of the "Tennessee or Cherokee River." It captured their hunting territory while also making an argument about American water grabs in Cherokee homelands.[39]

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https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19300 [accessed August 16, 2024], image 255, ED_089_R_001, AGI; Carondelet, "Relacion del estado de las Plazas Fuertes y Puestos de las Provincias de la Luisiana y Florida occidental."

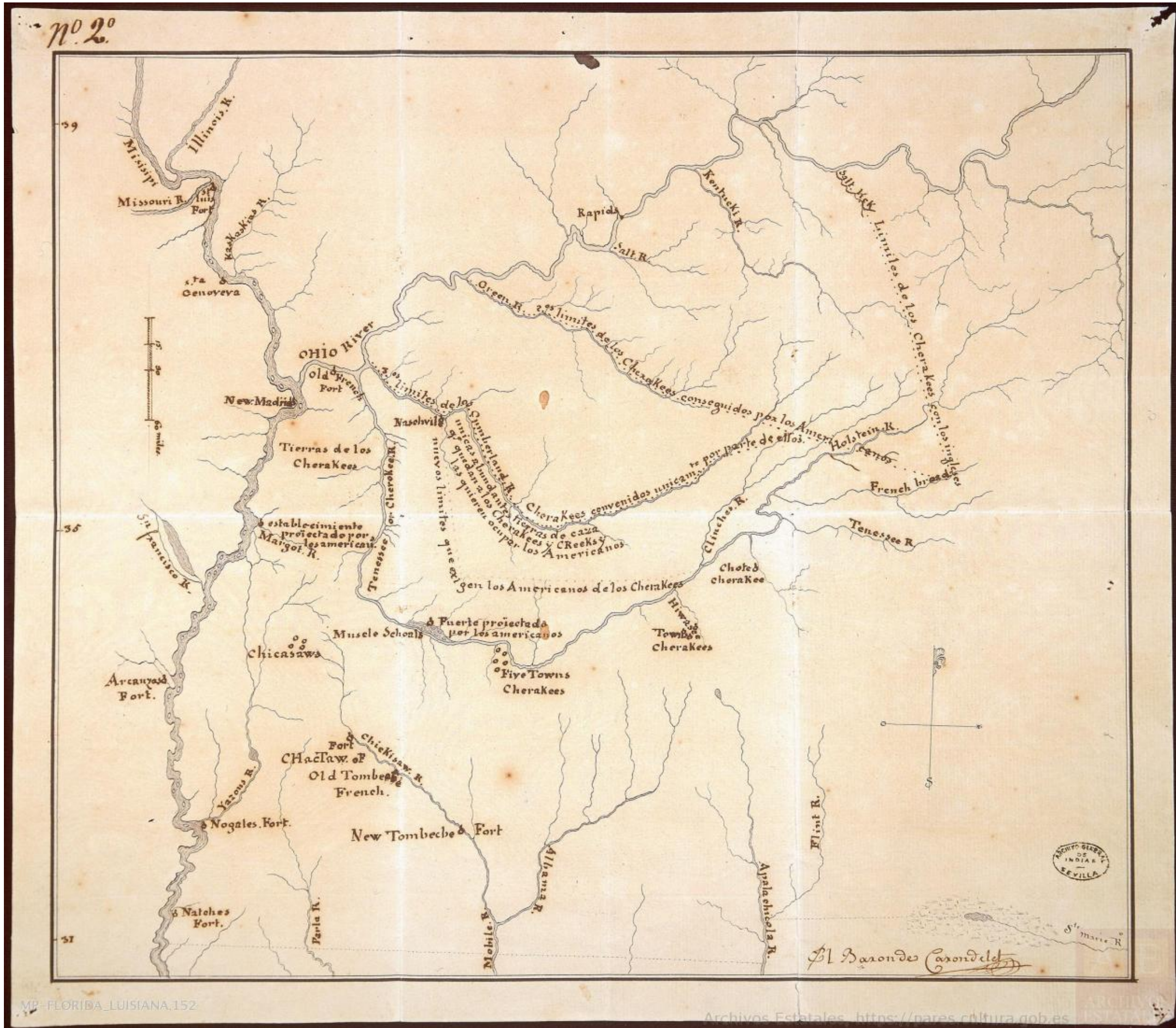
[38] [Luis Héctor de Carondelet to Luis de las Casas], New Orleans, May 22, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI.

[39] [n.a., signed by Carondelet], "Mapa de los límites de los Cherokees con los ingleses y de los conseguidos y pretendidos por los norteamericanos en la vertiente oriental de la cuenta del Mississippi," 1793, MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 152, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19312 [accessed August 16, 2024], image 264, ED_089_R_001, AGI ("convenidos unicam^{te} por parte de ellos unicas abundantes tierras de caza q^{e}. quedan a los Cherakees y Creeks y las quieren ocupar los Americanos"). I am still trying to work out what original map Carondelet was using for inspiration and would welcome your thoughts!

The short title of this hybrid object is *Map of Cherokee borders with the English and of those achieved and pretended by the North Americans*. Carondelet's information came from Choctaws, too. Around 1785 Francisco Domingo Joseph Bouligny y Paret, who had also penned an influential tract about the Louisiana colony, reconnoitered the Cherokee and Cumberland rivers with newly-built barges and flat-bottomed boats, the help of a Frenchman, a British Loyalist from Natchez, and six Choctaw warriors and a Choctaw chief.[40] At the right (or east) of Carondelet's map is a line running almost straight down from the Ohio River, extending from a waterway called Salt Lick—probably Great Salt Lick Creek at the time and Licking River today. The line is annotated, "limites" "of the Cherokees with the English." Then, in an acute angle stretching from the bottom of this boundary northeast to the Green River is a line and text reading "second Cherokee boundary obtained by the Americans." The third boundary, annotated and drawn on the Cumberland River, is described as a Cherokee boundary agreed (as tended to be the case at the time) by only a part of the Cherokees. This third line also marked "the only abundant hunting lands that the Cherokees and Creeks have left," which "the Americans want to occupy." Another aspirational boundary sits below this line, the "new boundaries the Americans demand of the Cherokees." Projected American forts are depicted on the Margot River and at Muscle Shoals on Cherokee (or Tennessee River). Indigenous placenames or places on the map include Cherokee Lands ("Tierras de los Cherokee"), Chote (Chota), the Cherokee Five Towns, and Chic[k]asaws (in unannotated space between Muscle Shoals and the Mississippi River). European military posts include Fort Choctaw of Old Tombecbe and New Tombecbe Fort, both imagined on the Tombigbee (or "Chickisaw") River north of the confluence of the Mobile and Alabama River. Carondelet, who was making an argument about Cherokee lands, was

[40] Estevan Miró to [Bernardo de Gálvez], New Orleans, August 14, 1785, PC, 2352, AGI.

uninterested in depicting the many towns in Creek homelands on the Coosa, Tallapoosa, and Chattahoochee rivers (which he did not label) or on the Apalachicola or Flint rivers (which he did). Below the meeting of the Mississippi and the Ohio River readers can also see New Madrid, and the old French fort on the Ohio River that William Panton had recommended the Spanish reoccupy.[41]



[n.a., signed by Carondelet], *Mapa de los límites de los Cherokees con los ingleses y de los conseguidos y pretendidos por los norteamericanos en la vertiente oriental de la cuenta del Mississippi* 1793, MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 152, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19312, image 264, ED_089_R_001, AGI.

[41] [n.a., signed by Carondelet], "Mapa de los límites de los Cherokees con los ingleses y de los conseguidos y pretendidos por los norteamericanos en la vertiente oriental de la cuenta del Mississippi," 1793, MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 152, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19312 [accessed August 16, 2024], image 264, ED_089_R_001, AGI ("Limites de los Cherakees con los ingelses," "2os [segundos] limites de los Cherokees consequidos por los Americanos").

American incursions on the Cherokee River had been ongoing since the 1780s, but these places had deeper histories. Haudenosaunee diplomats at Fort Stanwix in 1768 had identified the Cherokee River as the boundary between Iroquoia and southern nations.[42] During the mid-1780s Frenchmen brought in goods from Canada via the Cherokee and Wabash rivers. On the Cherokee River, Creeks and Chickamaugas bought goods from French traders near the place they called Chake Thlocko.[43] McGillivray described Chake Thlocko as a north-south ford; "the passing place to my people when they go a hunting or to War."[44]

For American settler colonists Chake Thlocko was not a crossing place but an aspirational site of permanent settlement, and they, like Carondelet on his annotated map, called it Muscle Shoals ("Muscle Schoals"). During the 1780s and early 1790s Chickasaws were fighting Abeika and Tallapoosa warriors of Creek towns. This conflict allowed settler colonists to try expanding onto Muscle Shoals, which they did by encouraging Chickasaw attacks against Upper Creek towns: the ones unmarked and unannotated and in blank space below the words-and-rivers limites on Carondelet's map.[45] In 1786 Miró had described two small forces commanded by "Brigadier Clark" meeting "at the head of the Tenezy River" to march against "los Creek, ó Talapuches." From this place (depicted on Carondelet's 1793 map at the meeting of the Holstein and French Broad rivers) George Rogers Clark aimed to open Americans' access to the Mississippi while razing Creek and Cherokee homelands. Though Miró doubted the veracity of this information, he passed the news on to McGillivray.[46] By 1787 a new American settlement at Muscle Shoals had led to killings and thefts of deerskins, equipment, and pesos

[42] Jones, *License for Empire*, 89.
[43] Coker and Watson, *Indian Traders of the Southeastern Spanish Borderlands*, 95; "O'Neill to Sonora, August 10, 1786," in Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 125–26; Salafia, *Slavery's Borderland*, 23.
[44] "McGillivray to Carondelet, September 3, 1792," in Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 336.
[45] Peach, *Rivers of Power*, 9, 83
[46] [Estevan Miró to Arturo O'Neill], New Orleans, July 6, 1786, 540–41 (quote 540r), PC, 4A, ED_143_R_010, AGI.

fuertes.[47] McGillivray explained that in 1788 there were (not for the first time) Cherokee refugees who had "come to us"—probably his kin at Little Tallassee—for relief and aid following attacks engineered by John Sevier.[48] In 1790 Zéspedes echoed earlier reports about land-hungry Americans on the Tennessee River.[49] Panton warned of American settlements there in 1792.[50] Notice arrived in September 1793 of bellicose Americans on the move: one group to the Tennessee River to form an establishment on Muscle Shoals, and another that aimed to attack the Cherokees from behind, to cut off Cherokees' communication with other Native Americans, and to make it difficult to access the Mississippi River. Meanwhile, a large corps was mustering in Georgia to invade "the territory of the Creek nation."[51] That reports of permanent American settlement arrived and arrived again in the 1780s and 1790s underscores how tenuous these claims remained.

For at least a decade McGillivray had been making plans to counter American encroachments in contested homelands. Some of his plans included the Tombigbee River, where violence had also flared and which Carondelet also depicted.[52] The Tombigbee, like the Mississippi, was connected to other important waterways. In 1785 McGillivray suggested that if the Americanos "overstepped" to trouble the Spanish or Native Americans, the Spanish build a

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[47] [Vicente Zéspedes to Josef de Ezpeleta, San Augustine, October 12, 1787, Papeles de Cuba, 1395, AGI; [Esteban Miró to Arturo O'Neill], New Orleans, August 3, 1787, 442v, PC, 4B, ED_143_R_011, AGI.
[48] [Translation of a letter from Alexander McGillivray to Vicente Zéspedes, Little Tallassee, December 8, 1788, sent by Zéspedes to Josef de Espeleta, San Augustine, January 14, 1789], Papeles de Cuba, 1395, AGI ("los mas Crueles ultrajes y devastaciones" and "Aquellos Indios acudieron á nosotros por Socorros, y ayuda").
[49] "Report by Don Vicente Zéspedes, St. Augustine, Florida, June 20, 1790—Duplicate," in Lewis, "Cracker, Spanish Florida Style," 191.
[50] [William Panton to Carondelet, Pensacola, April 14, 1792], 190–92, in ["Correspondencia del Sr. William Panton, 1785 a 1799"], legajo 1, no. 5, Louisiana documents from the National Archive of Cuba (Fondos Floridas), MF 6.1, Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans.
[51] [Francisco Luis Héctor de Carondelet to Manuel de Godoy], New Orleans, September 27, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI ("está levantando un cuerpo numeroso en la Georgia, para invadir al mismo tiempo el territorio de la Nacion crick"). On the confluence of events on the Tennessee River and Muscle Shoals, and the Oconee conflict see Peach, *Rivers of Power*, 83, 103.
[52] Peach, *Rivers of Power*, 95, 103.

post on the Tombigbee River "towards the head of the Tinisaw," or Tensaw River ("New Tombecbe Fort" on Carondolet's map). The Tombigbee River, like the Tensaw, discharged into Mobile Bay. It was a tributary of the Mobile River, navigable for flat-bottomed boats of thirty toneladas "in certain seasons of the year," and the place McGillivray recommended was fifty leagues from Mobile.[53] During the eighteenth century the Creeks had contested hunting lands along the Tombigbee, Alabama, and Escambia rivers with Choctaws.[54] Creeks and Choctaws had traditionally been separated by the buffer zone between the Tombigbee and Alabama rivers and violence between them had escalated during the 1760s and 1780s.[55] Historians don't quite agree about the Alabamas—whom the Spanish called Alibamones or Alibamons—who lived on the Tombigbee and some of whom were in close alliance with Choctaws. During the War for Independence it was clear that some Alabamas were meeting with English-allied Choctaws, as were some Creeks, like McGillivray.[56] There is disagreement about the extent to which Alabamas were fully integrated into the Creek Confederacy: because McGillivray himself was inconsistent in his portrayals of them; because non-Indigenous observers failed to normalize the practice of trading across imperial borders; and because of the decentralized nature of town politics.[57] McGillivray said that the Alabamas and "other Creek Indians" would approve of the Spanish post on the Tombigbee because they preferred the Spanish and the potential to conserve

[53] Arturo O'Neill to [Bernardo de Gálvez], Pensacola, October 31, 1785, PC, 2352, AGI ("overstepped," "towards the"); [Sebastián Nicolás de Bari Calvo de la Puerta y O'Farrill] to Mariano Luis de Urquijo, New Orleans, October 8, 1800, f. 528r, PC, 2355, AGI ("in certain").
[54] Angela Pulley Hudson, *Creek Paths and Federal Roads*, 19.
[55] Ellis, *The Great Power of Small Nations*, 215.
[56] [José de Ezpeleta to Bernardo de Gálvez], Mobile, September 27, 1780, 67v, PC, 4A, ED_143_R_009, AGI.
[57] According to Coker and Watson McGillivray said he could not keep the Alabamas in check because they had loose ties to the Creeks. Dorothy Jones said that during the 1780s Alabamas were usually considered part of the Creek Confederacy. Coker and Watson, *Indian Traders of the Southeastern Spanish Borderlands*, 123; Jones, *License for Empire*, 146.

"their lands, and lives."[58] The problem was that it was not clear where the Alabamas actually lived or where their boundaries were.

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The unannotated places on the 1793 map that Carondelet marked up reflect the dearth (in comparison to the British) of Spanish manuscript maps marking out Creek and Seminole homelands. Another probable reality is that *had* Spanish mapmakers possessed that information, it would have failed to make clear where Alabama homelands ended and Creek homelands began. The eighteenth-century Alabama River was known for its looping meanders, pure water, and fine fish, but it was not a place of many permanent towns because the ground was too low.[59] The people called Alabamas were reported as living on the Tombigbee and Coosa Rivers. The Alabama River joins the Tombigbee to form the Mobile River, which flows into Mobile Bay, which the Spanish had besieged and claimed in 1780. Facing north, the Alabama is formed by the Coosa and Tallapoosa river. The Tallapoosa River made its fall line at the southern town of Tuckabatchee, where onward navigation was impossible for European vessels.[60]

Historians can guess at what some mapmakers knew of these rivers and bays and what knowledge they still lacked because of the existence of maps made by colonial administrators working for the British, and because of the people they married. On the c. 1771 Taitt and Stuart *A plan of part of the rivers Tombecbe, Alabama, Tensa, Perdido, & Scambia*, Spanish viewers ready to fight over the Louisiana-West Florida border would have been annoyed that the Perdido's junction with the sea is entirely covered by the map's "Remarks." More significantly,

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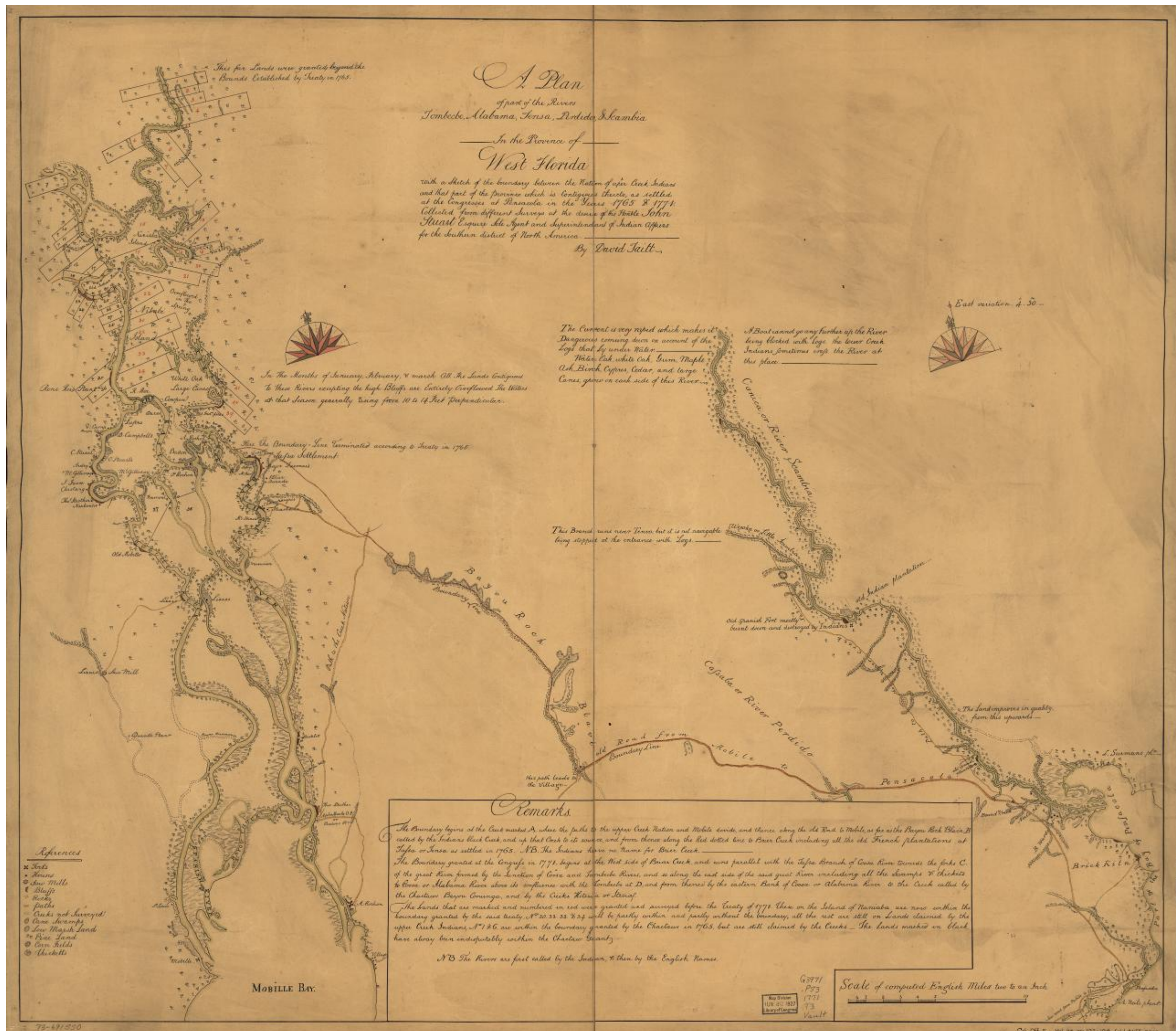
[58] Arturo O'Neill to [Bernardo de Gálvez], Pensacola, October 31, 1785, PC, 2352, AGI.
[59] Ethridge, *Creek Country*, 36.
[60] Joshua A. Piker, "'White & Clean' & Contested: Creek Towns and Trading Paths in the Aftermath of the Seven Years' War," *Ethnohistory* 50, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 315–47, esp. 317. Tuckabatchee had long been connected to Coweta on the Chattahoochee River via an overland path. Angela Pulley Hudson, *Creek Paths and Federal Roads*, 12.

there is ambiguity in the labelling making unclear where the Tombigbee ends and the Coosa (or its eastern branch) was imagined to be.[61] David Taitt, a Scottish-born surveyor and mapmaker, documented the permeability of boundaries agreed in treaties and the changeability of names. The title of his plan indicated that he had made it by gathering details about boundaries ceded by Creeks at congresses in Pensacola in 1765 and 1771 and compared these with additional surveys to produce a map of the Tombigbee, Alabama, Tensa, Perdido, and Escambia Rivers.[62] The map so impressed Stuart that he sent Taitt off to learn and write more about paths, rivers, creeks, and villages.[63] Taitt, for his part, enhanced his position. He married Sehoy III, a cousin of Alexander McGillivray, before becoming British Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs to the Creeks until 1779. He made his headquarters at Little Tallassee, making it likely that McGillivray, who probably shared geographic information with Taitt, could have shared more precise geographic knowledge with the Spanish had he wished.[64]

[61] David Taitt and John Stuart, *A plan of part of the rivers Tombecbe, Alabama, Tensa, Perdido, & Scambia in the province of West Florida; with a sketch of the boundary between the nation of upper Creek Indians and that part of the province which is contigious thereto, as settled at the congresses at Pensacola in the years 1765 & 1771*. Map, *Library of Congress*, https://www.loc.gov/item/73691550/ [accessed September 12, 2025].
[62] David Taitt and John Stuart, *A plan of part of the rivers Tombecbe, Alabama, Tensa, Perdido, & Scambia*.
[63] https://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/david-taitt/ This write-up dates the map to 1772 and names the published version of Taitt's travels.
[64] https://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/david-taitt/



David Taitt and John Stuart, *A plan of part of the rivers Tombecbe, Alabama, Tensa, Perdido, & Scambia in the province of West Florida . . . as settled at the congresses at Pensacola in the years 1765 & 1771*. Map, *Library of Congress*, https://www.loc.gov/item/73691550/.

The "Remarks" to Taitt's plan are bordered at the top by the boundary line, which overlapped with the old path from Pensacola to Mobile. The remarks are ringed on the bottom right corner by a smaller path of the same color that he called the "New road from Mobille to Pensacola." Taitt's remarks indicate that the lands he depicted as surveyed were partially within and partially without overlapping and conflicting land claims with Choctaws and Creeks. In addition to showing connecting roads to Creek trade paths and lands ceded, the plan marked "Lands . . . granted beyond the Bounds Established by Treaty in 1765" and named rivers first "by

the Indian, & then by the English Names." The plan illustrated how thoroughly inundated many of these lands were, and further west on the map the (mostly) non-Indigenous grants of land ceded (or claimed) in these places. After the branching of the Scambia River (also called the Escambia and known now as the Conica) and the Weeoka (Little Scambia)—which was "not navigable being stopped at the entrance with Logs"—were further comments about limited access. Although "the lower Creek Indians sometimes cross the River at this place," Taitt noted, "A Boat cannot go any further up the River being blocked with Logs." Its current was rapid. To the east of the "Coosa or Alibama River"—note the double naming and ambiguity of its inhabitants—he inserted a block of script explaining that in January, February, and March "All the Lands Contiguous to these Rivers excepting the high Bluffs are Entirely Overflowed" by "10 to 14 Feet Perpendicular."[65] Whether the river was the Alabama or the Coosa, these were places where year-round habitation was inadvisable.

Taitt's plan used the Escambia River to make an argument about Creeks' rejection of the Spanish while producing images that contradicted the plan's text. Opposite an "old Indian plantation" he depicted an "Old Spanish Fort mostly burnt down and destroyed by Indians." The destruction of a Spanish fort and the presence of old Native American plantations might have seemed to an uneducated viewer to be claimable space. This, though, was contradicted by Taitt's use of the mixed blocs of horizontal and vertical hachures that he used to denote cornfields on his legend.[66] Those old plantations were still being used by Creeks to produce crops.

On the legend Taitt also marked the graphic for river cane with dense horizontal lines. The Creeks called river cane *lap lako*, "tall cane," and it is known today as giant river cane. It belongs to the grass family *Gramineae* and is related to bamboo, and it stays green year-round.

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[65] David Taitt and John Stuart, *A plan of part of the rivers Tombecbe, Alabama, Tensa, Perdido, & Scambia*.
[66] David Taitt and John Stuart, *A plan of part of the rivers Tombecbe, Alabama, Tensa, Perdido, & Scambia*.

Creeks harvested young shoots and ate the seeds from smaller cane. They cleared canebreaks to make way for agricultural fields. White observers made mention of it because it helped them to feed their horses and cattle, and because it indicated fertile farmland, and therefore marked desirable Indigenous land.[67] Taitt confirmed that the "Scambia" River was flanked on both sides by ash, birch, cypress, cedar, gum, maple, water oak, and white oak, and "large canes."[68] By the 1780s the Spanish had obtained records of the river: a 1781 sketch certified by British Surveyor General and cartographer Elias Dunfurd (for whom Taitt had worked) of a "finca" on the east side of the Escambia River.[69] The "finca"—which could mean land, a house, or a ranch, and probably a ranch in this context—about seven miles from the river mouth, shows that between two lagoons jutting out from the Escambia River was indeed a stretch of "Cane Swamp."[70]

In March 1788 McGillivray told O'Neill that some "alibamons" about whom Vicente Folch had complained "pretend to be the Masters of Mobile River" and lived outside of "the Nations." Instead, they were "Settled down the river near to Durants." Two McGillivrays and a "Duratt" plantation appear on the Taitt and Stuart plan, and this is possibly the place to which McGillivray referred.[71] One way to interpret McGillivray's conception of the Alabama town near Durant's plantation is to view it as a talofa—not outside of the nation, but now outside the remit of the upper towns. "These people were not at the Pensacola Treaty" and didn't attend "our publick meetings" he further explained, saying that they instead met with Miró at Mobile. "So

[67] Ethridge, *Creek Country*, 49, 50.
[68] David Taitt and John Stuart, *A plan of part of the rivers Tombecbe, Alabama, Tensa, Perdido, & Scambia*.
[69] https://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/david-taitt/.
[70] [Elias Durnford (?)], "Croquis de un finca situada junto al rio Escambia en la Florida occidental," February 10, 1781, MP-Florida_Luisiana, 90, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19233 [accessed August 13, 2024], ED_089_R_001, AGI. I did not consult this sketch in the sala and therefore do not cite its corresponding microfilm image. For finca see *Compilation of Colonial Spanish Terms and Document Related Phrases*, 2nd edition, ed. Ophelia Marquez and Lillian Ramos Navarro Wold (Midway City, CA: Society of Hispanic Historical and Ancestral Research, 1998), 22.
[71] David Taitt and John Stuart, *A plan of part of the rivers Tombecbe, Alabama, Tensa, Perdido, & Scambia*.

being out of our reach," he concluded, "they Commit disorders on the river."[72] Following further reports of attacks by the Alabamas against "tombecbé," the Spanish were contemplating a trade embargo in retaliation.[73] Miró complained that McGillivray discussed land "belonging to the talapuches and not to the Alibamones as they pretend."[74] In the winter of 1788–89 Native American hunters had driven away "three whites who were marking lines ten miles" from Little Tallasee "and the Coosadas." These boundary markers were white men who admitted that they had come "from the Tombigbee River" and "that they intended to establish themselves on the land they were marking," as well as to build a trading house.[75] McGillivray defended territory on the Tombigbee as Tallapoosa territory rather than as Alabama territory, impeding Spanish approval of efforts to demarcate boundaries between Native Americans and their inhabitants.

By May 1789 Miró was urging McGillivray to better demarcate these homelands, and especially the Tombigbee where Carondelet would go on to imagine two Spanish forts. Miró suggested that "some Chiefs of your Nations, & others of the Alibamons" should meet on the Tombigbee "to point out & aknowledge a boundary line" because no one could tell him where it was or if it existed.[76] By this time McGillivray was attributing the violence to Choctaws, who he said were "Stimulating our people to attack the Tombegbe."[77] People from the Choctaw village called Chicashae had also followed Alabama advice and also robbed some cattle, but the majority of the nation was disposed to take up arms for Spain, according to Miró.[78] He met with the Alabama chiefs, including "Soulie rouge," who promised to return the stolen animals and not

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[72] "McGillivray to O'Neill, March 1, 1788," in Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 168.
[73] [Estevan Miró to Francisco de Cruzat], New Orleans, May 22, 1789, 655–66, PC, 6, ED_143_R_015, AGI.
[74] [Estevan Miró to Vicente Folch], New Orleans, February 16, 1789, 268–69, PC, 6, ED_143_R_014, AGI ("M^{c}.Gillivray dice que aquellas tierras pertenecen á los talapuches y no á los Alibamones como estos pretenden").
[75] "McGillivray to Folch, April 22, 1789," in Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 226–7.
[76] "Miró to McGillivray, May 11, 1789," in Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 229.
[77] "McGillivray to Miró, May 26, 1789," in Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 234.
[78] [Estevan Miró to ?], New Orleans, June ?, 1789, 807v, PC, 6, ED_143_R_015, AGI.

to do more damage to the Americans' establisments. Miró made them a small gift in return.[79] And, his "small treaty" asked for more land than what Choctaws had ceded on the east bank of the Tombigbee River.[80] That June, Folch thanked McGillivray for "putting a stop to the parties" proposing to attack inhabitants on this river.[81]

During Washington's first administration, the Spanish further strengthened their claims on the Tombigbee. In May 1793 the Spanish signed the Treaty of Boukfouka with several Choctaw representatives, including "Nanhulo mastabé, Cathiaopoye, totéhouma, [and] Panchinatla" in which the Spanish gained land thirty square arpans in size that the French had previously claimed.[82] This place, according to Carondelet, was known as "viejo tomcecbé," or Old Tombigbee on his map.[83] The Spanish renamed it Confederación, and in their treaty they agreed to build a fort and a storehouse for "gifts and provisions" and to use the post to defend their Choctaw allies' lands.[84] Tombigbee was considered a minor post, according to Carondelet, but if the Spanish decided to rebuild it (and he had budgeted 5,000 pesos), he thought it would be more convenient to locate it further below the meeting of the Mobile and Alabama Rivers, where it would be better placed to ward off the Americans.[85] When the Spanish did construct Fort Stephens on the Tombigbee ninety miles north of Spanish Mobile and fifty miles east of the Mississippi River, they placed it at the river's fall line.[86]

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[79] [Estevan Miró to Vicente Folch], New Orleans, July 11, 1789, 904r, PC, 6, ED_143_R_016, AGI.
[80] [Estevan Miró to Vicente Folch], New Orleans, June 29, 1789, 846–47, PC, 6, ED_143_R_015, AGI.
[81] "Folch to McGillivray, June 14, 1789," in Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 237.
[82] "Tratado de Amistad entre S.M.C. gran Rey de las Españas, y de las Indias," May 10, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI.
[83] [Luis Héctor de Carondelet to Luis de las Casas], New Orleans, June 11, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI.
[84] "Tratado de Amistad entre S.M.C. gran Rey de las Españas, y de las Indias," May 10, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI.
[85] Carondelet, "Relacion del estado de las Plazas Fuertes y Puestos de las Provincias de la Luisiana y Florida occidental."
[86] John C. Kotruch, "The Battle of Fallen Timbers: An Assertion of U.S. Sovereignty in the Atlantic World along the Banks of the Maumee River," in Patrick Griffin, Robert G. Ingram, Peter S. Onuf, and Brian Schoen, *Between Sovereignty and Anarchy: The Politics of Violence in the American Revolutionary Era* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2015), 268.

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McGillivray, for his part, repeatedly reminded the land speculators aggressively courting him that the land they sought was Native American land and water, or space claimed by the Spanish. These "Ecunnaunuxulgee," ("People greedily grasping after the lands of the red people," or land-hungry Americanos) were those involved in the Yazoo scandal.[87] From his communications with these "wild Speculators" McGillivray confirmed to Panton that part of the land being marketed by the Tennessee Company and which the Yazoo schemers were trying to buy from the Georgia legislature included "every foot of our, the Cherokee & Chickasaw Hunting Grounds."[88] According to Georgians, this was a placed called Bourbon County that began at the meeting of the Yazoo and Mississippi rivers and included "all the Lands and waters" within its boundaries.[89] The hunting lands were bordered by the rivers discussed here: a bend in the Cherokee River, 20 Mile Creek ("a main Branch of Tombegbie" in the Chickasaw Nation), the Tombigbee River itself, and the Mississippi and Yazoo rivers.[90]

The Yazoo River was of particular importance in the dispute about Louisiana's western border because British West Florida's northern boundary had sat at approximately 32 degrees 28 minutes North, from where the Yazoo and Mississippi met. From there the imaginary line stretched east to the Chattahoochee River.[91] However, the Americans—officials, speculators, and squatters—had encroached between the 31st parallel and the Yazoo River ("conquered" by

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[87] Richard Thomas, Translations of Creek expressions used in the foregoing [translated by Timothy Barnard, Cusseta, 24 November 1797], Letters of Benjamin Hawkins, in H. Thomas Foster II, *The Collected Works of Benjamin Hawkins, 1796–1810* (Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 2003), 250. Timothy Barnard was Metawney and George Galphin's nephew. For the Yazoo scandal see Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 40.
[88] "McGillivray to Panton, May 8, 1790," in Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 259.
[89] [Thomas Green, Georgia, c. 1783–85], legajo 1, no. 3, Louisiana documents from the National Archive of Cuba (Fondos Floridas), MF 6.1, Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans.
[90] "McGillivray to Panton, May 8, 1790," in Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 259.
[91] Albert W. Haarmann, "The Spanish Conquest of British West Florida, 1779–1781," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (October 1960), 107–34, esp. 107.

Governor Gálvez in 1779, ceded by Britain to the US in 1783).[92] In February 1791 McGillivray explained that he had long observed "a fixed design in the Americans to possess themselves of every foot of Land belonging to the Southern Indian Nations." His meeting with Americans at the 1790 Treaty of New York, which he wrote to Miró about, had persuaded him of this continuing land hunger.[93] He excused his involvement with the Yazoo schemers as a ploy to obtain information: he "drew from them the full extent of their plans." He used this information to "overthrow" the Yazoo Company by selling the lands in his share on more favorable terms to the US, instead (it would take several more years for the full extent of the scheme to come to light).[94]

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[92] "Report by Don Vicente Zéspedes, St. Augustine, Florida, June 20, 1790—Duplicate," in Lewis, "Cracker, Spanish Florida Style," 191; J. C. A. Stagg, *Borderlines in Borderlands: James Madison and the Spanish-American Frontier, 1776-1821* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 31.

[93] [Alexander McGillivray to Esteban Miró], Pensacola, February 26, 1791, 539rv, Papeles de Cuba, 184A, ED_106_R_009, AGI.

[94] [Alexander McGillivray to Esteban Miró], Pensacola, February 26, 1791, 540rv, Papeles de Cuba, 184A, ED_106_R_009, AGI. He explained that the threat of war between Spain and Britain made him anxious as Spain's ally to avoid "disputes with the Americans," and that "this Consideration made me less Inflexible in some parts than I otherwise would have been." In other words, anything Miró disliked, McGillivray had done with Spanish interests in mind, and the $1,200 he received per year from the US was compensation for his lands. He claimed to Miró that he had denied the offer of a commission as a brigadier general. [Alexander McGillivray to Esteban Miró], Pensacola, February 26, 1791, 541r–542v, Papeles de Cuba, 184A, ED_106_R_009, AGI.

Two twinned maps of uncertain authorship in the Archivo de Indias illustrate both knowledge and confusion about American yearnings for the Yazoo River at the end of the

[n.a.], "Mapa de los terrenos de las compañías de Virginia y de la Carolina del Sur en el Yazoo, entre los ríos Misisipi, Natchez, Mobile y Tennessee," [known April 1, 1791], MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 138BIS, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19292 [accessed August 15, 2024p, ED_089_R_001, 248; [n.a.], "Mapa de los terrenos de las compañías de Virginia y de la Carolina del Sur en el Yazoo, entre los ríos Mississippi, Natchez, Mobile y Tennessee," [known April 1, 1791], MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 138, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19291 [accessed August 15, 2024], ED_089_R_001, image 247.

eighteenth century. One map is clearly based on the other; on both maps the Mississippi River frames the bottom portion of the image. The earlier sketch has English place names and words, and the second map contains a mix of English place names and Spanish labels. *PARES* suggests that Manuel Gayoso de Lemos received instructions about handling any Yazoo speculators, together with these two maps in 1791.[95] The ríos Arkanzas, Colorado, and Blanco flow off the bottom, western edge of the maps. At their center are two large land claims by what the Spanish labeler designated the South Carolina and Virginia Yazoo companies and what the English labeler called the Virginia and "~~Georgia~~ South Carolina Yasou" companies. The maps show the "camino" or path from Cumberland to Natchez, which crossed the Tennessee River and myriad other creeks. Chickasaws (or "Chicachas")—the only Indigenous people to appear on the

[95] https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/description/19291

maps—are depicted living between the path between Cumberland and Natches and the Tombigbee River. The Tombigbee River, labelled the "Tom or Dom Bigby," is depicted as meeting the Rio Alibamon and Mobile River at their confluence.[96] McGillivray reassured Carondelet in 1792 that Tombigbee was still relatively well-defended. He said that the American fort there didn't exist, and warned that the priority should be Muscle Shoals.[97] By March and May of 1793 Carondelet was comparing the Americans' move to Muscle Shoals to their activities on the Yazoo and Mississippi rivers and interpreting them as "hostile intentions against Fort Nogales."[98]

The Spanish had established Fort Nogales at the meeting of the Yazoo and Mississippi rivers in 1791 to check American speculation.[99] Carondelet thought Nogales "perfectly situated" on the Yazoo because the passage formed a whirlpool that forced watercraft past "the foot of the batteries."[100] In 1794 he would propose that Nogales serve as the first point of defense in any invasion of the Upper Mississippi. Both New Madrid and Illinois were closer to the Upper Mississippi, but too far away to supply and populate.[101]

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[96] [n.a.], "Mapa de los terrenos de las compañías de Virginia y de la Carolina del Sur en el Yazoo, entre los ríos Mississippi, Natchez, Mobile y Tennessee," [known April 1, 1791], MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 138, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19291 [accessed August 15, 2024], ED_089_R_001, image 247 (the Spanish map); [n.a.], "Mapa de los terrenos de las compañías de Virginia y de la Carolina del Sur en el Yazoo, entre los ríos Misisipi, Natchez, Mobile y Tennessee," [known April 1, 1791], MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 138BIS, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19292 [accessed August 15, 2024p, ED_089_R_001, 248 (the American sketch).
[97] "McGillivray to Carondelet, September 3, 1792," in Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 336.
[98] [Luis Héctor de Carondelet to Luis de las Casas], New Orleans, May 22, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI (sailing down the Mississippi); [Luis Héctor de Carondelet to the Conde de Aranda (Pedro Pablo Abarca de Bolea?)], New Orleans, January 8, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI ("denote unos intentos hostiles contra el Fuerte de Nogales").
[99] Jack D. L. Holmes, "Some Economic Problems of Spanish Governors of Louisiana," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 42, no. 4 (1962): 521–43, esp. 533; [William Panton to Carondelet, Pensacola, April 14, 1792], 190–92, in ["Correspondencia del Sr. William Panton, 1785 a 1799"], legajo 1, no. 5, Louisiana documents from the National Archive of Cuba (Fondos Floridas), MF 6.1, Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans (Walnut Hills).
[100] Luis Héctor de Carondelet, "Relacion del estado de las Plazas Fuertes y Puestos de las Provincias de la Luisiana y Florida occidental; repasos que necesitan, Artillería que deseguarnecelos [desguarnécelos], aumento de esta que necesitas; con expresion de la importancia, y objectos de cada uno," April 18, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI.
[101] [Luis Héctor de Carondelet to Manuel Gayoso de Lemos], New Orleans, January 15, 1794, PC, 1447, AGI.

Long before this time, however, Nogales was and remained a crucial stop on a path in Indigenous homelands. The Yazoo maps make clear that although the Americans knew the place as Walnut Hills, this was an "Old Chickasaw settlement."[102] It was a major seasonal crossing for Chickasaws and Choctaws "on their return from Hunting on the West side" of the Mississippi.[103] Manuel Gayoso de Lemos identified some of the inhabitants of these homelands in his instructions for the commandant at Nogales, in which he incorrectly noted that Choctaw villages nearby were "in the jurisdiction" of Nogales. Choctaws would not have recognized Spanish abilities to settle questions of justice, but in Gayoso de Lemos's estimation such a scenario was unlikely because of their friendship with the Spanish. He expected them to bring their furs to trade, and that officials at the fort would acquire the goods that Choctaws required.[104] In March and April of 1791 when the Choctaw chief Ytilacana from the town of Bonefinca and six Choctaw warriors from various towns visited, Gayoso de Lemos provided provisions for the warriors, and embarked in his goleta with Ytilacana to travel about a league upriver. He learned of their efforts to open the path up to Black River, which remained uncertain.[105] Other leaders made clear that the Spanish were not yet welcome. Taboca and Franchimastabe, a Choctaw headman of the village of West Yazoo, protested against the construction of the Spanish fort in 1791 because they said that hunters would trade their deerskins there instead of bringing them

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[102] [n.a.], "Mapa de los terrenos de las compañías de Virginia y de la Carolina del Sur en el Yazoo, entre los ríos Mississippi, Natchez, Mobile y Tennessee," [known April 1, 1791], MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 138, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19291 [accessed August 15, 2024], ED_089_R_001, image 247 (the Spanish map); [n.a.], "Mapa de los terrenos de las compañías de Virginia y de la Carolina del Sur en el Yazoo, entre los ríos Misisipi, Natchez, Mobile y Tennessee," [known April 1, 1791], MP-FLORIDA_LUISIANA, 138BIS, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/19292 [accessed August 15, 2024p, ED_089_R_001, 248 (the American sketch).

[103] [William Panton to Carondelet, Pensacola, April 14, 1792], 190–92, in ["Correspondencia del Sr. William Panton, 1785 a 1799"], legajo 1, no. 5, Louisiana documents from the National Archive of Cuba (Fondos Floridas), MF 6.1, Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans.

[104] Manuel Gayoso de Lemos, "Instruccíones que devera observar el comandante del Puerto de los Nogales," April 1, 1791, PC, 2352, AGI.

[105] Manuel Gayoso de Lemos to [Esteban] Miró, Natchez, May 10, 1791, PC, 2352, AGI.

home.[106] Estevan Minor was sent to meet with Franchimastabe to explain the post as a barrier to US expansion and a more convenient trading location than Mobile while the Spanish went ahead and constructed it.[107]

In further testament to the fact that Nogales was a Native American place, it too was surrounded by rivercane. From April 11 to 17, 1791, the Spanish at Nogales spent a week burning the rivercane and trees to turn them into bricks for the post's oven to bake their bread.[108] Immigrants intending to become villagers in Nogales were invited to bring furs, tobacco, linen, hemp, firewood ("cordeleria"), flour, all kinds of livestock, salted meats, all types of provisions and iron and wood tools duty-free. They could send them at their own cost to permitted posts and pay the standard six-percent duty on them.[109] So construction of Nogales was underway, but its Spanish population was still thin.

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In 1792 William Panton accused the Americans of casting their sights on the Mississippi "down as far as Chickasaw Bluff."[110] Like Chake Thlocko, it was a place of many names. Zéspedes called it "Repechos Chickesawes." "Repechos Chickesawes" became known as the Barrancas de Margot and Chickasaw Bluffs.[111] It was two hundred leagues north of New Orleans and where Chickasaws had offered to cede to the Americans land five miles square.[112]

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[106] Peach, *Rivers of Power*, 97.
[107] Coker and Watson, *Indian Traders of the Southeastern Spanish Borderlands*, 167.
[108] Manuel Gayoso de Lemos to [Esteban] Miró, Natchez, May 10, 1791, PC, 2352, AGI ("se coninuo el desmonte y se pegó fuego a las Cañas y Arboles que se habían contado, y se empezaron á haz en Ladrillos de adobes para el horno").
[109] Manuel Gayoso de Lemos, April 1, 1791, "Instruccíon para la admision de Pobladores en el Partido de los Nogales," PC, 2352, AGI.
[110] [William Panton to Carondelet, Pensacola, April 14, 1792], 190–92, in ["Correspondencia del Sr. William Panton, 1785 a 1799"], legajo 1, no. 5, Louisiana documents from the National Archive of Cuba (Fondos Floridas), MF 6.1, Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans.
[111] [Vicente Zéspedes to Josef de Ezpeleta], October 14, 1787, Papeles de Cuba, 1395, AGI ("Repechos");
[112] [Vicente Zéspedes to Josef de Ezpeleta], October 14, 1787, Papeles de Cuba, 1395, AGI.

Chickasaws, who called the Mississippi River the Wolf River, used Euro-American ideas about property to oppose colonization. These strategies ranged from making arguments about the valuation of their hunting lands and the need to have them surveyed prior to sale, to reminders to United States officials that the country had not conquered Chickasaws during the American Revolution, to making claims about Chickasaw conquest over the Shawnees to stake claims to the Tennessee Valley.[113] They also invited Spanish alliances. William Panton knew Chickasaw Bluffs well enough to call it "the Heart of the Hunting Ground." He advocated for the construction of a Spanish warehouse "to frustrate the designs of the Americans on that side," who were planning to build houses.[114] In 1793 Americans led by George Rogers Clark's nephew managed to enter the Mississippi from the Ohio to disembark at the Barrancas de Margot. They distributed to the American-allied Chickasaw diplomat Piomingo guns, balls, powder, barrels of maize, sugar, and salt. They left behind someone who had the knowledge to repair weaponry and promised to return to continue to fight against the Spanish.[115]

Carondelet said the Americans acting "under the pretext of carrying corn to the Indians" hid their intentions of establishing themselves at those posts. He worried that American gifts of corn to supply Chickasaws in their conflict with Creeks would give the Americans an excuse to sail down the river.[116] By 1793 the Spanish were receiving details of American attempts to

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[113] "McGillivray to Miró, June 24, 1789," in Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 239 (Wolf River); Lucas P. Kelley, "Clear Boundaries or Shared Territory: Chickasaw and Cherokee Resistance to American Colonization, 1785–1816," in *The Power of Maps and the Politics of Borders: Papers from the Conference Held at the American Philosophical Society, October 2019: Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 110, no. 4 (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society Press, 2021), 93–116, esp. 100.
[114] [William Panton to Carondelet, Pensacola, April 14, 1792], 190–92, in ["Correspondencia del Sr. William Panton, 1785 a 1799"], legajo 1, no. 5, Louisiana documents from the National Archive of Cuba (Fondos Floridas), MF 6.1, Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans.
[115] [Francisco Luis Héctor de Carondelet to Manuel de Godoy], New Orleans, September 27, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI.
[116] [Francisco Luis Héctor de Carondelet to Manuel de Godoy], n.p., March 30, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI ("la Bahia de tampa está en las tierras de los baxos Crikes, quienes, aunque unidas con los altos" and "los movimientos, y preparativos que hacian los Americanos, para formar establecimientos á las orillas del Misisipi en las Barrancas de Margot, en Muscle Shoals, sobre el tenesi, y sobre el Yasu . . . baxo el pretexto de llevar Maiz á los Indios").

change Chickasaw hunting and agricultural practices, or their "ideas to introduce the industry of farming to these Indians." The Americans aimed to provide corn, iron for hoes, harnesses, and other farming tools.[117] Manuel Gayoso de Lemos understood what American officials at the time called the Plan of Civilization, though like American officials at the time he failed to see, recognize, and name extant Indigenous agricultural practices.[118] He did, however, understand the Americans' aims: to reduce Chickasaw hunting territory; to proactively produce corn and other grain for the subsistence of Chickasaws' American allies; and to use food aid as an entering wedge for the start of an American settlement.[119]

In 1795 the borders of rivers changed on paper because of the Treaty of Greenville and the Treaty of San Lorenzo. Shawnees, Leni Lenape, and Miami leaders met US negotiators to end the Western Confederacy War and, lacking the British support that had sustained them, they ceded their homelands south of the Ohio River, making less contentious the flood of American colonizers there.[120] Having spent the preceding pages writing skeptically about the capacity of a treaty to enforce lived realities on the ground, it is important to note a key change. It was also during the 1790s that the US government and its settler colonists developed the notion of preemption. Whereas the Proclamation Line of 1763 mandated that land purchases be made through the imperial state to constrain settler colonists' expansion, preemption was a tool of the state that fed settler colonists' land hunger. It was articulated in treaty articles in which Native American townspeople agreed, if they were in the future to be amenable to selling land, to sell it

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[117] Manuel Gayoso de Lemos to Luis Héctor de Carondelet, Natchez, May 16, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI.
[118] Manuel Gayoso de Lemos to Luis Héctor de Carondelet, Natchez, May 16, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI; Herrmann, *No Useless Mouth*, ch. 7
[119] Manuel Gayoso de Lemos to Luis Héctor de Carondelet, Natchez, May 16, 1793, PC, 1447, AGI.
[120] Andrew R. L. Cayton, "'Noble Actors' upon 'the Theatre of Honour': Power and Civility in the Treaty of Greenville," in *Contact Points*, ed. Cayton and Teute, 238; Patrick Griffin, *American Leviathan: Empire, Nation, and Revolutionary Frontier* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007), 248–250; Herrmann, *No Useless Mouth*, ch. 5.

only to the United States.[121] The treaty of San Lorenzo in the same year allowed the Spanish and Americans to agree about which Native Americans lived "in" which country's boundaries. It settled American access to the Mississippi, to a northern border between Spanish and US claims at the thirty-first parallel and a plan to survey and demarcate it, and about trade. Article IV limited navigation of the Mississippi to Spanish subjects and US citizens, granting Americans most-favored-nation trading status.[122] Article V of the treaty limited each country to making treaties with Native Americans inside their new borders. It agreed "to make the advantages of the Indian trade common and mutualy beneficial to their respective Subjects and Citizens."[123] Article II of the treaty fixed that border at a point to be drawn in the future from the Mississippi River heading east.[124]

That work would take time to get underway. In 1794, Alexander McGillivray became ill on his way home from his cowpen on Little River.[125] After travelling through inclement weather, he made it to Panton's house, where he died.[126] He was buried in Panton's garden.[127] After negotiations over the treaty of San Lorenzo had concluded, Manuel Gayoso de Lemos complained that earlier Spanish conquests had not been taken into account.[128] Casa Calvo explained in 1800 that the boundary line placed most Native Americans in lands claimed by the United States. He said that only some Seminoles (though he called them the "Talapuse tribe")

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[121] Michael A. Blaakman, "'Haughty republicans,' Native Land, and the Promise of Preemption," *William and Mary Quarterly* 78, no. 2 (April 2021): 243–50, esp. 246, 249, 250.
[122] This granted the right of deposit—what Paul Gilje calls free trade—to Americans coming into New Orleans. Paul A. Gilje, *Free Trade and Sailors' Rights in the War of 1812* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 131.
[123] "Treaty of Friendship, Limits, and Navigation Between Spain and The United States; October 27, 1795," *The Avalon Project*, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/sp1795.asp [accessed August 28, 2024].
[124] "Treaty of Friendship, Limits, and Navigation Between Spain and The United States; October 27, 1795," *The Avalon Project*, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/sp1795.asp [accessed August 28, 2024].
[125] "Panton to Lachlan McGillivray, April 10, 1794," Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 363.
[126] Coker and Watson, *Indian Traders of the Southeastern Spanish Borderlands*, 177.
[127] Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks*, 53.
[128] Manuel Gayoso de Lemos to [Juan Procopio de Bassecourt Thieulaine y Bryas López de Ochoa, Conde de Santa Clara], New Orleans, September 24, 1797, f. 426rv, PC, 2355, AGI.

remained from the surroundings of San Marcos de Apalache to San Augustín. In his words, "the Choctaw, and Chickasaw nations are entirely in American territory, to the north of the dividing line," along with the majority of "the Talapuses, and all of the Cherokees."[129] The northern border between US and Spanish claims had rebounded the mouth of the Yazoo River as an American waterway.[130] To the north, the Spanish accordingly moved their fort at las Barrancas from the east to the west bank of the Mississippi River—a move that Native Americans recognized as a way to continue to protect Native American territory from American encroachment.[131]

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When the Spanish described riverine posts including Placaminas as keys, they documented for historians how officials and mapmakers were imagining space. Keys were important because they locked and thus controlled entry and exit, but in imagining locks and keys up and down the Mississippi River, the Spanish consistently imagined terraqueous posts as more monitorable than they really were. The identities of some of the officials may have changed, but the imperial officials establishing forts and outposts in the 1700s would have recognized what other officials were still doing in the 1790s. Keys were a dream. People were closer to being right when they thought of places as hearts or heartlands, but no closer in their quest to exercise control over them. Carondelet, though he was insecure about Spanish claims to

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[129] [Sebastián Nicolás de Bari Calvo de la Puerta y O'Farrill] to Mariano Luis de Urquijo, New Orleans, October 8, 1800, f. 517r, PC, 2355, AGI; "Tratado de Amistad, Límites n Navegación celebrado entre España y los Estados Unidos de América, firmado en San Lorenzo el Real el 27 de octubre de 1795, y otros documentos relativos al mismo," *PARES*, https://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/description/5287845?nm [accessed August 1, 2024].

[130] Manuel Gayoso de Lemos to [Juan Procopio de Bassecourt Thieulaine y Bryas López de Ochoa, Conde de Santa Clara], New Orleans, September 24, 1797, f. 426rv, PC, 2355, AGI.

[131] Jack D. L. Holmes, "Spanish Treaties with West Florida Indian, 1784–1802," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (October 1969): 140–54, esp. 153 (the movement of the fort), 153 (protection of interests). The word "barrancas" may have indicated the ravines of streams. Sluyter, *Black Ranching Frontiers*, 24.

space on the Mississippi, used words to try to constitute the borders of his map of Cherokee homelands. His confident words along rivers must be read alongside the unannotated places on his hybrid map, which must be further juxtaposed with maps, letters, and reports of the same places made for the British.

Through this consultation of a mixed array of sources it is obvious that these were places full of Native American townspeople, the mapmakers they married, and the outmigrants they welcomed. It becomes possible to interpret abandoned forts on maps as places of flourishing cornfields, and old towns as seasonal crossing places still in use. Rivers become layered homelands that British and Spanish officials lacked the knowledge and confidence to comprehensively map, and life-sustaining places of turtle fishing, rivercane, and cornfields. As late as the 1790s those rivers remained unnavigable to those who lacked expertise and knowledge.