

WILLIAM P. McCARTHY

## *The Chevalier Macarty Mactigue*

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THE YEAR 1750 found the position of France in Illinois in precarious balance. The Indians were disenchanted with the promises of their French masters, and the local habitants were showing a pronounced indifference toward the fortunes of the New World empire, of which their own colony was proving one of the weakest points. In addition, the colony's defenses, necessary protection for the vital chain of contact between Canada and Louisiana, were dilapidated and scarcely capable of awing the local Indian tribes, let alone maintaining a strong French presence in the area. In all, it seemed possible, in that troubled year, that La Salle's dream of a French empire from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico was about to be undone.<sup>1</sup>

In France the dangerous situation in Illinois was realized by such men as the former governor of Louisiana, Jean Baptiste le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville, and in short order by the Ministry of the Marine, which held the chief responsibility for administering the colony and which was evidencing a growing concern over England's ambitions in the Ohio Valley. With this in mind, the Ministry of the Marine de-

1. Theodore Calvin Pease and Ernestine Jenison, eds., *Illinois on the Eve of the Seven Years' War, 1747-1755* (Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library, XXIX, Springfield, 1940), *passim*.

terminated to implement a period of renewal in the colony of Illinois. A new commandant was to be named to fill the vacancy left by the death of the Chevalier de Bertet in 1749, and efforts were to be made to construct a new fortress on the Mississippi that would be adequate to dominate the entire area.

At this juncture, there appeared before the French court at Fontainebleau an officer of colonial troops possessed of a simple request: to be named commandant of the Illinois country. He was Jean Jacques Macarty Mactigue, whose request was a presumptuous intrusion. Although a competent officer, an engineer, and at that time the senior captain of the Louisiana garrison, Macarty was a typical product of a colonial military system which demanded little more than that an officer show minimal competence and attention to duty. That he came requesting a critical post, the proper administration of which called for more than he was able to provide, mattered very little. Macarty appealed to those court circles in which he had some contacts, and in a short time the appointment was his.<sup>2</sup>

The new Illinois commandant had been born in France in 1708 to a family of Irish military refugees and adventurers which had fled to France after the collapse of Irish Jacobitism.<sup>3</sup> His father, Theodore Macarty, had served in Ireland under James II and then entered military service in France along with a number of his kinsmen.<sup>4</sup> In customary

2. *Ibid.*, xli-xlii. Macarty's chief patron at the court was Lord Clare, commander of the Irish Brigade.

3. Archives Nationales, Colonies (MS, Paris), D2C, 51: 106; hereafter cited as A.N., Colonies. This is a list of Louisiana officers dated April 8, 1737, which gives Macarty's age as twenty-nine. He was descended from the MacCarthys MacTeige (in French, Mactique) Dall of Ilen from Carberry in Ireland, thirteen of whom (including the head of the house, Ensign John MacDonnell MacCarthy MacTeige) had been dispossessed by Cromwell. Restored by Charles II, they lost the remnants of their estates in 1692. See John O'Hart, *The Irish and Anglo-Irish Landed Gentry When Cromwell Came to Ireland* (Dublin, 1884), 283, 430.

4. Archivo General de Indias, Santo Domingo, legajo, 2547. This document lists Theodore as a major serving under the Conde de Cruzol. He is also noted as a major in A.N., Colonies, D2C, 51: 106. Jean Jacques'

fashion the elder Macarty gave one of his sons to the church and the other two to the army, since for the penniless and unpropertied lower nobility there were no other sources of honorable employment.<sup>5</sup> One son was commissioned as a cadet in the *Mousquetaires Noires* in 1722 at the age of fourteen. Shortly thereafter he passed into the famed Irish Brigade as a lieutenant with the help of Lord Clare, with whom his family had some connections.<sup>6</sup> The patronage of Lord Clare was to prove useful in later years also, and may very well have been responsible for Macarty's securing the rank of aide major of *Mousquetaires Marines* and thus departing, at the end of 1732, on *La Gironde* for Louisiana and a career in the colonial forces.<sup>7</sup>

The New Orleans which he entered was a rather unpromising colony, quite unlike the charming Creole city nephew, Florence Maccarty, Duc de Clancarty-Blarney, in applying for a naval commission in 1774 submitted a list containing the names of ninety-five Maccartys who had served in France from 1690 to 1774, including five of the MacTeiges; see A.N., Marine, C7, 191, for the dossier of Florence Maccarty.

5. Pease and Jenison, eds., *Illinois on the Eve of the Seven Years' War*, 703. Macarty notes that one of his brothers held a benefice in Poitou. His other brother, Barthelmy Daniel, entered the Dillon Regiment in 1729 and transferred to the *Mousquetaires Marines* in 1736. See A.N., Colonies, E295, the personnel dossier of Barthelmy Daniel Macarty.

Various authors, among them Grace King the student of Creole genealogy, state that Macarty's brother was curé of Yorange in Poitou. In checking the Archives de la Vienne, I was able to establish that Joseph Guy Alexandre Macarty was "Vicar d'Azay-sur Thouet" as of July, 1752 (Archives de la Vienne, E4, 13). Unfortunately, it cannot be established with absolute certainty that this clergyman was Macarty's brother, but he is the only Macarty noted as holding any type of benefice in Poitou at the time of Macarty's stay in Illinois. It therefore seems highly probable that this was the brother referred to by Macarty.

6. Lord Clare continued to act as his patron well into the 1750's. See A.N., Colonies, E295, the dossier of Jean Jacques Macarty. See also A.N., Colonies, B67, 89, letter of the Minister of the Marine to Lord Clare, promising to help Macarty, dated July 8, 1738.

7. Macarty left Rochefort on *La Gironde* with 150 recruits from the Ile d'Oleron barracks on Nov. 15, 1732. See A.N., Colonies, C13, 14: 93. It cannot be stated exactly when or how Macarty secured his commission. When assisting many of the younger Irish officers in France, Clare customarily worked through the curé of Saint Sulpice, which was the parish in which most of the exiles were located. Unfortunately, records relating to any direct involvement by Clare in Macarty's appointment are unavailable.

which Americans would find in 1803. It was still a raw frontier town of wooden buildings and log huts, populated by slaves, soldiers, adventurers, and exiles. The town's small aristocracy was composed of the families of the officers and civil servants of the colony, and despite the area's unpromising conditions, they managed, as have colonial populations of every age, to impart a modest urbanity to their new environment and bring to it some of the graces of the one they had left in France. The city did not offer a great deal to young officers, but Macarty seems to have fitted in rather well, and when, in 1733, Bienville was sent out a third time to administer the colony, Macarty immediately attached himself to the new regime.

Bienville seems to have been impressed with Macarty and probably had something to do with the latter's appointment as aide major and adjutant of New Orleans. Macarty repaid the confidence with loyalty that tended to run to excess. Bienville was engaged in a dispute with his predecessor, Governor Périer, who refused to vacate the executive mansion. Bienville dispatched Macarty to order Périer to leave. Unfortunately, Macarty arrived in a rather intoxicated condition, and when Périer refused the demand, a sharp argument followed, and Macarty threatened the former governor with physical violence if he remained in the house. Informed of the incident, an embarrassed Bienville apologized, but not before Périer wrote to France complaining of the matter and accusing Macarty of being nothing more than a drunken lout.<sup>8</sup> The matter caused little stir in France, but it proved to be only the first of many

8. A.N., Colonies, F3, 24: 245. This is Périer's letter of March 6, 1733, regarding his dispute with Macarty and Bienville. There are no specific references to Bienville's appointment of Macarty as aide major and adjutant of New Orleans. However, Macarty's first appearance in these posts was immediately after the arrival of Bienville. This fact, coupled with Macarty's poor relations with Périer, leads to the conclusion that Macarty secured the two posts as a result of attaching himself to Bienville immediately after the latter's arrival. The commission aide major was purely military, whereas the combined position called "aide major and adjutant of New Orleans" included some civilian activities and obligations.

instances in which temper and liquor would lead Macarty into difficulties.

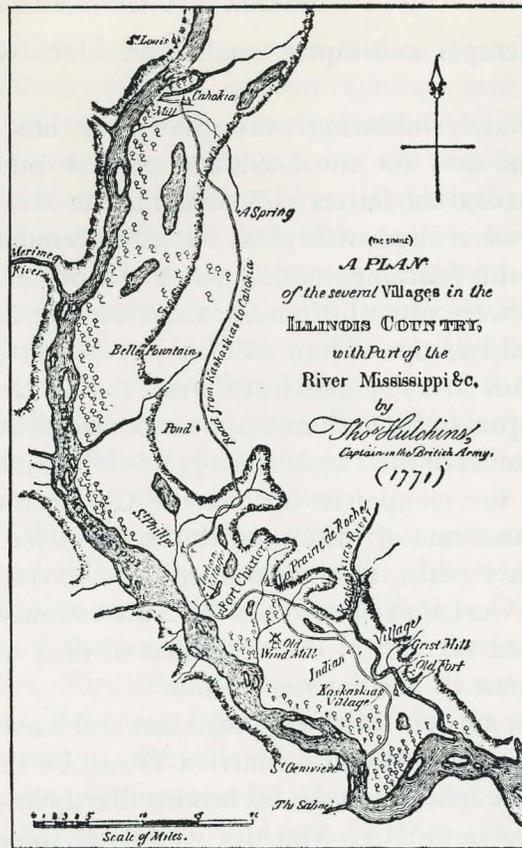
The years immediately following were quiet ones, however. Promotion was slow for the Louisiana officers, and their endless petitions and the letters of Bienville to the Minister of the Marine were filled with pleas for advancement and descriptions of the hardships under which the officers served, in posts that were often little more than huts set in the midst of malarial swamps. From aide major, Macarty was promoted captain in 1735 and transferred to the engineers.<sup>9</sup> Slight glimpses of his activities appear occasionally in government dispatches of the 1730's and 1740's. His name occurs in reports of the campaigns against the Chickasaw tribe as well as in accounts of inspection duties at various of the colony's military posts. He is also mentioned in connection with a fatal duel that almost cost him his commission, and in an official account of the dreariness of duty at the remote Miami post in northwestern Ohio.<sup>10</sup>

The years were not entirely filled with boredom and hardship, however, for in 1735 Macarty married Françoise de Trépagnier, and in the following year his brother Barthelmy Daniel transferred to Louisiana. Macarty was slowly able to build a small estate from the proceeds of an indigo plantation north of New Orleans. His family grew to include two sons and three daughters, and he settled into the routine of being a colonial garrison officer.<sup>11</sup> Yet he still hungered after

9. A.N., Colonies, B63, 604, contains the notification to Macarty that he had been promoted captain, effective Sept. 27, 1735.

10. A.N., Colonies, B64, 521. See also A.N., Colonies, D2C, 51, for duty at the Miami post, on the Maumee River in Ohio. For the duel incident see A.N., Colonies, B66, 353.

11. Pease and Jenison, eds., *Illinois on the Eve of the Seven Years' War*, 282. The details regarding Macarty's children are from a number of sources, the principal one being his dossier in A.N., Colonies, E295. The children were Jean Baptiste, Augustin, Jeanne, Elizabeth, and Catherine Ursele. There are in the dossier a number of letters and petitions relating to their application for a military pension in recognition of Macarty's services. There is also extant a dossier on Jean Baptiste that shows his rise from *Garde Marine* in July, 1754, to "Chef de Division and Major General de la Marine et des escadres" in May, 1786. Augustin, after brief service with the Irish Brigade, went out



The Illinois country as it was mapped by Captain Thomas Hutchins of the British Army in 1771.

military promotion. Being an aging captain was not a very satisfying existence, but then that seemed to be the normal course of things in Louisiana, which was filled with aging officers whose careers were stagnating.

His opportunity finally did come in 1749. By this date he was the senior captain of the colony, and when the commandant of the Illinois, Chevalier de Bertet, died, Macarty to Louisiana as an ensign in *La Marine*. In 1766 he was back in France with the *Mousquetaires Gris*. In 1780 he was serving with the *Grenadiers du Cap* in Santo Domingo, after which he retired to New Orleans as a planter. Elizabeth and Catherine lived most of their lives in France with their brother Jean Baptiste, and died at La Rochelle after 1800. Jeanne remained in Louisiana, and since she left a very large estate to her nephew Augustin (son of her brother Augustin) when she died in 1822, it can be assumed that she apparently inherited most of the family property. A noted eccentric, Jeanne figures in Charles Gayarre's writings about New Orleans, where she is referred to as "Mademoiselle Macarty."

directed all of his efforts to securing the vacant post for himself. Even the governor of Louisiana, the Marquis de Vaudreuil, may have added his recommendation to Macarty's request, and granted him permission to go to France to make a direct appeal to the Minister of the Marine.<sup>12</sup> Once he reached France, events moved swiftly for the would-be commandant. Lord Clare again lent his assistance, and there were other influential Irishmen at the French court willing to help a countryman seeking advancement. Clancartys, Dillons, Lallys, D'Arcys were always to be found at Versailles and Fontainebleau; and in the end Macarty not only had his commission as a brevet major, commandant of the Illinois, but also had the honor of induction into the Order of Saint Louis. His old commander, Bienville, was accorded the right to confer the order's rank of chevalier on Macarty, much to the old man's delight, he being ever eager to see his former subordinates honored and promoted.<sup>13</sup>

At this point there came a strange change in Macarty. Having returned to Louisiana with his commission — the ambition of years — in his hands, he suddenly asked to be relieved of the new post and appointed lieutenant of the king at New Orleans instead.<sup>14</sup> He gave as his reasons his family's need for his presence at New Orleans and the danger that his absence would lead to the ruin of his estate. Whether or not these reasons were his or those of his family cannot readily be determined, but one can speculate that his wife would not be eager to see him posted to a command as far from home as Illinois, and it may have been her sentiments

12. Pease and Jenison, eds., *Illinois on the Eve of the Seven Years' War*, xli, 478. The last reference is to a letter written by Macarty to Antoine Louis Rouillé, Minister of the Marine from 1749 to 1754, in which Macarty mentions seeing Rouillé at Versailles.

13. A.N., Colonies, B92, 206, for correspondence regarding Macarty's induction into the Order of Saint Louis by Bienville, July 16, 1750. For information on the Irish at the court see Richard Hayes, *Biographical Dictionary of Irishmen in France* (Dublin, 1949).

14. Pease and Jenison, eds., *Illinois on the Eve of the Seven Years' War*, 281-82, Macarty to Rouillé, May 27, 1751, asking that he be left at New Orleans.

that he was expressing rather than his own. Whatever the reasons, they made no impression at the Ministry of the Marine. The commission had been granted, a commandant was needed, and he must go. That, as far as the government was concerned, settled the matter.

On August 20, 1751, the bateaux of Macarty's party set out from New Orleans for Illinois.<sup>15</sup> With him went four companies of infantry to relieve the worn-out troops of the Illinois garrison; also with the party was Jean Bernard Bossu, a captain in the French Marines who was to record the wonders of North America for a receptive French public. It was a long trip up the river, and at least twenty of Macarty's soldiers died en route.<sup>16</sup> The party reached Kaskaskia in December and found a situation that justified the government's worst fears. The colony appeared to be on the verge of dissolution. Indians roamed at will, unimpressed by the ragged garrison at a few ruined forts, most of whose members longed only for an opportunity to escape the swampy colony. The habitant population appeared hostile to the seemingly parasitical military establishment and indifferent to, or unaware of, the colony's increasing decay. Macarty could hardly have been surprised by the situation since his orders covered all of these matters and gave specific directions as to what he was to do about them. The orders were comprehensive: quiet the Indians, restore the colony's defenses, reestablish morale among the troops, effect a renewal of civilian confidence in the government, and prevent marriages between Indians and the French.<sup>17</sup> It would be a formidable task for the ablest of administrators. For Macarty it was impossible.

One of the principal tasks required of the new commandant was reconstruction of the colony's defenses. Illinois was

15. Jean Bernard Bossu, *Travels through That Part of North America Formerly Called Louisiana* (London, 1771), I: 22-23.

16. Pease and Jenison, eds., *Illinois on the Eve of the Seven Years' War*, 586.

17. *Ibid.*, 298-311, for Macarty's orders.

to be the site of a new fortress which would serve as an administrative center and hold the Indians in check.<sup>18</sup> From the outset, however, the matter of the fort was to prove a vexing problem.

The government, as always, wished to economize. It had been concluded that a large four-bastion structure capable of housing three or four hundred men and possessed of facilities for holding large reserves of flour would be adequate. The fort might be either of stone or wood as costs and circumstances would best allow. Location, too, had been considered; the government wanted the fort as close as possible to Kaskaskia, the natural capital of the colony. Here, however, a difference of opinion arose. Macarty and some others opted for a site nearer to the original Fort de Chartres in the belief that a fort there would act as an inducement to the habitants to move to the far bank of the Mississippi and exploit its excellent soil. They further argued that it would be easier to supply by boat a fort on the Mississippi than one on the Kaskaskia.<sup>19</sup> As another alternative it was suggested that Fort de Chartres be rebuilt on a much more lavish and permanent scale. The government continued to vacillate, but in the end decided to use the old site.

Instructed to draw up a plan and a cost estimate, Macarty and François Saucier, the chief engineer, had the papers ready by March, 1752, and forwarded them to Vaudreuil. The government was shocked by the estimate of 450,000 livres, and Saucier took the sharpness of its reply so personally that he was soon complaining of having enemies in the Ministry of the Marine. The government made it clear that the Saucier estimate was outrageous; and the new governor of Louisiana, Louis Billouart, Sieur de Kerlérec, and his intendant, Vincent Guillaume le Kenichel d'Auber-ville, eventually cut the estimated costs by 200,000 livres. As Macarty had prematurely let out contracts for stone, it was agreed that the idea of a wooden fort was to be dropped in

18. *Ibid.*, xlii.

19. *Ibid.*, 710, 440-41, 423.

the interests of continuity. The government had so confused the issue, however, that as late as September, 1752, Macarty felt compelled to inquire of Vaudreuil whether the project was to result in a true fort or merely in stone barracks flanked by bastions.<sup>20</sup> To this, Vaudreuil hesitantly replied that it was to be a fort on the lines originally agreed upon, but only if costs could be kept minimal and roughly in line with a revised estimate of 270,000 livres submitted by Saucier.<sup>21</sup> By the beginning of 1753 stone was being transported by sledge from nearby quarries, and masons were at work on the structure.

Once commenced, construction progressed rapidly, despite difficulties with local laborers and the problems of obtaining cut stone. By August, 1753, however, French government officials had thought over the whole matter and decided to cancel the project in the best interests of reducing the costs of maintaining the colony. But Governor Kerlérec objected. He argued that the work had already commenced and would be even further along by the time his messengers could ascend the river and order Macarty to suspend operations. He proposed, instead, a plan which he had worked out with Bernard de Verges, chief engineer of Louisiana. It would reduce the costs more than 50,000 livres, by reducing the thickness of the fort's outer walls. They argued that since no cannon were likely to be employed against the fort, the decreased thickness of the walls would not reduce effectiveness.<sup>22</sup> The government was temporarily mollified and agreed to allow the work to continue. Still, the idea of abandoning the project remained in the minds of the budget-conscious clerks at the Ministry of the Marine, where plans were being formulated to forestall the English at a point closer to the Atlantic coast, by means

20. *Ibid.*, 694-95.

21. *Ibid.*, 598-603. In this communication of April 25, 1752, Vaudreuil agreed to let Macarty and Saucier make the final decision regarding the location of the fort. See also *ibid.*, 881, which refers to the revised estimates of the cost.

22. *Ibid.*, 827-29.

of a line of posts stretching from Canada to the Ohio River, with the key point at the juncture of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers, hundreds of miles east of Illinois.

The new plan seemed to end the need for a powerful fort on the Mississippi, and the budget for 1754 was therefore revised to eliminate allowances for construction at Fort de Chartres. Once again Governor Kerlérec protested. The fort, he pointed out, was already largely completed. It had been undertaken "after careful consideration," and to abandon it now would be wasteful. Furthermore, it would be months before Macarty could be informed of the final decision and construction halted. Kerlérec submitted that it would be less costly to allow the completion of the project than to throw away the money already put into it. Reluctantly the Ministry of the Marine agreed and made no further efforts to halt construction.<sup>23</sup>

Macarty seems to have been too preoccupied with construction and local problems to have taken any part in Kerlérec's disputes with France. He had begun to implement some of the other parts of his instructions and was soon embroiled in bitter disputes with virtually everyone from the local habitants to the governor general of Canada. He seems to have been occupied also in efforts to obtain his own transfer to New Orleans and a place for his oldest son in the Garde Marine at Rochefort.<sup>24</sup>

From the outset Macarty's regime was plagued by difficulty and disaffection. On the night of February 26, 1752, twenty-one men of the garrison deserted in a body. Macarty summoned a party of militia and set off in pursuit, only to have two of the men convince the others to decamp in the night. Enraged, Macarty arrested the two men and ordered

23. *Ibid.*, 881-82. See also A.N., Colonies, C11, 99: 470, a letter from De L'Isle Dieu to the Minister of the Marine, dealing with the Fort de Chartres project.

24. Pease and Jenison, eds., *Illinois on the Eve of the Seven Years' War*, 702-3, 782-83. His son Jean Baptiste did enter the *Garde Marine* in August, 1754; see A.N., Marine, C7, the dossier of Jean Baptiste, and A.N., Colonies, E295, for similar material in another dossier.

them jailed. Appeals then came from the local habitants to release the men. Macarty remained adamant until the appeals changed to threats and the habitants began to take up arms. To prevent open fighting between the garrison and the local citizenry he released the men, but only after bitter words with their leaders.<sup>25</sup>

Informed of the incident, Vaudreuil wrote to Macarty chiding him for his lack of success in handling the habitants. He pointed out that most of them were of Canadian ancestry and therefore rather high spirited. Gentleness would secure the best results with them, in the Governor's view. Beyond this, nothing was said of the matter, as Vaudreuil was willing to rely on Macarty's good judgment in the future. That this might have been unwise began to become evident by the end of 1752, when a chorus of complaints against the new regime began to reach New Orleans.<sup>26</sup>

Macarty's bad temper had been apparent as early as the Périer incident of 1733. His general irascibility and tendency toward arrogance seemed to become more pronounced after his arrival in Illinois, and sooner or later he aroused the ire of most of those who came in contact with him. Government officials, clergymen, and habitants, all complained of his general tactlessness and lack of consideration.

The strongest criticism came from a man equally noted for his evil temper, Michelange, Marquis Duquesne de Menneville, governor general of New France, 1752-1755. Duquesne was engaged in 1753 in efforts to implement the new plan for constructing forts in the Ohio region, and he settled upon Illinois as the ideal base from which to supply his scattered posts. That Illinois was already acting as the supply base for most of the northern garrisons of Louisiana never seemed to enter into his thinking, and when Macarty and his post commanders failed to provide requested supplies, they drew down the Governor General's wrath.

25. Pease and Jenison, eds., *Illinois on the Eve of the Seven Years' War*, 524-28, for Macarty's account of the desertion affair.

26. *Ibid.*, 618-20, Vaudreuil to Macarty, April 23, 1752.

Duquesne angrily wrote to the Minister of the Marine complaining of Macarty and alleging that he was pursuing "an infamous line of conduct" in Illinois.<sup>27</sup>

According to Duquesne, Illinois was in more wretched condition under Macarty than it had been in 1750. Trade had been limited to brandy and was controlled by Macarty, whose activities had demoralized the Indians, the habitants, and the troops of his own garrison. Farms were being neglected and the regular trade was breaking down since Canadian traders hesitated to enter the area. He recommended the removal of Macarty, "who is said to be more drunk than the Indians," adding that the Illinois troops were on the verge of mutiny. Whether or not Macarty made much of a reply to these charges is unknown. Governor Kerlérec seems to have made little of the whole matter, though Macarty was directed to reserve a large supply of flour for feeding the numerous troops being sent to the Ohio area. He obeyed his orders so scrupulously that by 1754 some of the Louisiana posts were complaining of near starvation on account of their not being supplied from Illinois.<sup>28</sup>

Charges against Macarty continued to come in, however, from the Jesuits. In 1754 Father Michel Baudouin requested, in the interests of religion and peace, that when Macarty was relieved, he should be replaced by his aide, Captain Neyon de Villiers. Father Baudouin intimated that Macarty's blundering had led to Indian warfare and that his arrogant use of authority had led to many desertions among the troops. Kerlérec, however, considered him "a very good officer; personally agreeable, but with little talent for dealing with the savages." The truth probably lay somewhere in the middle.<sup>29</sup>

27. *Ibid.*, xlvi, 845-47.

28. *Ibid.*, 892-93.

29. *Ibid.*, 869-78; 845-47 for Duquesne's letter attacking Macarty; Kerlérec's evaluation is quoted in Clarence Walworth Alvord, *The Illinois Country, 1673-1818* (*The Centennial History of Illinois*, I, Springfield, 1920), 233, n. 23.

Despite all of these difficulties and the acrimony which must have existed in the colony, Macarty was able to participate fully in the growing effort to secure the Ohio country for France. According to one historian, "In provisions and in men Illinois was to make her full contribution to the cause of France in every Western campaign from Braddock's in 1755 to the fall of Niagara in 1759."<sup>30</sup>

Flour remained the chief military commodity of Illinois, and it was this that occupied the attentions of Macarty and his officers after 1753. The new fort was provided with ample storerooms for flour, and every effort was made to see that large supplies were available for shipment up the Ohio to Fort Duquesne, at the present site of Pittsburgh. Until the fall of Fort Duquesne in 1758, boats plied the Ohio carrying supplies.<sup>31</sup>

Illinois' garrison never numbered more than three or four hundred regulars, but it did offer critical assistance in several instances. At Braddock's defeat and again when Grant's Highlanders were repulsed, the presence of Illinois troops contributed to the French victories. During these campaigns of the French and Indian War, Illinois' own posts remained comparatively tranquil. Most of the troops were engaged in routine duties or, as at Fort Massac in 1757, in efforts to strengthen the colony for anticipated attacks by the English forces.<sup>32</sup> The colony was called on only once for a major military effort, and that campaign ended in disaster.

The disaster occurred in 1759 at Fort Niagara. Earlier that year an English force was mustered at Oswego, New York, under Sir John Prideaux and Sir William Johnson and dispatched to besiege Fort Niagara, which guarded the approaches to Canada. Appeals were made to the southern and western garrisons for relief, and the government ordered

30. Pease and Jenison, eds., *Illinois on the Eve of the Seven Years' War*, lii.

31. *Ibid.*, 1-lii; see also J. F. Snyder, "The Armament of Fort Chartres," *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society*, XI (1906): 222-24.

32. *Ibid.*

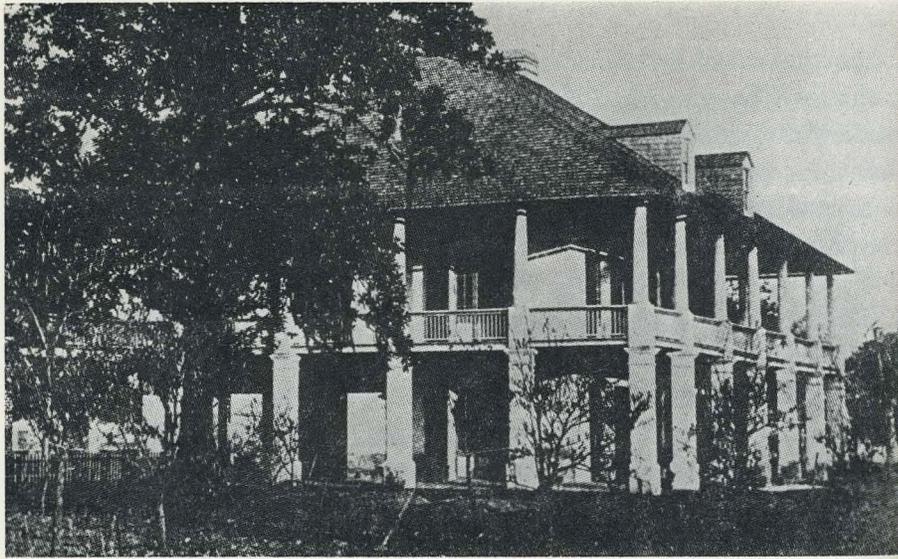
the formation of a column to break the siege. Macarty was critical of the plan, but mustered a force of three hundred soldiers and militia (six hundred Indians were picked up along the way). The command was placed under Captain Charles Philippe Aubry, and set out in early July. They went by boat down the Mississippi, up the Ohio and the Wabash, to the Miami portage, and thence down the Maumee into Lake Erie. There they joined other forces gathered to break the English siege; twelve hundred French troops and an equal number of Indians moved toward Niagara. Johnson had been informed of their coming, and on July 24, 1759, he ambushed and annihilated the column. Informed of the disaster, Macarty lamented, "At Fort Niagara I lost the flower of my army."<sup>33</sup> This action was the last campaign of French troops from the Illinois. Macarty himself had been appointed lieutenant of the king at New Orleans, and by July, 1759, he was active in his new post and again embroiled in conflicts over his conduct of affairs.<sup>34</sup>

When France lost her colonial empire in 1763, Macarty, like many other officers, retired to civilian life and devoted his attentions to his plantation. His family was then well established, one son being a naval ensign and the other a military cadet. Macarty senior seems to have been inactive in public affairs; his name appears infrequently after 1763 in government dispatches.

His name reappears, however, in 1764 in a rather ironic context in view of his past relations with the Jesuits. In accordance with a decree of Louis XV's, the Jesuits had been ordered to leave Louisiana and Illinois, and had begun a long trek to embark for Europe at New Orleans. The Jesuits had been a constant annoyance to Macarty in Illinois, with

33. *Ibid.* See also *Harper's Encyclopedia of American History*, VI, s.v. "Fort Niagara."

34. Pease and Jenison, eds., *Illinois on the Eve of the Seven Years' War*, xiii, n. 1. For Macarty's activities in New Orleans see A.N., Colonies, C13, 42: 147. He became the subject of controversy for jailing the servants of an official named Rochemore, with whom he came into conflict over trading rights and concessions.



*Jean Jacques Macarty's plantation home at New Orleans. It served as Andrew Jackson's headquarters during the Battle of New Orleans.*

their charges and complaints against him. And yet the diary of Father François Philibert Watrin, one of the exiles, noted in December of 1763:

Finally, at seven or eight leagues from New Orleans . . . [we] reached the estate of Monsieur Macarty, former lieutenant of the King in that city who, by his kind attentions recalled to . . . [our] remembrance the benevolence he had always shown at the Illinois where he had been major-commandant-general. After . . . [we] arrived in the town, he gave . . . [us] several other tokens of his friendship.<sup>35</sup>

That was one of the last acts of his life; on April 20, 1764, he died at New Orleans. Governor Dabbadie decided on full honors, turned out the garrison, fired three cannons, and had four officers act as pallbearers. "Although," he carefully noted in his diary, "these honors were not due to M. de Macarty, I have had them rendered out of consideration for his memory and his family."<sup>36</sup>

35. Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* (Cleveland, 1896-1901), LII: 287.

36. Clarence Walworth Alvord and Clarence Edwin Carter, eds., *The Critical Period, 1763-1765* (*Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library*, X, Springfield, 1915), 183.

Macarty's career had certainly not been brilliant. He had been a competent officer and little more. Yet perhaps therein lies his historical interest, for he was typical of the type of military man who built and maintained the French empire in America. It was men like Macarty, manning malarial posts along the great western rivers, who held the French possessions together until the indifference of their government made their efforts useless. Also, like many others, Macarty made an indirect contribution to the future of the land in which he served. His family lived on after him to produce two Louisiana secretaries of state, a mayor of New Orleans, an admiral, and a number of wealthy planters. Perhaps the family he founded and not his forty-one years of military service was his contribution to American history; if so, it was not an inconsiderable one.<sup>37</sup>

37. Lawrence Barthelmy Macarty, a grand-nephew of Major Macarty's, was elected the first secretary of state for Louisiana in 1812. The other secretary of state was a nephew of Major Macarty's, Jean Baptiste Macarty, who served in territorial days under Governor Claiborne; see Grace King, *Creole Families of New Orleans* (New York, 1921), 378. The mayor of New Orleans was a grandson of the major's, Augustin Macarty, who served from Sept. 7, 1815, to May 1, 1820. The admiral was Jean Baptiste Macarty, who served from 1754 to 1792; see A.N., Colonies, E295, for his personal dossier and service record. Numerous references to these Macartys may be found in the National Archives as well as the archives of the state of Louisiana and the city of New Orleans. Information on activities of the family prior to 1803 may also be found in the Archivo General de Indias.

In a letter of March 4, 1810, Gov. William C. C. Claiborne wrote of Delphine Macarty, the wife of Jean Blanque, as a member of "one of the most numerous & respectable family's [*sic*] in the County of New Orleans"; Clarence Edwin Carter, ed., *The Territorial Papers of the United States* (Washington, 1934- ), IX (*The Territory of Orleans, 1803-1812*): 870. Delphine, or Delfina, was married three times: first to Don Ramon Lopez Angullo, second to Jean Blanque, and third to Louis Lalaurie. Robert Tallant's *The Romantic New Orleanians* (New York, 1950), 247-48, gives some interesting details regarding her three marriages and her rather tragic later life. She was one of the leading socialites of New Orleans when married to Lalaurie, until it was discovered that she secretly tortured and murdered her slaves. As a result of the discovery she was hounded out of the city by a mob of enraged citizens, and spent the rest of her life in exile. The house where she had lived is still standing. It is known as the "Haunted House" and is mentioned in virtually every book on New Orleans.

Macarty's plantation home was Andrew Jackson's headquarters during the New Orleans campaign of 1815; King, *Creole Families of New Orleans*, 381-82.