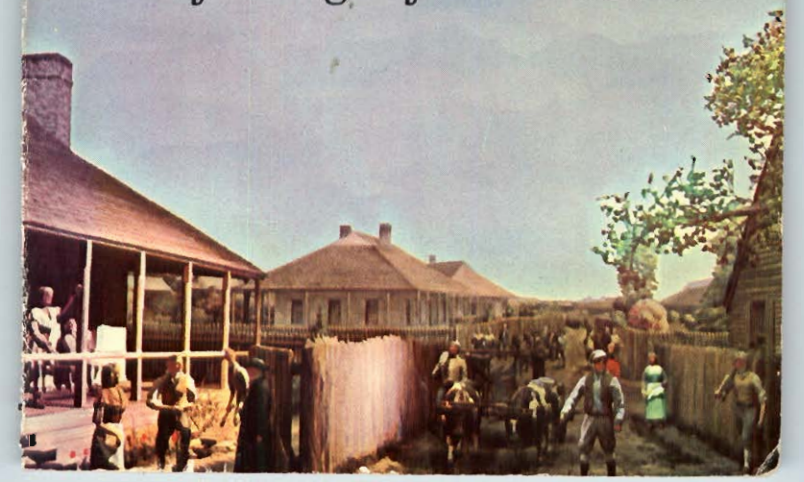
The Story of Old

Ste. Genevieve

An Account of
An Old French Town
In Upper Louisiana;
Its People and Their Homes.

With 82 Illustrations

by Gregory M. Franzwa



Monsignor Durand
Ste. Genevieve
Missouri
5 November 1975

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by Gregory M. Franzwa

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To Ted, Scott and Chris

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Preface

Ste. Genevieve is a sleeper. It isn't listed in most gazetteers, the pocket encyclopedias don't mention it, it gains only passing note in the national tour guides. Yet, it has more historic integrity than many of the great national historic towns which attract millions of visitors a year. Here one may walk up to the Ribault house and place his hand on the upright posts that form both foundation and wall. That is the same post that was put in that same place two centuries ago. It hasn't been restored, it hasn't been moved.

Without taking anything from the dedicated rebuilders of, say, Colonial Williamsburg, it must be admitted that such an act cannot be experienced there. Although the restoration is skillful and accurate, much of it was done from the ground up.

Or go into the attic of the Guibourd-Vallé house in Ste. Genevieve. Lay a hand on that old Norman truss, adzed into shape and pegged into position in 1800. It's the same truss. The same pegs. Right where they were.

Go to Old Sturbridge Village. There are fine, honest old houses there, but you will be touching a building

which for the first 200 years of its existence might have stood in Ohio.

Ste. Genevieve is a Mississippi river town of about 4,450 people, some 65 miles downstream from St. Louis. Largely because of the difficult farming conditions in the area, it had been declared a depressed area by the United States Department of Labor. As such it qualified in 1965 for a study grant from the Economic Development Administration of the United States Department of Commerce.

Acting on a request from the Ste. Genevieve Tourist Bureau, the EDA commissioned the St. Louis firm of Allied Engineers and Architects* to determine what could be done to make the old town a major tourist attraction, thus creating new jobs for the area. A team of outside specialists was retained by AEA to assist their own staff with the study, and this team included the author.

Although I was not totally ignorant of Ste. Genevieve, having visited it in 1959, I must confess that it was looked upon as an old town with an old house in it. During the course of writing my most recent book, *The Old Cathedral*, which has much to do with the history of the area around St. Louis, I was surprised to note the abundance of history in Ste. Genevieve. But it wasn't until I affiliated with the AEA team, in May, 1965, that I actually "discovered" the wealth of structural mementoes from the reign of the Bourbon kings.

I shall never forget my first night in Ste. Genevieve. Shortly after midnight that spring, I left my room in in the Ste. Genevieve Hotel and walked alone through those ancient streets. Walking past the old home of Commandant Jean Baptiste Vallè, I could see the towering hickory Council Tree in the moonlight; on

*Composed of R. W. Booker & Associates, Inc., consulting engineers; and Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Architects, Inc.

past the darkened Old Brick, which once echoed to the revelry of a bygone era; past the majestic old church; by the silent galleries of the Guibourd house; and on into the old cemetery, where the graves seemed to be bursting with their secrets. The sky over the Mississippi was light grey before I returned to the hotel. The love affair was on. It still is.

Since I am formally educated as a journalist, not a historian, I felt it imperative that a most thorough job of research be undertaken prior to writing the manuscript of this book, if for no reason other than to keep it from being cut up by the professionals. With the aid of Dr. Felix Snyder, director of libraries of Southeast Missouri State College, Cape Girardeau, a bibliography exceeding 60 titles was assembled. This was augmented by literally hundreds of newspaper clippings, old pictures, and all manner of data and old books proffered by the people of Ste. Genevieve.

Perhaps it should be mentioned here that, for all the history the old town contains, its record is exceedingly well hidden. Those who have written on it — even the experts — seem to have erred in places. Records were kept only when they were essential to the administration of the church, military or civil law. For example, the archives do not indicate the year a house was built. Rather, they date the earliest transfer of property. Whether the land was improved at that time is not always stated, and whether the improvement was that which is there today is left to the educated guesser. Births, marriages and deaths were carefully recorded, however.

The field research was both confusing and amusing. Personal examination of the houses themselves — the structural members, hardware, millwork and sash — was fascinating. Talks with the owners were equally delightful, and often contradictory with the supposed facts, documented or otherwise. Some of the people were careful to point out that their stories

were unsubstantiated; others insisted they were true, substantiated or not. The process of sifting and checking was laborious indeed.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my work was my reception in Ste. Genevieve. I was never refused admittance to any of the old homes. The owners stopped whatever they were doing to personally escort me through, pointing out the various features with understandable pride. I was lunched, wined, dined, talked to death, and loved every minute of it.

A lot of others helped me too, and without them there would be no book — people like my former colleague and good friend, Bernard K. Schram, who employed his literary expertise to bail me out of some otherwise embarassing entrapments, and Mrs. Frankie Donze, who opened many doors. Miss Vera Okenfuss, a walking encyclopedia of the lore of Ste. Genevieve, "Vera-fied" the text. Bill Kiefer of the Bank of Bloomsdale was most helpful in many areas.

I am indebted to Leo Basler, who took a day off to escort me to some of the outlying sites; to Joseph Wolf, who missed lunch to escort me to the Saline Spring; to Charles Cassoutt, who opened the sacristy of Kaskaskia's Church of the Immaculate Conception for me; and to the noted steamboat authority, Frederick Way, Jr., of Pittsburgh, who supplied the documentation on the *Dr. Franklin II*.

E. J. Schaefer, president of General Pass Book Company, took off the better part of a day for an interview. Ralph W. Smith not only gave me unlimited rights on his excellent tour map but offered to change it any way I felt necessary.

From St. Louis, there was the seemingly limitless cooperation from the ladies comprising the library staff of the Missouri Historical Society, who worked long hours to help me find the facts.

Leonard W. Blake, vice-president of the Missouri

Archaeological Society, donated much of his knowledge and the use of his personal library to the cause.

I was most gratified by the gracious manner in which the noted St. Louis color photographer, John Frost McDonald, offered the use of his superb Ektachrome used on the cover.

To the proofreaders I am especially grateful: Anton A. Tibbe, Charles H. Ellaby, Jr., and my patient wife Laura — each caught their share of bloopers. My sister, Miss Candace K. Franzwa, put all those little doodads on the French words, bless her.

Anybody out to make a fast buck off any supposed libelous statements will find himself reckoning with Carroll J. Donohue, senior partner in the distinguished law firm of Husch, Eppenberger, Donohue, Elson and Cornfeld. Mr. Donohue looked at the manuscript with an eye toward our fiscal well being.

I am indebted to the good offices of Joseph Weber, vice-president of Stanley Photo Company, for obtaining the use of a new Kalimar Six/Sixty single lens reflex camera, and to George Winslow, vice-president of Kalimar, Inc., who provided it. Mr. Weber selected the camera because it has the inherent capability of making an amateur's work look professional. L. Allen Klope gets the credit for the photographic printing — his superb darkroom was a hotbed of activity for many long nights. Ray Cliff, president of Runder Studios, processed our negatives with great skill and tolerance. My friend and client, Roy N. Sutton, offered the use of his brand new IBM typewriter to prepare the final draft.

My colleague, Donald H. Marshall, volunteered to undertake the public relations work on the book. Dr. Ralph W. Booker, A. G. Hayes, Harry Greensfelder, Jr., and Herbert R. Hellrung — clients all — were most patient with me during the trying days when the manuscript was under way.

Mrs. Jane Howe Kiel used her great knowledge of the English language on our behalf, unsplitting the infinitives and undangling the participles; and John Kiske, Jr., and William B. Muckler, from the printing company and typographic house, respectively, did their part with expert applications of their specialized knowledge.

The book, however, would be hollow to me without the advance reading and critical commentary of two towering figures in the scholarly world of architecture and history — Dr. Ernest Allen Connally, Chief of the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation of the National Park Service; and Dr. John Francis Bannon, S.J., chairman of the Department of History of St. Louis University.

I am deeply grateful to all of them.

Gregory M. Franzwa

March 15, 1967

Preface to the Second Edition

The efforts of Mrs. Lucille Basler to update the first edition are gratefully acknowledged. Mrs. Basler, an untiring worker for the betterment of Ste. Genevieve, has devoted many hours to our cause, and we thank her for it.

Shortly after the first edition was published, a motion picture was made, based upon the book, and entitled, "Ste. Genevieve — A French Legacy." A production of Ketc, Channel 9, St. Louis, the film went on to win the top award of the American Association of State and Local History, and has since been shown in more than 300 metropolitan areas.

January 1, 1973

CHAPTER I.

River on a Rampage

Any resident of any Mississippi river town can tell you that Ol' Man River can come boiling out of his banks at any time, even in the middle of a prolonged drought. It's what's up North that counts. A fast Chinook over the Yellowstone country can do it, or a balmy April sun over the snow fields around the Falls of St. Anthony.

History doesn't tell us what kind of a spring it was in Ste. Genevieve. That there was a flood of monumental proportions — possibly the most significant flood in the history of the Mississippi Valley — is attested to by the fact that the date 1785 is known by hundreds of the 4,450 residents of the town of Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, nearly 200 years later. *L'anee des grandes eaux* — the year of the great flood.

It is known, however, that the little village strung out along *le grand champ* — the big field — had been subjected to floods with some regularity in years gone by. As early as 1780 the river had undercut the bank to such a degree that great sections were toppling into the current. By 1784 a few of the citizens in some of the oldest houses abandoned them and headed for the high ground upstream or the bluffs to the west. Then, in 1785, it hit.

The angry waters sucked away more sections of the bank, boiled up over the little trail, licked at the cedar stockades surrounding each *habitation*, and sent each citizen scurrying to the high ground with whatever of his possessions he could carry and those of his livestock he could herd.

One of Auguste Chouteau's keelboat captains, riding his cumbersome vessel down the swollen torrent to New Orleans, maneuvered out over the town in wonderment, and tied up at the top of a stone chimney to survey the damage. Only there wasn't much to survey — a few other chimney tops, the ridge of a hip roof here and there, and water almost as far as the eye could see. The damage seemed to be total.

As the black waters receded, leaving in their filthy wake the decaying remains of entrapped fish, livestock and plant life, the dejected settlers picked their way through the foot-deep mud to their homes. They came to François Vallé II, many of the 594 citizens, and Vallé, son of their recently deceased commandant, heard their sentiments.

When you see an Osage breaking into your stable to steal your horses, you can put a ball between his eyes. There will probably be another Osage the next night, but if you are a light sleeper and a good shot the word will get around soon enough and you'll keep your horses. You can fire a ton of shot into Old Man River and all you'll do is raise the water a little more. The question was resolved — the town had to move, and the people would stick together.

Just as *le grand champ* had been their betrayer, it also had been their friend. A move of any distance would put them out of reach of the enormous fertility of that piece of bottom land which had supported them so well for a half-century. After all, it was said that you could leave an adz on the plain overnight and by morning it would have baby adzes.

So the roll was called, and they answered — the aged Baptiste La Rose, said to be the first settler; Don Sylvio Francisco de Cartabona and his troops — the military detachment; J. B. Sebastian Pratte; Louis Bolduc; Vital St. Gemme Beauvais; the merchants Datchurut and Viviat; Jean Baptiste Beauvais — all most likely were there. "Misère," as the lighthearted Frenchmen had nicknamed their sodden little village, was to be abandoned. Those homes or portions of homes that could be salvaged would be moved to the high ground a mile or two upriver, to *les petites côtes* — to the little hills. Those whose losses were total would build anew. And *le grand champ* would continue to feed the village.

This, then, was the culmination of an era which began more than 50 years before with a French nobleman, 20 or so miners, and 500 slaves; an era which pitted some of the gentility and culture of Versailles against the engulfing wilderness. Or perhaps it began much earlier — in the mists of the eighth millenium before the first recording of time — about 12,000 years before Christ.

CHAPTER II.

Pre-History of Ste. Genevieve

The slowly changing ways of life of the pre-historic inhabitants of the area have been divided into four basic stages by archaeologists. These generally follow each other, but often overlap. The period of the earliest hunters is called Paleo-Indian, dating from before 10,000 B.C. to around 5,000 B.C.; the succeeding stage, Archaic, from before 5,000 B.C. to after 1,000 B.C. in some places. The Woodland culture is divided into Early, Middle and Late stages dating in this area from 1,000 B.C. to about 1,300 A.D.; the Mississippian culture is known to have existed from around 900 A.D. to 1,500 A.D. and later.

Archaeologists have found little more than stone tools and weapons to indicate the presence of Paleo-Indian groups in Missouri, but the types are similar to those found in the West at kill sites of big game animals which now are extinct. It may be assumed that clothing was worn, since the climate was cooler and wetter than now. The scattered nature of finds of remains of these people indicates that they probably lived in small nomadic family groups. If the earliest hunters were not at the site of Old Ste. Genevieve, the spear points found in the vicinity indicate they certainly were nearby. The Mississippi

served as a great magnet. The Saline creek, about six miles south of town on U. S. 61, may not have been there at that early date, but if it was, that salt meant a game lick. Where there was game the Indian was not far away.

People of the Archaic culture lived in hunting and gathering groups, pursuing a seasonal round in small bands that briefly joined together when food was abundant. Eyed bone needles indicate the use of sewn clothing to cope with the cold. They were of Mongoloid stock.

Early Woodland, identified by the beginnings of pottery making, became first apparent on sites dating about 1,000 B.C. and gradually changed into Middle Woodland a few centuries before Christ. The culture is marked by development of plant cultivation, a more settled life and more complex burial practices.

Middle Woodland included in many places an elaborated form, called Hopewell by the archaeologists, which existed for several hundred years.

Although villages were small, large burial mounds containing exotic and artistic offerings were constructed, and differences in the burials indicate a well developed caste system.

Trade contacts to obtain burial offerings were widespread. These included sea shells and alligator teeth from the South, raw copper from Lake Superior regions in the North, mica from the Appalachians in the East and obsidian, a volcanic glass, from the Rockies in the West. The "Old Fort," a ceremonial enclosure, is a feature of Van Meter State Park, midway between Kansas City and Columbia. The installation was built by the people of the Hopewell culture.

This Middle Woodland varient went into a rapid decline in the early part of the Christian era, and archaeologists are not agreed as to the causes.

The succeeding Late Woodland period, which lasted in places after 1,300 A.D., was much less

elaborate. The occupation sites, although usually small, are very numerous throughout Missouri, indicating a population increase, it would seem. On those sites are found tiny stone projectile points in considerable numbers, and some students of prehistory suspect that this indicates general use of the bow and arrow. These tiny points, popularly called "bird points," on the head of an arrow shaft could kill a deer or a man.

It was the Mississipian culture which left its mark upon Ste. Genevieve, so positively and indelibly that it remains today. Believed by some archaeologists to have originated along the Ste. Genevieve-St. Louis axis about 900 A.D., the culture gradually expanded both upstream and downstream, leaving massive earthworks in its wake.

Middle Mississippian cities sometimes contained thousands of people. The women carried out an extensive agricultural economy, growing corn, beans, sunflowers, squash and gourds. The men were hunters and warriors. The great truncated pyramids often were topped with elaborate temples, and these were surrounded with numerous houses, arranged in accordance with the social prestige of the occupants. Some of the houses were square, some were circular. Early historic accounts indicate that great religious rituals were carried out. The entire town often was protected by a pointed stockade. Implements, though of stone, usually were well made and relatively efficient. The Mississippians, like those of the Hopewell culture, carried on extensive trading with most areas of the United States, and even brought copper from the Lake Superior regions. They utilized the dugout canoe, generally hollowed from a cottonwood log, to traverse vast distances on the Mississippi and its tributaries.

The mound builders of the Middle Mississippi culture left their earthen legacies throughout much of Missouri. One of the greatest cities was located

At 16'1" in height, great Mississippian mound on *le grand champ* is considerably smaller than its original size. It is along east side of St. Marys road, two miles south of South Gabouri creek.

at Cahokia Mounds State Park, in East St. Louis, Illinois. Louis Houck, one of Missouri's foremost historians, located some 28,000 mounds in the state, documenting them in his three-volume *History of Missouri* published in 1908. (One archaeologist observed that Houck must have paid his reporters by the mound, since the actual number seems to be less than half that. But that's still a lot of mounds.)

One of the most spectacular prehistoric earthworks in the state is on *le grand champ*, on the St. Marys road (Highway 61), some two miles south of the Gabouri. There are eight definite mounds on the site. The principal one is about 250 feet wide and 300 feet long. Others are considerably smaller and range up to only two or three feet in height. Houck stated the big mound was 25 feet high. Six years later a writer named Bushnell put it at 15 feet. The archaeologists Adams, Magre and Munger must have measured the mound in 1941 (they are too scientifically oriented to have guessed) when they put its height at 30 feet. Measurement with an eye-level by the author early in 1967 revealed that the height of the great mound has been reduced to 16 feet 1 inch.

Leonard W. Blake, vice-president of the Missouri Archaeological Society, stated that the large mound probably was not a signal mound, as is sometimes reported, but almost certainly a temple mound. Blake believes the smaller mounds could have been

burial mounds. The culture often laid its dead on the surface and piled dirt atop the bodies. The smaller mounds surround the large one, indicating definite religious significance.

The mounds in *le grand champ* are all under cultivation today, and probably have been for some 200 years. Before the white man they probably felt the plow of decadent remnants of the Middle Mississippi culture for another 200 years. They currently are being plowed to precipitate leveling. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that if the big mound is 16 feet high now it certainly must have been much larger when it was completed.

There have been no excavations at the big Ste. Genevieve mound. Presumably it will be plowed, planted and plowed again for succeeding generations, until no mound is left at all. Surface collections have been made — literally bushel baskets full of potsherds, flint chips and stone artifacts have been picked up, most of such little value to the finders that they were dumped in the weeds along the Valle Spring branch, where they are today. Substantial shards of great, 30-inch salt evaporating bowls have been uncovered along the Saline, some of them 600 to 700 years old — relics of the great Mississippian culture which settled there.

Hernando De Soto, in his midcontinental meanderings in the early 1540s, is believed to have contacted the Middle Mississippians extensively, and consequently contributed to their disintegration as an advanced culture. He brought with him numerous European diseases, for which the Indian had no resistance. He also exercised cruelty toward his hosts, causing entire cities to be abandoned to the conquistadors and breaking the homogeneous cultures into fragments unable to sustain themselves.

By the time the intrepid French penetrated the Mississippi Valley the culture was gone.

CHAPTER III.

Explorations of the Middle Valley

Before proceeding further into this narrative, it should be in order to cool off some of the claims that seem to have had their origins in the promotional file of a Chamber of Commerce rather than in a researcher's notebook. One: Coronado did not get to the Mississippi — near Ste. Genevieve, St. Louis, or anywhere else on that river. He didn't even get to Missouri. Contemporary historians cannot in good conscience bring Coronado closer than a point some 200 miles west-southwest of Kansas City. Two: De Soto did not get to the Saline spring. None of his men did. Again, reputable historic researchers cannot place De Soto much closer than Memphis, some 225 miles downstream from the Saline.

Much of the ruckus about De Soto developed around his procurement of salt, desperately needed as his ranks were thinning rapidly for lack of it.

One of the finest accounts of De Soto's expedition was written by Garcilaso de la Vega, the son of an Inca princess who followed Pizarro in Peru. Garcilaso spent much of his life compiling an account of the exploration from first-hand reports of

survivors of the adventure. The following account, repeated verbatim from the 1957 Varner translation of Garcilaso, took place when De Soto was in Arkansas, somewhat west of Memphis:

"Thus on inquiry he found among his men eight Indians who had been seized on the day the Spaniards entered the town. These people were not natives of this place but strangers and merchants who in their trading passed through many provinces and included salt among the things they customarily brought to sell. When taken before the Governor, they declared that in some mountain ranges forty leagues (about 120 miles) distance, there was a great quantity of very fine salt. And in answer to the repeated questions put to them, they replied that also in that land was much of the yellow metal about which the Spaniards had inquired."

Two soldiers, Hernando de Silvera and Pedro Moreno, were sent on the mission, carrying various articles of barter.

"With this accord, they departed, and at the end of an eleven-day journey returned with six loads of crystalline rock salt, which had not been made artificially but was formed naturally, and in addition brought a load of very fine and resplendent brass. They reported however that the lands they had seen were not good, but sterile and poorly populated."

Garcilaso's reports are not accurate throughout, but even if the contingent were camped exactly 120 miles from the Saline this could hardly have been the source of the salt. There is no brass around the Saline (there is copper in western Arkansas). Surely they would have heard of the great Middle Mississippi city only three or four miles upstream. The salt in the Saline is obtained by evaporating it in bowls, and there is hardly any ground on earth more fertile than the Mississippi bottom lands around Ste. Genevieve.

The area was not really opened to civilization until some 130 years after De Soto, with the voyage of Marquette and Jolliet.

While the area was penetrated by the Spaniards, it was left to the French to perform the first meaningful explorations of the Mississippi Valley. Jean Nicolet, the French explorer, generally is credited with being the first Frenchman of New France to have picked up rumors of the existence of the Mississippi. He heard such talk during an expedition to the Green Bay area. Some sources indicate that Pierre d'Espirit, Sieur des Raddison, and his brother-in-law, Médard Chouart, Sieur des Groseilliers (or so he called himself), the founders of the Hudson's Bay Company, discovered the river. They might have stepped across it near its source, not realizing it was any different from any other creek.

Despite all claims to the contrary, it would seem that the discoverers of the Mississippi were Marquette and Jolliet.

Louis XIV wanted a passage to Asia badly enough to pay a rich reward for it. Louis Jolliet (1645-1700) sought such an adventure, and James Marquette, S.J., saw in it an opportunity to win thousands of converts to Christianity. They elected to follow up those Indian rumors of a great river leading to the "Vermillion Sea" (the Pacific Ocean).

The 27-year-old Jolliet met Marquette at St. Ignace on December 8, 1672. They spent the rest of the winter there gathering whatever information the Indians could give them. On May 17, 1673 they and five French companions left in two light bark canoes. Traveling along the shore of Lake Michigan they picked up two Miami guides and turned into Green Bay, following the Fox river through Lake Winnebago and on to the portage in central Wisconsin. There they carried their canoes to the Wisconsin river.

On June 17, 1673, they floated out onto the broad Mississippi, just downstream from present-day Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. Marquette's journal contains abundant descriptions of the various phenomena of the river — Alton's Piasa bird, the confluence of the Missouri and the Mississippi, the Chain of Rocks. Perhaps his most graphic description is of an area some miles below Ste. Genevieve:

"(We have reached) a place that is dreaded by the savages, because they believe that Manitou is there, that is to say, a demon, that devours travelers; and the savages, who wished to divert us from our undertaking, warned us against it. This is the demon: there is a small cove surrounded by rocks, 20 feet high, into which the whole current of the river rushes, and being pushed back against the waters following it, and checked by an island nearby, the current is compelled to pass through a narrow channel. This is not done without a violent struggle between these waters, which force one another back, or without a great din, which inspires terror in the savages, who fear everything."

Houck identifies this as Grand Tower, but more likely it is some long-vanished stretch of the Mississippi.

A short distance above the mouth of the Ohio river they discovered an iron mine near some cliffs. "There are several veins of ore, and a bed a foot thick, and one sees large masses of it united with pebbles." This probably was the southeast corner of Perry County, just north of Apple Creek.

The explorers, apprehensive about the increased hostility of the Indians and running low on provisions, elected to return when they were near the mouth of the Arkansas River. By that time they had sound evidence that they were only a few days away from tide water — not from the "Vermillion Sea" as they had hoped, but from the Gulf of Mexico.

They went back up the Illinois, and it was along this river that they found a village of some Indians of the Illinois confederation, called the Kaskaskia, consisting of 74 cabins.

Marquette promised he would return and instruct them in Catholicism. On Holy Thursday, 1675, he made his promise good, thus founding the famed Mission of the Immaculate Conception — in what is now Starved Rock State Park.

His health broken, Marquette headed back to St. Ignace. Realizing he would never make it, he instructed his two Indian guides to pull into the mouth of a little river, now known as the Pere Marquette. There, at the age of 38, he died.

Jolliet continued his explorations, but lost his journal of the Mississippi voyage in the Lachine rapids, near Montreal. He became the official cartographer for New France.

While the goal of Marquette and Jolliet was largely one of exploration, it fell to Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, to establish political claim to the vast Mississippi Valley for the House of Bourbon. Louis de Buade, Comte de Frontenac, governor of New France, appointed La Salle to make the necessary voyage. With the approval of Louis XIV, La Salle assembled a party which included the daring one-armed Henri Tonti, the Franciscan Membre, and 44 others, including women and children.

In December, 1681, La Salle left Canada for the Gulf. He arrived at the Chicago River in January, and moved on down the Illinois to Starved Rock. There he found that the Kaskaskia village, which had contained 460 cabins by the fall of 1680, was all but deserted due to an attack by the Iroquois. He dragged his supplies across the ice of Lake Peoria, and on Feburary 6, 1682, he was at the Mississippi. Once there, he had to wait a week for the murderous ice floes to pass.

Continuing downstream, the adventurer and his party reached the mouth of the Mississippi and tidewater on April 6, 1682, where he erected a cross on the site, thus officially claiming the valley, from the site of New Orleans to the site of Minneapolis-St. Paul, for his king.

La Salle had sent Louis Hennepin, a Franciscan, northward on the Mississippi in 1680, and it is believed the Hennepin company discovered the Falls of St. Anthony, at the site of the present day twin cities.

La Salle found himself saddled with a change of superiors, and fell into disfavor in Quebec. Taking matters into his own hands, he sailed for Versailles. Things were not going well for him in France either, until Hennepin's chronicles (full of exaggerations) appeared in print on the continent. With that La Salle's fortunes rose, and he was given a fleet of four ships and some 280 persons, so he could found a colony at the delta.

Back in New France, Tonti heard of this good fortune and assembled a company to meet La Salle at the mouth of the Mississippi. Only La Salle never made it. He missed the delta by some 400 miles, due partially to the fact that the court had placed an unhappy captain in charge of the vessels. On December 19, 1685, the expedition sailed into Matagorda Bay, southwest of Galveston. The captain took one of the two remaining ships and headed for home, leaving the hot-tempered La Salle to his own devices.

Still not knowing where he was, La Salle built another Fort St. Louis near there as the base for his colony, then set out on a series of expeditions to try to find the Mississippi. During one of them he lost his only remaining ship, the *La Belle.*

On January 12, 1687 La Salle left 20 persons at the fort and took the remaining 28 with him on a

final search for the river. On March 19, 1687, he was taunted into ambush and shot by two of his own men. The loyal remnants of the party eventually reached Quebec, after La Salle's death had been avenged. (The colony was wiped out by the Indians in 1689.)

It should be mentioned that La Salle deserved little blame for faulty navigation. The first practical chronometer was not to appear until 1735, and until that time an error of several thousand miles in cartography was not unheard of. Navigators of that day were somewhat better at determining north-south positions. The angle between Polaris and the horizon corresponds (within about 60 miles) to the number of degrees north of the equator.

Longitude, however, was another matter. The contemporary celestial navigator can note the exact time of high noon from a chronometer which has been set at high noon at some known point. The difference in hours, minutes and seconds can readily be translated into nautical miles. The early navigators would have needed chronometers which would retain reasonable accuracy over many months.

Tonti waited patiently at the gulf for several months, then started his journey back to Quebec. He left a detachment to meet La Salle at the mouth of the Arkansas — that was the beginning of the old Arkansas Post.

Joutel, one of the survivors of the La Salle expedition, made note of both the Saline and of the high cliffs above Ste. Genevieve as he carried the news of the explorer's murder north. "We held our way 'till the 25th (August, 1687) when the Indians showed us a spring of salt water within a musket-shot of us, and made us go ashore to view it. We observed the ground about it was much beaten by bullocks' feet, and it is likely that they love that salt water."

Of the cliffs, he said, "We proceeded on our journey the 28th and 29th, coasting along the foot

of an upright rock about sixty or eighty feet high, around which the river glides."

Of the countryside, he said, "The country was full of hillocks, covered with oak and walnut trees, abundance of plum trees, almost all the plums red and pretty good; besides, great stores of other sorts of fruits whose names we know not, and among them one shaped like a middling pear, with stones in it as large as a bean. When ripe, it peels like a ripe peach, taste is of indifferent good, but rather of the sweetest."

La Salle, on his voyage back from the Gulf in 1683, paused long enough to form Fort St. Louis along the Illinois river at Starved Rock. The scattered Kaskaskia Indians in the area reassembled nearby to form what became known as "The Grand Village of the Kaskaskia." With other tribes La Salle and Tonti were able to entice into the area the city enjoyed a population of more than 18,000.

Claude Allouez, S.J., inherited the Kaskaskia mission upon the death of Marquette, but was unable to erect a chapel during his 10 years of service, largely because of La Salle's antagonism toward the Jesuits.

The site was abandoned about 1691 because the dense population had denuded the surrounding area of trees and game. The next spring the community was reestablished at the lower end of Lake Peoria, where the second Fort St. Louis was constructed. Soon there were three chapels serving the Indian city.

Because of internal dissentions, the Kaskaskia elected to part from the Peoria Indians, and with the Jesuit, Jacques Gravier, scouting on ahead, they moved down the Illinois. Gabriel Marest, another Jesuit, brought them by way of Cahokia to the mouth of *La Riviere Des Peres*, the southern boundary of present day St. Louis, where they remained from 1700 to 1703. While there they were

joined by most of the Tamaroa Indians and a few Frenchmen from Cahokia.

Prior to that time the Tamaroa and Cahokia Indians had established neighboring villages at Cahokia, across the Mississippi from St. Louis. Here three priests from the seminary at Quebec established their mission to the Tamaroa in 1699. They were Jean François Buisson de St. Cosme, François Joliet de Montigny, and Antoine Davion — known to history as the "Gentlemen of the Seminary."

In 1700, the Kaskaskia and a third of the Tamaroa moved to River Des Peres and the mission became known as the Cahokia's. In the spring of 1703 the settlement moved down the Mississippi river to the Kaskaskia river, pulled upstream a few miles, and on the southwest side of the river they founded Kaskaskia, with the noted Marest as their missionary.

Kaskaskia rapidly became a center of trade for the area. Built about a large square, the narrow streets divided the land into blocks of four lots each. Wheat was introduced by the Jesuits, and oats, hemp, corn, garden vegetables, hops and tobacco also were grown. The Indians pursued their old ways alongside the whites until 1719, when most of them were relocated four or five miles up the Kaskaskia river.

Back in Cahokia, the Gentlemen of the Seminary were in the rather awkward position of being missionaries without having anyone to preach to. They struck out downstream, going as far as Tonti's Arkansas Post, then returned to find villages where they were wanted and needed. St. Cosme, the most literate of the three, left this account of the Grand Tower, a starling landmark some 40 miles downstream from Ste. Genevieve:

"There is a rock on the right which advances into the river and forms an island, or rather a rock 200 feet high, which, making the river turn back very

rapidly and entering the channel, forms a kind of whirlpool there, where it is said a canoe was engulfed at the high waters. Fourteen Miamis were once lost there, which has rendered the spot fearful among the Indians, so that they are accustomed to make some sacrifices to this rock when they pass. You ascend this island and rock by a hill with considerable difficulty. On it we planted a beautiful cross, singing the *Vexilla Regis*, and our people fired three volleys of musketry."

The ensuing years saw more and more Frenchmen come into the Middle Valley. With such colonization came a need for local civil and military rule, to protect both the interests and the lives of the settlers.

It was late in 1718 when Pierre Duque de Boisbriant, newly appointed commandant of the Illinois country, arrived at Kaskaskia with orders to erect a military post. He selected a site on the east bank some 18 miles to the north and built a strong wood stockade, which he reinforced with the earth removed when the moat was formed. That was the first Fort de Chartres, which was completed in 1720. The fort was built too near the river, and the reinforcing soon ended up at New Orleans. Rebuilt in 1727, it was in such disrepair only five years later that the commandant ordered a new fort built some distance from the flood waters. The structure which now has been restored was started in 1753 and completed three years later. It was supposed to have been the best built fort in North America, and was to be the last French fortification on the continent to lower the lilies of France.

In 1712 Antoine Crozat, one of the wealthiest merchants in France, was granted a charter to allow him to open the commerce of Louisiana with extraordinary concessions. With Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac in charge, the expedition aborted early.

The Spaniards had no intention of cooperating with the venture.

The charter was surrendered in 1717 to the "Company of the West," which soon was united with the Company of the Indies to become the Royal Company of the Indies. None of these achieved any real success.

There is little documentation to support this, but it appears as if Mine La Motte, located near county road 00 about 16 miles southeast of Farmington, was opened by Cadillac, and was the result of a very bad practical joke. Joseph Schlarman reports that in 1714 a man named Du Tisné brought to Gov. Cadillac two samples of ore which he stated came from an area near Kaskaskia. A quiet assay proved an unusually high silver content, so Cadillac left for the Illinois country to investigate. Cadillac learned later that the ore samples had been given to Du Tisné by a visitor from Mexico. The Cadillac party left Kaskaskia and journeyed several miles up the Saline, then over to Big River, a tributary of the Meramec. He opened a pit about four feet deep, down to rock. Finding nothing to excite them but lead ore, they packed up their tools and went home to Mobile in October, 1715. There is reason to believe this was the celebrated Mine la Motte.

CHAPTER IV.

The Founding of Ste. Genevieve

Many of the earliest American towns were founded where they were because of the strategic advantages of the terrain — strategic as a military defense or as a protected port. Ste. Genevieve is where it is because the terrain delivers easy access to the Mississippi river. It was the closest such point to the mines some miles inland — not the deposits of precious metals sought with such determination by the conquistadors, but veins of lead of incredible richness. So extensive are the deposits that the area still is being worked, and still is producing in record quantities.

Philip François Renault, a wealthy Paris banker, was appointed director-general of the mining operations of the Royal Company of the Indies. Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, writing in 1819, dates the Renault appointment exactly one century earlier, in 1719. He states that Renault left France that year with 200 miners and laborers and all the needed provisions, and picked up some 500 Guinea Negroes from Santo Domingo during the voyage to Kaskaskia. He added that Renault arrived there in 1720.

Schoolcraft, however, was a reporter writing partially from observation and partially from hearsay, and neglecting to mention which was which, Houck, the noted Missouri historian, wrote in 1908 that Renault arrived in Kaskaskia in 1723, a date

which also has considerable backing from other historians. This position is supported by Francis J. Yealy, S.J., one of the best historians of Ste. Genevieve.

Houck stated that Renault even brought the bricks for his furnaces from France, each identified with his name. This may have been true — a surveyor named Cozzens is reported to have uncovered such a brick around 1900, while working near *Fourche à Renault* in Washington county where one of Renault's furnaces was constructed. On the other hand, brick kilns are not that difficult to construct, and it is possible that the brick were formed and fired in the area.

It is both possible and quite probable that Ste. Genevieve was founded within months after the arrival of Renault, and not in 1735, as is generally claimed.

Renault temporarily established his company in the old settlement of St. Ann, near Ft. de Chartres. This served until he could get a new stone house erected just outside the walls. He named his concession-town St. Philippe. (St. Ann later was washed away by the Mississippi.)

Renault reopened Mine La Motte, and is believed to have developed the lead mines of Washington County, housing his specialists in a long-disappeared settlement known as *Cabanage à Renaudière.* By 1725 he was producing 1,500 pounds of lead per day.

The mining techniques were primitive, but the ore was so rich that the profits were substantial. Pick axes, shovels, drills, rammers and priming rods for blasting were the tools of the trade. The men would measure off an eight-foot square, digging down to 10, 12 or even 15 feet — as far as a good man could throw the dirt and ore. Then they would rig a windlass to haul the ore to the surface.

The spar would be cleaned with a pointed pick, then broken into fist-size hunks weighing about 15

pounds. A 5,000-pound charge of ore would be placed in a U-shaped brick furnace lined on the inside and front with logs. The ore was heated slowly for 12 hours to rid it of sulphur, then brought to smelting temperatures for another 12 hours. Three-man crews would cart the wood, day and night. The yield was about 50 per cent pure lead.

Mrs. Ida M. Schaaf, writing in the *Missouri Historical Review* in 1933, makes a believable case for the founding of Ste. Genevieve a good many years prior to the generally accepted date of 1735. There seems to be little question that the lead was brought to the river over *le grand champ*, just below present day Ste. Genevieve. It might have been brought as far north as a mile or two above town, but upstream from there are cliffs of such formidability that it is improbable that a landing could have been made in that vicinity. The lead, molded in the shape of a thin horsecollar, was transported to the river around the necks and backs of horses. From Ste. Genevieve it supposedly was placed on keel boats and shipped north to Fort de Chartres. There it was weighed, placed back on the boats for the port settlement of New Orleans, which in 1723 had been in existence only five years.

Mrs. Schaaf makes a telling point when she cites the improbability of all this. There seems to be no logical reason for fighting the Mississippi current some 12 miles with a heavy load, only to immediately retrace the route on the way to the Gulf.

Nothing could have been done in Fort de Chartres that couldn't have been done more efficiently on the west bank, and Renault, being a businessman, must have known this. It isn't logical that the dispatchers and weighers would have returned to Fort de Chartres each night, and it is improbable that they lived on the keel boats until they received their full loads, when dry land was a few feet away. They must have erected some small cabins, and if they

did, that was the start of Ste. Genevieve. Any records that might have been kept have yet to be discovered. But the assumption is sound that Ste. Genevieve was founded about 1723, not in 1735.

Fr. Yealy cited a number of dates, each having some documentation. He wrote of two old maps, unidentified, dated 1755, bearing the legend, "French Village founded 3. years ago." This would establish the founding in 1752, provided the period didn't indicate decades, or 30 years. In that case it would be 1722.

Philibert F. Watrin, S.J., one of the priests banished during the Jesuit expulsion in 1763 and 1764, served Ste. Genevieve from Kaskaskia. During his exile in France the embittered Blackrobe wrote: "Fifteen years ago, at a league from the old village, on the other bank of the Mississippi, there was established a new village under the name of Sainte Genevieve." That would set the date in the late 1740s. Captain Philip Pittman in 1767 wrote: "The first settlers of this village removed from Cascasquias about 28 years ago," or in 1739.

In 1881 the crumbling bank of the Mississippi at *le grand champ* exposed the ruins of an old well. One of the stones bore the date 1732.

One of Fr. Yealy's most significant finds was a document dated May 25, 1732, in which Fr. Mercier, head of the Cahokia mission, addressed to the seminary at Quebec: "Scarcely a month ago I had the honor to send you with a certain Louis Poulin from the parish of Saint Joachim, all the papers and documents that will help you, etc." Since St. Joachim was the early name of the Ste. Genevieve parish, it would appear that by that date there was more there than a cabin or two. While it definitely wasn't a parish by canon law at that time, it was an actual settlement large enough to be assigned a patron.

Charles E. Peterson, the noted architectural historian, states that the village was among the

first of Missouri, after the old River des Peres (1700), mentioned earlier, and along with Cabanage à Renaudière (1720), Mine La Motte, Mines of the Meramec, and Fort d'Orleans, all 1723; Mine à Renault, 1724-25; and Vielles (Old) Mines, 1726.

One of the most valued documents in the archives of the Missouri Historical Society is a certified copy of Hunt's Minutes. Theodore Hunt was a recorder of land titles, commissioned by the American government to travel the villages around St. Louis, obtaining depositions to be used as confirmation of Spanish land grants. Hunt often added to his minutes information which he thought was important and yet had nothing to do with the job at hand.

In Book II, page 206, appears the following notation:

> Julien Labriere being duly sworn, says He is fifty Six years of age, and that he was born in the old village of S'Genevieve, which place was built about where the lower ferry is at present, that when He first had any recollection, He remembers seeing A man then very old named Baptiste LaRose, who was the first settler in the Old Village (this man died when he was One hundred & three years old) about fifty years ago there was fifty or Sixty Cabens in the old village — about forty one years ago, the Bank having caved in very much, compelled the Inhabitants to think of removing from the Old Village, and A D One thousand seven hundred and Eighty four three men named Loisel, Maurice Chatillon and Jacque Boyer removed from the old village and established the present village of S'Genevieve and they built houses on the lots at present occupied by Grifford, Daget and Veuve Leclere, Oro was the then Commandant — the following the year after the commencement of the settlement of the new village was l'anee Des Grande Eaus, the old village was overflowed, so as to be on the top of

the houses — A boat of Mr Chouteaus arrived at this time and they made the Boat fast to the Top of one of the Chimneys, and dived on the roof of the house — in the Big field the water in many places was twelve or fifteen feet deep —

his
Julien ⋊ Labriere
mark

Sworn to before me October 22d 1825 —
Theodore Hunt Recorder LT."

La Briere's deposition seems to check out. There could be some truth in the statement that La Rose was the first settler in the town. "Very old" could have been 80, and "first . . . recollection" could have been at age 10, which would have put La Rose's birth date about 1699. Thus, he could have been about 24 in 1723, when Renault was in the area. Could La Rose have been one of the dispatchers who loaded the lead on Renault's keel boats? Could he have been the builder of a cabin on the bank, to provide shelter on dry land and serve as some sort of office? The time to get answers to those questions was 1775. That was the last time anyone could have been trusted to give them — anyone being the mysterious Baptiste La Rose himself.

CHAPTER V.

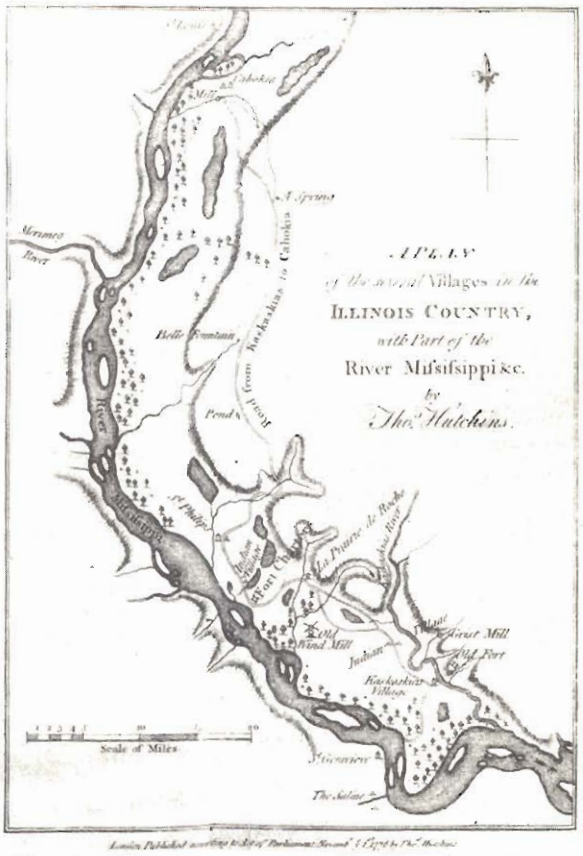
Silver Spoons on the Frontier

The village of Ste. Genevieve probably started with merely a cabin or two, but one didn't survive alone in the hostile wilderness. Banding together for the common defense became necessary. The Osage Indians would think nothing of a 100-mile trek if the reward involved a fine horse, beef cattle or sheep. They weren't murderers, but they were among the world's most brazen thieves.

The settlers built their homes with this in mind. The individual properties were laid out in squares about the size of a small city block. Enclosing the square was a stockade fence of vertically-placed pointed logs, usually cedar or oak, about seven feet high, with about three feet of the log in the ground. The houses usually faced the river, very close to the fence. In back of the house were three or four structures — a kitchen and bake house, a smoke-house, an outhouse and a well. The well often was stone, with a small wood truss overhead which, like the house, was covered with thatch. The bucket was lowered from a small windlass.

Thatched roofs were common in Ste. Genevieve until about 1800, when they gave way to hand-split shingles, which afforded greater resistance to fire.

The balance of the building lot usually was used for growing vegetables needed to sustain the family



Map drawn in 1771 by Thomas Hutchins shows area later known as American Bottom. Hutchins said communities there had population of "1273 sencible men." He counted 208 French, 80 Negroes in Ste. Genevieve then.

for a year. Herb gardens were commonplace, their yield being used medicinally and as spices. Grape vines were the source of good wines, so satisfying to the French palate. Fruit trees often were planted, and some of the townsmen's lots had areas where livestock could be tethered — even barns — in the event of Indian warnings.

The houses themselves often were one-room units, sometimes two, but seldom more. Typical exterior dimensions were 12′ by 13′, 15′ square, and 18′ by 19′. They usually were of logs placed vertically into the ground, five or six inches apart. Such construction was called *poteaux en terre* — posts in the ground. A few houses had rubble stone foundations on which the ends of the logs rested — *poteaux sur sole* — posts on a sill. The walls were tilted inward a few degrees, for reasons which are unknown today. The interstices were filled with *bouzillage* — a mixture which incorporated clay or mud, plus a binder of twigs, animal hair, straw or limestone gravel.

The roofs were unusual because of their extremely steep pitch, often exceeding 70°, which was necessary to shed the water from the thatching. The unavailability of other roofing materials precluded the use of anything but thatch. The roof was formed by massive Norman trusses, pegged in place. The members, 6″ by 6″, 8″ by 8″, or even larger, were adzed out of logs. The logs forming the walls usually were squared above grade by placing them atop a high wood framework, where one man of a two-man sawing team stood. The man on the ground had the best deal — he established the proper ripping angle for the 10-foot saw.

The ceilings of the houses sometimes were planked but never plastered. Ceiling beams usually were exposed. The overhead sometimes served as sleeping quarters for the children of large families. Often the roof was raised to provide a crawl space between

the top of the wall and the underside of the roof. This proved an ideal vantage point for defense against livestock raids by the Indians, giving the occupant an opportunity to fire over the stockade and providing a sort of linear loophole for his protection against returned fire.

The walls of the house usually were plastered, and there was a limestone fireplace in every room. Iron and glass were rarities, and had to be imported from France. Solid shutters and gates swung on hook and eye hinges. There probably was no glass in Ste. Genevieve windows until the middle of the eighteenth century.

Frequently the earth beneath the center of a house was removed to form a cellar for the storage of fruit and vegetables grown in the garden.

The center of the larger houses served as a large entrance hall. A room on one side was a combination living and dining room, and sleeping quarters were on the other side. The exterior walls always were whitewashed, partly to protect the *bouzillage* and partly to reflect the heat. (Whitewash was gained by burning the limestone.)

In the early years the houses were patterned after those of Quebec and Normandy. But Ste. Genevieve is some 600 miles further south than either area, and the settlers found the heat oppressive. Those French planters who came to the Middle Valley brought with them the idea of the *galerie* — a wide porch which was added to all four sides of a house.

Many architectural authorities credit the *galerie* to the pioneer French of Santo Domingo. Dr. Ernest Allen Connally, chief of the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation of the National Park Service, states that the *galerie* actually originated in 16th century France. Since the rooms usually were arranged *en suite* in Normandy, the *galerie* was used as a corridor. The new world development seems to have been the enlargement of the *galerie*,

and its extension completely around the house. One of its main functions was to keep the sun and the rain off the whitewashed walls.

As thatch was displaced by more fire-resistant materials the kitchens were moved up under the *galeries* and the cooking was done in the house proper, without excessive danger of fire.

By the mid-1700s the houses and lots were strung out along the river bank for more than a mile. There was no evidence of a common stockade wall — evidently each owner left a lane on all sides of his property. There was little order in the land planning, the houses being strung out in a helter-skelter manner rather than an orderly plan. There were some houses two or three "blocks" from the river.

Behind the cluster of stockades stood *le grand champ* — 3,000 acres of alluvium. There was no common ownership in Ste. Genevieve. Every man had his own piece of ground. This is unlike many other frontier settlements, where the agricultural production was divided among the families in accordance with their need. The land was divided into arpents — a measure of both area and linearity. An arpent, or "arp," measured about 192′6″, and most of the lots in the field were one arp wide and stretched back almost a mile to the little road at the foot of the limestone bluff, now known as the St. Marys road. There was another road bisecting the field, from the bluff to the river.

Records of the elaborate fence regulations are abundant in the archives of the Missouri Historical Society. A common fence paralleled the river, another the St. Marys road. Individual fences separated one tract from another, and were designed more to identify boundaries than to secure the crops against the wild and domestic animals that roamed the woods in *le domaine du roy*, the surrounding property held in the name of the king, from which additional land grants were made. Pecan trees

were planted on *le grand champ* to mark the lot lines, and many still are there today.

It was the job of the civil commandant to enforce the fence regulations, infractions of which were punishable by stiff fines and jail sentences.

Cattle, sheep and horses all were branded and roamed the king's land freely, often wandering into town, up and down the twisted little lanes. They frequently were wintered on the little river islands to keep them from moving off into the wilderness.

Corn, pumpkins, wheat, oats, barley, flax, cotton and tobacco were products of the big field. The settlers, hampered by the lack of steel implements, usually would plant the fields and leave them alone until harvest time.

There were one or two wood harrows, the property of the village. Although records of early years are scarce, the wheat in one year, 1744, was not enough to supply the colony and added supplies had to be imported. The yield may have been terrible, but they had a ball all summer long.

There was game for the shooting. There were wild turkeys, geese, ducks, swans, pelicans, quail, pigeons, eagles and turkey buzzards, by the thousands. If the Mississippi didn't cooperate, there was always meat.

The pioneers found their transportation in horses, oxen or boat. The heavy loads were carried in a four-wheeled wagon; two-wheeled carts (*charettes*) were for human transport only. Oxen, yoked at the horns, provided power for the heaviest loads, and were directed by whips instead of reins. Tough little ponies pulled the *charettes*. There was no steel or iron earlier in the 18th century — it wasn't until the late 1800s that wood wheels were fitted with iron tires. Many of the vehicles had chairs strapped to their sides for the comfort of women and children.

The people of Ste. Genevieve were totally different from the colonizers of the Eastern seaboard. Captain

Amos Stoddard, who claimed Upper Louisiana for the United States after the Louisiana Purchase, stated that in no other country was aggravated crime more rare than in Louisiana. "The art of deception, when calculated to work injury, is scarcely known among them . . . they are never so unhappy as when in debt, and never more happy than released from apprehension of a legal process."

Ward A. Dorrance had an opportunity to spend a summer in the early 1930s in the town of Old Mines, the site of Mine Renault and Mine à Breton. Of the 600 families in the Catholic parish at that time, 90 per cent still used French as the domestic tongue. In that village, about 40 miles west of Ste. Genevieve, it was at that late date possible to gain a glimpse of life as it must have existed 200 years before in Ste. Genevieve.

The men would work in the mines and fields Mondays and Tuesdays, from dawn until dark, in hopes of getting enough work done by noon Wednesday so they wouldn't have to go back to work until the following Monday. They would play cards, dance, sing, or gather together to see who could spin the tallest tales.

Their lightheartedness was reflected in the nicknames they gave each other and the other towns, many of them unprintable. Ste. Genevieve, as has been said, was nicknamed "*misère*" — miserable. Kaskaskia was "*pouilleux*" — lousy. Cape Girardeau was "*L'anse à la Graisse*" — greasy cove. Carondelet, where one of the attractions was a race track, was "*Vide-Poche*" — empty pocket. St. Louis was "*Paincourt*" — short of bread.

Nicknames were especially popular with the settlers. One of the aged Old Mines storytellers was nicknamed "*Gros Vaisse*," and we'll let the reader look that up himself, since we're trying to keep things clean. These names were not used behind a person's back — they were used openly and still

are. Those who bear them would think something was wrong if they were called by their legal name.

The custom persists in Ste. Genevieve today. There is Punkin' Basler, Fuclos La Rose, Horse Maurice, Flakes Bahr, Toothpick Bollinger, Possum Grass, Beck Basler, Bigfoot Basler (and his son Young Bigfoot Basler), and an entire family bearing the names of Izzy, Dizzy, Nuts, Boats and Nooney. The prominent Sexauer family includes men nicknamed Guinea, Sleepy, Funny, and Grandpa. One man has his nickname, "Boob," painted on his mailbox and listed in the Ste. Genevieve telephone directory. Some of those names are attached to the town's leading citizens.

The national insults were plentiful, particularly after the French population was augmented by those from other national origins. There was the Blue Bellied Yankee — with "land so poor his belly turned blue." And the pawpaw Frenchman, who had to "live off pawpaws in the summer and 'possums in the winter." A man's wife was the "old lady," a term accepted by both sexes. After the arrival of the Germans, a fight could be precipitated simply by shouting, "Damn the Dutch!"

People found their way around not by following marked highways, but by knowing the hollows. Every one had its name. They still do, and any good Ste. Genevieve County farmer can rattle them off one by one — Blue Jug Hollow, Snell Hollow, Red Barn Hollow, Bowes Hollow, and others.

The pronunciation of the "Missouri French" was rugged at best. When the Americans and Germans applied their influence it was all but unintelligible. *Fourche Du Clos* (Bloomsdale) became Fusch Da Clew. *Bois Brule* Bottom became Bob Rudy Bottom. *Isle Du Bois* became, of all things, Zillaboy. *Aux Arcs* became Ozarks.

While some early observers spoke of Ste. Genevieve in charitable terms, this wasn't always the

case. Don Pedro Piernas, military commandant in the early days of St. Louis, reported that the people of Ste. Genevieve were characterized by a "looseness of conduct, the abandonment of life . . . dissoluteness and license."

Perrin du Lac, writing in the 1790s, said that the children were "without learning or desire of learning. The youth spend their time riding, hunting, dancing. The children have contracted the manners and insolence of the natives."

Despite the allegations of the blue-nosed, the people of Ste. Genevieve were kind, gentle, and most cultured. Cases of seduction were unknown. They were honest and scrupulous. There were laws, but few of them were written down. The epitome of disgrace was legal punishment of any kind.

Their manners were elegant. The wives were the full partners of their husbands. Their slaves usually were treated as members of the family. At the balls, which sometimes lasted continuously for two or three days, the slaves and Indians were invited, and they came. So did the children, from toddlers on up.

While even the lowliest Americans were filled with prejudices — against Indians, Negroes, and other nationalities — the French hardly knew the meaning of the word.

Their foods were sophisticated too, as much so as the frontier would allow. Elaborate soups were prepared, and fricassees, salads, chicken, and wild game. The French palate would tolerate none of the crude corn pone and fat hog meat of the American.

One of the most colorful and ancient customs in North America — *La Guignolée* — was brought to the Middle Valley and Ste. Genevieve by the French. It survives today only in isolated sections of rural France and Canada, and in Ste. Genevieve. It was revived recently in old Cahokia.

In the old days, the young men of the village would go from house to house on New Years Eve, dressed in outlandish costumes, dancing a shuffling little step and singing their song to the accompaniment of two or three fiddles. The music, due to erratic tempo variations and a lack of voicing, would be all but impossible to set to paper. It has strong Gregorian overtones, and probably has come down from the middle ages almost intact.

During *La Guignolée*, the performers, blacked as Negroes or browned as Indians, would go from house to house begging food, which they would store for a banquet on Twelfth Night. At the banquet, the young men would take slices of a cake into which a bean had been baked. The man who got the bean was entitled to take the girl of his choice to the ball which followed.

The custom continues today in Ste. Genevieve, only the singers are now content to be invited into the various homes on their itinerary for a drink. Native Frenchmen have heard recordings of the Ste. Genevieve *La Guignolée* singers and have been unable to understand a single word. This probably is because the lustiest of the performers today are German, and can't understand a word of French themselves. But they sing *La Guignolée* anyway. Tradition is tradition in Ste. Genevieve.

The lyric is as follows:

Ensemble:

Bonsouère le maître et la maîtresse,
Et tout le monde dsu logis!
Pour le premier jour de l'année
La Gaie-anée vous nous devez.
Si vous n'avez rien à nous donner,
Dites-le-nous.
Nous vous demandons pas grand'chose,—
La fille aînée de la maisonne.
Nous lui ferons faire bonne chère,

Nous lui ferons chauffer les pieds!
Quand nous fûmes au milieu des bois,
Nous fûmes à l'ombre.
J'ai atendsu le coucou chanter
et la colombe,
Et le rossignol du vert bocage.
Ambassadeur des amoureux,
Va aller dsire à ma maîtresse
Que j'ai toujours le coeur joyeux,
Que j'ai toujours le coeur joyeux,
point de tristesse!
Mais ces jeunnes filles qu'ont pas d'amants,
Comment font-elles?
Ce sont les amours qui les réveillent,
Et qui les empêchent de dormir.

Solo:

Nous saluons la compagnie,
Et la prions de nous excuser.
Si l'on a fait quelque folie,
C'était pour nous désennuyer!

One translation, according to the bicentennial edition of the *Ste. Genevieve Herald*, goes as follows:

Ensemble:

Good evening master, mistress dear,
And every one that lives here too,
For the first day of the year
The Guignolée is to us due.
If you should be unwilling
To give us any kind of treat
We only ask you to bestow
A small chine-piece of meat.
A chine-piece of meat is no great treat,
Ten feet long is all it will be,
But we will make it ninety feet
Of rich and savory fricassee.
If nothing to us you are willing
To give, then let us know,
We only ask that you to us

Your eldest daughter show.
We will give her a pleasant time,
And we will nicely chafe her feet,
We will let her have a jolly time,
And we will quickly warm her feet.
When I was in the midst of the woods,
I was in the shade;
I heard the cuckoo and the turtle dove
cooing in the glade.
Nightingale of the verdant wood,
Ambassador of lovers gay,
Go tell, from me, my own true love
To have a joyful heart always.
Tell her always to have
A joyous heart; never to grieve,
The girl that never had a lover,
Say, how does she live?
Her thoughts of love keep her awake
And do not allow her to sleep.
Her aimless love keeps her awake
And chases away gentle sleep.

Solo:

And now, good company, we pray
That you will kindly us excuse;
If we have foolish been and gay,
It was to drive away the blues.

In the earliest days, the people of the little village lived like the Indians. They would send their furs and other goods downstream to a factor, who would trade them for whatever the person needed or was able to get from the French export trade. With the burgeoning growth of New Orleans, trading became easier and the villagers began acquiring some of the trappings that they had known in the old country.

Gradually they developed currency — "carrots" of tobacco, furs, and finally Mexican coins. (The "carrot" was a roll of tobacco which had been hammered into a half-inch hole in a log. The log then was split and the hard "carrot" extracted.)

Some of the citizens of Ste. Genevieve prospered, and enjoyed their incomes enormously. One example of the extent of an individual's personal possessions is found in the will of Jacques Louis Lambert *dit* (known as) Lafleur, a merchant and militia officer who died the day after Christmas, 1771. He left a regimental coat and vest, sword and belt, gun and powderhorn, gold watch worth 200 livres (about $25), gold button, silver snuffbox, three pairs of silver buckles, a silver cross, silver spoon, silver fork, two silver rings, a hunting knife, two purses, two looking glasses, a hat, an Indian pipe, 22 shirts, 12 night caps, 30 handkerchiefs, six drawers, two umbrellas, two mattresses, a featherbed, a blanket, a coverlid, a bed curtain, a pillowcase, three cravats, three tableclothes, eight pairs of breeches, a candlestick, a yard stick, a brush, a powder bag, a clock, a muff, a capot, a curling iron, plates, a tureen, several bottles, a basket, a bowl, pots, a copper kettle, a barrel, a birdcage, deerskins, and "other property."

The great expansion of trade which made such personal property possible also provided a voluminous source of daydreams for the youngsters in Ste. Genevieve. If they tired of dreaming of guiding expeditions to the West, they could always dream of the life of a river boatman.

It may have been glamorous to the young boys, but such a livelihood was quite another matter to the men who had to do the work. Canoes, pirogues and flat boats were used in the New Orleans trade. The flat boats weighed 20 to 30 tons, and generally were scrapped in New Orleans, with the complement of 10 men and their patron making their way back afoot.

The keel boats, weighing 50 to 60 tons, were too expensive to break down at the delta. They were equipped with masts and sails, and had tolerable

living accommodations aboard for the patron and his crew of 40 to 50 men. Generally the boats were equipped with a rudder. They would move about a mile each hour against the current. When stuck on a bar, the deck hands would move in circles around the deck, straining against their long poles. The trip back from New Orleans often took two months.

While truly magnificient imports from Europe were available to those in the Middle Valley who were willing to wait for them, not many could afford the cost. There were more poor than rich in Ste. Genevieve as everywhere else. Denan Detailly, an Indian interpreter who married a squaw, left in his will a featherbed covered with skins, another with ticking, four delf plates, a tin pan, a shovel, seven pewter spoons, four iron forks, an adz, saw, oven, table, four chairs, two sheets, two pairs of cotton breeches, one shirt, a blanket, a straw hat, and a pair of mittens.

The men of early Ste. Genevieve, almost without exception, wore their hair in long queues. It was held by an eelskin — a band used jointly to keep the hair off the back of the neck and to keep perspiration from dripping into their eyes. They wore coarse linen pantaloons, moccasins, and a blanket coat with cape, which fitted over the head. Men and women alike wore blue bandannas over their heads. Men of peasant lineage, who could not afford articles of cloth, often dressed completely in buckskins, which they made themselves. The coats of gentlemen of substance were often made in Paris, and were adorned with intricate designs of gold and silver braid and ornamented with solid silver buttons.

The peasant women, like the men, wore moccasins. They generally dressed in voluminous skirts of bold patterned materials. Frequently their aprons were made of plain deerskin.

Women of wealth, however, often had several corsets from France, silk scarves, combs of horn and ivory, and silk stockings. As soon as the New Orleans importers started operating in full swing, the ladies were able to procure plenty of serge, linen, silk, taffeta, satin and velvet.

Travelers in the mid-continent, used to the roughness found east of the Mississippi, often were startled to find a compact, genteel civilization in the wilderness of the Middle Valley. They still are.

CHAPTER VI.

God and the Rolling Bones

The Mission of the Immaculate Conception in Kaskaskia was instrumental in the development of Ste. Genevieve from the beginning. It is believed that a church was erected on *le grand champ* in about 1752, although that was not necessarily the first church. In that year, a François Rivard petitioned for land in *le grand champ* and promised to donate some of it for a church.

Certainly in the beginning the religious needs of the community had to be administered by priests from Kaskaskia, which necessitated an upstream pull of three or four miles. It may be presumed that the village received priestly visitations several times a year, and it also may be presumed that whoever did the rowing must have wanted a church there badly.

The first regular pastor was a Jesuit named Jean Baptiste de la Morinie, and it is his name that appears on all the records from November 10, 1761 to October 15, 1763, the year of the infamous Jesuit expulsion from French America. The earliest record is February 26, 1759, noting the marriage of Andre de Guire, *dit* La Rose, and Marie La Boissiere, the widow of Joseph Baron.

Missionary priests who, being quartered in Kaskaskia, might have visited the settlement, include François Louis Vivier (1714-1756), Rene Tartarin (1695-1745), François J. B. Aubert (1722-1785?), Philibert Watrin (1697-1765?) and Alexis F. X. DeGuyenne (1696-1762). The Jesuit Joseph Gagnon and a Franciscan, Luc Collet, also could have ministered to Ste. Genevieve. The records indicate that another early pastor was J. B. F. Salveneuve (1708-1764).

In light of the recreative activities of the early days, some might find it difficult to believe there was any religious influence in the community at all. Christian Schultz, writing early in the 19th century, had this to say about the situation: "Whenever there is a ball given even by the most rigid of these Catholics, there is always one room set apart for gambling. And never did I see people embark with so much spirit and perseverance to win each other's money as in this little village. They spend 30 hours at the same table with only claret and coffee, and exclusive of these frequent opportunities . . . they have meetings thrice a week for no other purpose than to play their favorite game . . . Should the billiard rooms, of which there are three, be closed the whole week, you will always see them open and crowded on Sunday."

Where was the Church during all this so-called debauchery? Right in the middle of it, and still playing a constructive role. The rugged, kindly priests had taught their lessons well. There was no brutality of man against man in those early years. No evidence of a single duel. The pioneer French were gamblers, but there is nothing in the records to show that any one man among them was an excessive gambler. They saw nothing immoral in dancing on Sunday. The priests went along with this because there was no reason not to. While Don Pedro Piernas (lieutenant-governor of Upper Louisiana), declared that the people of Ste. Genevieve

were characterized by "license, laxity of conduct and vice," it should be noted that Piernas and his company were from a land where instances of rank bigotry, lawsuits, and capital crimes were matters of course. The people of Ste. Genevieve were listening to a different drummer — and a better one.

Almost all the credit for the sophistication of the citizens of early Ste. Genevieve must accrue to the Roman Catholic Church. The frontier priests and missionaries were strict enough to command and receive general adherence to the basic laws of the Church and wise enough to ignore many of the outdated customs of Europe which often made little sense in the New World. Every man and woman was a full fledged citizen of the community, receiving all his rights and accepting all his responsibilities. Why was gambling allowed? Because a citizen feared the social disgrace of pauperism more than he coveted the winnings of the gaming table. Long before his losses could approach a critical amount the unlucky gambler left the games for home and hearth.

The Church did not require sacrifice from the devout frontiersman. Social pressures demanded giving what each family could afford to give, and no more. This always was enough to sustain the priests and missionaries. Under Spanish rule the crown paid the clergy in large measure. Only once in the early years did a priest (Francis Hilaire) try to extract the full 10 per cent tithe, and he was nearly run out of town.

The church of 1752 might have been replaced by another log church, or the original might have withstood the flood of 1785 to be moved to the site of the present church, facing the town square, in the 1790s. A visitor described it shortly after it was placed at the new site:

"At the upper end there is a beautiful altar, the fronton of which is brass gilt and enriched in medio-

relievo representing the religious of the world, diffusing the benefits of the gospel over the new world. In the middle of the altar there is a crucifix of brass gilt and underneath a copy of a picture by Raphael, representing the Madonna and Child, St. Elizabeth and St. John. In the second group there is a St. Joseph, all perfectly well drawn and colored. The beauty and grace of the Virgin are beyond description and the little Jesus and St. John are charming."

This church was replaced in 1835 by a stone church of proportions considered huge by the standards of the time.

Except for the vaulting and the roof, the present great church was designed by the legendary Francis Xavier Weiss, pastor of the parish of Ste. Genevieve from 1865 to 1900. The cornerstone was laid on April 30, 1876, and the building was consecrated on September 29, 1880. Three-fourths of the cost of the church was donated by Odile Pratte Valle, widow of Felix Valle, a grandson of old François Vallé I.

While times in the Middle Valley were peaceful and wholesome, such was not the case in Europe. Royalty, resentful of Papal aspirations to political power and recognizing the great value of the support given to the Vatican by the Society of Jesus, decided to blow the whistle. Orders were issued suppressing the Jesuits in France, and recalling all those in service in the New World. They were commanded to proceed immediately to New Orleans for transportation back to France. Their possessions were seized, sold to the highest bidders, and the proceeds applied against their transportation costs. Eleven years later, Pope Clement XIV was forced to suppress the Order throughout the world.

Thus, the force which inspired exploration, established and sustained a high order of civilization on

both sides of the Mississippi river, was removed by an act of idiocy 5,000 miles away.

The embittered Jesuits left. In all the Middle Valley there was but one priest — the Franciscan Luc Collet, hiding from the British near Cahokia.

One Jesuit, Sebastian Meurin, was so devoted to the people of Ste. Genevieve that he approached the Superior Council in New Orleans and asked them to allow him to return to the Middle Valley. They acceded to this request, with the proviso that Meurin was to "recognize no other ecclesiastical superior than the reverend Father Superior of the Capuchins at New Orleans." (Both Quebec and New Orleans at that time were claiming jurisdiction over the Middle Valley.)

So Meurin returned, alone. Back up the broad river, to Ste. Genevieve. Back to the perils of ministering to an area of thousands of square miles by canoe and horseback. He had been back only a few weeks when he was called upon to administer a baptism in the town of St. Louis, then only two months old, and that entry is the first in the ancient records of The Old Cathedral, on the downtown St. Louis riverfront.

Meurin spent most of the years following his return rushing from one settlement to another for baptisms, weddings, last rites and burials. The strain was so great that he appealed for help wherever he could. Disregarding orders, he wrote to Quebec. Bishop Briand, so moved by Meurin's plea, advised the beleaguered cleric that he not only would send help, but he would appoint Meurin vicar-general over the entire Illinois country, including New Orleans. The fat was in the fire. Philippe François de Rastal, Chevalier de Rocheblave, the Spanish commandant at Ste. Genevieve, put a price on Meurin's head, but the devoted people of Ste. Genevieve were able to warn their priest in time. In 1768 he went into hiding along the west bank,

traveling to the settlements between Ste. Genevieve and St. Louis in the dead of night.

During the succeeding years the kindly Meurin, watching the Mississippi enroaching on the graveyard near old Fort de Chartres, moved the bodies of Collet and Gagnon to Prairie du Rocher.

Briand was a man of his word. Within months after receipt of Meurin's appeal he dispatched the 31-year-old Pierre Gibault to the aid of the 61 year-old Jesuit.

Gibault was at home in the wilderness, and he covered the area with speed and enthusiasm, roaming as far to the east as Post Vincennes, making friends and converts wherever he went. Not long after his arrival, on June 24, 1770, he was called upon to bless the first church in St. Louis.

The jockeying for power in the Europe of the 1760s and the French and Indian War in North America had some drastic effects upon the peaceful population of the Middle Valley. The Treaty of Paris, enacted in 1763 at the close of the Seven Years War, caused France to cede to England all lands east of the Mississippi river, resulting in grave discontent to the occupants of the east bank.

Scores of inhabitants abandoned their homes in Kaskaskia to live in Ste. Genevieve, rather than offer their allegience to the despised George III. Young Auguste Chouteau capitalized upon this near panic by persuading many of the occupants of the settlements north of Kaskaskia to move to St. Louis, rather than make the arduous trek downstream to New Orleans, where the Spanish still reigned. There was still some apprehension on the part of the migrants to the west bank when it was learned that the Secret Treaty of Fontainebleau, proclaimed in April of 1764, removed their new home from the aegis of the Bourbon kings and placed them under

the Spanish crown. But any government was better than British government.

Thus, it comes as no surprise that the French of the area, like their brothers on the continent, sided with the colonists in the American Revolutionary War. The crude, raucus and often lawless Americans would make better neighbors than the English.

Still, the French delivered only passive support, until the quiet of the night of July 4, 1778, was broken by the triumphant hoots of a company of Kentucky woodsmen under the leadership of the haughty George Rogers Clark. They came ashore at Kaskaskia that night, flying the colors of the Commonwealth of Virginia. While the victory-flushed Long Knives knew they outnumbered the small British garrison, they were equally aware that the townspeople greatly outnumbered them. They needed some politics to beef up their muskets. They needed Gibault.

Gibault and Clark met that night to discuss the terms of the surrender of the town. The priest entered the narthex of his church and tolled its bell, summoning the townspeople to a meeting. Gibault assured the parishioners that they would be wise in following their sentiments in acquiescence to the American demands, a recommendation which the townspeople readily accepted. The flag of Virginia was raised without the firing of a single shot.

Clark was far from through with Gibault. He persuaded the priest to accompany a detachment through the forests to Post Vincennes, 145 miles due east. There the British garrison would be ready and waiting — the Long Knives would need all the persuasion Gibault could deliver to them.

Yet, Gibault, with Clark and a Dr. Laffont of Kaskaskia, needed only two days to bring the people and garrison at Vincennes to the side of the Americans.

The vain Clark, who wrote with disdain of Gibault's role, nevertheless regarded his political prowess highly. When the commandant of the British garrison at Detroit put a price on Gibault's head Clark lost no time in spiriting the priest into hiding.

It was left to the celebrated Patrick Henry to correctly appraise Gibault's role in the Middle Valley campaign: "This country owes many things to Gibault, for his zeal and services."

Having been transferred to Kaskaskia from Ste. Genevieve in 1773, Gibault was reappointed pastor of Ste. Genevieve in 1778, where he served until 1784. He was a familiar sight to settlers for miles around — a small man on a great horse, carrying the sacred accouterments of his office in his saddlebags, and a rifle across the saddle bow. In his belt were a brace of pistols and a murderous knife. Gibault, the man of God, was willing to trust his survival to the Almighty, with perhaps a bit of help from his belt. He was moved to New Madrid in July, 1793, where he remained until his death on August 16, 1802. For 34 years he had served his fellow men. After the death of the aged Meurin in 1777, Gibault had served the entire area alone, as Meurin had done before him.

Few historians would argue that this pioneer priest was a valuable ally to the cause of the American Revolution, for he delivered virtually all of what is now southern Illinois to the Americans, providing an effective barrier along the great waterway which would have linked the British garrisons in the north to the Gulf of Mexico. Yet, Gilbault is virtually unknown today.

CHAPTER VII.

From France to Spain to the U.S.A.

His given name was François but hardly anyone in the little village of Ste. Genevieve knew the man by any name but Papa Vallé. The name Vallé still is in Ste. Genevieve. Widows of his direct descendants live in the oldest homes, and in succeeding years younger descendants, like those before them, will succumb to the lure of the ancient town and live there again. With each passing year the mystique grows a little, and the children return a little earlier.

The earliest Vallé, Pierre, emigrated from Rouen, Normandy, to Quebec in 1645. His son, Charles, married a Genevieve Marcou(x) and one of their sons was François Vallé — the beloved Papa Vallé of Ste. Genevieve. He was born January 2, 1716.

He moved to Kaskaskia in 1740, and in that year he married Marianne Billeron. Soon after the couple moved to Ste. Genevieve, where all their children were born. There was François, Jr., Jean Baptiste, Charles, Joseph, and two daughters, Marie & Marguerite.

The family prospered — 15 years after their arrival in Ste. Genevieve the Vallé family was known to be the wealthiest in the Middle Valley. Philip Pittman, writing after 1764, said: "Valle'é was the richest inhabitant of the country of the

Illinois; he raised great quantities of corn and provisions; was the owner of 100 slaves, and in addition hired white people and kept them constantly employed."

Papa Vallé was an astute man too. Having lived under the lilies of France all his life, he couldn't have welcomed the news of the transfer of western Louisiana to Spain. Yet, when Don Pedro Piernas, the new lieutenant governor of Upper Louisiana, passed through Ste. Genevieve enroute to his headquarters in St. Louis, he was welcomed by Papa Vallé like an old friend. This, despite the fact Vallé's friends and associates had urged him to take them elsewhere, away from direct Spanish rule.

Piernas came to Ste. Genevieve with his tired and hungry detachment of troops. Papa Vallé fed them. It developed that Don Pedro was as short of cash as he was of food. Papa Vallé loaned him money.

His reward was not long in coming. The gratitude of Piernas was such that he appointed Papa Vallé both civil and military commandant of Ste. Genevieve. As such, he became commanding officer of one lieutenant, one corporal, and seven soldiers. (Each of the officers and men received two pairs of shoes, two pairs of stockings, two shirts and one new suit annually.)

Later, the garrison was changed to include Vallé; Don F. Charpentier, lieutenant; Don F. Du Chouquette as sub-lieutenant, plus a first sergeant, two second sergeants, four first corporals, four second corporals and all citizens between 15 and 50 years of age who were capable of bearing arms.

François Vallé was not a man given to temper. Even during the trying months when his oldest son was infatuated with a beautiful girl from the village, the patriarch kept his tongue while the affair ran its course. There is but one recorded instance when he abandoned his aplomb. A resident named Pierre Massé, known as Picard, disputed his word concern-

ing a payment for a quantity of lead. Vallé picked Picard up bodily and smashed him against a trunk, threatening him with imprisonment if he didn't pay his bill. Since he was directly involved, Vallé reported the incident to Don Francisco Cruzat, the successor to Piernas, for judgment. The offender was sentenced to make a public apology and serve seven days in jail.

The Ste. Genevieve jail was, of course, under the direct jurisdiction of Papa Vallé. Such was his nature that when some unfortunate soul was forced to lodge there Papa Vallé would send down some whiskey "to blunt the acuteness of his feelings and to render the reflections of his first hours as little bitter as possible."

One can't help but wonder if Picard ever got his booze.

Like most of the French, Vallé was a strong supporter of the American cause during the Revolution. He often was called upon to house American troops, and furnished liberal stores to Indians pressed into the American cause. He donated food to the American garrisons, and dispatched a contingent of Indians under his jurisdiction to the defense of Fort Jefferson.

Papa Vallé died in 1783, having served for 19 years as both civil and military commandant of Ste. Genevieve. At the age of 67, he was laid to rest in the alluvium of *le grand champ*. His bones undoubtedly were washed away within a few years.

Vallé was succeeded as military commandant by Don Sylvio Francisco de Cartabona, who arrived in Ste. Genevieve in 1784. It was Cartabona who took over the defense of St. Louis in 1780, shortly after the death of Don Fernando DeLeyba, who was commandant there at the time of the Indian attack.

In April, 1787, he was succeeded in Ste. Genevieve by Henri Peyroux de la Coudreniere, an infantry captain and respected author of several geographical publications.

Nine years later, Peyroux was replaced by François Vallé, Jr., 38-year-old son of the original commandant. The younger Vallé was married to the former Marie Carpentier and the two lived in a one-story frame building with wide galleries on the bank of the South Gabouri creek.

(This is the house that has fooled more than one historian into thinking it no longer exists. It does exist, but it was stripped of its galleries and great Norman truss possibly a century ago.)

Joseph Coulture, who had been flooded out countless times, had had enough of the Mississippi by 1778. That year he moved his family and his possessions to the high ground between the two forks of the Gabouri — thus becoming the first settler of *les petite cotes.*

Young Vallé is supposed to have been one of the early builders in the new village upstream from *le grand champ* — a distinct possibility since after his father's passing he probably had the capital and the manpower to accomplish the job. The house is supposed to have been built new on that site, not moved as so many of the others were. Thus it cannot be called the oldest house in Ste. Genevieve, even though it probably was built in 1786 or 1787.

Others of the first settlers in the new town were Jacques Boyer, M. Loisette, J. B. La Croise, Sr., J. B. and Vital Beauvais (known as St. Jeme or St. Gemme) and J. B. Sebastian Pratte. François Janis moved over from Kaskaskia in 1790, along with the celebrated Parfait Dufour. (Dufour was the man who led George Rogers Clark to Kaskaskia 12 years before, and who rendered valued service to Meriwether Lewis and William Clark on their transcontinental trek to the mouth of the Columbia in 1806.)

Many other east bank pioneers, full of loathing of the uncouth American invaders, came to Ste.

Genevieve — from Kaskaskia, Prairie du Rocher, even Cahokia. (Spanish authorities were under orders to refuse to issue passports to emigrants who did not profess the Catholic faith — an edict which served to bar most of the Americans from settlement on the west bank. The authorities in St. Louis winked at this law. There is no evidence to indicate that it was ignored in Ste. Genevieve.)

The old townsite was completely abandoned by 1791 except for a building or two. The church was moved up in 1794.

Vallé left other structural legacies. There no longer is any trace of the mill he built on Dodge's creek in 1793, or of the water-powered sawmill on the Aux Vasse. But the great mill on the bank of the Saline, where the old lead road fords, still stands. It was gutted by a fire in 1864, 64 years after it was built, but its towering, grotesque limestone walls still rise 65 feet above the stream. The ruin is only 15 yards away from the bank but the foliage is so dense that the structure is nearly invisible from the bridge, no more than 100 yards downstream.

It is probable that the stone for this building came from the ruins of old Fort de Chartres. Much of the fort's rock is believed to have been incorporated into the construction of many of the early Ste. Genevieve homes.

François Vallé, Jr., died on March 6, 1804, just four days before consummation of the Louisiana Purchase. He was buried beneath his pew near the communion rail of the old log church. The grave was moved during the construction of the rock church in 1834, and again during the building of the present structure. It is marked today by a bronze plaque imbedded in the floor.

On March 10, 1804, Israel Dodge, father, grandfather and step-father of future United States Senators, quietly raised the American flag above the

little mourning town. Mourning the death of its first citizen, the death of an era, the death of an empire. For that was the end of New France in North America.

CHAPTER VIII.

An Unfortunate Fort

François Vallé II was succeeded as civil commandant by his only surviving brother, Jean Baptiste Vallé. J. B. Vallé was a prosperous merchant, a sometime mountain man, and a partner in the fur trading venture known as Vallé and Menard. His home was one of the first built in the new town.

He was married to Jeanne Barbeau, daughter of the French Army engineer who constructed Fort de Chartres. By the time he was 27 (in 1787) he had two children, 37 slaves and the finest home in town. Upon the transfer of Louisiana to the United States, Territorial Governor William Henry Harrison appointed Vallé civil commandant, and he is said to have exercised the judicial powers of this office for the rest of his life.

One old settler, writing a century ago, recalled that even in his last years he wore the cocked hat, knee breeches and broad-cuffed coat, a living memorial to a dead regime.

His home, which still stands on the northwest corner of Main and Market streets in Ste. Genevieve, is surrounded with mystery.

The biggest puzzle is in the basement. There the walls are far thicker (three to four feet) than neces-

sary for foundation purposes. The rumor persists that the portion of the structure was used as a fort, built perhaps as early as 1762. The foundation wall indeed has this appearance — the corners bulge with massive three-quarter-round emplacements, possibly intended as tower foundations. Even the loopholes remain. Yet, there is no authoritative documentation to suggest this was ever used as a fort.

Even the builder of the house remains a mystery. Some texts credit it to J. B. Vallé, but some others say that François Vallé II erected the building.

There is a strong possibility that François Vallé II, after erecting the family place on the South Gabouri, immediately started construction of a fortification at Main and Market, 450 feet to the north. Upon his death at the age of only 46, it could be presumed that J. B. Vallé completed the construction, but as a residence rather than a fort.

The existence of a fort at all in the old town also is a mystery. The Catholic archives vaguely refer to the presence of one on *le grand champ* in 1759. In all probability, the term garrison house should have been used, although it was referred to as Fort Joachim.

There definitely was a fort on the bank of the South Gabouri, possibly erected before the year of the great flood. A plate in Ft. Yealy's book sites it very close to the François Vallé house, based upon the survey of 1817. General Victor Collot wrote that he had seen that fort on the bank in 1790, and described it as being too far from the Mississippi, and extremely vulnerable to an attack from the high ground behind it. General Collot observed that the fort was comparable to, but smaller than, the fort in St. Louis. This would mean it had circular stone towers placed at intervals, connected with a wood stockade. The J. B. Vallé foundation certainly doesn't fit such a description.

The files of the *Ste. Genevieve Fair Play* contain an account of an interview with Mrs. Celeste Thomure in 1888, in which she states that the François Vallé house itself served as the fort. The woman was 90 years old at the time, however, and recollections of long past happenings by anyone, much less a person of so many years, often are inaccurate.

The noted architectural historian Charles E. Peterson wrote that the fort was in existence in 1796; small, square and surrounded with pickets. He stated that it was armed with two two-pound cannons and manned by a corporal and two men.

An old map recently found identifies an old fort on the northwest corner of South Gabouri and Main Streets. Street repair crewmen found evidence of pickets in the soil when they excavated for street widening in the 1960s.

CHAPTER IX.

Indians...Friends and Enemies

The absence of class consciousness among the Ste. Genevieve French soon eliminated any hostility the Indians might have held for them. Since the Indian was not held as personal property, as was the Negro slave, there was little opportunity for close personal communion. The red man preferred to live in his own villages. There was social intercourse of considerable consequence, plus a great deal of commercial traffic.

A village of Peorias and Kickapoos was located on *le grand champ*, close enough to be a suburb of Ste. Genevieve. The red and white children played side by side in the narrow streets.

While the Peorias enjoyed peaceful relations with the Ste. Genevieve residents, they were subject to almost constant harrassment from other tribes. One of their number murdered the Ottawa chief, Pontiac, in Cahokia in 1769, and subsequent acts of retribution drove them to the Ste. Genevieve area in 1780. The distance decreased the trouble but didn't eliminate it.

The Peorias were able to save two or three bushels of corn and beans a year, plus dried pumpkins and dried meat. After their fall hunt they stayed in

their villages until February or March, when they went on another hunt. The crops were planted in April and the summer hunt took place in May. They often supplemented their diet with berries and nuts.

A village of Shawnees settled near Apple Creek, 45 miles downstream, in 1800. They patterned their vertical log houses after those of the Ste. Genevieve settlers.

The Kaskaskias eventually migrated west, and now are located in northeastern Oklahoma. In 1945 remnants of the once-great Illinois confederation numbered only 413 persons.

The only Indians truly native to Missouri were the Missouris and the Osage. The Missouris spoke the Chiwere Sioux language, and built their wigwams of poles covered with mats. The Osage also spoke a Siouan dialect. They had no permanent villages near Ste. Genevieve, although they certainly made themselves at home in the area. Most of their villages were in western Missouri, and consisted of a complex of rectangular houses. Ranging from 31 to 42 feet long and from 15 to 22 feet wide, they were supported by center posts joined with ridge poles, with bent poles forming the roof.

The Delawares and Shawnees were moved into the area by the Spanish in 1789. They were repeatedly called upon to raid the meandering Osage groups.

Throughout the Spanish regime the settlers were troubled by the Osage. While they were reluctant to kill, they would steal with brazen impunity, often subjecting their victims to gross indignites in the process. Ste. Genevieve, of all the settlements along the Mississippi, seemed to be the center of their activities, probably because of the pacific attitudes of its populace. The muscular warriors, few of them less than six feet tall, would enter the town during the night, divide into small parties and carry off anything they could find. They broke into

stables and led the livestock away. They would unite a short distance from the town and march leisurely away, driving their horses ahead, with no fear of being pursued.

In the forest or on the plains they were kings. The little encampment of Peorias and Kickapoos on *le grand champ* eventually was forced to curtail their hunts, such was their fear of the Osage.

A group of seven men, working the lead vein at Mine La Motte on April 7, 1774, was murdered by a band of Osage. Included was young Joseph Vallé, 20-year-old son of Papa Vallé.

There is a report of a man named Henry Fry, who left Big River with his fiancée, her brother and two sisters, bound for Ste. Genevieve and marriage. In the vicinity of Terre Blue creek, some nine miles north of Farmington, they were overtaken by a band of 60 Osage and robbed of their horses, guns, and furs worth $1,500. They stripped Fry and ordered him to run. When he refused they beat him with their ramrods, and stripped all the others but the bride's brother. One of her sisters was dragged naked through a field of burnt stubble. Her brother, Aaron Baker, having a fortuitous case of acne, was thought by the Osage to have small pox and was left quite alone.

It wasn't until after the immigration of the Americans, who regarded shooting Indians as being somewhat akin to squirrel hunting, that the Osage met their match and retreated to western Missouri.

CHAPTER X.

Lead, Commerce and Birdwatching

The people of Ste. Genevieve (and all historians concerned with that area for that matter) are immensely indebted to Henry Marie Brackenridge. At the age of seven he was sent alone down the Ohio from Pittsburgh in the early 1790s by his father, Judge H. H. Brackenridge. He left a graphic account of his life in Ste. Genevieve with the family of Vital St. Gemme Beauvais. The house where he lived still is standing, although substantially altered. Unlike the accounts of so many other observers, his recollections ring true with the evidence. The purpose of his visit, evidently, was to learn the language of the French.

Of the Beauvais family, he had this to say:

"M. Beauvais was a tall, dry, old French Canadian, dressed in the costume of the place: that is, with a blue cotton handkerchief on his head, one corner thereof descending behind and partly covering the eel-skin which bound his hair, a check shirt, coarse linen pantaloons on his hips, and the Indian sandal or moccasin, the only covering to the feet worn here by both sexes. He was a man of grave and serious aspect, entirely unlike the gay Frenchman we are accustomed to see; and this seriousness was not a little heightened by the fixed rigidity of the

maxillary muscles, occasioned by having his pipe continually in his mouth, except while in bed, or at Mass, or during meals. Let it not be supposed that I mean to speak disrespectfully or with levity, of a most estimable man; my object in describing him is to give an idea of many other fathers of families of the village. Madame Beauvais was a large fat lady, with an open cheerful countenance, and an expression of kindness and affection to her numerous offspring, and to all others excepting her colored domestics, toward whom she was rigid and severe. She was, notwithstanding, a most pious and excellent woman, and, as a French wife ought to be, completely mistress of the family."

He observed that when he arrived in Ste. Genevieve not a soul knew a word of English, and he knew but two words of French. His contemporaries, however, did not ridicule his handicap, but seemed to take pleasure in helping him learn their language.

Madame Beauvais took her religion seriously — she refused to put the Brackenridge boy to bed with her own children until he had been baptised.

He leaves an account of what appears to be the first school in Ste. Genevieve. It seems to have been established prior to 1795, for in that year Pierre Charles Peyroux gave it lands and something of a library. The teacher evidently was François Moreau, whose descendants still live in the old town. The school ceased operation with the death of Moreau in 1801.

Brackenridge described the Beauvais property as a "a long, low building, with a porch or shed in front and another in the rear; the chimney occupied the center, dividing the house into two parts, with each a fireplace. One of these parts served for dining-room, parlor, and principal bed-chamber; the other was the kitchen; and each had a small room taken off at the end for private chambers or cabinets. There was no loft or garret, a pair of stairs being a rare

thing in the village. The furniture, excepting the beds and the looking glass, was of the most common kind, consisting of an armoire, a rough table or two, and some coarse chairs. The yard was enclosed with cedar pickets, eight or ten inches in diameter and seven feet high, placed upright, sharpened at the top, in the manner of a stockade fort. In front the yard was narrow, but in the rear quite spacious, and containing the barn and stables, the negro quarters, and all the necessary offices of a farm-yard. Beyond this there was a spacious garden enclosed with pickets in the same manner as the yard. It was, indeed, a garden — in which the greatest variety and the finest vegetables were cultivated, intermingled with flowers and shrubs; on one side of it there was a small orchard containing a variety of the choicest fruits. The substantial and permanent character of these enclosures is in singular contrast with the slight and temporary fences and palings of the Americans. The house was a ponderous wooden frame, which, instead of being weather-boarded, was filled in with clay, and then whitewashed. As to the living, the table was provided in a very different manner from that of the generality of Americans. With the poorest French peasant, cookery is an art well understood. They make great use of vegetables, and prepared in a manner to be wholesome and palatable."

The description Brackenridge leaves of the Sunday balls is somewhat different from the accounts of others. Probably this is because the balls the children attended were quite different from those patronized exclusively by adults.

"I sometimes went with other children to the ball, which was by no means a place of frivolity, but rather a school of manners. The children of the rich and poor were placed on a footing of perfect equality and the only difference was a more costly, but not a cleaner or neater dress. The strictest decorum and

propriety were preserved by the parents who were present. There was as much solemnity and seriousness at these assemblies as at our Sunday schools; the children were required to be seated, and no confusion or disorder was permitted. The minuet was the principal dance. I think it is in some measure owing to this practice that the awkward, clownish manners of other nations are scarceley known among the French. The secret of true politeness, self-denial, or the giving the better place to others, was taught me at these little balls."

Within a few decades of the founding of Ste. Genevieve, agriculture had displaced mining as the area's chief producer of revenue. Mining, however, did not die out, and even today is an industry of growing importance.

In the early days of the community lead was king. Almost every *habitation* had some sort of space reserved for the storage of lead. There was a continuing flow of the metal from the inland mines to Ste. Genevieve. In 1778, Vital St. Gemme Beauvais and François Vallé I made a general claim of 60 feet around every hill in the area that might contain minerals.

Mine la Motte, supposedly founded by LaMothe de Cadillac, was located near the head of the St. Francis River, Mine à Joe near the present town of Flat River, Mine à Burton on a branch of the Mineral Fork, Old Mines near the town of the same name, and Renault's Mines on the Mineral Fork and the Fourche Arno. By 1804 there were 10 working lead mines in the area, and by 1817 production was up to 800,000 pounds annually.

Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, in writings published in 1819, described a personal encounter with a man he identified as a Mr. Burton, an aged miner. This

actually was François Azor, a native of Brittany, who was referred to as the Breton, a name the Americans corrupted to Burton. Azor supposedly was born in 1710. In 1818, at the age of 108, he was still going strong, walking the two miles from his home to the church for mass every Sunday.

While hunting in the area southeast of Mine Renault in 1773, Azor stumbled across a rich deposit of lead which came to be known as Mine à Burton. It is located near Potosi.

Schoolcraft said that the miners were paid four cents a pound for lead at the big warehouses of the Ste. Genevieve landing.

The lead was treated in various ways at the mines. It was soaked in vinegar to obtain white lead, used in the manufacture of paint. It was heated, sifted and reheated to make red lead.

Towers built in nearby Herculaneum were used in the manufacture of shot. The molten lead dripped through a copper sieve, then fell into a cistern below. The largest shot was dropped from a height of 140 feet; smaller pellets fell about 90 feet. The shot then was cranked in cylindrical vessels for roundness. Plumbago (graphite) was added for gloss. Each man was capable of producing 4,000 pounds of shot a day.

It might be said that the state of Texas was founded from Ste. Genevieve, because one of the residents of the community was Moses Austin, who with his son, Stephen, looms large in Texas history.

Born in Durham, Connecticut in 1764, Moses Austin moved to Philadelphia as a young man, where he became a merchant. He took over a pewter button factory in Richmond, Virginia, and then moved to Wythe County in western Virginia, where he operated a country store and a small lead mine.

In the fall of 1796 he came to St. Louis, then moved to Ste. Genevieve, where he took over the

operation of Mine à Burton in 1798. He brought his family, including Stephen, then five, to Ste. Genevieve in 1798, the same year he received a nine-square-mile land grant in the Potosi area. Records indicate he settled his family in a large house, probably located on that triangular plot between the LaBruyere house and the South Gabouri, a few yards east of the old St. Marys road.

Austin, a resourceful miner, erected the area's first reverbatory furnace. He turned out nearly 300 tons of lead a year, building a substantial fortune from his sheet lead and shot production. His success was such that he was able to erect a sawmill and a grist mill in 1799, and then a palatial residence, "Durham Hall," which became the nucleus of the American settlement west of Ste. Genevieve. He and his 50 employees survived violent Osage attacks in 1799 and 1802, largely because of the persuasive powers of a three-pounder imported for such occasions.

The failure of a St. Louis bank during the panic of 1818 wiped Austin out, but he had had enough prosperity anyway. He decided to form a colony in Texas. He died in 1821, while on a return trip to Ste. Genevieve. He is interred in the Presbyterian cemetery at Potosi, and attempts by the state of Texas to move his body to Austin have so far been fruitless.

Probably the most noted person ever to settle in Ste. Genevieve, albeit briefly, was the celebrated ornthologist, John James Audubon. He came not as a birdwatcher, but as a businessman. He left as a birdwatcher though.

Audubon, born in the West Indies in 1780, was taken by his family to France while an infant. While in his 20s he became acquainted with young Ferdinand Rozier, a native of Nantes. Both of them served in the Napoleonic Navy.

Despite his obvious talents as an artist and lover of nature, Audubon was determined to be a man of commerce. He saw in Rozier much of this same determination, and the two elected to abandon the devastated homeland and pursue their careers in America.

They arrived in New York May 26, 1806, and settled in Pennsylvania for a year. Then they loaded a keelboat with merchandise and headed for Kentucky, where they engaged in retail trade for three years.

In the fall of 1810 Audubon and Rozier loaded another keelboat with 300 barrels of whiskey and other goods and set out for Ste. Genevieve. An account of their trip, quoted from Audubon, is left by Rozier's son, Gen. Firmin A Rozier:

"After floating down the Ohio, we entered the Mississippi river running three miles an hour, and bringing shoals of ice to further impede our progress. The patron ordered the line ashore, and it became the duty of every man 'to haul the cordelle,' which was a rope fastened to the bow of the boat, and one man left on board to steer, the others laying the rope over their shoulders, slowly wafted the heavy boat and cargo against the current. We made seven miles that day . . . At night we camped on the shores. Here we made fires, cooked supper, and setting one sentinal, the rest went to bed . . .

"(Three) more days of similar toil followed, when the weather became severe, and our patron ordered us to go into winter quarters, in the great bend of the Tawapattee Bottom.

"There was not a white man's cabin within twenty miles, and that over a river we could not cross. We cut down trees and made a winter camp . . . I rambled through the deep forests, and soon became acquainted with the Indian trails and the lakes in the neighborhood.

". . . I was not long in meeting strolling natives in

the woods. They gradually accumulated, and before a week had passed, great numbers of these unfortunate beings were around us, chiefly Osages and Shawnees.

". . . Here I passed six weeks pleasantly, investigating the habits of wild deer, bears, cougars, raccoons and turkeys, and many other animals, and I drew more or less by the side of our great camp-fire every day . . . What a good fire it is . . . Imagine four or five ash trees, three feet in diameter and sixty feet long cut and piled up, with all their limbs and branches, ten feet high, and then a fire kindled on the top with brush and dry leaves; and then under the smoke the party lies down and goes to sleep.

"While our time went pleasantly enough, a sudden and startling catastrophy threatened us without warning. The ice began to break, and our boat was in danger of being cut to pieces by the ice-floes, or swamped by their pressure. (The ice) split with reports like those of heavy artillery.

"While we were gazing on this scene, a tremendous crash was heard, when suddenly the great dam of ice gave way, and in less than four hours, we witnessed the complete breaking up of the ice. The cargo was again put on board . . . and our camp given up to the Indians. After bidding mutual adieus . . . fortunately we reached safely Cape Girardeau. But this village was small, and no market for us, and we determined to push up to Ste. Genevieve.

"We arrived in a few days at the Grand Tower Missouri, where an immense rock in the stream makes navigation dangerous. Here we used our cordelles, and with great difficulty and peril passed it safely . . . We arrived at Ste. Genevieve and found a favorable market."

While the market may have proved favorable to Audubon, Audubon did not exactly prove favorable to Rozier. Both were gentle men, but the Pennsyl-

vania and the Kentucky experiences proved that the partnership was unfair to Rozier. They parted company only a few weeks after their arrival in Ste. Genevieve. Audubon dispensed with the tiny cabin he had built on the site of the town's first bank and headed back to Kentucky. He engaged in a milling venture there which soon went down. Audubon was literally forced to pursue ornithology as a career.

Rozier remained, and so intense was his impact on the community that to this day both a department store and a bank bear his name. His descendants still live in the old homes. He married Constance Roy in 1813 and the couple had 10 children. He died in 1864 at the age of 86.

Lead may have been the fountainhead of all Ste. Genevieve commerce but other forms of commercial endeavor should be recognized. One of the most colorful pieces of Americana was the general store, and Ste. Genevieve had some dandies. An old account book in the archives of the Missouri Historical Society listed some of the goods and services vended in one such store: groceries, meats, dry goods, hardware, shoes, stationery, glasses, toothbrushes, fiddle strings and real estate. The store also served as the business agent of what amounted to a musician's union.

The bills were paid in lead, salt and pelts. Sometimes they were paid by check.

Due to the proximity of the Saline creek there was always salt. It brought about $2 for a 60-pound bushel.

In 1796 the industry in Ste. Genevieve proper was limited to two water mills, a horse mill and a pottery kiln. The first steam mill was built by Edward Walsh in 1818, and Schoolcraft observed two brick yards there in 1819. He also commented on the abundance of silicious sand "in the interior, which I think adapted for the manufacture of flint

glass." The site is near Potosi. Ste. Genevieve missed out on that one though. The sugar-like sand was ideal for glass making purposes, but the townspeople weren't particularly receptive to the suggestions that the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company erect a plant there. The installation went to Crystal City, about 30 miles northwest. For some unknown reason the city fathers also turned down the opportunity to have Southeast Missouri State College located there — it went to Cape Girardeau instead.

More industry probably would have located in Ste. Genevieve in the early days but the old town probably was plagued with a shortage in available work force. This was augmented to some degree by the adoption proceedings of the big cities. Local citizens could petition for an orphan, who would agree to work without pay providing the citizen would give him decent food, clothing, shelter and the opportunity to learn a trade. The orphan would be on his own at age 21.

CHAPTER XI.

Ste. Genevieve Loads the U.S. Senate

If Virginia is the cradle of Presidents then Ste. Genevieve must be the cradle of United States Senators — no fewer than five of them had their roots in the old town. Towering above them all was Dr. Louis F. Linn, the man whose advocacy of the prompt settlement of the Pacific Northwest secured the American claim against Britain for sovereignty over Oregon and Washington.

Old Israel Dodge had something in common with three of those senators. He had moved from Kansas in the 1790s to a farm on the Saline creek. He operated the ancient salt works there around 1800, and built a fine home in the area in 1805, the year he was elected the first sheriff of the Ste. Genevieve District. His son was Henry Dodge, who was to become one of the two first senators from the new state of Wisconsin.

Henry Dodge was born in 1782 in Vincennes, Indiana. He helped his father operate the salt works, then succeeded him as sheriff. He later was appointed a United States Marshall for the Territory of Missouri. He was Governor of the Wisconsin Territory from 1836 to 1841, by appointment of President

Andrew Jackson. At that time the territory included Wisconsin, the Dakotas, Iowa and Minnesota. Then he became a delegate to Congress from that area, and again occupied the statehouse from 1845 until 1848.

He was elected to the United States Senate upon admission of Wisconsin to the Union in 1848, where he served until 1857. He died 10 years later.

Henry Dodge's son, Augustus C. Dodge, who was born in Ste. Genevieve in 1812, became one of the first two Senators from Iowa. He married a Ste. Genevieve girl, Clara Hertick, and moved to the Wisconsin Territory when he was 27. After fighting in both the Black Hawk and the Winnebago Wars he served as a delegate to Congress from 1841 to 1847. He was a United States Senator from 1848 to 1855, after which he was named U. S. Minister to the Court of Madrid. He died in Burlington in 1883.

Dr. Linn is referred to in a number of documents as the half-brother of Henry Dodge, which probably is true. One source (Rozier) identifies his mother as the widow of Israel Dodge, but this is most unlikely. Dodge and his mother probably were divorced.

Linn was born in Louisville in 1795. Upon the death of his parents Henry Dodge assumed his guardianship, including the burden of his education in a Louisville medical school. Dr. Linn spent the years from 1815 to 1830 in Ste. Genevieve. After serving for three years as a State Senator he was appointed to fill the unexpired term of U. S. Senator Alexander Buckner in 1833. He died in office in 1843.

Linn had become quite learned in the treatment and causes of cholera, assembling a fund of information from doctors and hospitals in European and eastern U. S. cities which had been ravaged by the disease. At one time he left his duties at the Capitol to return to Ste. Genevieve and help arrest an out-

break of cholera, acquiring a touch of the disease himself in the process.

Linn's epitaph in the Protestant section of the old cemetery describes him as the "Model Senator from Missouri," a claim which seems to have some basis in fact. Rozier's book contains an undocumented tale of Linn's popularity among his colleagues in the Senate:

"On one occasion, when he held in his hands a roll of bills to present, and had risen for that purpose, Mr. (James) Buchanan rose and remarked pleasantly, 'Doctor, we will save you the trouble if you recommend them; we will pass the whole bundle.' The suggestion was, in the same spirit, seconded by Mr. (Henry) Clay. On another occasion, whilst a debate ran high, the Senators being excited on some political question, Henry Clay made a statement which caused Senator Linn to rise to correct him. Immediately Clay paused and bowed, and waving gracefully his hand, replied, 'It is sufficient that it comes from the Senator from Missouri.' "

That quote might seem a little ridiculous to those familiar with the pyrotechnics on the floor of the contemporary Senate. This feeling is enhanced by the knowledge that Gen. Rozier was 70 when he wrote the preceeding lines about incidents which allegedly occurred a half-century earlier. Clay could be a holy terror on the Senate floor. Either he wanted to concede the point or he owed Linn a devil of a doctor bill.

It is a somewhat startling coincidence that both the initial Senators from the new state of Iowa were from Ste. Genevieve. George W. Jones joined Augustus Dodge in 1848 and served two terms. The son of Judge John Rice Jones, he was born in Vincennes in 1804. The family came to Ste. Genevieve five years later. George Jones married a Ste. Genevieve girl, Josephine Gregoire, then studied law at Lexington, Kentucky. They moved to Iowa

in 1827, and he was appointed postmaster in a little town near Dubuque in 1833. Two years later he was appointed a delegate to the Congress, where he served until 1841. Following his terms in Washington he was named U. S. Minister to Bogata, Colombia. He died in Dubuque in 1896.

Lewis V. Bogy, the only one of the five Senators who was born in Ste. Genevieve, studied law at Lexington under Nathaniel Pope. In 1832, at the age of 19, he served in the Black Hawk War. He returned to Ste. Genevieve in 1835, moved shortly thereafter to St. Louis, and was elected to the Missouri Legislature in 1840. In 1849 he was back home, but again moved to St. Louis in 1863, and was elected to the U. S. Senate in 1873, serving one term. He died in St. Louis in 1877.

Ste. Genevieve also was the home of the first U. S. Representative from Missouri, John Scott. He was born in Virginia in 1785, educated at Princeton, and then moved to Vincennes. With his move to Ste. Genevieve in 1805 he became the town's first lawyer. Despite his education Scott rarely exhibited any sort of refinement — a dirk and pistol were as much a part of his raiment as his socks. He probably was one of the court functionaries commented upon by Brackenridge during his return visit to the old town in 1811. At that time Brackenridge lamented the almost total loss of gentility suffered by the town with the arrival of the Americans. Scott is known to have worn his weapons in the courtroom, where he would continually bully both judge and jury into acquittals for some of the area's most villianous offenders.

Scott, as a member of the Territorial Legislature, was a guiding force in framing the first Missouri constitution, and in 1818 presented the petition for admission of Missouri as a state. He also is noted as the father of Missouri's public school system.

Scott was elected to Congress in 1821, where he served four terms. During his last term he found himself out of alignment with the forces opposing the reelection of John Quincy Adams to the Presidency. His major opponent was the awesome Missouri Senator, Thomas Hart Benton. Scott's political career, therefore, was concluded after that term of office. He returned to Ste. Genevieve to practice law until his death in 1861.

In the early part of the 19th century the population race between Ste. Genevieve and St. Louis was neck and neck. In 1752 there were 20 whites and three Negroes in the town. In 1764, the year Laclede founded St. Louis, Ste. Genevieve had a population of 100 persons. Three years later, the flight of the Kaskaskians and other east bank residents from the British had raised this total to 350. By 1769 there were 600 in Ste. Genevieve, and in 1799 the figure was 949.

But St. Louis was catching up, thanks to aggressive recruiting activity by Auguste Chouteau. In 1799 St. Louis had only 24 persons fewer than Ste. Genevieve. In 1805 the population of the two towns was identical at 2,780. It remained that way in Ste. Genevieve for the next century. The proximity of St. Louis to the mouth of the Missouri made the difference — it rapidly became a base of departure for Western exploration and commerce. By 1838, the last year of the beaver boom, St. Louis had a population in excess of 16,000, a figure that was to redouble many times as the great caravans outfitted for the West.

By 1960, Ste. Genevieve had grown to 3,992, up some 1,200 from the population of 1940. And more than one good citizen has expressed displeasure with such rapid expansion.

Ste. Genevieve would have been outstripped by St. Louis much earlier had it not been for Nouvelle

Bourbon. A group of French nobles and nationals sympathetic to the cause of the Bourbons fled the old country during the revolution and settled in Gallipolis, Ohio. Recognizing that the young American democracy hardly would be as sympathetic toward a royalist cause as would the Spanish, they searched for a site west of the Mississippi, finally settling in an area next to the old *le grand champ* — atop the bluffs to the west, some two miles south of the new village. The year was 1793.

Leading the group was Don Pierre Carlos Delassus, father of Carlos Dehault Delassus, the man destined to become lieutenant governor of Upper Louisiana. There were only four or five actual members of the nobility in the settlement — the rest having only strong loyalist tendencies.

The New Bourbon territory encompassed an area from the Saline to the new settlement; from the big field west to Mine La Motte. In 1798 there were 20 houses on the town site, and a year later a census revealed there were 407 persons in the entire territory. The population reached a peak of 500 persons in 1799, then declined to nothing during the 19th century. There is no trace of the town today. But in 1794 it was sufficiently advanced to request a chapel (which it probably didn't get), and the following year a resident willed the community some ground for a hospital, and endowed it with the proceeds from a number of fields nearby. The hospital didn't come through either.

For all the unusually high degree of civilization the French brought to the Mississippi Valley they were unable to put formal education on a solid footing. They made several good tries, but in Ste. Genevieve it was an on-again, off-again proposition.

The first school in the old town probably was the one attended by young Henry Brackenridge. There is in the archives a will bearing a date of 1791, leaving a house and land for an orphanage and

school. The location is unknown. The maker of the will was Madame Marguerite Peyroux de la Coudrenière. Brackenridge indicates that the school probably was in operation in 1792.

There was a period of seven years beginning with the death of the schoolmaster, when the old town was without either a school or the hope of getting one. But in December, 1807, an organizational meeting was held marking the beginning of the Ste. Genevieve (Louisiana) Academy.

A fine ashlar stone building was erected on an eminence a few blocks from the heart of town, and the first classes were held in the spring of 1810. Daniel Barry, the first instructor, proposed to teach English, French, Latin, Greek, mathematics, surveying, logic, metaphysics, geography, history, natural and moral philosophy.

In the spring of 1812, Mann Butler, the noted pioneer historian, came to Ste. Genevieve from Kentucky to assume the teaching chores. He lasted two years, after which the Academy was closed.

A Swiss by the name of Joseph Hertick came to Ste. Genevieve in 1815 to found an academy in a rambling old house 10 miles southwest of town. Called "The Asylum," the building provided an education for three future Senators — Jones, Bogy, and Augustus Dodge, who married the schoolmaster's daughter. The institution ceased operation in 1830.

By 1819, the parish priest succeeded in gaining the services of three members of the Christian Brothers, headed by Brother Antonin, to staff the Louisiana Academy. This was the first teaching facility of the Christian Brothers in America. The venture lasted but a few years.

Records indicate that some sort of school was in operation in the Price brick building from 1824 through 1842.

Since the Louisiana Academy never had the depth of faculty to accommodate girls, the Sisters of Loretto opened an academy for girls in the two buildings built by Catherine Bolduc, widowed daughter-in-law of Louis Bolduc, for her son-in-law, Rene LeMeilleur, next door to the Bolduc House. A 10-foot long passageway joined the two structures — one of brick and the other frame. "Our Lady of Mt. Carmel" was opened in 1837. The sisters sold the property 11 years later and purchased a tract at Fourth and Merchant, the site of the present Convent of the Sisters of St. Joseph. They erected a convent and a classroom building. By 1858 the school had 42 pupils registered.

The Louisiana Academy didn't achieve a solid footing until Firmin Rozier took charge in 1849. He improved the building greatly and made an extensive brick addition in 1854. In 1861 he was listed as the principal and had four instructors working under him. The manpower drain caused by the Civil War resulted in the abandonment of the school in 1862.

Stone marker on west side of Third Street, between Merchant and Market, commemorates *El Camino Real*— the Kingshighway — which led from New Madrid through Ste. Genevieve to St. Louis.

While Ste. Genevieve was founded due to an advantage of transportation afforded by its topography and its relationship to the Mississippi, it was sustained in later years by another factor— *El Camino Real*. the

Kingshighway. In past centuries it had been no more than an Indian trail, but by 1789 it was at least important enough to be given a name. Men afoot or on horses considered it somewhat of a luxury, but the narrowness of the trace made travel by carriage or charette all but impossible.

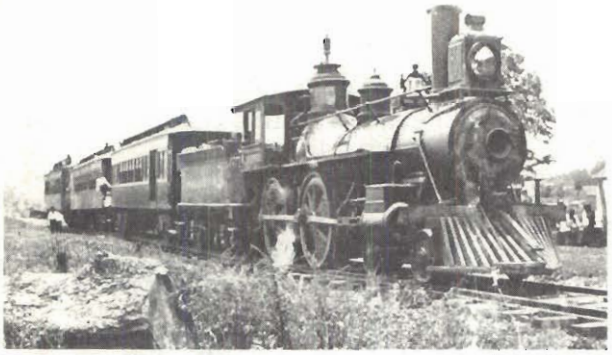
El Camino Real stretched from New Madrid through Cape Girardeau, Ste. Genevieve, and eventually terminated somewhere near the riverfront in St. Louis. (The notion that Kingshighway boulevard, in the central west end of St. Louis, was the terminal stretch of the old road seems erroneous — in 1789 this was a half-day's travel from the riverfront.) *El Camino Real* was declared a public road by the Americans in 1807, and the Missouri Territorial Legislature designated it as a postal route five years later. The road generally followed the course of U. S. Highway 61 through most of its 200-mile length.

The Mississippi, great a boon as it was to north-south travel, caused many a headache for those who wanted merely to cross from one side to the other. The Jesuit missionaries probably kept in excellent physical condition negotiating the four or five miles of water separating Kaskaskia from *le grand champ*.

John Price, the builder of the first brick building west of the Mississippi was granted the right to operate a ferry between Ste. Genevieve and the east bank in 1798, but there seems to be no evidence that he exercised it. An earlier ferry definitely was in operation late in the 18th century — by a man named Chailloux, *dit* La Chance. A full time ferry operation was undertaken in 1819 and appears to have operated continuously to this day. It leaves Little Rock Landing, at the foot of Maxwell's Hill some three miles north of town, upon command.

A fine old steam railroad ferry was pulled out of service at the same spot in the early 1960s after

nearly a century of service. (The railroad came to Ste. Genevieve in June, 1899.)



First train into Ste. Genevieve is shown the day it arrived, June 11, 1899. *Courtesy Mrs. Ida M. Schaaf*

The big news on the river came in August, 1817, when the steamer *General Pike*, Jacob Reed, Captain, passed by on her way to St. Louis. This was the forerunner of the fabulous era that saw the St. Louis harbor continuously choked with the frightening goliaths. That the *Pike* passed Ste. Genevieve up for St. Louis was indicative of the diminishing importance of the old town as a port.

Not that the town lacked action. The steamers that did tie up to take on wood did a brisk business from townspeople eager to snap up the offerings from New Orleans.

The people of Ste. Genevieve had an opportunity to see the horror of steamboating too. One vessel, the *Franklin*, built in Pittsburgh in 1816, hit a snag and sank near Ste. Genevieve on her way from Louisville to St. Louis.

It was the *Dr. Franklin No.* II that shocked the people. She was cruising about four miles north of

town on August 22, 1852, when a flue collapsed. The result of the violent steam explosion is described by Gen. Rozier:

"She was towed down to the Ste. Genevieve wharf. Amongst the passengers was the famous novel writer Ned Buntline, who escaped unhurt. The sight on board of the steamer was a distressing and mournful one. The cabin of the boat was strewed with men and women, uttering the most fearful cries, and undergoing the most cruel sufferings. Strong men were there blistered with steam, yet cold in death. Both engineers were blown into the river, and at the time of the explosion some jumped overboard and were lost. In one berth lay a wife and mother dead, with a child still clasped in her arms, whilst others were frightfully mutilated. The citizens of Ste. Genevieve rendered all the aid and assistance to those unfortunate persons, and had the dead decently buried in the graveyard."

The death toll from the accident is variously estimated between 20 and 32 persons. The vessel survived the explosion, was rebuilt and ran the river until July 7, 1853, when she burned at the wharf in St. Louis. She was built at Wheeling, West Virginia, by John McLure in 1848. She was a small vessel, 173 feet long with a 26.5 beam, and drawing 4.3 feet of water.

The Mississippi had strange ways. Mark Twain, recalling his riverboat days in *Life on the Mississippi*, described an incident involving the capriciousness of the Mississippi channel. He was puzzled when his boat discharged a well-dressed family on a rocky point, with no evidence of civilization other than an old stone warehouse and two or three decayed houses. They set off afoot down a winding country road. Actually, they were bound for Ste. Genevieve, which had been shut in behind a new island, which has long since disappeared.

About the middle of the 19th century the Missouri Legislature passed enabling laws for the formation of toll road companies. The entire state was in the grip of a plank road craze, and Ste. Genevieve was no exception. One was laid down from Iron Mountain to the old town during 1851-53. Plank roads were constructed by laying down parallel rails of round logs, then laying four-inch oak planks transversely over them. Maintaining the roadbed for 40 miles was too much and the $200,000 cost never was recovered. Things were not going at all well for Ste. Genevieve. Soon the Iron Mountain Railroad had its direct line through to St. Louis — and the rich ore bypassed the old town entirely.

CHAPTER XII.

A Town Full of Excitement

The process of verifying an ancient and relatively unimportant fact is laborious indeed, but proving something *didn't* happen is even more difficult.

For a century the rumor has circulated in Ste. Genevieve that the Marquis de Lafayette stopped overnight in town and slept on the old spool bed in the house of Commandant J. B. Vallé.

The known information indicates this is most improbable, but more than 30 man hours of intensive research failed to settle the matter one way or another.

In 1825, General Lafayette accepted an invitation from the United States to visit the nation he helped so much during the American Revolution.

It was in mid-April of that year that he left New Orleans, bound for an unscheduled trip to St. Louis. It is known that, on Wednesday, April 27, the steamer *Natchez*, with Lafayette aboard, stopped "for a few hours" in Cape Girardeau. It is well-verified that the boat tied up for the evening at 5 p.m. April 28 in Carondelet. The General arrived at the foot of Market street in St. Louis at 9 a.m. April 29. He spent the day going from one reception

to another, but he boarded the *Natchez* to spend the night, as had been his custom throughout the journey. It is a certainty that he took lunch in Kaskaskia on April 30, on his way back downstream.

Had Captain Davis tied up the *Natchez* at Cape Girardeau at 7 a.m. on the 27th, and had the "few hours" been, say, four, then it is possible that she could have made Ste. Genevieve by 9 p.m. She could have left at 8 a.m. the following day and made Carondelet by 5 p.m.

For the record, there has been no verification of the rumor that the General was accompanied throughout his voyage by a mysterious 24-year-old girl, a circumstance which might have accounted for his insistence in remaining aboard the *Natchez* every night.

Ste. Genevieve did have one internationally distinguished visitor — Otho, King of Greece, and the world's champion freeloader.

Otho had been king of the Hellenes only three years when, at the age of 20, he decided to visit America. In 1835 he arrived at the doorstep of John Jacob Astor, then a partner in the American Fur Company, in New York. The busy Astor used his great persuasive powers to encourage the young playboy to visit the hinterlands, specifically St. Louis, and his partner, Pierre Chouteau.

No mean talker himself, Chouteau persuaded his highness that for real fun he should see Ste. Genevieve, and stay with his friend, Jean Baptiste Vallé, the aging commandant.

And so the strapping, six-foot buffoon spent the next three months taxing the patience and good manners of Vallé, Gen. Jean Baptiste Bossier and others of the gentle French.

Otho was the last of the big spenders. He played cards for high stakes, and being rather thick he lost

considerably more often than he won. He was in no danger of losing his meager stake, however, because his adversaries were far to polite to take money from royalty.

He was forever badgering General Bossier to shoot pigeons with him at $5 a bird, and Bossier was forever thinking up excuses. There really wasn't any money involved — Otho couldn't hit a bird if he held it in his left hand and shot with his right.

Even an energetic young monarch like Otho could get tired, and after three months he headed back to Greece, again by way of Chouteau, who convinced him that the real action was back in New York. Astor told him to keep right on going, and sure enough, Otho found some excitement right at home in Greece. He was deposed in 1862.

Nineteenth century mob violence was a child of the city. No such calamity ever visited Ste. Genevieve. There was violence, however, in the form of two notable duels.

The first occurred on October 1, 1811, on Moreau's Island, opposite Ste. Genevieve. Thomas T. Crittenden, a young lawyer from Kentucky, was successful in his defense of a man accused of slander by Ezekiel Fenwick. Dr. Walter Fenwick, brother of the accuser, challenged the attorney and fell mortally wounded.

Another duel took place on the steps of the territorial courthouse in August, 1816. Auguste De Mun, a candidate for the Territorial Legislature, had made certain comments in the community about the alleged counterfeiting activities of his opponent, William McCarthur, a brother-in-law of Dr. Linn. McCarthur sent his challenge which De Mun refused. When McCarthur insulted De Mun publicly they met at the courthouse. While court was in session McCarthur went down the steps and De Mun

went up. At a signal they whirled and fired, and De Mun lost. He is buried in the old cemetery in Ste. Genevieve, sans tombstone.

Photo taken during flood of 1881 shows Mississippi swirling about old Kaskaskia house.

Thereafter, the periods of excitement were few and far between. There was the great flood of 1844 — even worse than the one in *L'anée des grandes eaux*, 1785. Then the waters completely filled the lowlands, from Missouri cliffs to Illinois cliffs. Some two and one-half feet higher than the waters of 1785, the river at some places was nine miles wide, and Kaskaskia was more than eight feet under water. Francis Rozier supposedly dived off a retaining wall at Main and Merchant into several feet of water. Farmers went to bed in one state and woke up in another.

And then there was the great bank robbery. It was the 26th of May, 1873, when four bad guys knocked off the Rozier bank, shotguns and Navy revolvers minimizing any chance of resistance.

The *Ste. Genevieve Fair Play* ganged up their headlines as follows:

DARING ROBBERY ! ! ! !

A FOUR THOUSAND DOLLAR HAUL ! ! ! !

Four Men Walked Into the Merchants Bank of Ste. Genevieve in Open Day Light and Robbed the Safe of its Contents and Escaped ! ! ! !

The Cashier Was Forced at the Muzzle of Two Pistols to Open the Safe

GREAT EXCITEMENT ! ! ! !

CITIZENS TURN OUT EN MASSE IN PURSUIT OF THE THIEVES ! ! ! !

The report carried in the *Missouri* (St. Louis) *Republican* described the event in detail:

"If there is any operation in which the audaciousness of pure devilry ever be displayed, it is in the exercise of high art in robbing a bank in broad daylight. Occasionally within late years whole communities have thrilled with the daring deeds of men whose intent to plunder has been consummated under circumstances requiring forethought, skill, nerve and dispatch. Midnight robbery has all the elements of wicked romance, but it does not begin to excite those emotions of surprise that startle business circles when crime is perpetrated in the immediate presence of witnesses in the bright light of day. The chronicles of the times are prolific with accounts of what desperate men dare to do; but perhaps there has been no greater exhibition of boldness than that which was displayed yesterday in the quiet town of Ste. Genevieve, Mo., on the Mississippi river.

"The bank, situated upon the corner of Merchant Street and Main, stands a two-story brick house used as a banking house by the Ste. Genevieve Savings Association. Gen. Firmin A. Rozier is President and O. D. Harris cashier.

"The hour for commencing business is 10 o'clock in the morning. As usual Mr. Harris went to the bank yesterday, and having opened the front door, laid the safe keys on his desk nearby. He then walked to the front door of the building, where he engaged in conversation with General Rozier's son, who had come to the bank. Soon a gentleman named Herzog approached. While the three men were talking two men on foot, strangers to them, were observed on the street passing by. Mr. Herzog soon left, but he had not gone fifty yards distant when the strangers retraced their steps.

"How the Robbers Operated.

"Seeing that they intended to enter the bank, Mr. Harris preceded them, the whole party followed by young Rozier. When half way in the room the cashier happened to turn his head and was startled at sight of two pistols pointed at his temples, and was most thoroughly aroused to the delicacy of the situation as he felt the cold muzzles quickly pressed to them. The force used by the robbers was so great that for hours afterwards one of his temples showed the mark of the pistol barrel. Before he could remonstrate he was saluted with a stirring command 'Open the safe or I'll blow your d...d brains out.' Mr. Harris hesitated about opening the safe, which being observed, caused the robbers to level their pistols at Rozier, threatening to shoot him if he should run. But Rozier broke away and was confronted by two other men on horseback, who were concealed from observation.

"Pistol Practice

"These fellows fired three shots, putting a ball through Rozier's coat, close to the shoulder. A Negro happened to witness the scene, but dared to do nothing more than fold his arms and stand still under cover of a pistol held by one of the horsemen, who threatened to kill him if he moved a hairsbreadth.

"Inside of the Treasure Box.

"While this attempted tragedy was being played on the street, the pinioned cashier was involuntarily performing his quiet part in the bank by receiving a blow from the butt of a pistol. The two robbers drew him to the safe, which he opened. Then they made a grab for the first valuables, securing about three thousand dollars in currency. They also grasped a cash box which they supposed held bonds and other papers of value. It happened, however, to contain the papers of ex-sheriff R. G. Madison, who is now a state representative. The box also contained one hundred dollars in gold. They then overhauled other papers belonging to the bank, but not representing money. Finding that time was precious, the two desperadoes jerked Mr. Harris' watch from his vest-pocket and then grasped him by the coat collar, still pointing their pistols at his head, and marched him out of the bank building toward the standing place of the two waiting thieves outside about a square off.

"Street Shooting

"At this place one of the horses had been tied to a tree, but had gotten loose. Just then a German citizen came along, when the thieves shouted to him, 'Hitch that horse, G..d d...n you. If you don't I'll shoot you.' The German obeyed orders.

"The robbers speedily released Mr. Harris, mounted their horses, and the four commenced firing in all directions to intimidate pursuers. Above the reports of the shots was heard a wild 'Hurrah for Sam Hildebrand, catch the horse thieves if you can,' and then the rapid hoofbeats of the retreating horses showed that the job was finished.

"The Robbers took the Perryville road, and when a short distance out opened Mr. Madison's box and extricated the gold. They met a German farmer and asked him if he had any money. He replied 'No.' 'Oh well,' said one of the men, 'I guess you're

poor. Go down the road and you will find a box with papers in it. Take it to the bank and they will give you a hundred dollars.' The German returned the box to the bank and reported the circumstances, but failed to collect the hundred dollars.

"The Pursuit

"The above transactions were conducted with all the celerity demanded by the exigencies, and in a shorter time than required for description. Young Rozier sounded the alarm as soon as possible, but the only men on the streets were halted by the pistols of the robbers, and did not dare to move hands or feet in attempting capture. By the time he did secure assistance the scamps had gone.

"While the robbery was going on a gentleman, who lived in a house opposite to the bank, saw it, and had his revolver elevated to shoot across the street into the bank, but his wife begged him to desist, fearing the robbers in revenge would shoot Mr. Harris. Thus they escaped their just desserts, and went out of town with all the bravado of impudent horsethieves and burglars.

"That the whole affair was well planned there can be no doubt. Two of the robbers slept the night before at a farm house two miles out. They knew that Gen. Rozier, the president, whose room is on the same floor with the bank floor, was absent. They also supposed and rightly, that in that town of 1,500 inhabitants only a few persons would be in the streets at the hour for bank opening. They also supposed that the safe would be unlocked immediately after the opening of the bank, thus facilitating their stealing.

"As might be expected, the people of Ste. Genevieve were greatly excited by the robbery. As soon as possible a band of mounted men organized, and armed with shotguns went in pursuit of the robbers. Chief McDonough was last night informed of this

robbery, and will set his police machinery in motion to secure information.

"The robbery, though one of the boldest on record, did not pan out very handsomely, as the booty amounted to only $3,600. This was all the bank lost, no bonds having been taken."

Later newspapers fail to mention anything of the robbery or the robbers — evidently the thieves never were apprehended.

There seems to be no truth to the rumor that the bandits were headed by Jesse James, or that they stopped in the barn behind the house of Commandant Vallé to divvy up the loot. Jesse was a vain robber, and had a way of autographing his art so there would be little doubt about who did the dirt.

CHAPTER XIII.

Ste. Genevieve Rediscovered

As has been said, the growth of Ste. Genevieve was arrested by a number of factors, most of them prompted by the better geography of St. Louis. There can't be much truth to the supposition that the supposed indolence of the French caused the decline. In the early days the town prospered mightily under the French, indolent or not. The old town, like any number of others in the Middle Valley, was inundated with industrious Germans in the immigration wave of 1825-45. By the middle of the 19th century there were far more Germans there than French, and English had become the domestic tongue of both national groups.

Gradually agriculture displaced mining as the principal economy. *Le grand champ* continued its fabulous production, as indeed it does today, but the tough, dedicated Germans cleared the land to the west and agriculture became big business.

It became big business everywhere else too, and as modern technology started catching up with its potential, the marginal farmer disappeared, and so did the marginal farm.

But fortune smiled upon Ste. Genevieve, as it had done so many times before. Industry arrived, and with it the sort of stability that appears to be permanent.

The vast deposits of limestone west of town were purchased by Mississippi Lime Company early in the 20th century, and soon the firm had built up the old quarry to the point where it became one of the world's largest producers of lime. Chemical quicklime, chemical hydrate, precipitated calcium carbonate and various sizes of limestone are produced there.

The Mississippi Lime Company has showered the people of Ste. Genevieve with the kind of civic benevolence that any industrial titan could emulate. More than one-fourth of the town's wage earners work there, and the firm has consistently recognized its obligation to them. They saved the Bolduc house when it seemed that no one else cared. They saved and restored the Linden house across the street, and as the second floor balconies sagged and fell, signifying the imminent end of the Bolduc-LeMeilleur house (the old Loretto convent), Mississippi Lime saved that one too.

Other industries also have contributed to the prosperity. General Pass Book Company is one of the world's largest producers of check book covers and pass books for banks and savings institutions. Their plant is highly sophisticated, and embodies more printing techniques under one roof than any in St. Louis.

Bilt-Best Corporation came to town with a brand new plant recently, bringing with it orders for preglazed window sash for residential construction, and that company is growing rapidly. Selmor Manufacturing Company, diversifying its St. Louis production facilities, located a factory in the west end of town to produce shirts and various other clothing items. Kisco Boiler produces steel tanks and other

vessels for industry. The industrial growth is coming in leaps and bounds.

The growing awareness of the American people of the architectural treasures in Ste. Genevieve will soon move tourism to the status of a major new industry. There's no place for the old town to go but up.

There has been no lack of appreciation of this heritage on the part of the people of Ste. Genevieve. July 21, 1885, was the day selected for the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the move to the new town, and the 150th anniversary of what the people then believed to be the year of the town's founding.

They had no trouble getting people up that Tuesday morning. The St. Louis Cavalry and Artillery, a military company, brought its cannon down for the occasion and fired the national salute of 21 rounds at 6:30 a.m. The *Will S. Hays* carried a load of visitors from St. Louis, the *Bellefontaine* came over from Chester, and the *Nick Swaer* arrived from Kaskaskia. The Ste. Genevieve Cornet Band led the long procession to Maxwell's Hill, just above Little Rock Landing, and included in the line were the mayor, city officers, clergymen, county officers, the visitors, the townspeople, and an elaborate float constructed by the ladies of the town.

At Maxwell's hill the flags of France, Spain and the United States were unfurled and the artillery boomed. Gen. Rozier, Alex. J. P. Garesche, Col. F. T. Lederberger, Major William Cozzens, and Commodore Lyndon A. Smith, secretary to Mayor David R. Francis of St. Louis, also boomed.

Merciful Providence intervened at 4 o'clock, when the heavens opened up, drenching the fiery orators with such a cloudburst that more than a few of the

people wondered if *L'anèe des grandes eaux* wasn't about to repeat itself. It was a day to remember.

Those who are supposed to know about these things say that there never was any celebration anywhere, before or since, to rival the bicentennial celebration in Ste. Genevieve in 1935.

Considering the size of the town, the magnitude of the effort is a little startling to this day. Meetings were started in January, 1933. The Missouri Legislature felt justified in appropriating $10,000, since this was the oldest town in the state. This sum was supplemented by pledges from more than 100 of the townspeople.

Historic research was started more than two years in advance of the celebration. Orchestral and choral rehearsals were begun more than a year in advance. Twenty-four local dance instructors assisted a professional choreographer in teaching several hundred children the routines indicated in the script. The town's ladies sewed three hundred juvenile costumes, and as many adult costumes were rented. Men, women and children from all over the county were assigned parts. The cast numbered 1,200.

The Valle Spring, just southwest of town, was the site of the pageant. The little stream was dammed to form a miniature Mississippi, and the natural amphitheater was large enough to hold the 15,000 people who jammed in to see the spectacle. A three-level stage was built, and an elaborate lighting complex was installed. A Goddess of Liberty was erected to oversee the affair, and she was upstaged by a huge lighted cross.

Back in town, the people were encouraged to bedeck their homes and businesses with the colors of the three nations that had ruled over this land. Medallions were sold all over the United States as souvenirs. The entire state and southern Illinois was

deluged with bumper strips, posters, literature and press releases. The Chamber of Commerce brought one state convention after another to town in 1935, preparing the merchants for the crushing crowds that were to come in late August. Workmen rushed the little stone museum to completion.

The celebration opened on August 19, 1935, with a Pontifical High Mass celebrated by the auxiliary bishop of St. Louis. The mayor and other civic officials delivered appropriate remarks that afternoon, and later in the day the museum was dedicated.

That night the first five episodes of the pageant took place. They were narrated over a public address system by a professional reader — there was no dialogue. Thus ended Ste. Genevieve Day.

The second day, St. Louis Day, Hon. Bernard F. Dickmann, mayor of St. Louis, was the guest of honor, and five more episodes were enacted that night. August 21, 1935, was Missouri Day. Governor and Mrs. Guy Brasfield Park were overshadowed by the presence of the U. S. Sixth Infantry and Regimental Band, sixteen state bands and bugle corps, and a score of historical floats.

National Day was the name given to the finale, when the French consul to the U. S. addressed the throngs. That night, President Franklin D. Roosevelt talked to the assemblage via amplified telephone: "We hail the stalwart qualities of frontier days, and the Christian courage of our pioneers . . . it is with full appreciation of your past that, on this occasion of your Bicentennial celebration, I extend to you my hearty wishes for a happy and prosperous future."

The Mississippi now is a friend of the town. *Le grand champ* will be flooded again and again, but the flood control projects on the upper Missouri and the Mississippi dams provide guarantees against any more major disasters. The ferry still operates from

Little Rock Landing, and will continue to do so until the hoped-for bridge across the broad Mississippi is built.

But Ste. Genevieve is like a drowsy giant. It is only a matter of a few years before the American people, restless for "new" old things to see, will learn of Ste. Genevieve. Gone will be the sleepy Sundays when a hundred St. Louisans drove to the old town to buy a sundae and gawk at the magnificent old homes. Interstate 55 will bring perhaps 500,000 people a year down from St. Louis' Gateway Arch. Traffic will jam and the city fathers gradually will get things organized.

Five will get you ten that the charisma will remain, despite the throngs, the balloons, the souvenirs. People still will be able to leave the new downtown hotel at midnight, walk past the darkened homes, stare up at the brilliant firmament and wonder what those stars have seen. The magic is there. It will never leave.

Appendix

There are more than 30 major tourist attractions in or near Ste. Genevieve, and it is the purpose of this appendix to enrich the experience of viewing each of them.

They are listed in the order which I believe would be of maximum interest and convenience to the average visitor, and that is not necessarily the order of importance to architects, historians, townspeople, or to me personally.

Since the community is so small most of these sites may be reached on foot. Automobiles are necessary in visiting only nine of them.

There are perhaps a dozen important homes which have not been cited. Placed in any major midwestern city, any one of them would attract a great deal of attention. They are not listed here because their importance pales when they are pitted against the great houses which are listed. An example might be that of the famous DeMenil house in south St. Louis. If the DeMenil, which is a fine house indeed, were in Ste. Genevieve it would not make the list. Nor would it be a candidate for restoration. There

are too many older homes in Ste. Genevieve that would precede it on the list.

A matter of some concern is the dating of the old houses. With only one or two exceptions, all buildings have been given differing completion dates by the various reference works. Usually the dates were off only a year or two, but on occasion a discrepancy of five to ten years was noted. Due to an almost universal lack of legal documentation of erection dates we were forced to accept the consensus of the more learned authorities.

Generally, the Creole houses may be classified structurally by their French terms: *maison de poteaux en terre* (house with posts into the earth), *maison de poteaux sur solle* (house with posts on a sill), and *maison de pierre* (house of stone). The Anglo-American houses generally were frame, with lap siding.

Strangely enough, the *poteaux en terre* technique is known neither in France nor in Canada. Most likely it was brought up from the Gulf Coast — the dwellings of the Indians who had used the method in the area had been gone for hundreds of years.

Glass for the windows of the older homes had to be imported from Europe. The few brick that were used probably came from New Orleans kilns. The stone, of course, came from the bluffs.

There are two most interesting homes that should be listed here but cannot be — they were destroyed in recent years. One is the home of Francis Rozier, on the northeast corner of Merchant and Main. The mansion was torn down about 1958. It is said that young Rozier dove off a retaining wall (which still remains) into the waters of the flood of 1844.

The Misplait house, one of the few which were moved from *le grand champ*, was located along the old St. Marys road, just north of the Amoureux house. It was demolished in the late 1940s.

Last known photo of old Misplait house, torn down in 1940s. Once located on *le grand champ*, Misplait was moved to tract just north of Amoureux, on west side of St. Marys road, just after flood of 1785. *Courtesy Ida M. Schaaf*

Orientation is best gained by considering Main street as a base line. It runs north and south across the South Gabouri creek and then becomes the old St. Marys road. Located along this street, from north to south, are the Ste. Genevieve hotel on the west side, the Beauvais on the east, the J. B. Vallé, the Bolduc-LeMeilleur and the Bolduc on the west, and the Linden house on the east side.

See Map, Inside Back Cover

Just north of the low water bridge across the Gabouri, on the east side, is the LaBruyere house and the site of the Moses Austin home. Across the creek, all on the west, are the Janis-Ziegler House (Green Tree Tavern), Misplait site, Amoureux House and the Bequette-Ribault House. *Le grand champ* is on the east.

The principal streets from the Gabouri north, intersecting Main street, are South Gabouri, Market, Merchant, Jefferson and Washington. Paralleling

Main street are Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth streets. It would take three full days to see all there is to see in this area alone, and it all can be encompassed afoot.

Bolduc House

West side of Main, between Market and South Gabouri streets

Louis Bolduc (1734-1815), a lead miner, merchant and planter, was born in Canada. He became a wealthy Ste. Genevieve land owner and slave holder, and his descendants lived in this house until the 1940s.

This is the first known example of an authentic and essentially complete French creole house in the Mississippi Valley being restored to its original form.

The structure, in dilapidated condition, was acquired in 1949 by the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America as a gift to the Missouri Society. It was restored in 1956-57, under the direction of the noted Dr. Ernest Allen Connally.

The Bolduc House.

For a number of years architectural historians had supposed that the Bolduc was really two cabins — this was based upon the observation that the ceiling construction and height in the two principal rooms was different. Dr. Connally, however, noted that the stone foundations are a continuous and uniform structure, as are the exterior walls and the roof framing, establishing that the house was one construction.

West gallery of Bolduc House.

Dr. Connally said that the ceiling construction differed because of a need to utilize the attic for storage of heavy goods, possibly lead.

He made this statement: "At some time, quite early, it was used to store corn. We found highly dessicated, blackened shriveled corn cobs in some cracks. Such storage would have been fairly easy, since there was originally no ceiling in the *galerie*."

Dr. Connally can only guess at the date of construction. The Ste. Genevieve archives hold a contract for a house, dated in 1769, that approaches the size of the Bolduc, but still is somewhat smaller, with a narrow, floorless *galerie*. Another

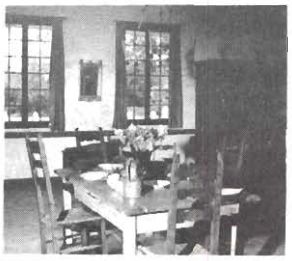
Restored kitchen-bake house, at rear of Bolduc House.

contract, between Louis Boisleduc (*sic*) and Louis Boulet, dated 1770, is for a building about (but not exactly) half the size of the Bolduc — 26 feet by 21 feet 6 inches, with a narrow gallery all around.

Dr. Connally doubts that either house is a part of the existing Bolduc, but he admits to the possibility that some of the heavy timbers from houses on the old site might have been used. "It was a lot of work to hew out heavy timbers, and roof trusses could be disassembled and moved."

He greatly doubts the supposition that the old house was moved up from *le grand champ* after the flood. "I think it quite likely that it could have been built initially on the present site as late as 1785-90. Such a late date would in no way detract from the importance of the house, which remains one of the largest, oldest and most instructive examples of French colonial architecture in the upper Mississippi Valley."

Rear of Bolduc from orchard shows old boxwoods in formal garden, brick kitchen under gallery at left.



Simple, rugged furniture, often homemade, graced early French Homes in Ste. Genevieve. Shown is Bolduc dining room.

It is not definitely known that Bolduc built the house, but he was living there at the time of his death. In 1815 the property extended northward to Market street. The lot transfer records show that some of the Bolduc ancillary structures stood on the lot where the Bolduc-Le-Meilleur house is now. Dr. Connally found the

stone foundations of a small square building on the contemporary property line and assumes they were the remains of the original kitchen building. Since most of the old foundations were on the Bolduc-LeMeilleur lot in 1815, the Bolduc house was without a kitchen when the Bolduc-LeMeilleur was erected, about 1820. Dr. Connally presumes, therefore, that the northwest corner of the *galerie* was enclosed at that time to make a kitchen. It is presumed also, from the structural evidence, that the *galerie* ceiling was added then too.

Cabinet now in Bolduc house is said to have survived flood of 1785. Note water stains on lower part of doors.

The Bolduc consists essentially of two large rooms separated by a central hall — all surrounded by the *galerie*. The outside dimensions of the total house are 48 feet by 82 feet. It is covered by a steeply pitched hip roof, which changes to a more flat slope over the *galeries*. The walls are of heavy oak timbers set upright on a stone foundation. Six-inch interstices between the posts are filled with a nogging of clay and chopped straw (*bouzillage*). The walls are white-washed.

The roof is supported by heavy oak trusses of the same type used in Normandy in the middle ages.

Smaller versions of the buildings which might have been on the lot have been added to the rear of the Bolduc. A formal garden and orchard are miniatures of the original. Sprigs from the boxwoods and food stuffs prepared from the produce of the land are

sold at the site by the Ste. Genevieve Women's Club, operators of the house.

The furnishings in the home are authentic antiques —many of them dating back to the 18th century Included is a cupboard (or *armoire*) showing a stain about two feet above the floor, allegedly caused by the flood of 1785. Inside the door is the date, 1735. The authenticity of both marks is to be doubted. The flood of 1785 didn't stop two feet above the floor (although the house in which the piece rested may have been on higher ground), and the 1735 date could have been added by a budding public relations man at any time.

Still, the house, its furnishings and grounds constitute a towering example of French colonial living and architecture in the late 18th century. It is unquestionably the best known house in the Middle Valley, and one which has earned the respect of architectural historians everywhere.

The Bolduc is open to the public from April 1 to November 1, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. A small admission fee is charged.

St. Gemme-Amoureux House

St. Marys Rd. 1/3 mile south of South Gabouri creek.

Occupied after 1800 by Mathurin Michel Amoureux, a French nobleman and a correspondent of Albert Gallatin and Thomas Jefferson, this house is believed by the owners to have been built by Jean Baptiste St. Gemme about 1770, then moved from *le grand champ* soon after the flood of 1785. (This point is disputed by Charles E. Peterson.)

Unlike the Bolduc, the Amoureux is a working house. It has a tin roof — cedar shakes or especially the authentic thatch would cause severe fire risk problems. Since the old house is in daily use as a museum and an antique shop, the owners felt justi-

fied in the installation of air conditioning. Yet, the Amoureux is a splendid example of a French creole

The Amoureux House.

Great oak beams are reinforced by rubble stone buttresses in Amoureux foundation.

house — utmost care has been taken to assure that the installation of unauthentic improvements was done in a manner which would not detract excessively from the historical presentation. One notable exception is the use of brick on the portions of the chimneys projecting above the roof — a situation the owners intend to correct.

Ancient strap hinges — one fishtail, the other rattail — are believed to be original hardware for Amoureux cellar door.

Old walnut fireplace was beneath several layers of paint and varnish.

The house is *poteaux en terre* construction—hand-hewn cedar logs are clearly visible beneath the front *galerie* and in the earthen cellar. The roof has a typical steep Canadian pitch (72°) at the peak, flattening out to 52° over the *galeries*.

The Amoureux has been examined by experts in the field of historic preservation who are unanimous in their opinion that it was built originally without *galeries*, and that the roof was thatched. There still are nail holes in the members of the ponderous Norman truss which go down to the plate. Here and there are thatching strips.

The roof framing has been cut off on the west end of the house, where the wall is constructed in the American manner. Thus it may be concluded that the house originally extended further to the west (Dr. Connally thinks about 12 feet more). It is believed that a remodeling took place in the early 1800s, which involved the addition of the *galeries* and clapboard siding.

It was the custom of the French builders to eliminate as many of the sharp edges as possible. Even though it required hours of hand work, the edges of the walnut beams on the ceiling are beaded throughout.

Layers of plaster were chipped away from the entrance hall by the owner, to expose what is believed to be the original pumpkin pine paneling. A huge walnut mantle in the living room was brought out from beneath countless layers of paint and varnish.

To the rear of the house, over the site of the original west wall, the owners have added a "Country Store" in the Norman tradition, outfitting it with antique store fixtures from the area.

From the one *galerie* which remains, visitors may gain a commanding view of *le grand champ*, just across the St. Marys road.

(The name is spelled "Amoureaux" in Ste. Genevieve, but it appears as "Amoureux" in the family papers in the Ste. Genevieve archives.)

The house is open daily for a small admission charge throughout the year, with tours conducted by the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Norbert B. Donze.

Jean Baptiste Vallé House

Northwest corner, Main and Market streets

The late Guy Study, a noted St. Louis traditional architect, called the J. B. Vallé "the most important

house in town." From an architect's standpoint this could hardly be true, but for the historian it most assuredly is. This was the social hub of the new town. The big decisions were made here, for J. B. Vallé (1760-1849) was the last of the commandants

The Jean Baptiste Vallé House.

— never under the Spanish as is so commonly said, but under the Americans. There can be little doubt that the basement of this house was constructed to serve as a fortress. It is improbable that this is the fortification referred to by the travelers of the late 18th century — it hardly fits their description. They referred to a fort on the bank of the South Gabouri — this is 550 feet from the creek.

It is true that both the Mississippi and the Gabouri have taken some strange turns — J. B. Vallé himself is supposed to have said that he was at times only 50 yards from the Mississippi while sitting on his *galerie*. The topography of the area would seem to preclude such a happening, however.

Some sources date the fortress construction to 1762, and indeed there must have been a fort in the area at that time. It most likely was a beefed up house on *le grand champ*. Nevertheless, the possibility exists. A substantial number of sources state the superstructure of the house was moved up from

le grand champ in 1782, some three years before the flood. This seems improbable too, even though the river was causing considerable distress at that time. The house probably was built new just where it is, about 1787.

Rear-quarter view of J. B. Vallé shows maid's quarters underneath gallery in foreground.

Possibly it was built by François Vallé II — there are some who say it was used as a Spanish state house until 1804. If that is true, it had to be occupied by François II, because he was the commandant until his death in 1804. Yet, it is known that François Vallé built and occupied the house bearing his name on the Gabouri immediately after the flood. It also is possible that J. B. built the place and it became the state house after the death of his brother.

One corner of J. B. Vallé basement is occupied by room with massive stone walls, believed to be foundation for old fort.

The J. B. Vallé was never unoccupied. Consequently, as the technology of living improved, so did the house. Drastic changes were effected shortly after its purchase by Leon Vion in the 1860s, and they are being made even today. Through it all, the owners seem to have been deeply conscious of the history of the great house, and have been careful to make only those alterations considered fundamental to modern living. The house still retains its inherent grace.

The walls of the basement fort are of rubble stone, three to four feet thick. Wedges have been driven to keep the 46-foot oak beams from sagging. The room has corners bulging with three-quarter-round masonry buttresses, complete with loopholes. The area now is used for storage.

Across the hall from the fort is a room rumored to have served as a dungeon — the flat bars still are at the window. The owners, however, feel that the room was always for food storage; the barred window for the admission of fresh air and security against human and animal thieves. It makes an excellent storage room for canned goods. The adjacent wine room still serves its original purpose, and some of the bottles there date back 100 years. Beside one of the interior partitions there still rests an old steamer trunk bearing the name "L. Vion."

The main floor houses a parlor on the right and a library on the left, separated by a deep center hall leading to the rear rooms. Behind the library is a bedroom, housing a splendid spool bed. To the right is the dining room, and off that a large kitchen added in later years. A small sitting room now is located along the north gallery. Along the west gallery are the maid's bedroom and the only bathroom. First floor ceilings are supported by 46-foot oak beams.

Courtesy Miss Vera Okenfuss

Poteaux sur solle construction is revealed beneath plaster. Great oak posts of such houses were slanted in corners to provide extra rigity through triangulation.

The second floor, once a granary, now is punctuated with dormers and is dominated by a whopping old Norman truss.

Leon Vion came from France in the 1840s and bought the J. B. Vallé house in 1867. Extensive modifications were made to the roof, including the installation of the dormers and the bricking of the six chimneys. Handsome oak shelving was added to the library and the interior partitioning was rearranged to form the added rooms. Although the kitchen probably had been moved up under the gallery by that time, Vion modernized it and added more space in other areas beneath the galleries. He embellished the interior with handsome brass cornices and valances.

There was no changing the walls. The great oak posts exert their elephantine weight against the unyielding stone sill. The interstices are packed with *bouzillage*, the whole covered with stucco.

Old barn on J. B. Vallé property was built in 1812.

The outbuildings include a handsome barn built in 1812 and a fine old smokehouse of hand pressed brick. As late as 1966 there was still a ham hanging in there, shriveled to a tenth its original size. The old slave house, corn house, chicken house and milling shed are gone.

To the north is the old hickory Council Tree, said to be 250 to 300 years old. Vallé allegedly conducted numerous councils with the Indians beneath this tree. Reports that Pontiac was there probably are erroneous — the tree was there in the 1760s, but nothing else was. Pontiac was murdered in Cahokia in 1769.

The house now is occupied by Bernard K. Schram and his wife, the former Vion Papin. Mrs. Schram is a great-granddaughter of Leon Vion. The building has been completely modernized, and stands in eloquent testimony to the taste of the owners.

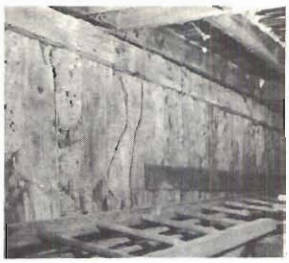
Bequette-Ribault House

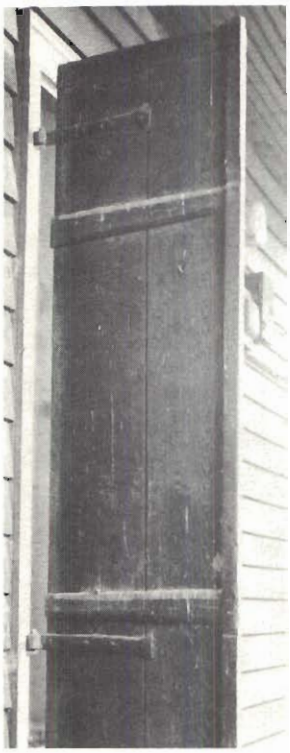
West side of St. Marys road,
1/2 mile south of South Gabouri creek

This *poteaux en terre* house was built where it is about 1775 by Jean Baptiste Bequette, a Ste. Genevieve farmer. It was occupied by John Ribault, Sr., in 1837, and had been continuously occupied by his family and descendants until the late 1960s.

The Ribault was owned by two old bachelors — Alonzo and Cap Ribault, now both deceased. Their grandfather came to Ste. Genevieve as a young man,

Excellent old Ribault house still is sturdy despite years of neglect.





freed a slave from the holdings of the Janis family and married her.

Their home has the classic shape of the Mississippi Valley Creole house. In extremely dilapidated condition, the house nevertheless displays much of the sturdiness which has preserved many a Ste. Genevieve home well past the normal life span.

Its red cedar logs, hewn flat above grade, have been tunneled through by wasps for countless years. Evidence of this destruction is clearly visible beneath the front gallery. Rafters along the old Norman truss are peeled and dried willow. The siding, now black with age, was replaced twice by the last occupants.

Top Photo:

View beneath front gallery of Ribault reveals tunneling by wasps in cedar logs of *poteaux en terre* construction.

Bottom Photo:

Ribault shutters, believed to be original, have tapered, dove-tailed battens fastened with wood pegs.

The shutters, with their tapered, dove-tailed battens pinned with wood pegs, closely resemble those of continental Europe. The great strap iron hinges, although original, probably were wrought in this country.

The Ribault brothers applied a tongue-in-groove ceiling to the *galerie*, thus closing off an opening above the frame of the house proper which had been left to serve as a protection against Indian attack. The occupants stated that the house once had a hip roof. The home was wired for electricity in the early 1900s, but has never received running water or natural gas. It is never opened to the public.

Guibourd-Valle House

Northwest corner, Fourth and Merchant streets

While the Bolduc is furnished in the manner of the typical middle class French colonist, the Guibord would appear to have been occupied by a nobleman. It was owned by Mrs. Jules Felix Valle, Jr., who died in 1972. She was the widow of the great, great, great grandson of Francois Vallé I, the first commandant of Ste. Genevieve, who in turn was the grandson of an early Quebec emigrant.

The Guibourd-Valle House.

Mrs. Vallé maintained the home with great artistry, elegance and authenticity. It was near the point of no return in 1930, when her husband bought it and restored it to liveable condition. The garden

Gallery across front of Guibourd-Valle house is entered from either end.

Rear gallery of Guibourd-Vallé house has been glassed in with casement windows, overlooks one of Ste. Genevieve's most handsome gardens.

Rooms in Guibourd-Valle house are furnished to the taste of a French nobleman.

to the rear and north sides of the home is believed to be the most meticulously cultivated in town. It is in bloom almost constantly in the growing season — all but a small patch to the rear, where the earth was poisoned by the salt from a long gone smokehouse.

The origins of the house are obscure — Jacques Guibourd is known to have acquired title to the entire block through a grant from the Spanish government in 1799. The house, however, is believed to have stood elsewhere in the town. It might have been built on *le grand champ*, moved up to the new town, then moved again in 1800 or 1801. It is said to have been built in 1784.

The house is characterized by a great gallery transversing the front, entered from either end. It has two front entrance doors, which was not unique among French colonial homes. The door hardware is original — cast iron lock sets with handles instead of knobs.

Great oak beams of Guibourd-Valle Norman truss are pegged in place.

A brick kitchen was added underneath the gallery, evidently shortly after the move. The original walnut beams, with beaded edges, still support the ceiling.

The Guibourd holds the only remaining example of authentic original fenestration in Ste. Genevieve. The windows along the rear of the house proper, inside the

. Windows in rear *poteaux sur solle* wall, overlooking sunroom, are inward-opening 12-light casements, believed to be the original.

sunporch, are nine-lighted casements which swing in, and are believed to be original.

Of *poteaux sur solle* construction, the interstices between the great cedar logs are filled with plaster. In the attic is one of the town's finest examples of the Norman truss. The gables are punctuated by four windows — each glazed with the original water glass. The square nails penetrating the roof underlayment haven't begun to rust — there are no machine-made nails in the roof.

A complete guest house stands on the rear of the property, built about 1935. The former slave quarters are connected on to the house proper.

Guibourd, a native of Angers, France, came to Santo Domingo as a secretary to a wealthy planter. He was saved during the bloody insurrection by a servant, Moros, who accompanied him to Ste. Genevieve. He became a wealthy farmer, tanner and slave holder.

Janis-Ziegler House (Green Tree Tavern)

St. Marys road, just south of South Gabouri creek

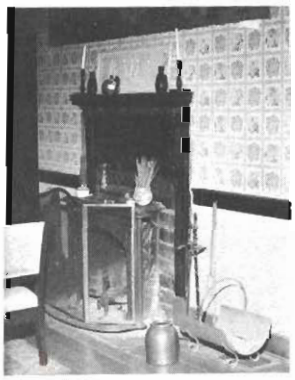
The Janis-Ziegler House (Green Tree Tavern).

Nicholas Janis emigrated from Canada to Kaskaskia, and married there in 1751. His son, François, is the builder of the Janis-Ziegler house. François Janis, a slender man 5′7″ tall, was a friend of George Rogers Clark. Clark made him a justice of the peace in Kaskaskia, later appointed him an Ensign. He was married at Prairie du Rocher in 1781 and moved shortly thereafter to Ste. Genevieve.

Janis-Ziegler is one of few remaining examples of Creole-French house where gallery girdles entire frame, except for kitchen placed underneath gallery

The house was built at the present site about 1790. It is the only house of this vintage utilizing an Anglo-American roof truss, believed to be the original. The roof is supported by 150 young walnut trees. The members are morticed and tenoned, with pegs used throughout.

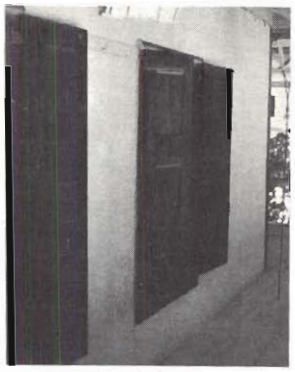
Round boxwood logs rest on a stone foundation three feet thick. The interstices are latticed with twigs, then filled with plaster. A kitchen of rose brick was added at a later date under the north end of the west gallery. New Orleans style walnut shutters are said to bear their original stain — most certainly



Great fireplace in Janis-Ziegler house has three openings — this one into living room, one in each of two bedrooms behind it.

the hardware is original. The three-inch planked floors throughout the house are pegged.

A great "coffin" door is used as a main entrance. Entrance ways in homes of this vintage often were larger than needed because funerals and wakes were conducted in the parlor, and the casket had to go through the door.



Shutters on front wall of Janis-Ziegler house are believed to have their original stain.

The house has a most curious fireplace, with openings in the parlor and in each of two bedrooms behind the parlor. The triangular configuration extends down into the earthern cellar. There is a hollow in the center of the fireplace foundation large enough for two or three people.

Janis converted the 75-foot by 45-foot building into a tavern and boarding house after 1804 to capitalize upon the colonization of the area by the Americans immediately after the Louisiana Purchase. The original sign of the Green Tree Tavern is in the Ste. Genevieve Museum.

An English traveler, Thomas Ashe, mentioned the tavern in writings dated 1806: "I heard the bells of the Catholic Church ring for vespers long before I entered the town. I did not wander from the peal but rode on with speed and animation, and put up at an inn which had strong indications of comfort. I was by no means disappointed; the landlord, a lively Frenchman, looked after my horses

and his wife made me a cup of coffee with as much perfection as ever I drank at the *Palais Royal* or at the foot of *Pont Neuf*."

Janis owned a sugar mill on the Aux Vases. Sometime prior to 1833 the building was sold to Matthew Ziegler, who operated a tobacco store there for a number of years before it was converted back to a residence. His great-grandson and namesake, owner of the Dufour, Shaw and Fur Trading Post, retains the account book showing that whiskey cost 40¢ a gallon — that due to such a low bulk price free snorts could be given to the customers.

There could be no truth to the rumor that the horses of the guests were sheltered under the rear gallery, unless the horses were three feet tall. It also is questionable that the building was ever in service as a fortification, as has been rumored.

Still, the joists supporting the rear gallery are notched in places which could accommodate ropes used in the operation of firing shutters. Since the stables definitely are known to have been to the rear of the property, and since the Osage were quite active during the 15 year period after the house was erected, the installation of such devices would make good sense.

The house currently is owned by Mrs. G. Frederic Foley, and is opened to the public daily during the tourist season.

Shaw House

Southwest corner, Second and Merchant streets

The origin of this house is most confused — it most likely dates back to the 1790s, but there is no verification of this. The original builder probably

The Shaw House.

was Parfait Dufour, who owned that quarter of the block before the turn of the century.

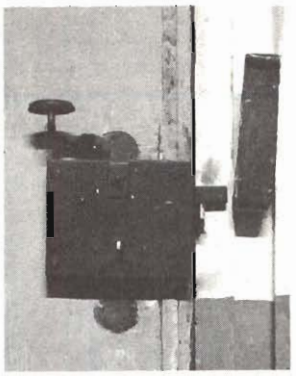
Cut glass doors from wreck of old steamboat, *Dr. Franklin II*, separate bedroom from living room of Shaw house. Some panes were left clear to provide visibility for vessel's captain.

Emilie Shaw, who lived in the house from 1837 until her death 60 years later.

Now owned by Matthew E. Ziegler, great-grandson of an owner of the Janis-Ziegler house, the

Shaw was purchased by Dr. and Mrs. Shaw about 1837, and greatly altered by them in 1852. The wreck of the *Dr. Franklin II* contributed much to its appearance today.

The 1½-story frame house originally was little more than a cabin. The building enclosed one large "keeping" room.



Door hardware in Ste. Genevieve homes is most unusual. This lock is in Mammy Shaw house.

The shape of the house admits to a strong American influence. Each of the siding boards has a beaded edge, in line with the passion of the Norman builders to eliminate sharp edges, but this technique also is found in Virginia.

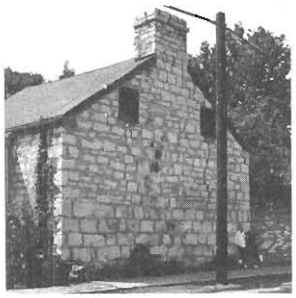
The modernization program conducted by Dr. Shaw divided the house into several areas and boxed in the stairway-ladder to the overhead. Three doors, supposedly from the pilot house of the *Dr. Franklin II*, separate the bedroom from the living room. The boat's old cast iron coal-burning fireplace is in the bedroom. A fine ornamental cut glass door also came from the boat. Made by the firm of Curlings and Robertson of Philadelphia, the door was dated by the manufacturer between 1834 and 1850.

The marks of the adz on the hand-hewn oak timbers supporting the ceiling still are most evident, as are the plane marks on the ceiling boards.

The house is open to the public throughout the year. An entance common to both the Shaw and the Fur Trading Post is along Second street. A small admission fee is charged.

Fur Trading Post

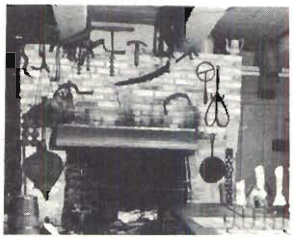
West side of Second street, just south of Merchant



The Fur Trading Post.

Despite years of study by the owner, Matthew E. Ziegler, the name of the builder of this structure, which is just to the rear of (and connected to) the Mammy Shaw house, is unknown. So is the date of its erection. It might have been constructed by Parfait Dufour or possibly by Jean Baptiste Bossieur as a fur warehouse. Slaves are believed to have been quartered in the below-grade portion of the structure, which is built of stone. There are keystone arches in the fireplace and above the basement entrance — this was a technique used by the Spanish in place of the traditional lintel, and probably dates construction prior to 1800.

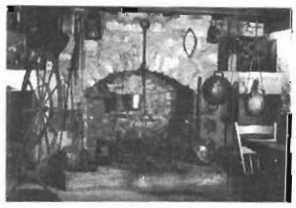
The walls of the slave quarters below have been laid up with river mud, which over the years has turned as hard as the stone it holds. There are no cracks whatever in the old wall.



Huge fireplace in upper level of Fur Trading Post is decorated circa 1785.

It would appear that the old structure was erected about the time of the Shaw house — possibly a few years later. Ziegler, one of the area's best known artists, has connected the two old buildings with a stone structure which serves

as his living quarters, gallery and studio.



Old fireplace in slave quarters section of Fur Trading Post. Note keystone arch in fireplace.

The area above the slave quarters is believed to have served originally as a place of barter with the Indians — and this too has been subjected to study by the owner without definitive results. It had a great deal of use by the public, as indicated by the unusual wear on the floors. The building was unoccupied from 1900 to about 1950.

The Fur Trading Post at one time was owned by Felix Valle, and probably was used to house some of his slaves.

The building is open to the public through a common entrance with the Shaw house. A small admission fee to the combined buildings is charged.

Beauvais House

Southeast corner, Main and Merchant streets

Appearance of Beauvais house is greatly changed from days when it was the home of Henry M. Brackenridge.

While the outward appearance of this house has been subjected to extensive alterations, the ponderous cedar and walnut *poteaux en terre* frame still is substantially as it was in 1770, the approximate year of its erection.

Built originally as a great four-room house on *le grand champ* by Vital St. Gemme Beauvais, it was moved to the new town prior to 1790. Henry M. Brackenridge, who lived there for several years as a young boy, indicated that it had galleries along the front and rear only. At that time a fireplace divided the house into two parts — one serving as a kitchen and the other as just about everything else — master bedroom, dining room and parlor. Each of the areas had one bedroom to the rear. Like all the other houses in the old town prior to 1800, it was surrounded with cedar pickets seven to eight feet high. A handsome old brick smokehouse to the rear, built in the early 1800s, still stands.

At one time a room to the north housed the first postoffice in Ste. Genevieve.

Great logs of *poteaux en terre* construction penetrate earth in cellar of Beauvais. Note how split walnut flooring planks are shaved to pass over great beams.

The log walls are filled with a *pierrotage* of stone and lime mortar. Some of the ancient walnut beams in the basement measure 18 inches across. Others, about 10 inches thick, are sagging badly. Portions of the earthen cellar have been dug down for headroom, but all along the exterior walls the earth backfill comes to within a foot or two of the beams.

The split walnut flooring planks were notched in places where they pass over the great beams to provide a level floor above.

Although the shutters have strong Anglo-American overtones, and thus probably are not original, the hardware seems to go back to the date the house was built.

The Beauvais has been restored by Mr. and Mrs. Donze, and now is open to the public.

Memorial Cemetery

Fifth and Merchant streets

Despite periodic desecration by vandals, the old Ste. Genevieve cemetery remains one of the most picturesque sights in town. Here are buried the men and women who, two centuries ago, built the houses now bearing their names. Some of the stones carry birth dates from the early 1700s.

The casual visitor often is horrified at the sight of what he believes to be open graves. Many of those graves are in the New Orleans tradition — concrete enclosures perhaps two feet high, covered with a slab of concrete. Many of the walls are broken out and some of the capstones sag, revealing a void down below.

Actually, the Ste. Genevieve pioneers were buried six feet under — the style of marker is merely imitative of New Orleans. Still, the destruction — both from vandalism and natural causes — is deplorable. In the great Guibourd mausoleum, with its front a simulation of the slide-in, above-ground type of burial place, a two-foot-square hole has been punched in the back elevation, revealing a hollow vault.

The first burial was that of Louis Le Clere, in 1796. Others include Ferdinand Rozier, J. B. Vallé, Guibourd, Senator Linn, Henri and François Janis,

Monument at left marks final resting place of Commandant and Mrs. J. B. Vallé, in Ste. Genevieve Memorial Cemetery. Felix and Odile Valle marker is at far right.

Vital St. Gemme Beauvais, Charles Gregoire, Col. Felix Valle and his wife, Odile Pratte Valle, the last of the 3,000 to be interred there.

The cemetery is divided into three sections. The south half, now completely filled, is Catholic. The northeastern quarter is reserved for Protestants, and the northwest corner for the Odd Fellows Lodge. It is in the Protestant section that 12 unidentified victims of the explosion of the *Dr. Franklin II* are buried.

The people of Ste. Genevieve have spent thousands of dollars of their own money and countless hours, in restoration of the old cemetery. Mrs. Lucille Basler and the Foundation for Restoration of Ste. Genevieve are now raising funds for that purpose.

The cemetery is open to the public during daylight hours throughout the year, without charge.

Stone Ice House

East side of alley paralleling and between Third and Fourth streets, midway between South Gabouri and Market streets.

Opening in gable of old stone ice house probably was for ice loading. Wood above stone indicates roof has been raised some time after original construction.

Before the lot was excavated on the north side of this building, the high opening was the same height off the terrain as the bed of a wagon. It probably was used for cold storage throughout its early life, as there is no fireplace evidence.

It probably was built by J. B. Thomure, shortly after 1800. A tunnel, built in 1904, connects the stone building to an old stable immediately to the east. Mrs. Anna Thomure reports the tunnel was built after a disastrous fire, as a refuge for the livestock. The walls of the ice house are extremely thick, and no information exists as to why the roof was raised. It is not open to the public.

François Vallé II House

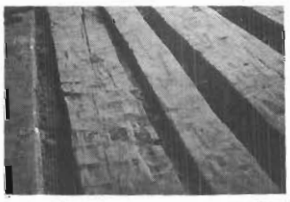
167 South Gabouri street, between Main and Second

There well could be some validity in the rumor that this was the first house on *les petite côtes*. The

house of the second Spanish civil commandant appears to have been built on that site, probably about 1786.

Only the *poteaux sur solle* construction of inner wall and ceiling beams remain of this greatly altered house of François Vallé II.

François Vallé II was born in the Illinois country in 1758, and is known to have owned the entire west half of this block in 1790. He was appointed civil and military commandant in 1783. By 1787 there were three houses on the lot. He had 39 slaves, all of them believed to have been quartered on that property.



Adz marks still are visible in overhead of François Vallé II house, overlooking South Gabouri creek.

The house has been modernized to the point where it appears to have been built about 1895 or 1900. The old cedar logs making up the *poteaux sur solle* construction are visible beneath loose siding boards, however.

The old Norman truss is completely gone from the overhead. About all of the original that re-

mains are the walls, foundation and great walnut logs spanning sill to sill in the overhead. They still bear the mark of the adz.

The building is a private residence, not open to the public.

Price Brick Building

Northeast corner, Third and Market streets

Believed to be the first brick building west of the Mississippi river, the Price Brick now houses one of the fine restaurants of Ste. Genevieve.

Built about 1790 by John Price, it was lost only 16 years later when Sheriff Israel Dodge brought his hammer down to satisfy an indebtedness Price had incurred with a fellow citizen, Joseph Pratte.

Price was one of the first Americans in Ste. Genevieve. He moved there from Kentucky in 1789 to engage in trade with Louisville and Nashville. He was granted a six-year license to operate a ferry between Ste. Genevieve and Kaskaskia.

The handsome, hand made brick is laid up in a Flemish bond. Smaller brick in common bond at the gables indicates that the building probably had a hip roof at one time. The English influence is indicated by the dentil cornice.

There appears to be no foundation to the rumor that the brick for this building was brought to America from France as ballast for a sailing vessel. When the ships needed ballast it was generally provided in the form of slate. There were plenty of kilns downstream capable of such production, and there may even have been one in Ste. Genevieve by that time.

The structure still has its original windows. It seems to have been built as a residence, although for a number of years it served as the first courthouse in Ste. Genevieve.

The Price Brick is open to the public during the regular restaurant hours. There is no admission charge.

The Price Brick Building, now a restaurant.

Linden House

East side of Main, between Market and South Gabouri streets

Early deed references indicate that the Linden was sold by Jean Baptiste Moreau, Sr., to "Jemmien" Beauvais in 1811, and Beauvais evidently started construction shortly thereafter. There may have been a cabin on the site at the time of sale. It was enlarged after 1860 by Ludwina Wilder.

Originally the Linden was a two-room *poteaux sur solle* house with a relatively light weight truss.

The Linden House.

It was acquired in 1959. It was rehabilitated and semi-restored by Dr. Connally, and now serves as headquarters for the National Society of Colonial Dames of America for the State of Missouri. It is not open to the public.

Dufour House

South side of Merchant street, between Second and Third streets

The Parfait Dufour House.

Parfait Dufour, a native of Detroit, was a prominent scout for the early explorers. He is known to have built this house, but he probably lived next door west. Defour led Col. George Rogers Clark from Kaskaskia to Vincennes, later accompanied Lewis and Clark to Oregon.

A *poteaux en terre* cabin measuring 10 feet by 15 feet was known to have been on this site in early days, but there seems to be no trace of it now.

Probably it was razed in the early 1800s to make room for this house, which is only slightly larger. The Dufour is of *poteaux sur solle* construction, covered with lap siding. An enormous stone chimney, possibly the original, is along the rear of the house.

The Dufour is owned by Matthew E. Ziegler, but is not open to the public.

Nicolas Mayotte House

140 South Seventh street, between
Market and South Gabouri streets

The Nicolas Mayotte House

Nicolas Mayotte, one of the first settlers along the Gabouri, is said to have built this one-room *poteaux sur solle* cabin prior to 1800. The weatherboard beneath the dilapidated front porch had peeled back to reveal the cedar posts and crumbling *bouzillage*, and has since been repaired by the occupant. It is not open to the public.

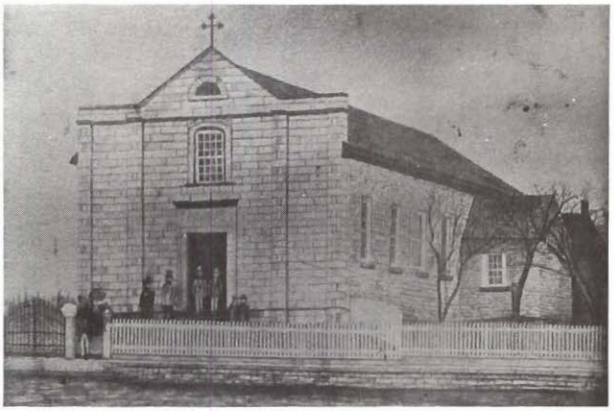
LaLumendiére House

801 South Gabouri

François Moureau is known to have obtained from the Spanish a land grant of substantial acreage along the South Gabouri. He sold the property to Antoine LaLumendière, who built this house on the site in the early 1800s. It remained in that family until 1959. It is a single story, *poteaux sur solle* building, and was saved from destructure by the Foundation for Restoration of Ste. Genevieve. It is not open to the public.

Ste. Genevieve Catholic Church

Southwest corner, Dubourg Place and Merchant street



Old Stone Church, built on present church property during 1830s. *Courtesy Vera Okenfuss*

This towering, Victorian gothic church, built between 1876 and 1880, stands on the same tract that was the site of the first church in the new

town. That old log church was moved to the high ground in 1794. A stone church consecrated in 1837 served until the late 1870s.

The old log church is believed to have been built on *le grand champ* in 1752. There were plans for a new church to replace it, but no proof that the old log church wasn't the same one which was moved up to the new town. It was erected by Philibert Wattrin, S.J., curé of Kaskaskia, and named St. Joachim.

Commandant and Madame François Vallé II, Father Maxwell, and several other early pastors are buried beneath the nave of the church.

The impact of the French in the congregation was felt for a long time. As late as 1890 the church was being served by an old French bedeau, Papa Girard. He would awaken sleepers by a vigorous nudge of the collection box. Those who made liberal contributions were met with a bow and an offer of snuff.

Present Victorian-Gothic Church.

Catholic Church Nave.

Commandant and Madame François Vallé II are buried beneath this plaque in front of nave of church.

Linn House

North side of Merchant street, just west of Second street

Home of Lewis F. Linn, the "Model Senator from Missouri."

The Linn house, built in 1827, is important more for the prominence of the builder than for its age. The two-story frame building, modified extensively, has a roof line suggestive of the salt box houses of New England.

Dr. Lewis F. Linn was one of the most noted early United States Senators. By encouraging settlement of the Pacific Northwest Senator Linn laid the groundwork for a favorable compromise with England over the establishment of the border between Canada and the Oregon Territory.

Senator Linn moved to Ste. Genevieve to practice medicine in 1816, and served in the Senate from 1833 to 1843. He died in office.

The house is not open to the public.

Dufour-Rozier Building

Northwest corner, Second and Merchant streets

This two-story cut stone structure is believed to have been built by Parfait Dufour as a store. It is now occupied by a printing company.

The Dufour-Rozier Building

Felix Valle House

Southeast corner, Second and Merchant streets

This 1½-story ashlar stone structure was built in the Georgian Colonial style by a Ste. Genevieve builder, Jacob Philipson, about 1818. It was purchased in 1824 by J. B. Vallé, after Philipson moved to St. Louis. Felix Valle, a nephew of J. B. Vallé, bought it from his uncle sometime later, and it was occupied by his descendants until acquired by the Missouri Park Board several years ago. It now is vacant.

Felix Valle house, a study in Georgian Colonial design.

It is assumed that Felix Valle built the slave quarters to the rear shortly after he occupied the house. The building has an unusually steep roof, punctuated with dormers, and an elaborate dentil design along the cornices. The original stoop at the front entrance was replaced with a recessed doorway topped with an arch. The house still has its original door hardware recessed into thick, solid oak doors. It is not open to the public.

Hubardeau House

Northeast corner, Fourth and Jefferson streets

Records exist showing that Simon Hubardeau ordered glass for a new house in 1769 — obviously for a building he was erecting on *le grand champ*. It is possible that a little of this building might have been incorporated into the great stone structure at this site today. The building was here in 1789, the date of execution of Hubardeau's will.

The two-story house is somewhat modified from the original configuration. It is known that Hubardeau owned the entire block in 1790.

The building contains its original floors, supported by adzed log joists. The windows have all been replaced by modernized designs. A doorway on the Fourth street side was filled with stone to match the balance of the west facade.

A one-story brick addition was added about the time of the Civil War. The house is not open to the public.

The Hubardeau House. Doorway once occupied blank space near corner. Brick addition, built at time of Civil War, is at left.

Bolduc-LeMeilleur House

Southwest corner, Main and Market streets

This building was in an aggravated state of disrepair in 1966. It was purchased by a Ste. Genevieve industrialist just as a second story porch sagged and was ready to fall.

The building recently was restored as a 1½-story structure, believed by some to be its original configuration. An old brick building to the north was removed to expose the north elevation to the public.

Bolduc-LeMeilleur House before restoration.

Bolduc-LeMeilleur after conversion to 1½-story house.

Dr. Ernest Allen Connally directed the restoration of the house.

Etienne Bolduc, Louis' son, married Catherine Janis on Aug. 2, 1792, and some authorities interpret Louis' will to indicate that a two-story frame house was on the site at that time. A brick store was built on the corner in 1820.

When Louis died in Nov., 1815, a sale was held and this portion of his lot was bought by Catherine, by then a widow.

Catherine Bolduc's daughter Agathe married René LeMeilleur in 1815, and apparently they all lived there together. Both René and Agathe died before Catherine, who sold the property to the Sisters of Loretto in 1837. At the same time the Sisters received the little brick building on the corner from J. B. Vallé. The structures stood about 10 feet apart and were connected by a wooden passage. Eleven years later, the sisters sold the combined property, which then became the Detchmendy Hotel. Dr. Connally believes it was this owner who raised the Bolduc-LeMeilleur to a two-story structure, but many others feel the two-story building which supposedly was erected in 1792, and the two-story building converted to a 1½-story house in 1968, were one and the same.

The Bolduc-LeMeilleur is occasionally opened to the public.

Ste. Genevieve Academy

Northwest corner, Fifth and Washington streets

Old Louisiana Academy is handsome building today, 160 years after it was built.

This two-story stone building was built in an Anglo-American style in 1808, and used as a school for boys intermittently from that date until the Civil War period, when it was closed.

Today it is owned by the Ste. Genevieve School District, recently was reconditioned to serve as an educational facility for retarded children, but today stands vacant. The building, in excellent condition, is not open to the public.

LaBruyere House

Southeast corner, Main and South Gabouri streets

This great two-story frame building is sited on an eminence overlooking the South Gabouri creek, and if something isn't done soon it's going to fall into it. The core of the building measures about 26 feet by 17 feet, and brick chimneys flank the side elevations. It appears to date from about 1820. The house, black from lack of paint, is not open to the public.

Decaying LaBruyere house towers above eminence on South Gabouri Creek.

There are a number of other old houses in old Ste. Genevieve. There is the so-called Winston cabin, believed to be enclosed in a fairly new house at 186 South Seventh street. There is the Larose cabin, on out the South Gabouri, and a small log house two blocks due west of the Winston place. There is a fine old Greek Revival house standing across Third street from the church, built about 1830 by Charles Gregoire.

Old two-story LaBruyere home now is occupied by junk dealer. Note how porches are sinking from core of house.

There probably are a dozen or so old log cabins buried inside homes that even the owners don't know about. For example, in 1967 a house was demolished on the northeast corner of North Third and Jefferson streets — inside was a two-room *poteaux sur solle* cabin. There are one or two outbuildings of horizontal log construction in the upper part of town.

Remains of two-room vertical log cabin, recently torn down at North Third and Jefferson streets.

In the north end of town are two buildings now nearing their bicentennial. The Louis Caron and Antoine Aubuchon houses now appear as fairly contemporary structures.

Ste. Genevieve seems to be growing in awareness of the need to preserve its old buildings. The remains of the cabin mentioned above were salvaged by Mr. and Mrs. N. B. Donze, and plans are now under way for rebuilding it at another location.

But you can't win 'em all. Only a few years ago the splendid old Misplait house, which stood just north of the Amoureux and was one of the few survivors of the flood of 1785, had fallen victim to such negligence that it had to be town down. Even the stone well, with the typical French tent roof over its windlass, has been filled in.

Moses Austin sold some ground after he left Ste. Genevieve which, according to the deed, was improved with a fine brick mansion. There are still some rumors that the building there, across Gabouri street from the LaBruyere House, contains remnants of the Austin home.

One visit well worth the effort and small cost is to the Ste. Genevieve Museum, on the southeast corner of DuBourg and Merchant streets. The building, erected in 1935, contains much memorablia of the past, with concentration on the middle 19th

Ste. Genevieve Museum, on town square, houses many objects of interest to tourists.

century. One notable exception is an intact salt evaporating bowl, found at the Saline Spring. Also on display is an original water color by Audubon and the original wood sign from the Green Tree Tavern.

Outflow from Valle Spring was dammed in 1935 to create miniature Mississippi, a prop for town's bicentennial celebration.

There also are a number of sights worth seeing around Ste. Genevieve. One of the most picturesque is the Valle Spring, site of the mammoth bicentennial program in 1935. It is reached by taking Fourth street out to where it branches with the Cemetery road, then

across U.S. 61 about a half-mile. Just before the road forks to go to the "new" cemetery a trail leads to the left and down into the spring.

The "new" cemetery itself absorbs many of the hours of the Ste. Genevieve visitors. There are great old names here too.

Some bodies were removed from their graves in the old cemetery just after the new one was opened, including that of Louis Bolduc.

Saline Spring is just patch of muddy ground and puddle.

A visit to the famous Saline Spring may prove

Burnt Mill now is grotesque ruin on banks of Saline creek.

View from bridge over Saline in Perry county shows power of forest to conceal the Burnt Mill.

Burnt Mill ruin, although 65 feet high, is about to be engulfed by foliage.

a bit disappointing. Now it is just a patch of muddy ground, with a trickle of mildly saline water oozing from it here and there. Two centuries ago, it was the heart and cause of a thriving settlement. In recent years archaeologists have uncovered treasures more hundreds of years old, reminders of the great Mississippian civilizations that worked there. The site of the Kreilich excavations is at the near edge of a field just beyond the spring itself.

The Saline Spring is reached by taking U.S. 61 south six miles to the bridge over the Saline Creek. A few feet north of the bridge, turn west onto "J". About two-tenths of a mile up the road is a marker for an underground telephone cable crossing. Follow the crossing south about 50 yards to a bare, muddy area about 50 feet wide and 100 feet long. That's the Saline Spring.

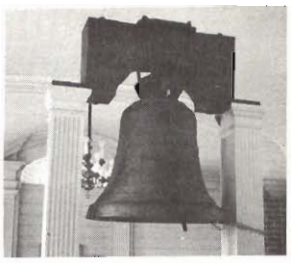
A far richer experience awaits anyone willing to drive the 20 miles to the Burnt Mill. This is a great stone structure on the banks of the Saline, just inside the Perry county line.

François Vallé II built the mill in 1800 along the three-notch road from Mine La Motte, where the

old lead road fords the Saline. It burned during the Civil War, and charred remains of its beams may be seen in the notches in the stone walls.

An early drawing of Kaskaskia in its prime.

In the wintertime the great stone ruin towers in plain view, some 65 feet over the bank of the Saline. In summer it is nearly obscured by the foliage, despite the fact that it is no more than 15 yards from the bank of the creek.



Kaskaskia's Liberty Bell of the West.

The mill may be reached by taking U.S. 61 15 miles south to where Highway NN branches off to the right, about one mile north of Brewer. Follow NN 3½ miles. Turn south on a hard surfaced road and go perhaps 1/10 mile — a bridge is there at the bottom of a steep hill. Stop on that bridge and look over your right shoulder. The sight is staggering.

There are two attractions of great magnitude in Illinois, near Ste. Genevieve. Both Kaskaskia and Fort de Chartres are shrouded in memories of tragedy.

Kaskaskia was founded in 1703 along the west bank of the Kaskaskia river, about four miles upstream from the Mississippi. At first there were only the Jesuit Gabriel Marest, Chief Rouensa and his Kaskaskia Indians, a few Frenchmen and the remainder of the Tamaroa who elected to abandon Cahokia to gain some relief from the marauding Sioux.

At the new site they were joined by a number of French traders. By 1707, the population had grown to 2,200, and continued to grow substantially for the next several decades.

The Jesuits saw to it that one of the first buildings on the site was a church — the mission church of the Immaculate Conception. Built in 1703 of logs, it soon proved too small for the rapidly-growing town. In 1740 a new stone church was placed in use. A third church was made of vertical logs in 1775, but was pulled down in 1838 because of its deterioration. The final church, of brick, was built in 1838 and still serves the Kaskaskians, although now in a different location.

Old altar, carved by hand from walnut for church of 1737, now is in sacristy of Church of the Immaculate Conception, Kaskaskia Is.

In 1718 Pierre Duque de Boisbriant became commandant of the Illinois country and moved from New Orleans to Kaskaskia with a great number of the military. While the officers and men were housed in town, Boisbriant and a contingent of workmen built Fort de Chartres along the Mississippi, some 16 miles north of Kaskaskia.

The presence of the military caused considerable crowding in the town, and in 1719 the Indians were ordered out. They founded the so-called Indian Kaskaskia about five miles up the Kaskaskia river from town.

As the French began to traffic more and more in the Middle Valley the fame of Kaskaskia spread to Europe. Word of the town reached Versailles, and Louis XV presented Kaskaskia with a 650-pound

bronze bell, cast in 1741. The bell now is enshrined in the Fort Kaskaskia Memorial Building on Kaskaskia Island.

It was this old town that received George Rogers Clark and the cause of the American Revolution the night of July 4, 1778, and it was this same bell that called the people to hear Pierre Gibault's plea for acquiescence. It is 11 years older than the Liberty Bell in Independence Hall. Around its upper rim it bears the legend, in French: "For the Church of the Illinois, with the compliments of the King from beyond the sea."

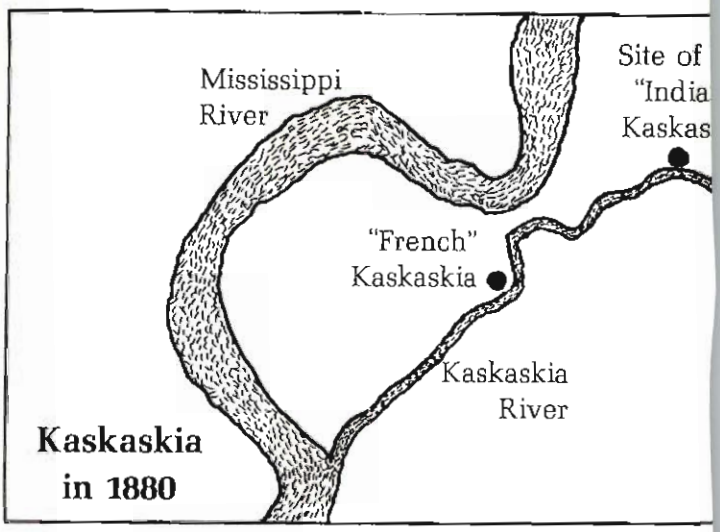
The bell was retired by a carillon of new bells in 1873, and stored in an old building. A flood crumpled the structure, and it wasn't until 1918 that the bell was recovered and brought to the island.

Cornerstone of Church of 1737, with the date still legible, was remounted in building constructed to house Liberty Bell of the West, on Kaskaskia Island.

When old Kaskaskia was founded on the west bank of the Kaskaskia river, the Mississippi was about two miles to the west. The stretch between the two rivers was alluvium and subject to continuing erosion and inundation.

In 1844 the Mississippi boiled out of its banks, but didn't reach Kaskaskia. It did cause the Kaskaskia river to back up to the point where its waters were eight feet deep in the streets.

By 1881 the Mississippi had come within 400 feet of the Kaskaskia river. The little town was caught in a squeeze. In April of that year the Mississippi broke through just above Kaskaskia. The bed of the little river wasn't large enough to hold a fraction of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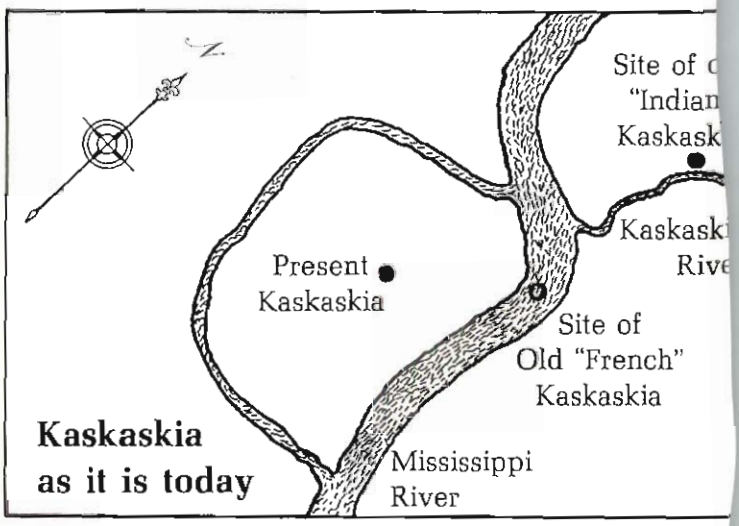
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the Mississippi's current, and the flooding was total. The Mississippi all but abandoned its loop around the old town, and the new channel went down the Kaskaskia. Within a few years the inhabitants of old Kaskaskia had gone to the high ground in the middle of the peninsula — their old homes had gone permanently beneath the Mississippi.

Old residents can recall rowing over the site of the old town and seeing wells and other stone structures looming beneath the muddy waters.

Kaskaskia is reached today by traveling nine miles south on U.S. 61 to St. Marys, then turning east on Highway "U". Just outside St. Marys is a long bridge going over a wide, flat cornfield several feet below. That cornfield used to be the Mississippi river.

The Church of the Immaculate Conception — the mission started by Father Marquette in 1675, when Kaskaskia was at Starved Rock in northern Illinois — is now in the center of Kaskaskia Island. It houses the hand-carved walnut altar built for the second church in 1738.

Next to the church is the shrine holding the old bell. Its cornerstone is the same one used for the old rock church, and the date of 1737 still is clearly visible.

Boisbriant evidently was a stranger to the ways of the Mississippi, for he built his Fort de Chartres right on the banks. It was hefty enough for Indians

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Top Map Left:

In 1880 the Mississippi river swung dangerously close to the old town of Kaskaskia, located on the southwest bank of the Kaskaskia river. The two-mile distance between the two rivers had narrowed to 400 feet since 1880.

Lower Map:

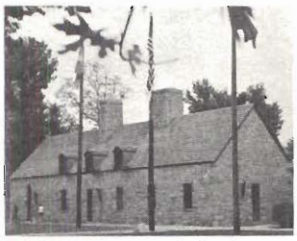
By 1915 the devastation started with the flood of 1881 was complete, and old town site was in center of Mississippi channel. Survivors relocated in Ste. Genevieve and in center of peninsula.

or British—a stout wood stockade reinforced on the interior with earth from the moat excavation. It was completed in 1720, but had to be rebuilt only seven years later.

Main gate at Fort de Chartres has been restored. Structure holds cannon platform.

By 1732 the rebuilt fort was in such dilapidated shape from the poundings of the Mississippi that a new one was built upon the higher ground. That version fell into general disrepair.

In 1751, when the French apprehension over the English was running high, it was decided to build a more permanent fortification. A stone fort was started from plans drawn by François Saucier. In 1756, after three years of construction, the stone fort was completed.



One ot several buildings restored at Fort de Chartres. Portion at left served as chapel for the troops.

The walls were 18 feet high and two feet thick, enclosing four acres of buildings and parade grounds. The main gateway mounted a cannon platform. Included in the complex were a two-story building, guard house, chapel, government house, coach house, pigeon house, two buildings for officers' quarters, two long barracks, a massive powder magazine, kitchen and bake ovens, and four prison cells. It was described by a British officer as "the most commodious and best built fort in North America."

For all of this, the fort served the French only eight more years. The Treaty of Paris passed the

lands east of the Mississippi to the English in 1763. They abandoned and destroyed the fort in 1772.

Huge powder magazine restored at Fort de Chartres has side walls 5 feet thick, end walls 3 feet thick.

The state of Illinois has uncovered most of the breastworks and reconstructed a number of the old buildings. The Fort de Chartres State Park is open daily to the public without charge.

The most colorful way to reach the fort is to drive up North Main street three miles from Ste. Genevieve to Little Rock Landing, board the automobile ferry there and go across the Mississippi to the Modoc landing. Follow the signs about three miles to Modoc, turn north four miles to Prairie du Rocher, then left on highway 155 to Fort de Chartres.

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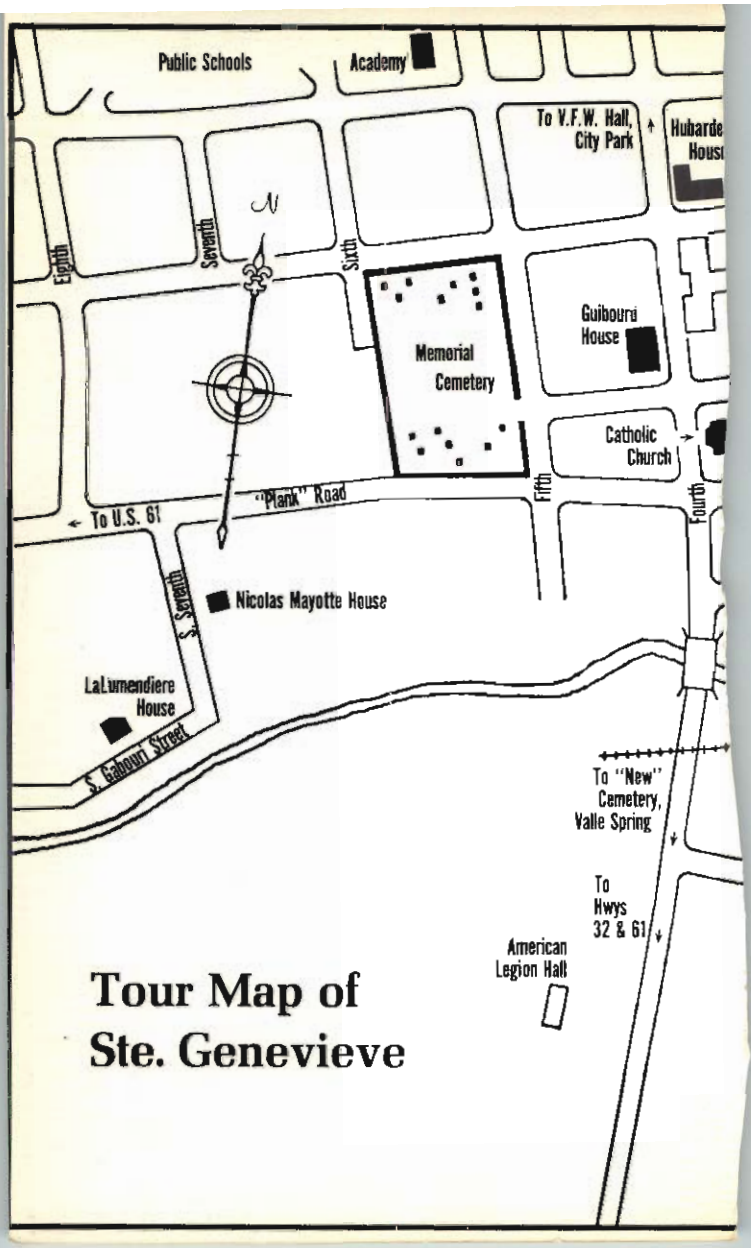
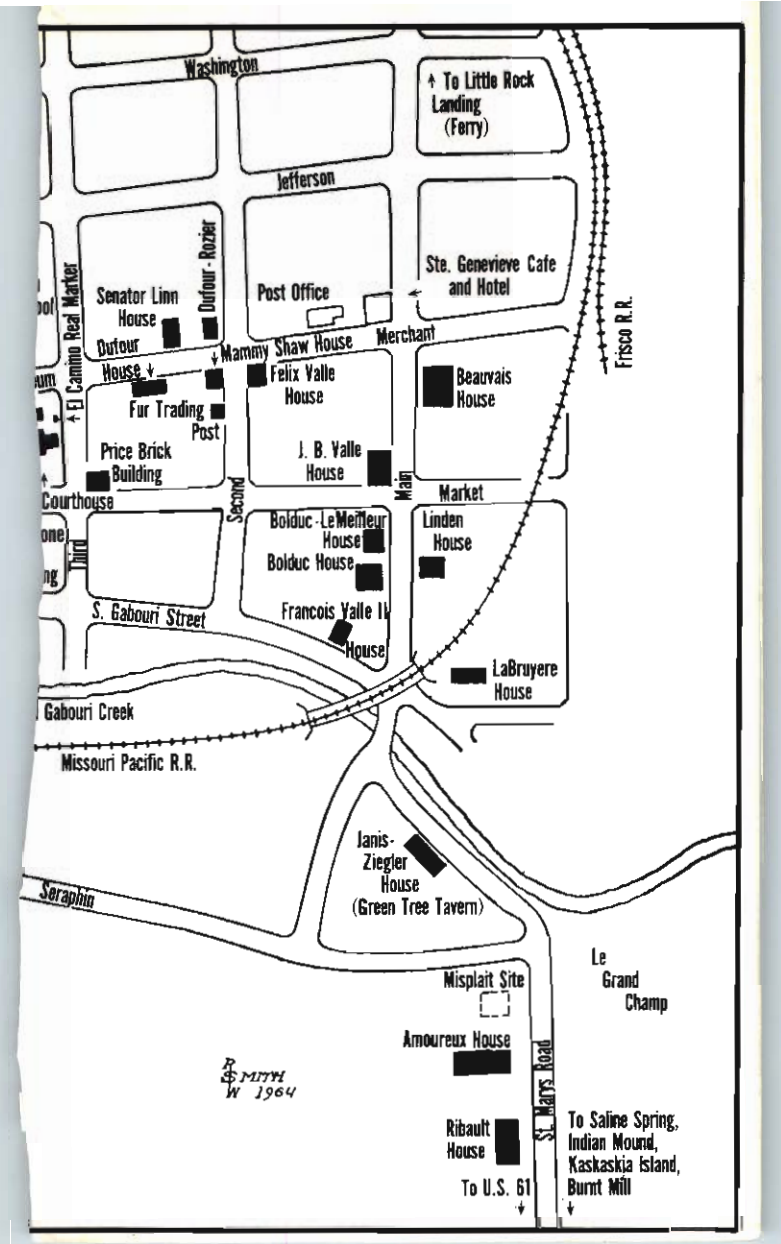

Public Schools
Academy
To V.F.W. Hall, City Park
Hubarde House
N
Eighth
Seventh
Sixth
Memorial Cemetery
Guibourd House
Catholic Church
Fifth
Fourth
"Plank" Road
To U.S. 61
S. Seventh
Nicolas Mayotte House
LaLumendiere House
S. Gabourn Street
To "New" Cemetery, Valle Spring
To Hwys 32 & 61
American Legion Hall
Tour Map of Ste. Genevieve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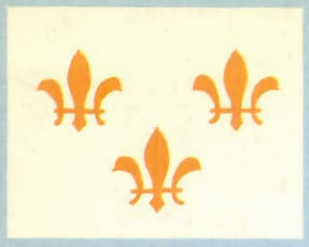
To Little Rock Landing (Ferry)
Jefferson
Ste. Genevieve Cafe and Hotel
Post Office
Frisco R.R.
Senator Linn House
Dufour-Rozier
Dufour House
El Camino Real Marker
Mammy Shaw House
Merchant
Felix Valle House
Beauvais House
Fur Trading Post
Price Brick Building
J. B. Valle House
Main
Market
Courthouse
Second
Third
Bolduc-LeMeilleur House
Linden House
Bolduc House
S. Gabouri Street
Francois Valle II House
LaBruyere House
Gabouri Creek
Missouri Pacific R.R.
Janis-Ziegler House (Green Tree Tavern)
Seraphin
Le Grand Champ
Misplait Site
Amoureux House
St. Marys Road
Ribault House
To Saline Spring, Indian Mound, Kaskaskia Island, Burnt Mill
To U.S. 61
P. SMITH W 1964



The lilies of France, flag of the Bourbon kings.

This is the story of a little midwestern river town. At first glance it seems like any other midwestern river town, but Ste. Genevieve is unlike any other town on earth. Here is what happens when nothing happens for a couple of centuries — no slums, no fires, no floods, no urban renewal projects, no sprawling shopping centers, no incendiary race riots. The residue is a natural structural legacy otherwise unknown in America — more than a score of homes nearly two centuries old, some of them altered to accommodate only the minimum of contemporary conveniences — electricity, running water, natural gas.

The French came, lived and died here. Their descendants live on — many in the original houses of their colonial predecessors. This is their story . .