

"I, the subscriber, being duly sworn as an interpreter of the French language, do hereby certify that the foregoing deposition of John Baptiste Grappe, Esq. is truly interpreted and translated.

"J. HORN.

"Natchitoches, Sept. 22, 1805.

"Personally appeared before me, John Sibley, one of the justices of the peace for the county of Natchitoches, Francis Grappe, of Tampte, in said county, aged fifty-seven, who being duly sworn, deposeth and saith, That to the best of his knowledge and belief, he was born near the ancient Caddo village on the Red river, which, by the course of the river, he believes to be upwards of five hundred miles above Natchitoches, where his parents then lived, and had lived, he believes, a number of years before he was born, and where they continued to live until he was sixteen or seventeen years of age. As long ago as he can remember, he recollects a Mr. Francois Hervey, a French gentleman, who lived there, and who he understood was the first white man that settled there, and that his father settled there about two years after, but he always understood there had been a company of French traders settled for a number of years about forty miles higher up the river, and that Mr. Hervey was one of them, but they were broke up before he was born; it was always called the Company, and that during the whole time he lived at the ancient Caddo village there were three settled families, besides a number of single persons and a detachment of soldiers, and that the number of soldiers assigned by the French government for that post was always fifteen, but he never knew the number complete, and that his father was commandant of the place for many years, and was succeeded by a Mr. Glose, who continued to be commandant till it was abandoned, after the cession of Louisiana to Spain, and that his father, by order of the then governor of Louisiana, built a small fort there, in which were two small pieces of cannon, and in which was a flag staff, on which the French flag was occasionally hoisted. He believes the whole time that that place was occupied by the French as a military post and a settlement of families, was about thirty years, and that the inhabitants pursued the same agriculture that was then common in other parts of the French settlement of Louisiana, viz. corn, tobacco, indigo, cotton and garden vegetables, with some wheat, which grew well, but having no way of manufacturing flour, there was but little wheat raised, though there were a pair of excellent European mill stones and mill irons there, but were not in use in his time; the stones he himself brought down in the year 1778, and they were carried

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to Opelousas; he understood they had been carried to the Caddo country by the Company, as it was called; and that he has knowledge of a French trading establishment being at the place called the Dout, on the Sabine river, near where the Mandaco* Indians now live, and that

*or Mandaco, one of the forms of the name of the Indian tribe now generally called Anadarko. ~~and the French~~ In his "Historical Sketches of the Indian Tribes in Louisiana", etc., 1805, Doctor Sibley wrote of ~~the~~ the "Nandakoes", "They live on the Sabine river, 60 or 70 miles to the westward of Yattasses, near where the French formerly had a station and factory. Their language is Caddo: about 10 men only of

them remaining. A few years ago they suffered very much by the small-pox. They consider themselves the same as Caddos, with whom they intermarry, and are occasionally visiting one another in the greatest harmony: have the same manners, customs and attachments". — F. W. C.

it was an ancient establishment, and a place of great trade and resort at the time his father's family lived at the Caddos, and that he has several times been at the place; the French flag used to be hoisted there; and there are the remains of the buildings and works now to be seen; and that the Dout is about 150 miles north-west from Natchitoches; and that there was at the same time a similar trading establishment and a number of settled French families at the Yattasse Point, on the south-west division of Red river, about twenty-five leagues above Natchitoches, on what is called the Bayou Pierre settlement, which is now under the jurisdiction of Spain, and which place is now, and ever has continued to be, occupied by French inhabitants, and that some of whom have ancient French grants or titles for their lands, and that Mr. Verge, who lived there for many years before Louisiana was ceded to Spain, had the exclusive Indian trade granted him by the French governor of Louisiana, of the Troiscannes, or Tauacanos, the Keyekies, Yattasses, and several other tribes that then lived on the river Sabine, and southward and westward of it, in what is now called the province of Taxus.

FRANCOIS GRAPPE.

"Sworn to before me the 30th September, 1805.

"JOHN SIBLEY, J. P.

"The subscriber, being duly sworn interpreter of the French language, doth hereby certify, that the foregoing declaration of Francois Grappe is truly interpreted and translated.

"JOHN HORN".

From the preceding evidence, sworn and unsworn, obtained by Doctor Sibley, and notwithstanding some discrepancies in it, we may ~~construct~~ ^{deduce} the approximate annals of the Caddo Old Towns for the middle and later thirds of the eighteenth century, as follows:

For ~~a number of~~ ^{about} years preceding a year which was 1735 or thereabout, ^{and a number of other Frenchmen,} ~~the~~ members of a trading firm known on upper Red river as "the Company", ~~were~~ were resident on Red river about 40 miles above the Caddo Old Towns.

In 1735, or thereabout, François Hervey ~~was~~ located, as the first known white settler after those of La Harpe's Post of the Nessonits, at the Caddo Old Towns, ~~were soon afterward called 170 leagues above Natchitoches by the course of the river~~ ~~were established a French post and settlement~~ two years later,

In 1737, or thereabout, a French post and settlement were founded near the Caddo Old Towns. The post was built by Sergeant Beson and his company of soldiers and Corporal Alexis Grappe, under orders from the then French governor general of Louisiana, (Bienville), and was called Fort St. Louis de Carlorette. The garrison compliment designated for the fort was 15; but after the construction of the buildings, there seem usually to have been only about four soldiers besides the sergeant and corporal. The fort was embrasured for the two small platform-mounted pieces of ordnance. There was a flagstaff, on which a French flag was occasionally hoisted. Barracks were built for the soldiers and houses for the settlers. Of the two cannon, ultimately, one burst in firing and the other went into the river by the caving of the river bank. Of the settlers, there seem, most of the time at least, to have been but three or four families; but there were also a number of single Frenchmen resident in the community, besides the soldiers. The names of families known to have been resident there for longer or shorter time, are Brevel, Grappe, Beson and Grillette.

About 1740, probably, Marie Louise Brevel was born at the settlement at the Caddo Old Towns. She lived there only during the years of her infancy or that part of her childhood too early for permanent recollections of the place, and again for a year and a half after her marriage ^{with} Antoine Grillette.

1745 was probably about the year when was born the Brevel boy, Marie's brother, who has left us a brief narrative of the journey which he made ^{about 1755} ~~from the forks of Red river to~~ ~~the~~ ~~Indians~~ ~~Indians~~

the region of Santa Fe.

In 1748, François Grappe was born "near the ancient Caddo village on the Red river", presumably at the Fort Carlorette settlement, at which post his parents had lived for a number of years before he was born, and of which his father, Corporal Alexis Grappe, had been one of the builders, and was for many years the commandant.

In 1753, or within a year of that, Sergeant Beson brought his 5- or 6-years-old son, Julian Beson (and at the same time presumably whatever others of family he had) up to Fort Carlorette; Julian, and presumably the family, living there 14 or 15 years thereafter, which was apparently till the fort and settlement were abandoned. It is likely that Sgt. Beson was commandant of the post in some of its earlier years, including probably also the time of Corporal Grappe's absence with Fabry's expedition in 1741-'42.

In 1759, or earlier, Antoine Grillette and wife (née Marie Louise Brevel), just after their marriage, went up from Natchitoches or from île Brevel to the French settlement at the Caddo Old Towns, and lived there a year and a half.

In 1759, Marie Pelagie Grappe was born at the Caddo Old Towns settlement. She afterwards became Mrs. Fontineau.

^{1770, and possibly before}
Before 1763, some French hunters raised several crops of corn on Red river, at or near the mouth of Boggy (Vaseuse) river, more than 50 leagues above the Caddo Old Towns.

In 1763, Jean Baptiste Grappe was born, presumably at the French hamlet at the Caddo Old Towns.

In 1765, Some time in this year Corporal Grappe, being succeeded as commandant of Fort St. Louis de Carlorette, by a man named Gicco, moved with his family down to Natchitoches to reside; Madam Grappe, his wife, remaining at the Old Towns settlement however till six weeks later, to collect some debts.

In 1765 or thereabout, young Brevel, probably then about 20 years old, went with some young Indians, "with whom he had been partly raised", from a "Pani" (probably Waco or Wichita) Indian village near the main forks of Red river, to the region of Santa Fe.

In 1767, ^{During the commandancy of Gicco,} Fort St. Louis de Carlorette and the French settlement near Caddo Old Towns were abandoned; chiefly because the settlers had large families of children growing up and were desirous

of giving them the advantages of a better society, and because there had been no growth of the settlement, promising such advantages.

In 1769 or 1770, Jean Baptiste Grappe, then a mere boy of six or seven years, visited the region of the Caddo Old Towns with his father, and remained there about four months. He found Fort St. Louis de Carlorette and its barracks and the houses of the French settlement deserted, but all still standing entire. The houses and fields formerly occupied by his family were ~~known~~ ^{pointed out to} him by his father. He observed the embrasures and the cannon-platform; the flagstaff was still standing.

In 1778, François Grappe brought down from the deserted ~~old~~ ^{old} hamlet at the Caddo Old Towns, the mill-stones and mill-irons that had been taken up there by "the Company", but which had never been used in his time. These mill fixtures were then taken to the Cpelousas.

During the period of occupancy of the place at the Caddo Old Towns as a French fort and settlement, which was about 30 years, the inhabitants were engaged in trade with the Indians and in such lines of agriculture as were common in Louisiana, raising corn, tobacco, indigo, cotton, ^{and} garden vegetables, with some wheat; the latter grew well there, but was little raised because there was then no way of manufacturing flour there. The lands there were beautiful and fertile. Contemporary with the Carlorette fort and settlement, there were French establishments in the northwestern quarter at Yattasse Point on Red river, about 25 leagues above Natchitoches; ^{the other was} and at a place called "the Dout" (Le Dout or LeDoux?) on Sabine river, 150 miles northwest of Natchitoches, on the right bank of the river, near its head; and one belonging to Mr. Bourne of Natchitoches, 8 leagues southwest of the Sabine and about 50 leagues northwesterly from Natchitoches. The establishment at "the Dout" was an important place of Indian trade, and apparently was founded considerably earlier than Fort St. Louis de Carlorette; it floated the French flag, and the arms of the King of France were buried there.

In 1777-'78, (as we learn from the contemporaneous correspondence of Lt.-Col. Messieres), an epidemic of small-pox, which, in 1777, had raged furiously from San Antonio de Bexar and Bucareli, Texas, to Natchitoches, Louisiana, and had apparently dis-

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peared, suddenly broke out in Indian villages somewhat farther northward, and thence spread to the "Caddoaches and Taobayases" (Caddoes and Towayash), the consequent loss of life at these latter villages being "more than 300 persons of both sexes".

In 1791, or thereabout, the Caddo Indians, "on account of a dreadful sickness that visited them", left their "Old Towns" in Long Prairie, and settled much lower down on Red River, where ~~they~~^{about} resided for nine years, after which they were driven thence by a flood.

In 1800, or nearly that, they settled on what ~~they~~^{was} called ^{Caddo, or} ~~they~~^A sayou Sodo, ~~_____~~, 30 or 35 miles west of their second Red River home; and this ~~location~~^{location} ~~mmm~~^A west of Red River, was destined to remain their home for about a generation.

(End of chapter)