

Sir,

New Orleans Nov. 7. 1812

In pursuant to your instructions of the 9th ult. I have examined the different papers of ~~Lafouche~~ #Barataria of Lafouche,

With respect to Barataria There is no obstacle whatever to the approach of Vessels not drawing more than three feet Water, may come within two leagues of this City without any difficulty whatever, There is sufficient depth of Water even at this time to come one league & a half further by polling the Vessels, the Bayou being too narrow to row, & too swampy to Cordell in high water Vessels of that description can come quite into the river, hence I am I think conceive it practicable for troops to advance by that route, and after the most critical researches, I am decidedly in favour of the place called the Temple for a military situation, in preference of any other position in that quarter, no other place can come in competition with it, but the point of Grand Terre It is true that the Channel is very close to the Island all round the point, and that a Battery erected there would completely command the Pass, but the land is very low, subject to inundation at every uncommon Tide, & surrounded by higher Ground on the same Island, again there is three other passes which communicate with the Bayou Barataria over which a post there would have ^{no} control, each of which will permit the Entry of larger vessels than can approach the Temple, to wit the pass of Bastien, the pass at the East End of Grand Terre

and the pass at the West end of Grand Ile,
all these different passes come together some distance
below the Temple. I feel quite certain that there is
not the most remote possibility of approaching this City
from Barataria without passing that place, and
altho the Bayou, which have their sources in the
neighbourhood of the Mississippi are numerous
they all concentrate at that place,
half a league below the Temple is a Bar extending
quite across the Bayou, which is in that place
near a mile wide, on which there is not more
than three feet water at any place, that is the
only obstruction to larger vessels navigating the Bayou
altho Eight feet may come into the Bay of Barataria
these only can come up to the Temple.

The ground is 5 feet above the highest Tides a bold
Bluff Banks, surrounded by water in front & on
both sides and a marsh in the rear, a Battery on
the point could play on vessels ascending for $\frac{3}{4}$
of a mile, and there is no situation within gun
shot where any Counter Battery could be erected
the coast of Bayou being nothing but a mere
as to the nature of the works, the number of men
required & the weight of metal necessary, you will
be enabled to judge from the survey of the place
accompanying this report, & from the preceding
facts, that vessels of a greater draft of water
than three feet cannot come up, & that there
is no way of attacking the place without

sailing up under the ~~full~~ rate of the guns -

With respect to the Lagoon, There is no Connection with Paratarica whatever, nor now with the Atchafalica. except the Canal five leagues from the upper mouth, There is but two mouths to the Lagoon - the most eastwardly one called the Little Bay communicates with the sea one league West of the Pass of Grand Ile it is very narrow in many places not more than 20 feet wide & in one only 3 feet deep, it is six leagues long.

The Grand Bay communicates with the sea three leagues farther Westward, The Bar lying some distance from those and the weather very foul It is probable that my sounding might not be altogether correct, I only found six feet on the Bar, but was told by the Oyster men that there was eight, from the mouth up to the forks there is from 8. to 12 feet, and the Grand Bay is 80 yards wide at the forks.

There is such a Sarcinap in the Lagoon throughout its whole course, that it is only almost impossible to give any one place the preference, I should be rather in favour of the forks, only on account of its being less accessible to the upper because ~~it~~ it would be more easily defended than any other place. The ground is very low, Except a narrow strip that is not flooded at every tide of the sea, however there is dry ground enough ~~which never~~ which bears no appearance of ever having been inundated to serve such a number of troops.

as might be necessary.

It is nine leagues from the forks to the next tolerable situation, which is Daples plantation. The ground is high enough there to keep dry and the Bayou only forty yards wide but there is nothing to prevent troops landing either above or below.

a very small detachment of Artillery with about three six or nine Pounders at each place with some infantry would effectually secure that quarter. The Creole Volunteers would perhaps be the best troops for the Sapsack, as I consider it a very unhealthy situation.

From my notes I can furnish an accurate chart of Grand Terre Grand Ile Camisade &c. but presumed that a survey of the positions chosen would be all that is important at present and having no paints they are sufficed with the pen.

April 6 General
Millsboro