

STUDIES AND COLLECTIONS OF THE EARLY FAR WEST. } SPANISH
FRENCH.

CHAPTER I. ~~10~~ 10.

FIRST GLIMPSES OF COLORADO.

The first white men who came within what was destined to be the state of Colorado, were Spaniards, and entered upon the southern part of its area. But whether they were Coronado's cavaliers of 1541, or later comers of the sixteenth, seventeenth or eighteenth century, and whether they ^{traversed} ~~crossed~~ south-eastern Colorado, or San Luis Park, or the San Juan region, are questions less easy to answer.

From ancient workings that have been found there, some writers have inferred that prospectors entered the San Juan country in search of mineral wealth, before the revolution of 1680; but why such workings might not be referred, with at least equal probability, to the period following Vargas' reconquest, and especially to the latter half of the eighteenth century, when prospecting for the precious metals in the San Juan region is, of record, ~~not~~ ^{often} ~~are~~ not informed.

Historians of Colorado ~~generally~~ ^{often} have assumed that ~~the first entrance of Colorado was made by Francisco Vasquez Coronado, on his way from New Mexico to Quivira in 1541, entered Colorado, and was the first to do so; but, as we shall see, while this famous expedition, may have included the first entrance of Colorado, in its outward or eastward-bound part, which famous~~ ^{we have already seen his} ~~the~~ ^{went} about as far around Colorado as it well could, and it was on the return journey to New Mexico, if at all, that it entered within the limits of Colorado.

I was informed in 1900 by Dr. J. W. Fewkes, that a map of 1755, made to accompany a report of Padre Juan Miguel Menchero, as visitador, locates Cuartelejo in the general region in which ^{the} Ladder creek ruins are.

See Appendix Notes on Cuartelejo, Copied from Almost Illegible Notes of F. W. Craig.

In at least the later part of the history of Cuartelejo (the first quarter of the eighteenth century), the region in which that interesting frontier establishment stood, was known ~~as~~ to the French as territory of the Padoucas. At the same time, it must have been a sort of debatable ground between the Jicarilla Apaches, who appear to have been allies, and the Pawnees (Pananas) and Wichitas (Jumanas), who were apparently enemies, of the Taos Indians of Cuartelejo.

~~The~~ The Padoucas are by most writers identified as Comanches. Yet, curiously enough, there seems to be no mention of either Padoucas or Comanches ~~in the latter~~ (the latter an ~~aboriginal~~ ^{aboriginal} name adopted by the Spanish) in either French or Spanish contemporaneous literature, in connection with Cuartelejo. And it is especially surprising that Monsieur de Bourgmont, who treated with the Padoucas ^{west-central} in Kansas in 1724, makes no mention of Cuartelejo, and that ^{the latter} ~~that~~ place, ^{or anything} that could refer to it, is not mentioned in the speeches ^(which his journal reports) ~~of~~ the Padoucas, ^{in those} ~~nor of~~ the Pawnees or other Indians present at the great peace and trade council which ^{was} ~~held with them~~ there; for the

locality ~~could not have~~ was in the same general region of the plains with Cuartelejo. Except at the time of the annual trading fairs at Taos, when, for the sake of barter, they suspended hostility and became friendly, the ~~the~~ Comanches were generally hostile to the Indians of the Taos pueblo in Taos valley; ~~possibly they had a similar attitude~~ so it is possible that they were hostile to the Cuartelejos, as they ^{were driven from their} ~~stronghold~~ ^{and hunting grounds} certainly were to the latter's Jicarilla allies, whose ancient ~~village~~ stronghold, in ~~the~~ the forests of the Raton mountain and the present Maxwell Land Grant; they ~~destroyed~~ ^{were destroyed} by the Comanches in 1724, and compelled to flee to the western side of the Taos ^{or Picuris} ~~range~~ of mountains, where they remained till comparatively recent times.

retaliation for its destruction, and to protect the frontier of the French mining territory from further Spanish invasion, that caused the French in 1723 to build and garrison Fort Orleans on the Missouri river, opposite the village of the Missouries.

There is a legend which indicates that the Spaniards of this ill-fated expedition, in leaving New Mexico, passed down the canon of the Purgatory river, and that their friends having last seen them going down its valley to an unforeseen destruction, is the circumstance which gave to that river its alternative name of "Rio de las Animas Perdidas" ^(River of Lost Souls), a name by which, abbreviated to "Las Animas", the river is yet often called, and which is also perpetuated by the Colorado county of Las Animas and by the town of that name at the junction of that river and the Arkansas.

Since about the beginning of the eighteenth century it had been the desire of the French, and one of the special objects of the Compagnie des Indes, to ~~bring the Mississippi valley into trade relations~~ ^{bring the Mississippi valley into trade relations} with the Indians of the far west and with the Spaniards of Mexico.

~~and although French parties under Saint Denis, acting for the Compagnie des Indes, succeeded in crossing the Texas frontier, and reached the San Juan Bautista, on the west of the Rio Grande, near the mouth of the Rio Grande, below Eagle Pass, in the latter year with a considerable quantity of merchandise, the Spanish policy was opposed against their proposed expedition, and was adverse to such attempts.~~

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led to that rebellion, there took place from the Pueblo of Taos, the most remote of the northern Indian villages, and ~~the most~~ one of the ~~most~~ most intolerant of Spanish oppression, a migration of several Christian Indian families northeastward, to a locality far out upon the plains, on a main southern source of the Smoky Hill river, in what is now Scott county, Kansas, where they built an adobe pueblo of seven rooms. Their flight was known to the Spaniards, who called the new settlement "Cuarteleso". ^{For} ~~Meaning~~, apparently, a fortified place of ^{Footnote} refuge. ~~but~~ but made no immediate attempt to reduce them to subjection again or to bring them back. At Cuarteleso these Indios Cristianos excavated a ditch ^{they and their descendants} and remained as an independent community, carrying on agriculture by irrigation after the manner of their brethren in the pueblos of New Mexico, for about three generations, or till some time subsequent to 1727, when they ^{community was} ~~were~~ brought back to Taos by twenty Spanish soldiers and a party of Indian auxiliaries under Don Juan de Archuleta, sent out by the governor of New Mexico for that purpose.

In 1706, Don Francisco Cuervo y Valdes being governor of New Mexico, Captain Juan de Uribarri marched out to the village of the Jicarilla Apaches, thirty-seven leagues northeast of Taos, and was by the latter Indians conducted to Cuarteleso, of which, says H. H. Bancroft, he took possession, naming the surrounding province "San Luis", and the Indian rancheria "Santo Domingo". He did not disturb the inhabitants of the place, and the name which he gave to it seems to have been little used, if at all, as the few early maps and manuscripts that note this far outlying pueblo generally cite it as "Cuarteleso".

With the Jicarilla Apaches as guides, his expedition proceeded to the Arkansas river and — in all reasonable probability by a more or less direct route through what is now southeastern Colorado — to a point ~~only~~ about ~~and~~ sixty miles east of the Colorado state line, on that particular "Beaver creek" (locally so called) which on ~~some~~ ^{some} maps is designated by the ~~less hackneyed and hence more distinctive and desirable~~ name of "Ladder creek", in the northern part of present Scott county, Kansas, where the ruins of a seven-room pueblo have been recently excavated by Messrs. H. T. Martin and H. D. Steele, and ~~presented~~ ^{given to the} ~~works of Hubert Howe Bancroft~~ identified as Cuarteleso by Dr. S. W. Williston, under whose direction, as then Professor of Paleontology in the University of Kansas, the excavation was made. The geographical data ^{cited} by Bancroft are so explicit that there remains little room to doubt that ~~Dr.~~ ^{Williston} is correct in identifying the ~~Ladder creek~~ ^{ruins with} the long lost Cuarteleso. This ~~exceedingly~~ interesting locality is twelve miles due north from Scott City, a town reached from either the east or the west by the Missouri Pacific railway, and from the east also by ^{a branch to} the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe.

The expedition of Captain Uribarri, across the upper Arkansas valley to Cuarteleso in 1706, exactly a century before the United States expedition under the gallant Zebulon Pike, seventy years before that of ~~Escalante and Dominguez~~, and fifty-five years before that of Juan Maria Rivera, is the first one, of historic record, which there is undeniable reason to believe was made by people of European origin, over territory now included in the state of Colorado; the only earlier expedition known, and the first one known, of any kind whatsoever, over Colorado domain, being that of the Taos Indian emigrants themselves about the year 1680, ~~enroute to Cuarteleso, though Colorado may possibly have covered the southern~~

In the fall of 1719, Governor Antonio Valverde y Cosio, with 105

some of the state in 1844, as we have already seen.

A phase of its Comanche,
Ute and Shoshone name.

Spaniards and thirty Indians, reinforced enroute by a body of Apaches under Captain Carlana, led an expedition from Santa Fe against the Utes and Comanches. Leaving Santa Fe on the 18th of September and keeping on the east side of the Sierra, they travelled northward till the 10th of October, after which they travelled eastward and southeastward, and on the 20th of the latter month were on the Arkansas river, then called "Rio Napestle", where, soon after, ^{ward} probably near the east line of Colorado, they fell in with some Indians of Cuartelejo, among whom they found men with gunshot wounds received from the French and their allies, the Pawnees and Jumanas*. They returned from the Arkansas river to Santa Fe,

*The Jumanas were several tribes of the same linguistic stock as the Gaddos of Red river and the Pawnees of the Platte; they lived to the south of the latter, and by the early French and Americans of the Mississippi valley were called Panis, Panicuassa, Panis Piquas, Pawnees, Southern Pawnees, ~~Paniced, Pawneess~~ Freckled Pawnees, Pawnee Picts, etc. They ranged from the Arkansas river (from the Smoky Hill river in 1541, when their grass-house villages were found on the lower part of that river by Coronado) to the Red and Brazos rivers of Texas. Some of the tribes of this stock have ~~probably become extinct~~ or absorbed by related tribes within the past century. Of those still existing, the Wichitas, Wacoos and Tawaconies are among the best known.

~~Jumanas. They returned from the Arkansas river to Santa Fe,~~
having explored a large part of what is now eastern Colorado, including evidently the plains portion of the Pike's region, and possibly a portion of western Kansas. Bancroft further notes that the Spanish Viceroy sent to the authorities at Santa Fe an order to establish a fort at Cuartelejo, which was considered to be about 130 leagues northeasterly from Santa Fe; but ~~this~~ ^{it was concluded that} this was deemed wholly impracticable, and the Viceroy must have meant Jicarilla, which was less than a third as far away in that direction.

End of Chapter I

Chapter II (= "Cuartelejo") begins on p. 3a.

Footnote

any account has been preserved in history.

A Tragedy of the Missouri Valley.

There had been from the beginning of the sixteenth century a continued conflict between Spain and France for supremacy in the New World. This conflict continued until 1763, when it extended to the Missouri valley, and culminated in one of the most singular and bloody tragedies recorded in the history of the West. France claimed and occupied the Mississippi valley and Spain had conquered and controlled Mexico. The French, by their humane and conciliatory policy, had secured the friendship of the Western Indians, and were gradually marching on the disputed territory along the Missouri river; a country then rich with furs and the trappers' paradise. For the purpose of checking this encroachment and driving the French back, there was organized in the spring of 1766, at Santa Fe, Mexico, a Spanish caravan, for it could scarcely be called an army, which for its unique and grotesque appearance has never been surpassed. It consisted of several hundred soldiers, men, priests and women, all strangely dressed, and they had with them droves of cattle, horses and dogs. All nationalities was represented—Spaniards, Mexicans and Indians. On they marched, floundering across the great trackless plains of Colorado and Kansas, without landmarks or guides. Their purpose was to enter the village of the Pawnees, who were the traditional enemies of the Missouris, form an alliance with them, and attack the Missouri and their allies and friends, the French, many of whom were then living with them. Being entirely unfamiliar with the country they mistook the country of the Pawnees and going farther north came into the camps of the Missouris. Being unaware of their mistake they made the object of the expedition known to the chiefs, and sought an alliance. The chiefs of the Missouri, with duplicity, readily consented

parties of two or three, accompanied by their Indian comrades and were locating among the different tribes along its banks, engaged in hunting and trapping the beaver. As early as 1781, it was reported that there were not less than 100 of these free and enterprising Frenchmen scattered among the different Indian tribes on the Missouri. In 1803, one La Roche, a Frenchman, appeared at the fort on the Illinois and reported he had been high up on the Missouri and had visited many tribes on its waters. In the same year (1803) Cavalier M. Lesieur was ordered by Governor De Boreville, of Louisiana, on a mining expedition to the head waters of the Mississippi. Hearing he entered the mouth of the Missouri river and ascended that stream to the mouth of the Kaw. This was the first expedition up the Missouri of which there is any account. It will be observed that it was just ninety-nine years before Lewis and Clark.

In 1799, Nicholas de La Haille, a French explorer, proposed an expedition of 100 men to explore the mysterious river, in which great interest had now become awakened, but no account has been found of the result. In 1817, one Herbert laid before the marines of Canada a proposition to follow the Missouri to its source. He said: "Not only may we find the mines worked by the Spaniards, but also discover the great river that is said to rise in the mountains where the Missouri has its source, and is believed to flow into the Western sea." He advised also, that wooden canoes be used instead of the birch bark canoe in general use at that time on the Northern lakes, and gives as a reason that "the numerous snags in the Missouri would make it dangerous to use the ordinary canoe." No further account has been found of this proposed expedition.

Early Exploration of Missouri.

In the year 1818, the French authorities at New Orleans ordered M. de Dutton, an officer of distinction, to explore the interior of Missouri, of which nothing was even then known except from vague reports from the Indians and trappers. He ascended the Mississippi river in pirogues until he came to the mouth of the Saline, a small stream which flows into the Mississippi about ten miles below the town of St. Genevieve, where he disembarked. Then he took a northwesterly course through a dense forest and traveled over as rough a country as there is in the state. At last he came to the Osage river at a distance of seventy leagues, 210 miles, which he crossed. About five miles west of the river he came to a large village occupied by a tribe of the Osage Indians. These Indians treated him kindly and after remaining with them several days he proceeded westwardly about forty leagues, 120 miles, until he came to a prairie country abounding with game, where he found two other villages, these being occupied by the Pottaw, a warlike tribe, who owned great numbers of horses. From this point they changed their course and proceeded northwardly until they struck the Missouri river at a place six leagues (eleven miles) above the mouth of Le Grande river—Grand river—which flows into the Missouri just above Hannibal.

to join the Spaniards in the proposed attack, and received from them a supply of guns and ammunition. Then, with the Spaniards entirely on their guard, they fell on them during the darkness of night and massacred every soul except one man, a priest, who perhaps from his clerical garb was permitted to escape.

A Legend of the Mouth of the Kaw.

The location of this bloody massacre is unknown, but as the Missouri tribe of Indians inhabited the country along the banks of the great river, the tragedy probably occurred in Missouri, and not a great ways below the mouth of the Kaw. The story itself sounds like an improbable legend, and might not be believed were it not for the fact that every early French historian refers to the tragedy and gives the same account of it.

Recognizing from this invasion the danger to which the French were exposed, De Iberville, the commandant at New Orleans, ordered M. Bessabrant, the commandant at Port Illinois, to proceed with a military force up the Missouri and establish forts. But the West India Company, a fur trading outfit, whose headquarters were at Mobile, anticipated them, and for the protection of their own interests had a few months before sent Chevalier M. Rougemont up the river on a like errand and had instructed him to build a fort, garrison it, and hold the country at any cost. In pursuance of his orders, this officer came up the Missouri river in the spring of 1711, and established a fort called "Fort Orleans." There is some question as to where this fort was located. It was certainly above the mouth of the Osage river, and one authority says it was on an island in the Missouri river. If so, it has long since, no doubt, been washed away. Other early historians refer to it as being a few leagues above the mouth of Grand river, but on the opposite side of the Missouri. This was no doubt the true location, and either on the left-hand bank near Malta Bend, or on the high bluff just below, called the "Pinnacles," was the historic spot. In fact, at the latter spot there is to-day what appears to be the well defined ruins of an ancient fort. Lewis and Clark passed this locality on their way up the river on the 15th of June, 1804, and in their journal state that near here and on the south side, was the old abandoned French fort called "Fort Orleans."

"Fort Orleans."

After establishing the fort M. De Rougemont left a garrison there and proceeded up the river with some of his men until he came to a village of the Kansas Indians at the mouth of the Kaw. From here, on the 3rd of July, 1711, he set out with a motley crew of French trappers and Indians, among whom were 100 Missourians and sixty-eight Osages, to visit the Comanches, who lived still higher up the river on the Platte. These Indians were then called the Padouche. In fact, the Platte river was originally called the Padouche. They passed through a beautiful country, which was described as "fine prairie country, with hills and dales and clumps of trees to right and left." De Rougemont returned along down the Kaw after an interesting experience among these wild savages, until he again came to the Missouri. He then floated down that stream singing the "Te Deum," in honor of the success of the expedition, until he arrived at Fort Orleans, the latter point in November, 1711. But he was doomed to disappointment, for on his arrival not a single soul was to be found. During his absence the entire garrison had been murdered, by whom it was never known.

While no further attempt was ever made by the Spaniards to invade Missouri, or to resist the encroachments of the French, Upper Louisiana, which included Missouri, became Spanish territory by a secret treaty in 1762, in which France ceded to Spain all of her Western domain. It was never, however, a Spanish province except in name, for the French, who then occupied it, remained in possession until it was retroceded to France in 1800, and by that country to the United States in 1803.

Early Lead Mines.

As early as 1770, the French had come up the Mississippi and settled at Fort Chartre in Illinois, on the eastern shore. This settlement was made by Frances Renault, an agent for a French mining company, who came from Kansas by the way of the West India islands, where he bought 50 negro slaves, which he brought with him. He crossed the Mississippi, went into the mineral section of Southeast Missouri, discovered the old furnace formerly used by the Spaniards and was the first to work the lead mines of that region successfully. This was in the year 1772.

The old French town of St. Genevieve was the first white settlement in Missouri. It was founded in 1763. Other settlements and villages soon sprang up on the banks of the Mississippi in the same section, including St. Louis, which was founded in 1764. No attempt was made to found any settlement in the interior of the state or on the Missouri river, except the French village of St. Charles, until the beginning of the nineteenth century. But while this is true, the French trader had for 100 years been pushing his canoe up and down the Missouri river. He had crossed the wide prairie, had hunted in the forests and explored every stream. It was he who gave the beautiful and poetic names to the rivers and lakes of the state—names which will perpetuate his memory as long as time shall last—and to him, and not Lewis and Clark, belongs the honor of having first explored Missouri.

PHIL. E. CHAPPELL.