

from the lateness of the season, many of their horses giving out; and it had to walk most of the way to the mountains, which it did not reach till the 18 of December. On the way out, the firm of Chouteau and De Munk bought of Mr. Philibert his furs, goods, horses, etc., and the time of his men. These <sup>men</sup> they expected to find at the mouth of the Muerlano, where Philibert had given them rendezvous; but in this they were disappointed. After searching for them for some time to no purpose, they met some Indians who told them that the men, not seeing Philibert return about the appointed time, and being destitute of everything necessary to support themselves, had gone over to the Spaniards.

Of the experiences of Philibert's company on the upper Arkansas, in <sup>1811 and 1815</sup>, little is known. Two of its men were killed by the Utes and Apacs etc; but it seems to have had no trouble with the Spaniards, with whom indeed it is likely that it conducted some ~~small~~ traffic, in addition to its trade with the Indians.

The fortunes of Chouteau and De Munk's party, the earliest upper Arkansas traders of whose doings we have many details, will now be related in Mr. De Munk's own words, as contained in his letter of November 26, 1817, to Governor Clark of Missouri. It will afford an understanding of the conditions that existed in present Colorado and New Mexico and the mutual ~~small~~ attitude of the United States and Spain, touching their common frontier, from the year of the Louisiana purchase until, by treaty in 1848, a definite boundary was established between the possessions of the two nations.

Mr. De Munk having started to Taos and Santa Fe, to find Philibert's men and to interview the governor of New Mexico, his letter says:

"I arrived at Taos, where I found the men, who had been received with the greatest hospitality, and allowed to pass the winter there. I went on to Santa Fe, to explain to the governor the reasons of my coming into the country. As soon as I alighted at the capital, I was presented to the then governor, Don Alberto Maynes, who at first expressed his surprise to see me; but no sooner had I told him the circumstances under which I came, he treated me very politely.

"Don Alberto is an old gentleman of good information, who possesses, in a great degree, the good manners and politeness peculiar to his nation.

"Having seen on my way to Santa Fe that the rivers abounded with beaver, I asked the governor the permission of coming, with a fixed number of hunters, to catch beaver in the rivers which empty themselves into the Rio del Norte. This he could not take upon himself to grant, but had the goodness to write on that subject to the commandant re-

ral. As I could not wait for the answer, Don Alberto ~~had~~ told me to come back when convenient, to know the general's answer. I must not omit to say that the governor did not seem a moment to doubt, that we had a right to frequent the east side of the mountains, and there to trade or catch beaver if we could, for he advised me not to go to the south of Red river of Hatchitoches, but from that river to the northward we might trade and hunt as we pleased. [To understand the governor's position fully, it should be remembered that the upper part of the Canadian river, northeast and east from Taos and Santa Fe, was called Rio Colorado and at that time believed to be the upper part of the Red river of Hatchitoches. — P. W. C.]

"I returned to Taos from whence I started, with all our engages and two Spaniards the governor had ordered to accompany us, till the Rio de la Trinchera; from thence, in three days we reached Mr. Chouteau's camp at the mouth of the third fork. [Previously referred to in the same letter as El Huorfano, and denominated on Pike's map, the third fork.] — P. W. C. Finding ourselves with more men than we expected at our departure from St. Louis, and not having a necessary equipment, it was necessary for one of us to come back. I started on the 17th February with Philibert and one of our men, and did not reach this place [St. Louis, where the letter is dated. — P. W. C.] but after forty-six days' journey, through barren prairies, which, at that season, did not afford any pastures for our horses, having sometimes to travel in the night, to avoid the Panis' war parties (we had the good fortune to discover in the day time). I bought the goods and engaged men for a new expedition, and having taken another license, started on the 15th July to go by water to the Kansas river, where Mr. Chouteau and I had appointed to meet. On his way from the mountains Mr. Chouteau was attacked by the Pawnees, about 300 in number; had one man killed and three wounded; five Pawnees remained on the spot, and a great many wounded.

"At the Kansas river we found ourselves forty-five. We shipped the furs to St. Louis, and started again for the mountains. There we met a party of Spanish traders, who told us that the Yutas and Apache Indians were hovering in this quarter, and as those Indians had already killed two of Philibert's men, our return would not have been safe, had our party gone to any distance, so that we agreed that Chouteau should wait for me at the pass called by the Spaniards La Sangre de Christo, or thereabout. Myself and two men went in company with the Spanish traders to the Rio de la Gulevra, where we left them and continued our way to Taos. When I arrived at Rio Colorado (a small fork of

Rio del Norte), I found that a new village had been established since my first passage there. I alighted at the house of the commandant of the place, who told me that I could not go further till he had given notice to the alcalde of Taos, and received his orders. I waited patiently that night and next day. On the second night at about 12 o'clock, arrived a party of forty men, commanded by Dr. Mariano Fanno, with verbal orders that I must go back with him to my men, and that the governor would not allow me to go to Santa Fe. I answered that I was ready and willing to follow him, but wished to write to his excellency, to which he consented.

"In my letter, I explained the object of my coming — that it was by the orders and with the consent of his predecessor, and begged him of him to permit me to go to Santa Fe, in order to know precisely what to depend on. This appeared to me the more necessary, as Don Mariano had not brought any written orders.

My letter being despatched, we started from Rio Colorado to go and rejoin our party. Our Shouteau was not at Sangre de Christo, but traced him up the Rio del Norte, near where it enters into the mountains. Here Dr. Mariano, after spending one day with us, took leave. At his departure, he told us that we should remain there, or rather go lower down the river, to wait for the governor's answer.

"I do not know what caused the delay, but it was not until about twenty days after, that I received a letter from the governor, saying, that the commandant general would not permit us any time to stay in the Spanish dominions, and to go out of them immediately. I wrote to the alcalde of Taos, that I had just received the governor's orders, and in compliance with them, we were recrossing the mountains; that, when on the east side of them, we should remain all winter; that we gave this notice, having no bad intentions, nor any motives to conceal our movements. Receiving no answer, we took it for granted that being on this side of the mountains, we gave the Spaniards no unscrupulousness. We had almost every week some traders from the Upper Villages, of whom we bought several horses, bread, flour, &c.

We had fixed on the 15th March, 1817, for the day of our departure, to go in search of the Crow Indians, whom we knew to be somewhere about the headwaters of the Columbia; but as the Spanish traders during the winter, repeatedly told us, that the governor had written to the commandant general, in order to obtain permission to hunt on the rivers running west of the mountains, we did not think proper to abandon a subject so interesting to us. For that purpose, I went to Taos in March; there I was told, that there were very unfavorable

reports. The alcalde having to write to the governor, I wished him to say, that I felt very satisfied to have come under such circumstances, that I proposed to remain as an hostage till the truth should be known, and that my life would answer for the good behavior and pacific occupation of our party. Two days after, the two hundred men commanded by lieutenant Don Francisco Salazar, of the militia, and sergeant Manuel Vaca, of the regulars, arrived at Taos. They intimated their orders, which were to take me back to my party, visit all the places where we had encamped, from the mountains to the Rio de las Animas, and to dig out all the goods we had put in the ground for security, (having no use of them in winter). We started from Taos, and a few days after reached this side of the mountains, where we were soon joined by Mr. Chouteau, to whom we had sent an express. We took out of the grounds all the goods and furs &c. we had hidden in different places; this being done, sergeant Vaca told us, that the governor had further ordered, that the whole of our party must go to visit with them our former encampments, as low down as the Rio de las Animas; that if no fort was found, he would leave us there, to get to St. Louis as well as we could. To this we could not consent, ~~as~~ for it would have carried us to an inevitable destruction, it being the time when the Pawnees are lurking for prey in all directions about Arkansas river; besides, we should ~~as~~ have lost the benefit of our spring trade. We proposed to the sergeant, that I should go with him to the Rio de las Animas, that Mr. Chouteau would remain where we then were, with a party ~~that~~ that he, (the sergeant) ~~should~~ leave to guard him, and that at our return we would go away in a northern direction. Both commanders agreed to this proposition. I started with a party of fifty men to search the so much talked of fort, which, it is needless to say, could not be found. Everything was in order, and a good understanding existed between our people and ~~the~~ Spaniards when we returned. Next day we parted, and were accompanied some distance by the lieutenant, sergeant and a few men. Much delay having taken place by the coming of the Spaniards, it was now impossible for us to proceed to the head waters of the Columbia by the route we had at first intended to go, which was by following the foot of the mountains up the Rio del Almagre, ~~which~~ [The old Spanish name for Ponteine qui Bouille creek.—F. W. C.] and then turn to the west. [Evidently by way of the time-honored Ute pass. F. W. C.] Though we knew the road to be good, we could not undertake it for want of time; therefore resolved to enter the mountains on the north side of Arkansas river. We passed the first chain with great ease, but we were no sooner on the other side than we foresaw all the difficulties we had to encounter. We had before us a chain of snow-capped moun-

trains much higher than the one we left behind. The cold was intense, and the recital of ~~the sufferings~~ <sup>hardships</sup> of ~~unsuccess~~ <sup>unsuccess</sup> would renew the sufferings we underwent. After three days of steady labor through snow, <sup>in</sup> order to cut a route, we had the mortification to retrace our way back. Perceiving that nothing advantageous could be performed that season, it was agreed that seventeen men with the most reduced horses, should go down river Plate, and there to wait for Chouteau, who was determined to wait one year longer. Both he and we, with the balance of our men, (except five shonee Indians, who had left us several days before,) we came on this side of the first chain of mountains, to take the goods we had put in the ground at the entrance of the mountains, and myself take the furs and return to St. Louis, which was fixed on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May.

In the night, a very heavy rain commenced, which continued all day on the 23d, and prevented my starting. At about 8 o'clock, P.M., one corporal and four soldiers came to us: they said that a large party was behind, and would come in next day. On the 24th, sergeant Mariano Fernan came in with his party and informed us, his orders were to take us all to Santa Fe. (Afterwards we were told he had instructions to take us alive or dead.) We secured again our bedding in the earth, and slept there, according to information of long & tradition, derived from <sup>Joseph</sup> Abensenville, one of Christians <sup>who</sup> was appointed to Mexico. <sup>and on our</sup> way, we thought we

as it was reported, sent a detachment of his men back to steal our property, of which we never heard anything, only three days previous of our leaving Santa Fe, while the governor made a kind of inventory of the same. When we got to the Rio de la Guadalupe, Chouteau, myself, and one of our hands, under an escort of ten men, took the advance, and on the 1st June arrived at Santa Fe. I was first introduced to the governor, who inquired in a very angry manner, why I had not obeyed him, when ordered to go out of the Spanish domains. I replied, his orders were obeyed as soon as received; that we were taken on the American territory, where our governor had given us a license to go. At this he got in a violent rage, saying that we should pay for our own and our governor's ignorance; using all the time very abusive language, repeating several times that he would have our brains blown up; that we were fortunate in had not come himself, for he would not have taken us alive.

S. R. Montane told me since, that he experienced the same treatment, and was likewise confined in a dungeon and in irons.

On the 7th of the same month, the Lieutenant, Don Jose Maria de Acevedo came in to give the welcome intelligence, that the governor had ordered all arms should be taken off. After forty-four days imprisonment,

we were presented before a court martial composed of six members and a president, who was the governor himself. Only one of the six members appeared to have some information, the others not knowing even how to sign their names. Many questions were asked, but more particularly why we had staid so long in the Spanish dominions. I answered, that being on the waters of Arkansas river, we did not consider ourselves in the domains of Spain, as we had a license to go as far as the head waters of that river. The president denied that our government had a right to grant such a license, and entered in such a rage that it prevented his speaking, contented himself with striking his fist several times on the table, saying, gentlemen, we must have this man shot. At such conduct of the president, I did not think much of my life, for all the other members were terrified in his presence and unwilling to resist him, on the contrary do anything to please him. He, the president, talked much of a big river that was the boundary line between the two countries, but did not know its name. When mention was made of the Mississippi, he jumped up, saying that that was the big river he meant; that Spain had never ceded the west side of it! It may be easy to judge of our feelings to see our lives in the hands of such a man. That day the court did not come to any determination, because the president (as I heard himself say to Lieutenant de Arce) had forgot everything he had to say. Next day we were again presented to the court; but as I knew then what kind of a man I had to deal with, I never attempted to justify myself of his false assertions. We were dismissed, and Mr. Chouteau and myself put in the same room.

Half an hour afterwards, the lieutenant came in with the written sentence; we were forced to kneel down to hear the citure of it, and forced likewise to kiss the unjust and iniquitous sentence that deprived harmless and inoffensive men of all they possessed of the fruits of two years labor and peril.

"What appears the more extraordinary, is that the governor acknowledged to me afterwards, and in the presence of Don Pedro Mino (the deputy of New Mexico to the cortes) and several others, that we were ~~very~~<sup>innocent</sup> men, and notwithstanding this, <sup>51</sup>our property was seopt, and [we] permitted to come home, with, each, one of the worst horses we had. .... .. Our actual loss amounts to \$10,000.75<sup>M.</sup>"

Though the claim for this loss remained for many years a subject of occasional correspondence between the United States and Mexico, it seems never to have been paid.

Of the experiences of Chouteau and De Mun's company, with the Indians as well as Spaniards, a complete narrative seems to have been

dictated to the celebrated naturalist <sup>of</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>of</sup> Long's expedition, Thomas Say, in 1810 by <sup>Joseph</sup> Lisonnette, the hunter and guide; but the manuscript of it, together with other valuable papers, was unfortunately carried off by soldiers who deserted from the returning expedition as it neared the frontier. Two items of the soldier company's ~~misadventures~~ <sup>and</sup> contact with the Indians in 1816 have however been preserved. One of these is the battle with the Sioux on the Arkansas, in which these Indians were <sup>it</sup> meant to contend against fire - arms; the other an incident on the Platte.

of the personnel of those two companies of trapping traders, who from 1815 to 1817 embraced the leading white merchants and commercial travellers of Colorado, and those business competitors, in some of their "wide-lines", were Siouxards and Cheyenne and Crow Indians, we know but little; but as it includes ~~most~~ the first Colorado merchants known to us by name, a brief glance at that little may be interesting.

forty-five in number after two of Philibert's men had been killed by Indians, forty-eight men altogether ~~must~~ have gone to the mountains in these two companies in 1811, '12, and '13. With the exception of the five Shawnee Indians, all of these, so far as appears, were Frenchmen. It is probable also that the Shawnees could speak French, as the immigrant Shawnees of Missouri had long resided in two villages near St. Genevieve and Cape Girardeau, in contact with a prevailing French population.

Joseph Philibert was a native of Canada. He came to St. Louis about 1801 and was married ~~in~~ in 1803 to Florence Croteau, by whom he had seven sons and two daughters, most of whom were still living in 1880. In ~~the~~ the spring of 1811, <sup>as we have seen,</sup> he organized a party for trapping and trading with Indians, which business he seems to have prosecuted ~~successfully~~ <sup>successfully</sup> in Colorado and northern <sup>Arizona</sup> with some success for nearly two years. In 1810 he was one of the subscribers to a document, numerously signed by the Catholic householders of that town, guaranteeing to the Catholic clergy of St. Louis the free use of a lot on which to build for residence and school purposes. Though ~~more~~ interested in providing educational facilities for the youth of his community, and enterprising enough to be the leader and ~~proprietor~~ proprietor of a company in the fur trade, he ~~does~~ seems not to have been an educated man, as his name is subscribed to the said document by means of his X mark. Mr. Philibert died in 1860.

Auguste P. Chouteau, generally called ~~Mr.~~ <sup>Mr.</sup> Chouteau, was born May 9, 1796. He was the oldest son of John Pierre Chouteau, who, as a six-year old boy, accompanied his older brother Auguste, when the latter was sent by Pierre Laclede Liguest with a party of thirty men, in 1795, to begin the preliminary of building on the site of the future St. Louis. <sup>in 1804 he married Sophie A. Labadie, by whom he had ten children, most of whom were girls.</sup> In 1803 he was one of the associates judges of the "New Court" of the

Territory of Missouri. <sup>He seems to have been about equally</sup> familiar with French, English and Spanish; and Waldo relates of him that his fluency in the last named language enabled him to communicate freely with the authorities and priests during his incarceration in Santa Fe, of which the Waldo manuscript also gives this incident: "In superior powers of conversation and his courtly address so captivated the Spanish governor that he would frequently have the Colonel carried from ~~the~~ prison to his house to amuse him and entertain him. On one of these occasions, when the governor had favored his visitor with a long catalogue of his numerous benefactions in his behalf, he paused and with great earnestness demanded what more he would have. The colonel quietly replied, 'I libertad, Señor Gobernador!' This so incensed the boastful magistrate that the colonel was quickly ordered back to his vile cell." In spite of his early calamitous experience

Immediately after his return from the prison of Santa Fe, he organized the new firm of A.P. Chouteau, DeMun & G.B. Sarpy, and for many years he conducted trade with the tribes of the Missouri and Arkansas frontiers, where he had a large farm and, in 1831, at least, was raising every article of necessary food, and in greater abundance than was necessary for himself, his wife and family and followers. He had a large farm and, in 1831, at least, was raising every article of necessary food, and in greater abundance than was necessary for himself, his wife and family and followers.

In the fall of 1831 from Independence, Missouri, to the little group of log cabins which then embraced both this trading post and the Western creek Indian agency, wrote thus of him. "The Colonel, whom we considered for the time being the head of the party, generally led the van; a fine, good-humoured, shrewd man, of French descent, with claims both to fortune and family in Missouri. As our conductor, we were all beholden to his courteous manners, and extensive information on every subject connected with the country and its red inhabitants, for much of our personal comfort and entertainment. In the pursuit of his profession of Indian trader, he had often dared captivity and death. Among the Comanches, whose principal trader and companion with government he had long been, he was unposed, and I believe justly, to possess the greatest influence. In fact, he had been brought up from his early boyhood, more or less in their camps; had hunted, feasted, fought with and for them, and was considered by them as a chief and a brother. From him we were glad to take our first lessons in hunting, trapping and backwoodsman's craft, and enjoy our first sleep at that kind of life, which, judging from his fine vigorous person, and the health shining on his sun-burnt features, was, with all its hardships, congenial to health and good humor. During the last few years of his life, Col. Chouteau had a small stockade trading fort a mile north of the Canadian river, for trade with the Iowas, Comanches and Michitans, with whom, as with the Comanches, he was a favorite trader. It was at a place earlier known as Camp Holmes, "a wild romantic spot", says Green, now a beautiful spring, where, in 1855, Governor Taken and Deeral Ashuckie, commissioners on the part of the United States, escorted by a force of troops under Major Moon, "had a big talk" and a still bigger smoke with an assembly of Comanche nobility and six of the more aristocracy nations. Col. Chouteau may have conducted trading posts elsewhere for brief periods at other localities. In 1855, the 85th U.S. Cavalry established a post on the Verdigris, where he resided, until his death, in 1862. Col. Chouteau, had died about five years past.

Col. Chouteau was a native of Port au Prince, but his father, a Frenchman, was sent to France to be educated, and a few years later joined his parents, who, after the negro insurrection in Haiti, removed to England. He lived in England fifteen years and came to the United States in 1810, at the age of twenty-six, living at first

with the Indian trade in Colorado and New Mexico, he continued to occupy himself thereafter with the same vocation. On the 18th of October, 1817, less than five weeks after his return from the prison of Santa Fe, he organized the new firm of A. P. Chouteau, DeMun & J. P. Sarpy. For many years he conducted trade with the tribes of the Missouri and Arkansas frontiers, especially with the Osages, his principal post being on the Verdigris river, five or six miles from Fort Gibson. Charles Joseph Latrobe, the author of "The Rambler in North America" and of several other interesting books of ~~memory~~ travel, who accompanied him in the fall of 1832 from Independence, Missouri, to the little group of log cabins which then embraced both this trading post and the Western Creek Indian agency, wrote thus of him. "The Colonel, whom we considered for the time being the head of the party, generally led the van; a fine, good-humoured, shrewd man, of French descent, with claims both to fortune and family in Missouri. As our conductor, we were all beholden to his courteous manners, and extensive information on every subject connected with the country and its red inhabitants, for much of our personal comfort and entertainment. In the pursuit of his profession of Indian trader, he had often dared captivity and death. Among the Osages, whose principal trader and organ with government he had long been, he was supposed, and I believe justly, to possess the greatest influence. In fact, he had been brought up from his early boyhood, more or less in their camps; had hunted, feasted, fought with and for them, and was considered by them as a chief and a brother. From him we were glad to take our first lessons in hunting, camping and backwoods ~~man's~~ craft, and enjoy our first peep at that kind of life, which, judging from his fine vigorous person, and the health shining on his sun-burnt features, was, with all its hardships, congenial to health and good humour." Besides his trading house on the Neosho, he was raising every article of necessary food, and in greater abundance than was necessary for himself, his very numerous family and followers. Latrobe, who arrived at this farm in October of 1832, wrote of "the Saline", "This was an estate situated on the romantic bank of the Neosho, about fifty miles above Fort Gibson. It was the property of the Colonel, whose welcome home amid a crowd of Negroes, Indians of divers tribes and of both sexes, dogs, pigs, cats, turkeys, horses, ducks, all looking fat and happy, was an extremely amusing sight. We were his guests for a day or two, long enough to see that we were on a fine estate, producing but little surplus after

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feeding the biped and quadruped 'varmint' living upon it; and to witness the coalition formed between the squadron of new dogs and the old retainers, who behaved with great urbanity and kindness to the new comers".

During the last few years of his life, Col. Chouteau had a small stockade trading fort a mile north of the Canadian river, which was occupied a part of each year, at least, as a branch post for trade with the Kiowas, Comanches and Wichitas, with whom, as with the Osages, he was a favorite trader. It was at a place earlier known as Camp Holmes, "a wild romantic spot", says Gregg, near "a beautiful spring, where, in 1875," Governor Stokes and General Arbuckle, Commissioners on the part of the United States, escorted by a force of troops under Major Richard F. Mason, "had a 'big talk' and a still bigger 'smoke'" with an assembly of Comanches and Wichitas and six of the more easterly nations. Col. Chouteau may have conducted trading posts for brief periods at other localities. He died in the early part of 1900 at ~~the~~ his trading post on the Verdigris, where his cousin, Auguste A. Chouteau, had died about five years earlier.

In 1830, not long after the death of Col. A. P. Chouteau, Mr. Josiah Gregg, a well-known merchant of St. Louis, who was ~~returning~~ <sup>conducting</sup> to Santa Fe and Chihuahua a large train of merchandise, the first trading caravan ever taken west by the route up the Canadian river, reached "Camp Holmes", or "Choctaw's Fort", as he also calls it, about the middle of day, and camped <sup>there</sup> the same night with a military escort of forty United States Dragoons under the command of Lieut. <sup>James P.</sup> Bowman, which had joined them that day, with orders to accompany them as far as the supposed boundary between the United States and Mexico. <sup>They had not been</sup> long at the fort when they received a visit from the Comanche chief, Tabba-queena, (Big Eagle), and his band of about sixty followers, including several squaws and papooses, and a few chiefs and warriors of the Kiowas, a tribe "frequently found domiciled among the Comanches;" and "great was their grief", says Gregg, "when we informed them that their favorite trader had died at Fort Gibson, the previous winter."

Julius De Mun was a native of Port au Prince, but when young was sent to France to be educated, and a few years later rejoined his parents, who, after the negro insurrection in Hayti, had removed to England. He lived in England fifteen years and came to the United States in 1808, at the age of twenty-six, living at first